A STUDY OF LEWIS CASS AND HIS UNITED STATES SENATE SPEECHES ON POPULAR SOVEREIGNTY

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PREFACE

Lewis Cass was born and educated in Exeter, New Hampshire. He moved to the Northwest at the age of eighteen; and after enjoying marked success as a frontier lawyer and state congressman in Ohio, he became a military officer in the War of 1812. Perhaps his most praiseworthy achievement was the service he rendered as governor of Michigan Territory from 1813-31. As Secretary of War and Minister to France, Cass increased his popularity by 1848 to the extent that he was selected as the Democratic candidate for the presidency. After he was defeated by Zachary Taylor, the Michigan statesman completed two terms in the United States Senate. Fifty-five years of service in the government were concluded in 1861 when he resigned as Secretary of State and retired in Detroit.

Purposes of the Study

The broad purpose of this study is to analyze the public speaking of Lewis Cass in the United States Senate as manifested in his speeches dealing with the doctrine of popular sovereignty. Specifically, the study consists of (1) a biographical sketch of Lewis Cass, (2) an investigation of the principle of popular sovereignty, (3) a rhetorical analysis of the popular sovereignty speeches of Cass which were presented in the Senate, and (4) a report of the responses to his

speeches as revealed by views expressed largely by his contemporaries.

Limitations

Although it is recognized that the historical data concerning both Cass and the period in which he lived lend considerable significance to the rhetorical analysis, this study is not intended to be a comprehensive biography of Cass nor a detailed disquisition on popular sovereignty. A brief account of the origin and development of the doctrine of popular sovereignty is nevertheless relevant to the study in order to provide a clear understanding of the speaker's lines of reasoning. The chief focus, however, is upon the speaking of Lewis Cass and not upon the doctrine.

Significance of the Study

During the two terms in which Cass served in the United States Senate, the persistent issue before the nation was slavery, especially as it related to the admission of territories into the Union as states. Each newly-admitted state threatened to upset the delicate balance of power which existed in Congress between the free and the slave states. Much important legislation preceding the Civil War was concerned with the question of whether the new states would be slave or free.

The solution proposed by Cass to the above dilemma was the doctrine of popular sovereignty. Briefly, it argued that the people of a territory itself, not Congress, should decide in their territorial legislature whether they would allow slavery or not. The popular sovereignty principle eventually became more famous than Cass himself. Douglas and the Democratic Party ultimately adopted it before Cass retired. The Democratic Party platform of 1856 upheld the doctrine as the best solution to the slavery problem in the territories.

The speeches by Cass which dealt with popular sovereignty were delivered between 1850 and 1856. His Nicholson letter, in which he formally proposed the doctrine, appeared in 1847. During the period between 1847 and 1856, Cass reached the height of his career in politics.

Previous Studies

Richard G. Hewlett, an historian, completed a doctoral dissertation in 1952 at the University of Chicago entitled "Lewis Cass in National Politics, 1842-1861." It is a comprehensive statement of the political career of Cass. This study is well documented and one of the most objective works dealing with the Michigan statesman. Its purposes and scope, however, vary considerably from the purposes and scope of the present study.

Two lengthy and detailed biographies of Cass were written during his lifetime. In 1852 William T. Young wrote

Sketch of the Life and Public Services of General Cass; and in 1855 William L. Smith's book of 781 pages, Fifty Years in Public Life, was published. Both authors made extensive reference to and quoted liberally from the speeches by Cass as a means of interpreting his actions. Since the death of Cass, two commendable biographies have been completed. In 1891 Andrew C. McLaughlin produced a well documented book entitled Lewis Cass. McLaughlin, of the University of Michigan, was the only professional historian to have written a biography of Cass. Frank B. Woodford's work of 1950, Lewis Cass, the Last Jeffersonian, is a dramatic and exciting interpretation of the life of the Michigan statesman.

There have been at least a dozen short pamphlet-size biographies of Cass. Most of these compendiums appear to be merely summaries of Young and Smith's works. A few of the short biographies, however, preceded the volumes of Young and Smith. They were largely campaign texts designed to present only the favorable or the unfavorable aspects of Cass in 1844 and 1848, and were primarily written for political reasons.

Sources

The two chief sources of primary materials for this study were the Lewis Cass Papers of the Burton Historical Collection, located in the Detroit Public Library, and the Lewis Cass Papers of the William L. Clements Library at the

University of Michigan. There were letters relating to Cass in the papers of A. Felch, G. B. Catlin, C. C. Trowbridge, G. Johnston, S. Miller, S. Farmer, J. R. Williams, J. T. Mason, A. Blair, M. Norris, S. Sibley, W. Woodbridge, B. F. Witherell, M. Chapier, L. Lyon, J. F. Joy, B. J. Lossing, W. R. Smith, and C. I. Walker of the Burton Historical Collection, and in the Lucius Lyon Papers and the Michigan Papers of the William Clements Library. Other useful sources of information were the following:

Michigan Historical Collections at the University of Michigan

- Lewis Cass Papers
- Kinsley S. Bingham Papers
- Andrew C. McLaughlin Papers
- Alpheus Felch Papers

Boston Public Library, Boston, Massachusetts

- Lewis Cass Papers

Library of Congress, Washington, D. C.

- Lewis Cass Papers
- Photograph and Prints Department
- Newspaper Reference Room

Files of the Architect of the Capitol, Washington, D. C.

The National Archives, Washington, D. C.

- Foreign Affairs Records
- Indian Affairs Records
- War Department Records

Benjamin F. Davis Library, Phillips Exeter Academy, Exeter, New Hampshire.

Files of the Records Office of Phillips Exeter Academy, Exeter, New Hampshire.

Personal Interviews

Milo M. Quaife

Frank B. Woodford

Augustus C. Ledyard

Newspaper Sources

William L. Clements Library at the University of Michigan

The Detroit Gazette

The Marshall Statesman

The Washington Daily National Intelligencer

The New Hampshire Patriot and State Gazette

The Centerville Western Chronicle

The New York Weekly Tribune

The Boston Public Library

The Boston Evening Transcript

The Boston Courier

The Michigan Historical Collections

The Marshall Democratic Expounder

The Ann Arbor Signal of Liberty

The Brighton-Howell Livingston Courier

The Hillsdale Gazette

The Battle Creek Michigan Liberty Press

The Grand Haven Grand River Times

The Adrian Michigan Expositor

The Adrian Watchtower

The Hillsdale Whig Standard

The Ann Arbor Primitive Expounder

The Grand Rapids Grand River Eagle

The Grand Rapids Weekly Eagle

The Detroit Public Library

The Detroit Tribune

The Detroit Daily Advertiser

The Detroit Democratic Free Press

The Detroit Daily Democrat

Newspaper Reference Room of the Library of Congress

The New York Daily Tribune

The New York Weekly Tribune

The Detroit Daily Advertiser

The Washington Union

Clipping Files of the Detroit News, Times, and Free Press

The Senate speeches of Lewis Cass were printed in the Congressional Globe, which was the semi-official organ of Congress preceding the Congressional Record.

Plan of the Study

Chapters I and II of this investigation deal with the historical background of the speaker and of the doctrine of popular sovereignty. Chapters III through VII are a rhetorical analysis of the speeches which Cass delivered in the United States Senate dealing with the principle of popular sovereignty. Chapter VIII is concerned with responses to the speaking of Cass, and Chapter IX is a summary.

Chapter I is a biographical sketch of the subject. Because the public speaking of Lewis Cass played a significant role in his political career, an investigation of the political achievements of the Michigan statesman is germane to the analysis of his speaking. Chapter II traces the origin and manifestation of the doctrine of popular sovereignty. The seven speeches selected for analysis in this study are concerned with the popular sovereignty principle.

Chapters III through VII are analytic appraisals of the selected speeches in terms of the classical canons of rhetoric. These canons are (1) the three modes of proof, logical, emotional, and personal, (2) organization, (3) language, and (4) delivery. Chapter IV treats emotional persuasion. The appeals relating to the character and personality of the speaker himself are discussed in Chapter V. Chapter VI investigates the language of the speaker in terms of (1) figures of speech, (2) attention-getting devices, and (3) embellishment techniques. Chapter VII describes the

speaker's voice and bodily action, which together are referred to as delivery.

Observations concerning the responses to the speaking of Cass are recorded in Chapter VIII. Most of the data relates to the remarks of the contemporaries of Cass to his speaking. The opinion of later generations, however, is also considered as well as an appraisal of the ability of Cass to foresee and accurately to predict the impact of his political principles upon future events.

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Chapter One

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF LEWIS CASS

Early Life

Ancestry

Both the maternal and paternal ancestors of Lewis Cass were of Puritan stock. In answer to an inquiry in 1848 relating to his family background, Cass replied:

> I left New Hampshire too early in life to have acquired any knowledge of the history of my family, nor have [I] since had an opportunity to procure any information upon the subject.[1]

A relative, Aurthur Gilman, stated that "in 1781 Jonathan Cass [Lewis' father] married Mary Gilman, a member of a branch of the Gilman family that traces its ancestry back to Norfolk, England, where in 1558, the forefathers were living of those who in 1638 landed in Boston and began a life in the New World."[2] Under Washington in the revolutionary army Jonathan Cass, who has been described as a blacksmith and farmer of limited education, attained the rank of captain. He was promoted to major when he served

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[1] Letter from Cass to L. G. Dean, December 29, 1848. Lewis Cass Papers. Boston Public Library.

[2] Letter from Aurthur Gilman to Andrew C. McLaughlin, November 28, 1890. Andrew C. McLaughlin Papers. Michigan Historical Collections. University of Michigan.

later with "Mad" Anthony Wayne at Fallen Timbers. "If there was anything distinguished in Lewis Cass' ancestry," however, "it lay on his mother's side. Mary Gilman came from a line of enterprising merchants who virtually controlled the economic life of Exeter, New Hampshire,"[1] where Lewis Cass was born on October 9, 1782.

Education

In 1792, at the age of ten, Lewis was enrolled in Phillips Exeter Academy. The head master was Benjamin Abbot who held a master's degree from Harvard. At the Academy, Lewis acquired the prevailing classical pattern of education which undoubtedly later had a bearing upon his career as a speaker. The Exeter catalogue of 1824 indicates that during the second year of study there was work in "rhetorick" and that Cicero's Select Orations were read. The student practiced declamation during his second, third, and fourth years, and "forensics" was taught during the third year.[2] "Joseph S. Buckminster, class of 1792, recorded that he had studied the Greek testament, Xenophon's Cyropaedia, Horace's Epistles,

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[1]Richard G. Hewlett, "Lewis Cass in National Politics, 1842-61" (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Department of History, University of Chicago, 1952), p. 6.

[2]Catalogue of the Officers and Students of Phillips Exeter Academy (Exeter: Gazette Office, 1824). Files of the Records Office, Phillips Exeter Academy, Exeter, New Hampshire.

Sallust, Cicero, Virgil, Livy, Blair's Rhetoric, and Morse's larger geography."[1] Although the regular curriculum was designed for four years of study, there was an "advanced class" for students who wished further work. Cass was enrolled at Phillips Exeter Academy for seven years. "The course of study was perhaps made not primarily with the view to sending students to college; since according to the Founder, Exeter was intended to fit boys for life rather than for college."[2] Upon graduation Cass was presented with a diploma, which read in part:

> Be it therefore known that Lewis Cass has been a member of the said Academy seven years, and appears on examination to have acquired the principles of English, French, Latin, and Greek languages, geography, arithmetic, and practical geometry; that he has made very valuable progress in the study of rhetoric, history, natural and moral philosophy, Logic, Astronomy and Natural Law, and that he has sustained a good moral character during said term.[3]

Teaching

After graduating from Exeter, Lewis hastened to join his family, which was temporarily residing in Wilmington,

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[1] Lawrence M. Crosbie, The Phillips Exeter Academy (Norwood: Plimpton Press, 1924), p. 289.

[2] Ibid., p. 288. ". . . to this early and fortunate connection with Exeter Academy and to his practice as a teacher of others, General Cass mainly owed that intellectual discipline and literary culture and ability which he displayed when . . . he became an orator upon the floor of the United States Senate." William E. Chandler, Congressional Record, 50th Congress, 2nd session, p. 2006.

[3] Copy (in Cass' hand) of a document signed by John Gilman and Benjamin Abbot (trustees), October 2, 1799. Manuscripts of the Benjamin P. Davis Library. Phillips Exeter Academy.

Delaware, where Jonathan Cass was stationed by the army in a recruiting capacity. The former student now turned schoolmaster. His father wrote that "George, Charles, and Mary's time are daily employed at their studies, superintended by Master Lewis."[1] Debby Cass informed her aunt back in Exeter:

> Lewis' prospects are very flattering, he teaches a school at 6 dollars a quarter and will probably have 30 or 40 scholars. Papa wished him to be with us the short time we remain here . . . .[2]

Cass in Ohio

Perhaps Lewis Cass was too restless to live the life of a schoolmaster, for he resigned his position after only a few months as a teacher of Latin in the academy at Wilmington. With a bundle on his back, he walked over the Appalachian Mountains to join the Cass family which had moved to Ohio. The wilderness area north of the Ohio River, the Northwest, was a region of opportunity and adventure.

Law Career

It was only a short time until Cass was studying law in Marietta, Ohio, in the office of R. J. Meigs, who later became governor of the state. In December of 1802, Lewis Cass became the first man to be admitted to the bar in the

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[1]Letter from Jonathan Cass to his sister, January 2, 1800. Lewis Cass Papers. Burton Historical Collection. Detroit Public Library.

[2]Letter from Debby Cass to Betsy Gilman, January 25, 1800. Lewis Cass Papers. B.H.C.

new state of Ohio.[1] Polly Cass proudly boasted to a friend: "Lewis is a clerk in the Servayor (sic) General's office at Marietta with a sallery of $500, and in the active practice of law which produces him 500 annually."[2] A few months later another member of the family expressed his pride:

> Lewis, as I have before observed practices law in Chilicothe, his emoluments amount to seven or eight hundred dollars annually. He is doing extremely well, is called one of the best lawyers in the state, and is quite an honor to the family.[3]

The public career of Cass began in 1804 at the age of twenty-one when he was elected prosecuting attorney of Muskingum County.

Ohio was truly a frontier in 1804. The main street of Zanesville, the county seat, was still uncleared of stumps and brush. Cass later referred to "the primitive court-house, built of logs, and neither chinked nor daubed, but with respectable interstices . . . . And in this sanctuary, as well as in the public houses, the Court and Bar, and suitors and witnesses, were mingled in indescribable confusion."[4] As a circuit-riding attorney, Cass had to traverse long

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[1] "Cass was admitted tho I believe not of age nor had he studied I believe the length of time required by the former law." Letter from Dudley Woodbridge to William Woodbridge, May 30, 1803. William Woodbridge Papers. B.H.C.

[2] Letter from Polly Cass to a friend, July 30, 1804. Lewis Cass Papers. B.H.C.

[3] Letter from D. W. Silliman to Elizabeth Gilman, October 14, 1804. Lewis Cass Papers. B.H.C.

[4] Lewis Cass, France, Its King, Court, and Government and Three Hours at St. Cloud (New York: Wiley and Putnam, 1841), p. 110.

stretches of lonely wilderness. "The judge and the lawyer," he said, "mounted their horses, and rode one and two hundred miles to Court, and then to another and another yet, and through the woods, following merely a bridle path, crossing swollem streams upon their horses while swimming and thrown together at night into a small cabin . . . ."[1] Court was held wherever there was room, in a log court-house or a settler's cabin. "In these strange courtrooms, there was much of legal learning and forensic skill. There was also rare opportunity for sharpening wit and increasing self-reliance."[2] Dockets were crowded, and justice was quick and direct. Conflicting land claims, for example, were rife because of the rapid influx of settlers. As a result, lawyers were in constant demand on the frontier.

Ohio Legislature

At the age of twenty-four, Cass was elected to the Ohio legislature. In spite of his youth, "he was conspicuous for his powers both as a speaker and a writer . . . ."[3] At this time it was Aaron Burr who provided the stimulus which prompted Cass to action. Burr, still bitter over the loss of the presidency to Jefferson, came to Ohio to find new

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[1] Ibid., p. 109.

[2] Andrew C. McLaughlin, Lewis Cass (Boston: Harper, Mifflin, and Co., 1891), p. 46.

[3] William T. Young, General Lewis Cass (Detroit: Markham and Elwood, 1852), p. 19.

success. He was able to convince a wealthy resident, Herman Blennerhassett, to finance a fantastic southern expedition of conquest, the exact details of which are still confused because of conflicting reports. On this matter, however, Cass wrote from Chillcothe to his wife:

> The plan of Col. Burr is finally completely developed. We have received private communication from the Governor,[1] informing us, that Mr. Burr's plan is to collect about 1300 men, to rendezvous at the mouth of the red river and to proceed from there to New Orleans, to attack the city, to seize upon the bank and treasury, and upon the artillery and to form an independent government under the protection of Spain . . . . We have passed a law, which I draughted, empowering the Governor to stop the boats now building, and all others provided for that purpose, and seize all persons concerned.[2]

Cass not only drew up the desired legislation, which was passed by the legislature, but he also drafted an address to the President from the legislature which insured the administration of the attachment and loyalty of that body to the federal government. Both houses approved this communication to Washington, D. C. Shortly thereafter, Jefferson offered Cass a commission as United States Marshall of Ohio, which the ambitious young attorney readily accepted.

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[1]The agents of Jefferson who were scouting Burr informed Governor Tiffin of Ohio that sedition was being planned on the Ohio River.

[2]Copy of a letter from Cass to his wife, December 6, 1806 as reported in General Lewis Cass, 1782-1866 (Norwood: Plimpton Press, 1916), pp. 9-10.

Territorial Governor of Michigan

When the war of 1812 came, Cass volunteered immediately and was given a colonel's commission. He was captured when his commander, General Hull, surrendered at Detroit. After being released from his parole by the British in a prisoner exchange in 1813, Cass informed Thomas Worthington: "Our state is certainly entitled to a Gen. officer, and in that event I should be very glad to be appointed."[1] He soon received the desired promotion to brigadier general under Harrison. In the Battle of the Thames, which helped to secure the Northwest for the United States, Cass won special mention for his service. He was placed in charge of the Northwest frontier, and on October 29, 1813 was appointed governor of Michigan Territory, an office which he faithfully and diligently executed for the next eighteen years.

Difficulties

Disease, poverty, and war caused much suffering in Michigan Territory. Governor Cass wrote in 1813, "we have more than 1000 sick," and daily the situation is becoming worse.[2] The overcrowded fort at Detroit was further taxed by the arrival of settlers who had been driven from their ravaged farms in the nearby Raisin River (Monroe) district.

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[1]Letter from Cass to Thomas Worthington, February 4, 1813. Lewis Cass Papers. B.H.C.

[2]Letter from Cass to Samuel Huntington, November 19, 1813. Lewis Cass Papers. B.H.C.

"The enemy," reported Cass, "has left their traces in every part of this unfortunate country. Such scenes of terror and distress have never been witnessed in a civilized country. It will take years for the habitants to recover from the effects . . . ."[1] Signs of destitution were everywhere. Cass told William Woodbridge:

> The Indians daily come in throwing themselves upon our mercy. Their situation is truly deplorable. They are totally destitute of all means of existence; and unless we supply them with small quantities of ammunition, they must perish. Through fear or policy the British suffered them to pillage the poor miserable inhabitants at pleasure. This country is totally exhausted of all its resources, and except as a frontier is scarcely worth possessing.[2]

Helping the settlers to acquire enough food for mere subsistence was a major task. Public stores had to be distributed to prevent actual starvation.[3] "I need not tell you," lamented the Governor, "people here have suffered everything an enemy unrestrained by justice, or magnanimity could inflict."[4] Two years after he had accepted the position as governor, Cass was still reporting to the Secretary of War that "the resources of this country are totally inadequate to support the number of indigent and helpless persons

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[1]Letter from Cass to Thomas Worthington, December 11, 1813. Lewis Cass Papers. B.H.C.

[2]Letter from Cass to William Woodbridge, November 9, 1813. Lewis Cass Papers. B.H.C.

[3]Milo M. Quaife, "Lewis Cass, Statesman," Pioneering, I (1935), 10.

[4]Letter from Cass to Robert Brent, September 22, 1814. Lewis Cass Papers. B.H.C.

in it."[1]

A second difficulty with which Cass had to contend was that the British refused to accept the fact that they no longer had jurisdiction and legal title to Michigan Territory. They demanded the right to try their own subjects for crimes committed in Michigan. When they held supremacy on the Great Lakes, they stopped and searched United States vessels. The Indians were provoked by the British to harass and steal from the Michigan settlers. McLaughlin said that this "insult to American independence and American humanity he [Cass] deeply resented, so keenly did he feel the injustice and perversity of England that he never recovered from his suspicions of her. . . . it colored his whole political career."[2]

The Indians constituted a third problem, especially during the early years of the administration of Cass. They considerably outnumbered the white population in Michigan Territory at this time. Even after the War of 1812, the hostility of some of the neighboring Indians continued to be a menace to the farmers, who were outside the protection of the fort. "In the Raisin [River] Valley especially . . . the ravages by the natives had been very great. The cattle had been driven off or had become so wild

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[1]Letter from Cass to J. Dallas, July 22, 1815. Lewis Cass Papers. B.H.C.

[2]McLaughlin, op. cit., p. 98.

that they could not be reclaimed, and could only be hunted and shot as one might the deer. Provisions of every kind had been carried away or destroyed . . . . "[1] In September of 1814, Cass related to General Armstrong:

> . . . a party of Indians stole eleven horses last night, almost from under the guns of the fort. They are gone and all the armies of Europe could not catch them. This fact among a thousand others will show you how liable we are to their attacks and how far they are beyond our reach.[2]

During the same month, James Monroe, Secretary of War, received the following message from the Michigan Governor: "Yesterday and today I have been very busy with the Militia of the country, in pursuing a party of Chippeway Indians, who have been for some days hanging upon the settlements murdering the people and plundering their property. We have fortunately succeeded in killing some of them."[3] Five years later Cass was still sending similar reports to the Secretary of War, this time, John C. Calhoun: "Three applications have been made to me within a month to adopt measures to prevent the Indians from killing the cattle and hogs and stealing the horses of the citizens."[4]

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[1]Webster Cook, Michigan (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1905), p. 71.

[2]Letter from Cass to General Armstrong, September 3, 1814. Lewis Cass Papers. B.H.C.

[3]Letter from Cass to James Monroe, September, 1814. Lewis Cass Papers. B.H.C.

[4]Letter from Cass to John C. Calhoun, May 27, 1819. Lewis Cass Papers. B.H.C. "During the day about three hundred Indians loafed about the city; and when they could get liquor enough, they made disturbances at night." C. Larzelere,

In spite of the fact that Michigan Territory was theoretically United States soil, most of the Northwest region was rightly recognized as still belonging to the local Indian inhabitants. As ex-officio superintendent of Indian affairs, it was the responsibility of Cass to make treaties in order to procure land from the red men for the use of white settlers. The Governor endeavored to be fair in bargaining with the Indian,[1] though he fully realized that the white man enjoyed a power advantage over the indigenous landholder which was ultimately irresistable. Cass confided to Calhoun:

> An Indian Negotiator is placed by the mere execution of his duty in a peculiar situation. He is required by his instructions to procure a cession upon the best terms for the United States. On the other hand, neither the feelings of the age, the opinions of the country, nor the principles of the government permit that he should extort from the wanderers of the forest the inheritance of their fore-fathers for the merest pittance, which they may be induced to take. There are more considerations, connected with the subject, which no honorable man will disregard. The execution of the duty is at best irksome and unpleasant. A part of the community see in every Indian negotiation a tissue of fraud and deceit, by which the land of the Indians is acquired with the mere shadow of a compensation.[2]

"Thirteenth Narrative: Lewis Cass, Governor," The Story of Michigan (Lansing Michigan Education Co., 1923), p. 9.

[1]A granddaughter of Cass remarked that "General Cass often said to me with great impressiveness, 'My child, remember that I tell you I never broke my word to an Indian, and no Indian ever broke his word to me.'" Elizabeth Cass Goddard, "Early Days in Detroit," Copy of an address delivered before the Daughters of 1812. Lewis Cass Papers. B.H.C. "No man in the country had done more to remove the Indians from the path of empire in a humane and peaceful manner." Dwight L. Dumond, A History of the United States (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1942), p. 381.

[2]Copy of a letter from Cass to John C. Calhoun, February 1, 1822. Lewis Cass Papers. B.H.C.

Traveling thousands of miles in birch canoe, on foot, and on horseback to Lake Superior, Green Bay, Prairie du Chien, St. Louis, and Fort Dearborn (Chicago),[1] Cass negotiated twenty treaties for the United States. "His personal influence was so great, that there is little exaggeration in claiming that the actual possession of the Northwest was due to his exertions."[2]

Cass was sincerely concerned with the welfare of the Indian. "In all their villages his name was familiar; and in all transactions with this wandering, peculiar race of people, he acted with a just and enlightened regard for their interests, and took care that they should suffer no wrong."[3] The Governor encouraged them to be industrious and civilized, and he particularly condemned white men who traded liquor to the Indian. Cass urged the white and the red man to aid each other whenever possible. He stated at Greenville in 1814:

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[1]Following an Indian trail in returning from Fort Dearborn on horseback, Cass was one of the first white men to journey from Chicago to Detroit on the old Sauk Trail, which is today U.S. Route 112. Soon after his return, Cass wrote to Solomon Sibley: "Strange as it may appear to you, there was a serious intention of evacuating Chicago. So little is the importance of that post appreciated, and such is the prevalent ignorance of its relative situation that it was deemed to be useless both with respect to the protection of our settlements, and to the effect, which it was calculated to produce upon the minds of the Indians." Letter from Cass to Solomon Sibley, October 21, 1821. Lewis Cass Papers. B.H.C.

[2]McLaughlin, op. cit., p. 113.

[3]W.L.G. Smith, Life and Times of Lewis Cass (New York: Derby and Jackson, 1856), p. 231.

> . . . I have no doubt but immortal advantages will result from their assistance and cooperation. I have so little doubt of the sincerity of those who are here, that I shall entrust my person and life to a party of them, who will tomorrow accompany me through the woods on my journey to Detroit and with no white men in company except three interpreters.[1]

Cass developed a remarkable understanding of the Indian character. He made a careful study of the "customs, and history of the many tribes within his jurisdiction, in order to cope with the Indian methods of holding council and with the Indian metamorphic style of expression."[2] His actions at crucial moments were courageous and firm. "Many a time Cass had to show his personal bravery and fortitude by acts of daring by which a less resolute man would have been utterly unable to influence an Indian gathering."[3] His extant speeches to the Indian and statements made by his companions reveal his courage, generosity, and integrity.[4]

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[1]Letter from Cass to General Armstrong, July 25, 1814. Lewis Cass Papers. B.H.C.

[2]Benjamin F. Comfort, Lewis Cass and the Indian Treaties (Detroit: Charles F. May Co., 1923), p. 18.

[3]Ibid.

[4]"No man in the Northwest was better qualified to deal with the Indian." John W. Stone, "Marquette County and the Upper Peninsula of Michigan," Michigan History Magazine, III (1919), p. 351.

Local Self-Government

In the Northwest "the form of government was prescribed by the United States from the beginning."[1] Under the terms of the Ordinance of 1787, the territorial governor and judges had sweeping powers. Cass believed that it was "a very unjustifiable system . . . that of authorizing the governor and judges to pass laws by adopting them . . . ."[2] In principle this practice, he continued, "annihilated every vestige of popular right. It was a mere act of arbitrary power."[3] "Some territorial governors became virtual dictators, but Cass avoided the error. He never considered himself as a master of the people, but rather as their servant."[4] It was almost with astonishment that the Michigan Governor declared in a letter to Secretary of War W. H. Crawford in 1816: "The people of the country have no voice in the administration of the Government."[5] A New Englander by birth, Cass was predisposed toward self-government; but the French habitant population of Michigan could not readily conceive of the new idea. The Governor described their nature:

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[1] Dwight G. McCarty, The Territorial Governors of the Northwest (Iowa City: State Historical Society, 1910), p. 21.

[2] Lewis Cass, Congressional Globe, 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 71.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Frank B. Woodford, Lewis Cass (New Brunswick: Rutger's University Press, 1950), pp. 148-49.

[5] Copy of a letter from Cass to W. H. Crawford, May 31, 1816. Lewis Cass Papers. B.H.C.

> There is a peculiar elasticity in the French character . . . by which the Frenchman accommodates himself to any situation in which he may be placed. Upon the Seine and upon the St. Lawrence, if not equally pleased, he is equally pleasant; and during two centuries, in the depths of the American forests, he has associated with their rude tenants and as he could not elevate them to his own standard, he has descended to theirs.[1]

It was only by degrees that Cass was able deliberately to diminish his own powers. The French under his influence "were yearly more and more becoming Americanized, and were throwing off the trammels of the old feudal system."[2] The laws were codified and published. County lines were delineated, and the settlers were encouraged to make suggestions as to whom they wished to fill local offices. Cass largely deprived himself of the spoils system that was his if he wanted it. "He adhered with tenacity to the doctrine that the people should have a direct voice in appointments and in other political affairs in the territory."[3]

Relentlessly Cass worked toward increased popular autonomy in Michigan by obtaining for the people "as much self-government as was possible under the Ordinance of 1787."[4] In 1818 the populace felt that they were not yet ready for

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[1]Lewis Cass, Remarks of the Policy and Practice of the United States and Great Britain in their Treatment of the Indians (Boston: Frederick T. Gray, 1827), p. 6.

[2]Stone, op. cit., p. 353.

[3]McLaughlin, op. cit., p. 120.

[4]F. Clever Bald, Michigan in Four Centuries (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1954), p. 187.

the second stage of political organization under the Ordinance, and they voted down the privileges offered to them by their Governor. It was not until 1823 that the people of Michigan were nominating their own legislative officers. On June 24, 1824 in his first message to the legislature, Cass stated:

> You are the first representative body of Michigan deriving its authority from the people, which has been convened in the territory. The legislative power, therefore exercised, has been invested in officers, over whom the people had no direct control. Authority thus held is certainly liable to abuse; but its practical operation was restrained and secured, as well by the limitations provided in the fundamental Ordinance, as by the spirit of our institutions, and the superintending control of the General Government.[1]

Twenty-three years before the Nicholson letter[2] the seeds of popular sovereignty were therefore beginning to burgeon in the thoughts and actions of Cass. It appeared peculiar to some observers that a political leader should rejoice at the prospect of relinquishing some of his powers. But it was not strange to a New England educated Puritan, who was reared in the atmosphere of town meetings and popular government. Eagerly Cass "recommended a system of township government which would give the people automony in their local affairs. This, of course, meant a surrender of

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[1]Lewis Cass, Messages of the Governors of Michigan, George N. Fuller (ed.) (the Michigan Historical Commission, 1925), I, 13.

[2]The Nicholson letter was the first formal statement of popular sovereignty by Cass. It can be found in the appendix of this study.

the governor's appointive power, but it was a capitulation Cass was happy to make."[1] He said to the Michigan legislature on May 12, 1830:

> So far as may be consistent with the Ordinance and Acts of Congress, it would appear expedient, that every power, necessary to the police and good government of the District, should be exercised by the people there, without the intervention of the distant territorial authorities. And it may be safely exercised; for the experience of the United States, during half a century of self-government, demonstrates that the people are the safest depositories of their own power.[2]

This was Cass the Jeffersonian speaking. Those who later cried that the Nicholson letter was a hasty and disingenuous bid for presidential votes in 1848 need only to have read these messages to the Michigan legislature to have discovered that their charge was false. The confidence of Cass in the ability of the people to govern themselves was expressed throughout his whole political life.

Goal: Statehood

From the beginning of his administration as Governor of the Territory, Cass looked forward to the day when the rude wilderness of Michigan would achieve the dignity of statehood. His daily efforts were assiduously directed toward this long-range goal. The Governor's plan was to appraise

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[1] Woodford, op. cit., p. 156. "Governor Cass was largely instrumental in . . . enlarging the franchise and the participation of the people in the administration of the government during the territorial days." McCarty, op. cit., p. 139.

[2] Cass, Fuller, op. cit., p. 49.

accurately the physical potential of the region, to build roads so that the settlers could gain access to the interior, to provide government offices for the sale of lands-- Michigan's most attractive lure-- and to stimulate prosperity in every aspect of the public and private life of Michigan.

Cass endeavored to ascertain the physical resources of Michigan Territory. He organized and executed long journeys of exploration throughout the region. On November 18, 1819 the Governor sought permission from Secretary of War Calhoun to undertake such an expedition.[1] In addition to investigating the state of Indian affairs in the hinterland, Cass wished to determine if there were copper and iron deposits in the Territory. Charles C. Trowbridge, who accompanied the Governor on this forty-five hundred mile adventure provided a vivid account of events in his journal. He related that the group consisted of an engineer and two assistants, a mineralogist, a physician, a corp of eleven soldiers, a private secretary, a journalist, twelve French voyageurs, nine Indians, and two interpreters-- forty-three persons in all.[2] They traveled via Lake Superior to the upper reaches of the Mississippi and then to St. Louis before returning to Detroit. Deposits of iron and copper were found in the Upper Peninsula. Trowbridge reported that

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[1]Copy of a letter from Cass to John C. Calhoun, November 18, 1819. Lewis Cass Papers. B.H.C.

[2]Charles C. Trowbridge, "With Cass in the Northwest in 1820," Ralph H. Brown (ed.), Minnesota History, XXIII (1942), 135.

> . . . 'General Cass at one time made a four month's trip of four thousand five hundred miles, at another, one of three months and fifteen hundred miles, and at another one of two months and a thousand miles in these frail vessels [birch bark canoes] . . . .'[1]

Before Michigan Territory could be considered for statehood, people had to be induced to come there. "But the big handicap was inaccessibility. Michigan in those early days was beyond the reach of any but the most hardy and adventuresome."[2] Roads were practically non-existent. Detroit was cut off from Ohio by the almost impassable Black Swamp. When Cass sought appropriations for road construction, he stressed the military and strategic aspect of good roads in the Northwest. He realized that an appeal to the federal government to build roads "merely to hasten the sale of public lands might not produce results; but if it could be shown that such roads as he desired were important for the military interests of the country, the combination could not be resisted."[3] The records of the War Department reveal seven letters which were written by Cass to the Secretary of War between 1823 and 1825 relating to the construction of roads in Michigan Territory.[4] William Woodbridge

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[1]Charles C. Trowbridge as quoted by James V. Campbell, Charles C. Trowbridge (State Pioneer Society of Michigan, June, 1883), p. 13.

[2]Frank B. Woodford, Yankees in Wonderland (Wayne University Press, 1951), p. 9.

[3]William L. Jenks, "Fort Gratiot Turnpike," Michigan History Magazine, IX (1925), 150.

[4]The dates of this correspondence were June 27, 1823; March 9, 20, December 20, 1824; March 31, June 7, November 3, 1825. Records of the War Department in the National Archives. Washington, D. C.

received a message from the Governor in December of 1822, stating that "the prospect of obtaining a grant for making the black swamp road is favorable."[1] Money was appropriated "for roads and several were begun during the 1820's. All of them followed Indian trails which had been in use for centuries. The first connected Detroit with Fort Meigs (Perrysburg) on the Maumee in Ohio. It is now U. S. Route 25."[2] Largely through the efforts of Cass, wrote Milo Quaife, "Congress appropriated $20,000 in 1824 for a road between Detroit and Toledo."[3] It was therefore possible for settlers to get into Michigan Territory with greater ease.

If Michigan were to be made attractive to pioneers, lands had to be surveyed accurately and put up for sale. When Cass became governor of the Territory, no land had been sold by the United States; no surveys had been made; and no titles were possible. There was a need for farm land. In the East "over-population, worn out soil, and a general economic confusion"[4] provided the western migration with its impetus. Cass in 1816 tried to persuade Secretary of War Crawford to establish land offices:

> By opening up land offices we should soon have a population from the United States which would grad-

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[1]Letter from Cass to William Woodbridge, December 29, 1822. Lewis Cass Papers. B.H.C.

[2]Bald, op. cit., p. 152.

[3]Milo M. Quaife and Sidney Glazer, Michigan (New York: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1948), p. 292.

[4]Woodford, Yankees in Wonderland, p. 8.

> ually teach the Canadians our acts of industry, which would support the expenses of the Government in a time of peace, and defend the country in the event of war.[1]

In 1818 the first land office was doing business in Michigan. "By 1821 more than two and a quarter million acres had been surveyed, and a decade later about ten million acres of the seventeen and a half-million that had been ceded to the government were ready for sale."[2] The obstacles to settlement and eventual statehood were thus being removed.

Settlers poured into Michigan Territory. The population in 1810 was about 5,000; in 1820, 8,765; in 1830, 31,640; and it was to increase to 212,267 by 1840.[3] Attracted by cheap lands, which the government sold for $1.25 per acre, and encouraged by easy and adequate transportation, it was no wonder that a large number of the eastern migrants came to Michigan. The Erie Canal which had flooded their markets with cheaper goods could as well transport their own products from cheaper and better land in Michigan.[4] "Import and export were possible at prices so low that freight almost disappeared as an item of cost. A swarm of lake-sailing vessels, most of them schooner rigged and the first

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[1]Letter from Cass to W. H. Crawford, May 31, 1816. Lewis Cass Papers. B.H.C.

[2]George N. Fuller, "Settlement of Michigan Territory," Mississippi Valley Historical Review, II (1915), 34.

[3]Bald, op. cit., pp. 145, 151, 155.

[4]J. Harold Stevens, "The Influence of New England in Michigan," Michigan History Magazine, XIX (1935), 327.

steam-powered ships moved over all parts of the Lakes. Detroit's isolation was over."[1] It was estimated that more than 300 passengers landed during the fall of 1825.[2] "Detroit was the principal point of entry for immigrants. During 1836, as many as two thousand arrived in a single day on steamships and sailing vessels."[3]

There was considerable evidence of civil and educational enlightenment in the Territory by 1830. Detroit had an orphanage and a home for inebriates. Religion, education, and morality were encouraged as Easterners migrated to Michigan. The Governor informed the legislature in 1827:

> I return to you without my signature the bill to provide for licensing billiard tables. . . . It will be attended with consequences injurious to the habits and morals of the community.[4]

In 1829 in Detroit's leading hotel, the Mansion House, Cass addressed the first meeting of the Michigan Historical Society. This event was soon followed by the organization of the Lyceum and the Athenaeum. The latter provided a reading room which could be regarded as the predecessor of Detroit's present public library. The Michigan Essay or the Impartial Observer, which was published only once, in 1809, was the

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[1]Raymond C. Miller, "Detroit - Old and New," American Heritage Magazine, II (1951), 40.

[2]William J. Cox, Michigan History (Lansing: Henry R. Pattengill, 1911), p. 46.

[3]Bald, op. cit., p. 156.

[4]Lewis Cass to the Michigan Legislative Council, April 13, 1827. Lewis Cass Papers. B. H. C.

first newspaper in the Territory. Between 1817 and 1830, however, there appeared the Detroit Gazette, the Michigan Herald, and the Michigan Courier. The Detroit Free Press was established in 1831.

The community that was near starvation in 1813 was exporting flour in 1830. In a single year, 1825, "fifty-eight new buildings were constructed . . . twenty-two of which were two stories in height, seventeen were one and a half, and nineteen were of one story."[1] The Governor had reason to be proud of the advancement and progress which had been made in Michigan Territory during the eighteen years in which he served as its chief executive.[2] He had begun with an isolated, impoverished village-fort without a church, a schoolhouse, a courthouse, a bridge, or a road. He concluded his administration amid a prosperous and thriving community destined in six years to become a state in the Union.[3]

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[1]James H. Lanman, History of Michigan (New York: E. French, 1839), p. 236.

[2]Lewis Cass was "more intimately associated with the history of the Northwest than is any other man and to him in large degree is due its progress and development." McLaughlin, The Influence of Governor Cass on the Development of the Northwest, p. 67. "Lewis Cass was probably the most capable territorial governor in the history of our country . . . ." Dumond, op. cit., p. 274. "Never before or since has so vast a region as the old Northwest territory been indebted to the public service of one man as this region is indebted to the policies and institutions founded by Lewis Cass." Comfort, op. cit., p. 15.

[3]"By the time Governor Cass was summoned by President Jackson to a seat in his cabinet in 1831, the little frontier settlements which he had come to defend in 1812 had extended and spread to the dimensions of a commonwealth under his judicious and statesmanlike care and nurture." Thomas M.Cooley, Michigan, A History of Governments (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, and Co., 1890), p. 203.

The National Government

Secretary of War

On August 1, 1831, Cass turned over his office to the youthful Stevens T. Mason, whom the President had appointed Secretary of the territory of Michigan. The ex-governor made the long and bumpy journey to Washington to take his place as head of the Department of War in the administration of Andrew Jackson.

In some respects Cass was well suited for his new responsibilities. He had been a brigadier general in the army and was a personal friend of the generals working under him, having served with them during the War of 1812. The Black Hawk War, the National Bank, the threat of nullification by South Carolina, and the Michigan boundary question kept the Secretary of War busy. He reduced the incidence of parades and inspections on Sunday, abolished the liquor ration, secured pensions for Revolutionary War veterans, raised the standards of the Medical Corps, and initiated improvements in salaries, cavalry allocation, and the Topographical Corps.[1]

The sedentary work of his new post was much different from the active life to which Cass had been accustomed in Michigan. Tedious hours spent in an office vitiated his health. Many of his letters written during this period were characterized by brevity:

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[1]Detroit Free Press, October 10, 1848. Detroit Public Library.

> You must not measure the strength of my feeling toward you by the length of my letters. You know how busy I am, and how difficult it is for me to devote much time to private correspondence.[1]

In addition Cass was plagued by chronic indigestion:

> I should have written to you before, but with the pressure of office, dyspepsia, and fever and ague, I have had no time at my disposal.[2]

> I have intended, for some days to write to you, but the everlasting pressure of other matters, and occasional attacks of dyspepsia have from time to time prevented.[3]

Twice Cass asked to be permitted to resign, and twice Jackson persuaded him to remain in office.

Minister to France

In October of 1836 when Cass was tendered the office of minister to France, he happily accepted. The fact that he spoke French fluently and that he had lived for a considerable time among the French habitants of Detroit equipped him with the understanding necessary for such a post.

In Paris, Cass lived in comparative luxury largely sustained by a private fortune accumulated from the sale of his farm which at this time was within the limits of the city of Detroit. After disposing of the backlog of official business he found time to tour the Mediterranean for a

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[1]Letter from Cass to Saterlee, October 10, 1833. Lewis Cass Papers. B.H.C.

[2]Letter from Cass to William Woodbridge, January 26, 1832. Lewis Cass Papers. B.H.C.

[3]Letter from Cass to a friend, May 2, 1832. Lewis Cass Papers. B.H.C.

needed vacation, read in the French archives, and write about his impressions of Europe. Early in 1842 Cass published a treatise which brought him more political than literary fame. The United States and England were engaged in their perennial argument with respect to the right of search on the high seas. The anti-British sentiments of Cass and his own extensive knowledge of the subject prompted him to write a pamphlet entitled An Examination of the Question, Now in Discussion Between the American and British Governments Concerning the Right of Search. Historians are not agreed as to whether or not Cass was making a bold bid for fame when he wrote this for public consumption. There is no doubt, however, that his essay of seventy-seven pages denouncing England's maritime practice of stopping and searching American vessels gained him widespread popularity in the United States, where he had already been proposed as a candidate for the presidency at a Democratic meeting in Philadelphia.

Cass was a successful minister to France. Because of an unpaid debt to the United States, our relations with France were poor when he sailed for Europe. On his return people were comparing his ministership with those of Franklin and Jefferson, and it was obvious that rapport between the United States and France had improved considerably. Exactly how much of the credit should go to Cass is not evident. He probably deserves a share of it, however, for he "conducted himself with rare discretion as an American minister, and

had quite outdone himself as a politician. Diplomatic missions are usually dangerous to political ambition, for absence does not make the voter's heart grow fonder; but his six-years residence abroad increased his reputation and his popularity."[1]

Presidential Candidate and Senator

When Cass arrived in Boston on December 6, 1842, he found that he had become somewhat of a political hero for having stood up so firmly against the British. Twisting the lion's tail was still a joy to most Americans. Cass had demanded for the United States the respect which he believed it deserved. A friend offered the Michigan statesman some political advice:

> . . . you will be approached in various ways, if I am a judge of times. . . . various means will be sought out to commit you on important points. . . . I would tell them to rely upon my disposition to do right if elected.[2]

Cass declined an offer by Bostonians to stage a rally in his behalf at Faneuil Hall.[3] Boston, nevertheless, gave

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[1]McLaughlin, Lewis Cass, p. 192.

[2]Letter from Levi Reynolds to Cass, December 28, 1842. Lewis Cass Papers. William L. Clements Library, University of Michigan.

[3]" . . . we would propose that the meeting should be, at such time as may suit your convenience, in Faneuil Hall, the spot associated most nearly with the dangers in which both nations participated, and the place which, of all others, Americans would desire to welcome her well-deserving sons." Letter from the New England Citizens to Cass, December 7, 1842. Lewis Cass Papers. W.C.L.

him a flattering reception. His greeting in New York was even more enthusiastic. The New York Herald reported:

> The movements of this distinguished man continue to excite strong sensations amongst the democratic masses. . . . the friends of Mr. Van Buren are still in a state of alarm. . . .
> General Cass was last in Philadelphia on his way to Washington. He was received with great enthusiasm in the city of brotherly love.[1]

Cass "was welcomed at Washington by the Congressmen and satellite politicians who wished to scan the face of the new prophet. All the way from the capitol to his Michigan home there were applause and curiosity to satisfy the most hungry."[2]

Cass and Van Buren were the two Democratic hopefuls for the presidency. Cass, who had been in public office now for thirty-six years, certainly did not lack experience. He was steadily gaining on his rival in popularity. Yet he insisted again and again:

> The Presidency I have never sought. When in France I received an application from a committee of the Northern [illegible] of Philadelphia, asking me to permit my name to be used for that office. I wrote an answer which was designed in a civil way to put a stop to the affair. . . . I never wished to be President.[3]

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[1]New York Herald, December 20, 1842. Newspaper Reference Room of the Library of Congress. Washington, D. C. "We bid you welcome to our city, and respectfully beg leave to tender you an invitation to partake of a public entertainment, commemorative of our esteem and regard." Letter from a Committee of Citizens of Philadelphia to Cass, December 15, 1842. Lewis Cass Papers. W.C.L.

[2]McLaughlin, Lewis Cass, pp. 195-96.

[3]Letter from Cass to L. Lyon, April 13, 1844. Lewis Cass Papers. W.C.L.

The following month in a letter to the Delegates from Michigan to the Baltimore Convention, Cass reiterated: "I never sought the Presidency of the United States."[1] G. M. Williams of Detroit, however, commented: "Gen. Cass lives opposite us on Fort Street. The old Cock is making a play for the Presidency. I was greatly amused, a few days ago, at his reception of about 20 paddys dressed a la millitaire denominated 'Cass Guards.'"[2] It is also true that the Michigan statesman received a fourteen page letter from William B. Lewis which read in part: "You requested me to inform you when Genl. Jackson was first spoken of for the presidency and in what way he was finally brought before the country as a candidate."[3] It is not difficult to speculate why Cass desired the information. He admitted privately to Lucius Lyon:

> A prudent man should avoid committing himself as much as may be, to a specific course of action, long anterior to the time he may be called upon for a practical decision.[4]

The Democratic convention met at Baltimore on May 27, 1844. Aided by the Cass supporters and with remarkable speed, a resolution was jammed through requiring a two-thirds

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[1]Letter from Cass to the Delegates from the State of Michigan to the Baltimore Convention, May 19, 1844. H. N. Walker Papers. B.H.C.

[2]Letter from G. M. Williams to Thomas Williams, July 1, 1843. J. R. Williams Papers. B.H.C.

[3]Letter from W. B. Lewis to Cass, July, 1844. Lewis Cass Papers. W.C.L.

[4]Letter from Cass to L. Lyon, May 12, 1844. Lewis Cass Papers. B.H.C.

majority to nominate. The Van Buren forces were stunned. They had expected and got a simple majority of thirty-one votes on the first ballot, 146 to Cass' eighty-three; but this was no longer sufficient for victory. From here Cass gained ground until on the seventh ballot he led Van Buren 123 to ninety-nine. The convention adjourned for the night. The next morning James K. Polk became the Democratic presidential nominee on the second ballot (ninth of the convention). Van Buren attributed his failure to Cass, who had ultimately thrown his delegates to Polk. The little magician got his revenge four years later.

In spite of his personal ambition, Cass was loyal to the Democratic party. He worked hard for the election of Polk, a gesture the latter was not to forget. Richard Rush wrote to Cass: "I observe that you are active all over the country, and rejoice at it. It can't fail to do good and great good. . . . When this will find you at Detroit, I can hardly guess, seeing how usefully you are employed elsewhere and everywhere."[1] The Detroit Democratic Free Press stated:

> Gen. Cass is now on the stump in Ohio doing efficient service in the Democratic cause. He spoke at Norwalk on the 17th, Delaware on the 19th, Arkana on the 21st, and at Columbus yesterday. Tomorrow he is to speak at Zanesville and on Saturday

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[1]Letter from Richard Rush to Cass, August 28, 1844. Lewis Cass Papers. W.C.L.

> at New Philadelphia. We believe he goes thence to Cleveland.[1]

In Pontiac on July 5, 1844, Cass said: "I know James K. Polk and George M. Dallas well. I have known them for the last quarter of a century. They are men in every way capable and honest; and if elected, as I have no doubt they will be, will be found equal to the elevated stations, firm, energetic, and faithful . . . . "[2] A grateful Polk informed Cass four years later: "I need not assure you, that I shall be most happy if at the close of my term I can surrender the Government into your hands."[3] The President repeated to Lucius Lyon: "To see General Cass in the White House is and has been for years, the chief political desire of my heart. I do feel confident of his election . . . ."[4]

After the election of Polk, Cass turned his attention to the Senate. The Brighton-Howell Livingston Courier printed:

> Many of the democratic papers of this state are strenuously urging the election of Gen. Cass to the U. S. Senate. We know of no individual at present, who is more worthy of that high station, and more capable of performing the arduous and responsible duties connected with it.[5]

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[1] Detroit Democratic Free Press, September 24, 1844. D.P.L.

[2] Lewis Cass as reported by the Detroit Democratic Free Press, July 5, 1844. D.P.L.

[3] Letter from James K. Polk to Cass, August 24, 1848. Lewis Cass Papers. W.C.L.

[4] Letter from James K. Polk to Lucius Lyon, November 4, 1848. Lewis Cass Papers. W.C.L.

[5] Brighton-Howell Livingston Courier, January 29, 1845.

The Michigan legislature, on February 4, 1845, enthusiastically elected its favorite son to the United States Senate.

Cass did not long delay in becoming a vigorous participant in the Senate debates. "Seldom does a Senator in his first session step into leadership; but Cass seemed in a moment to be at home, and was recognized immediately as a chief opponent or ally."[1] His speeches in behalf of the 54° 40' boundary for Oregon gave him ample opportunity to promulgate his expansionist philosophy. For the same reason, Cass became completely involved in the debates concerning the Mexican War, which began in April of 1846. As an amendment to an appropriations bill for the maintenance of the war, the Wilmot Proviso arose to manifest the evils of sectionalism. It declared that the acquisitions from Mexico must never become slave territory. "The Wilmot Proviso had the effect of a political bombshell, and from that moment, for the next fifteen years, slavery was to be the dominant subject in nearly every debate in the Congress of the United States, and the chief issue before the public."[2]

Cass had much to say about the Proviso and its constitutional implications. He declared to Alpheus Felch:

> We have got a very unnecessary subject, a firebrand thrown among us which threatens the most disastrous results to the party. I allude to the Wilmot Proviso, the introduction of which is deprecated by all our discrete friends. It is not a question of

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[1]McLaughlin, Lewis Cass, p. 225.

[2]Woodford, Lewis Cass, p. 243.

> the extension of slavery, for that cannot come now. If we should pass that resolution tomorrow, it would conclude nothing. The subject would be just as open for Congressional legislation as though no such resolution had passed. And the very first step that Congress must take after the acquisition of territory, is to provide for its government, for it cannot be governed without. The whole matter is then open for discussion, and the intermediate proviso becomes perfectly useless. We have enough to carry on the existing war without provoking internal dissensions. We may never get any territory, and thus the whole contest may be useless. I shall myself vote against any consideration of the subject at present, and such I presume will be the vote of every Democratic Senator . . . .[1]

It was as a direct result of the problem presented by the Proviso that Cass came forward with the doctrine of popular sovereignty. On this subject in the Senate, he reached the height of his public speaking career.

Undoubtedly with one eye on the presidency in 1848, "Cass received his own visitors, gave elaborate dinners, doled out his share of patronage, and maintained a patriarchal interest in anything of a public nature that would benefit Michigan or the old Northwest."[2] He took care to see that his speeches were printed, and "a judicious circulation of them kept him prominent as the patriotic champion of American privileges."[3] Cass requested from S. P. Beers the addresses of "something like 100 prominent democrats thro' the State of Connecticut, who take an interest in the

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[1]Letter from Cass to Alpheus Felch, February 4, 1847. Alpheus Felch Papers. B.H.C.

[2]Woodford, Lewis Cass, p. 238.

[3]McLaughlin, Lewis Cass, p. 225.

Oregon question."[1] Aaron Hobart received the following letter from the Michigan Senator:

> I have taken the liberty to send to your address a number of copies of my Oregon speech, which I will thank you to direct to each part of the state as you may think proper. I will send you more for the same purpose, and also some of my speeches in answer to Col. Benton.[2]

Cass still denied that he desired the presidency.[3] Perhaps even if one sought the office, this was the proper attitude to take.

On December 24, 1847, Cass wrote a public letter to A. O. P. Nicholson stating his views on the Proviso and formally launching for better or worse his doctrine of popular sovereignty. This was a planned campaign document designed for widespread publication. The Michigan Senator stated that Congress had no power to decide whether a territory would be slave or free. It was a domestic matter which could be decided only by the people of a territory. Cass, the Jeffersonian, was again placing his confidence in the people. The letter had national appeal, but ironically it was somewhat unpopular in Michigan. George Griswold informed Alpheus Felch:

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[1]Letter from Cass to S. P. Beers, September 21, 1846. Lewis Cass Papers. Division of Manuscripts of the Library of Congress.

[2]Letter from Cass to Aaron Hobart, April 27, 1846. Lewis Cass Papers. W.C.L.

[3]See letter from Cass to H. N. Walker, December 26, 1846. H. N. Walker Papers. B.H.C.

> We have received the Genl's letter on slavery. It caused some fluttering and what affect it will have in our State cannot just yet be determined; but of one thing there is not much doubt, were the Genl. not a resident here, an attempt would be made to organize a head against him . . . . I have heard one or more democrats here myself plainly indicating anything but favor to the Genl. on account of that letter.[1]

The Democratic convention met at Baltimore in May of 1848. Matters were complicated by the fact that New York had two delegations, each professing to be legitimate. Several days of discussion resulted in the admission of both delegations with the right to cast New York's vote jointly. The Van Buren Barnburner delegation protested and withdrew from the convention. The other group known as the Hunkers remained but declined to vote. Cass was nominated on the fourth ballot. Robert M. Harrison submitted to a friend the observation that

> the election between Taylor and our friend General Cass is somewhat doubtful and depends on what side the old fox Van Buren may go over to with his Barnburners, as I think he himself can never be President.[2]

D. L. Seymour remarked "to Steven A Douglas that the state of the party was 'horrible.' The Barnburners bolt, he went on, 'has created a degree of bitterness in our ranks hardly to be conceived and still the bolting goes on'-- rebels

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[1]Letter from George R. Griswold to Alpheus Felch, January 16, 1848. Alpheus Felch Papers. M.H.C's.

[2]Letter from Robert M. Harrison to Alvah Bradish, October 25, 1848. Lewis Cass Papers. B.H.C.

showing themselves 'exceptionally hostile' to Lewis Cass."[1]

The election was a close contest. Zachary Taylor, the Whig candidate, polled 1,360,752 votes to Cass' 1,219,962. Van Buren, who ran on the Free Soil ticket, managed to get 291,342. Only 141,000 popular votes separated the two leading candidates. It was disappointing to the Democrats to lose the election after polling more votes between Cass and Van Buren than did the Whigs.

In January of 1849, the Michigan legislature again faced the task of electing a United States Senator. Polk confided to Cass:

> I am glad to learn from you, that it is possible that you may accept a reelection to the Senate and be in Washington this winter. The opinion is that under the circumstances of your position you ought not to hesitate to accept an election to the Senate. The whole Democratic party I am sure would be highly gratified to see you again a member of that body, where you would have the opportunity as you have heretofore so ably done, to reindicate and maintain the [illegible] of the Democratic policy.[2]

Cass was the leading contender for the post, but his re-election was stoutly opposed. The vote which finally elected him was forty-four to thirty-eight. Compare this with his election by the same body in 1845 when the opposition was scarcely perceptible. He was still loved and trusted in the Northwest, but Michigan was changing. The old Northwest was becoming a part of the North. A generation

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[1]Allan Nevins, Ordeal of the Union (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1947), I, 190.

[2]Letter from James K. Polk to Cass, November 26, 1848. Lewis Cass Papers. W.C.L.

was growing up that did not look upon Jefferson, Jackson, and Cass as prophets. "Michigan was on the high road to its later Republican beliefs, and in re-electing its trusted leader it was simply postponing the day of separation from him."[1] The Michigan legislature repudiated the doctrine of popular sovereignty and asserted that Congress had the power to prohibit slavery in the territories. Senators Cass and Felch were enjoined to take cognizance of this pronouncement.

During 1850 Cass spoke five times in the Senate in favor of popular sovereignty, his instructions from the Michigan legislature notwithstanding. The question of slavery in the territories of California, Utah, and New Mexico bore heavily upon the current business of the thirty-first Congress. The South, once on the defensive in respect to this issue, was growing aggressive in demanding that Congress protect slave property in the territories. The North, once passively inclined to accept the fact of slavery, was being converted to the position finally stated by Lincoln that no new slave state would be tolerated in the Union.

Political Campaigns of 1852 and 1856

In 1852 Cass received 116 votes to Buchanan's ninety-three on the first ballot at the Democratic National Convention in Baltimore. On the thirty-fifth ballot, his vote

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[1]McLaughlin, Lewis Cass, p. 264.

reached 131. Franklin Pierce, however, was chosen by the convention on the forty-ninth ballot. Although Cass was still the titular head of the Party, he did not really expect the nomination as he had in 1848. The Michigan statesman admitted: "I trust I know myself well enough to know that my time for public office is fast passing away . . . ."[1] He was at this time seventy years old.

Cass paid little heed to his age that fall when he vigorously stumped Michigan for the Party. His schedule comprised almost daily speeches. He arrived in Detroit on September 4. On the 10th he delivered a major address in Cleveland at a celebration commemorating the Battle of Lake Erie. He spoke in Ann Arbor on the 18th. On September 22 and 23, Cass and Stephen A. Douglas attended the Michigan State Fair. From there they journeyed to Chicago where the two campaigners addressed a rally of about seven thousand on September 25. The Michigan Senator hurried back to talk in Jackson on the 28th; Howell, 30th; Pontiac, October 2; Cassopolis, 5; Adrian, 7; Monroe, 8; Marshall, 12; Grand Rapids, 16; Kalamazoo, 18; Flint, 20; and Mt. Clemens, 23.[2]

Cass spoke in behalf of his friend Robert McClelland who was running for governor. The Whig mayor of Detroit, Zachariah Chandler, opposed McClelland. Whether Cass was

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[1]Lewis Cass, "Ratification Meeting Address," in Washington on June 9, 1852 as reported by the Hillsdale Gazette, June 17, 1852. M.H.C's.

[2]Hewlett, op. cit., pp. 223-24.

effective or not on his campaign tour might be difficult to determine; but it is true that when McClelland won the election, "Chandler, smarting under defeat, darkly threatened: 'I am afraid that it will take General Cass' Senatorial seat to balance the account between us.' Time and altered circumstances would soon enable Chandler to make good his threat."[1]

The ambitions of Cass to be President had cooled considerably by 1856. He admitted to Felch:

> As to political matters here, they are all in confusion. As I am a looker on, I think I can judge dispassionately. I have withdrawn from the contest, and tho I shall never cease to thank you and others for their good opinion and friendship, yet I know my time has come, and that I am too old to enter the Presidential race again.[2]

Cass, always a loyal, dependable party regular, stumped Michigan with McClelland in what turned out to be a hopeless effort for the Party. They "talked themselves hoarse at every town and crossroads hamlet. The reception they received was apathetic . . . . And like a panther relentlessly stalking his prey, Zachariah Chandler followed them, making speeches in the same places to the same crowds, with much more enthusiastic results."[3] Although Buchanan was elected, Michigan had gone Republican. "It was a source of regret to

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[1]Woodford, Lewis Cass, p. 294.

[2]Letter from Cass to A. Felch, February 23, 1856. Lewis Cass Papers. B.H.C.

[3]Woodford, Lewis Cass, p. 313.

Cass that a party with a 'sectional' aim should find support in the country. For above all else he loved the Union, and he hoped against hope that harmony would be restored by the old sedatives with which he was familiar."[1] On January 10, 1857, the hatchet fell. Michigan's Republican legislature elected Zachariah Chandler by a vote of eighty-nine to fourteen to succeed Lewis Cass in the United States Senate.

Secretary of State

Although he was seventy-five years of age, Cass was not yet ready to quit politics. He affirmed to his son in 1857: "As to my health it couldn't be better."[2] The Michigan statesman had become somewhat of a patriarch in politics. When Buchanan offered him the cabinet position of Secretary of State, he accepted.

It was prophetic that during the Buchanan administration the old problem of Great Britain's right of search arose again. In 1858 American vessels were still being "detained" and "visited," as the British phrased it. Cass was one of the authorities in the country on the legal aspects of this question. Andrew C. McLaughlin said that the treatise "Right of Search," which Cass wrote while in France, was "sound, conclusive, and unanswerable."[3] Milo Quaife

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[1] McLaughlin, Lewis Cass, p. 317.

[2] Letter from Lewis Cass to Lewis Cass Jr., December 7, 1857. Lewis Cass Papers. W.C.L.

[3] McLaughlin, Lewis Cass, p. 327.

added that "for logic and persuasive appeal, it surpassed Webster's 7th of March Speech."[1] So it was almost with gusto that Cass reasserted the ponderous arguments and the detailed evidence which characterized his style. Attorney General Jeremiah S. Black confided to the Secretary of State:

> I have read your dispatch with the greatest care . . . . The arguments of course cannot be answered . . . . The only question is whether the cabinet may think your response too severe. For my own part, I do not think a word could be spared.[2]

England acquiesced, after half a century, that a vessel of war cannot visit, detain, or seize a merchant vessel of a foreign nation.

Cass loved the Union, no matter what its internal differences; and he was a bitter foe of secession. Boldly he had spoken out in the Senate against those who promulgated disunion. His fears were never greater than in 1861 when he declared to a friend:

> I write to you in bad spirits. The lamentable state of our country gives me the greatest anxiety. It seems to me that the South is almost insane . . . . But one thing remains to every true lover of our glorious Constitution, and that is to support the government in all its efforts . . . .[3]

When a militant South dared an equally adamant North to stop it from seceding, the Secretary of State advised

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[1]Statement by Milo M. Quaife, personal interview, March 16, 1957.

[2]Letter from Jeremiah S. Black to Cass, July 19, 1858. Lewis Cass Papers. W.C.L.

[3]Letter from Cass to Ira Davis, May 13, 1861. Lewis Cass Papers. W.C.L.

Buchanan to order the strengthening of the Southern United States fortresses immediately. Buchanan refused, and Cass resigned.

Retirement

Cass "presided at a war rally in Detroit on April 24, 1861"[1] and delivered an address in behalf of the Union. He spoke at Hillsdale, Michigan, August 13, 1862 at a meeting designed to stimulate enlistment. Felch reported that this was "his last public speech . . . . It was a short but most impressive and patriotic address."[2] Cass witnessed the end of the Civil War and, rent and racked as it was, the restoration of the Union.

The political career of Cass spanned fifty-five years and is one of the longest on record. Quaife said that he was "the peer in character, patriotism, and ability of any of his contemporaries . . . . In a relative sense it may be said that the memory of Cass has been allowed to sink into obscurity and neglect. Considering the role he played, few Americans have received less attention at the hands of writers of history."[3]

> While he achieved a creditable record as governor, as a national figure, Lewis Cass was the conventional politician and achieved little which entitles him to renown.

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[1]Quaife and Glazer, op. cit., p. 215.

[2]Letter from A. Felch to E. C. Lyons, June 20, 1893. Alpheus Felch Papers. B.H.C.

[3]Milo M. Quaife, "Some Reflections Concerning the Papers of Lewis Cass," Lewis Cass Papers. B.H.C.

> Perhaps the most authentic and reliable estimate of Lewis Cass is that of the late Professor Channing of Harvard who wrote that he 'had a great reputation in his day, although the reason for it is somewhat indistinct at the present time.'[1]

There were others, however, who thought differently. Andrew C. McLaughlin said of Cass:

> . . . he was a great American statesman, building up and Americanizing an important section of his country . . . . With the great slavery contest his name is inseparably connected, he stood with Webster and Clay for Union, for conciliation, for the Constitution as it seemed to be established. He was one of those men whose broad love of country and pride in her greatness, however exaggerated, however absurd it may seem in these days of cynical self-restraint, lifted her from colonialism to national dignity, and imbued the people with a sense of their own power.[2]

Dwight L. Dumond stated categorically: "He was the greatest statesman that Michigan ever produced."[3]

Summary

1. Born and educated in New England, Cass became predisposed early in life to the philosophy of local self-government. His doctrine of popular sovereignty, which he formalized in 1847, reflected the Jeffersonian attitude that a central government ought not to do for the local units what they can do as well for themselves.

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[1]E. R. Skinner and Bryan Rust, "Question the Greatness of Lewis Cass," The Detroit Collegian, January 17, 1934.

[2]McLaughlin, Lewis Cass, p. 357.

[3]Statement from a lecture by Dwight L. Dumond, January, 1957 at the University of Michigan.

2. As a lawyer on the Ohio frontier and as a congressman in the Ohio legislature, Cass acquired experience in government which significantly assisted him in his subsequent career in national politics.

3. Perhaps the most commendable aspect of the political career of Cass was his eighteen year term as governor of Michigan Territory. In the face of great difficulties such as disease, poverty, and harassment by the British and Indians, he strove for Indian treaties, government land surveys, land offices, roads, and enlightenment. By making Michigan more attractive to the settler, Cass helped to promote the development of the Territory from a wilderness community in 1813 to the threshold of statehood by 1831.

4. Notwithstanding the sweeping powers that were his if he wanted them, Cass governed Michigan Territory as democratically as was possible under the circumstances. He constantly encouraged the people to accept more responsibility in the administration of their local government.

5. As Secretary of War from 1831-36 under Jackson, Cass was overworked, with the result that he suffered ill health. His appointment in 1836 to the post of minister to France provided him with enough leisure time to take a needed vacation, to read in the French archives, and to write. The treatise "Right of Search," which was written in France, brought him international fame.

6. Cass lost the Democratic nomination for the presidency in 1844 by a narrow margin, but he won the post in 1848.

After being defeated by Zachary Taylor, the Michigan statesman completed two terms in the United States Senate, where he had ample opportunity to argue the doctrine of popular sovereignty.

7. By means of the principle of popular sovereignty, Cass hoped to unite the Democratic party and provide a solution to the question of slavery in the territories. When popular sovereignty failed in Kansas in 1856, the nation rejected the doctrine.

8. Although Michigan refused to return Cass to the Senate in 1857, Buchanan nevertheless offered him the position of Secretary of State. Cass recommended in 1861 that the President reinforce the southern posts in order to maintain federal law in the South. Buchanan refused, and Cass resigned his office of Secretary of State.

9. The Michigan statesman retired to Detroit in 1861 after fifty-five years of service in the government. He lived until 1866, long enough to see the Union restored.

Chapter Two

THE ORIGIN AND MANIFESTATION OF POPULAR SOVEREIGNTY

The purposes of this chapter are to outline the origin of the doctrine of popular sovereignty, to describe its influence upon the careers of Lewis Cass and Stephen A. Douglas, and to discuss the ultimate success of the Kansas-Nebraska bill. Popular sovereignty served as a nucleus of the political career of Cass in the United States Senate. His most significant speeches in Congress dealt with this subject.

Origin

The first formal exposition of the principle of popular sovereignty appeared in a letter from Cass to A. O. P. Nicholson, December 24, 1847. "We cannot say that Cass created the doctrine for it sprang from the instinctive sentiment of a vast body of western citizens and from a mass of vague suggestions. But he was the first to give it clear formulation."[1] McLaughlin said that popular sovereignty

> . . . was first fairly announced by Cass; he first introduced it as an active principle in the political life of the time . . . . He first

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[1]Nevins, op. cit., p. 30.

> struck the clear note for which others had been unconsciously or furtively feeling. In that sense he was the author of the doctrine of which Stephen A. Douglas afterwards became godfather and fiercest defender.[1]

There had been allusions to the principle of popular sovereignty long before 1847. When the British Parliament levied taxes upon the American colonies, the colonists objected because they were being made the subject of legislation by a body in which they had no direct representation. They were demanding a type of popular sovereignty. In 1844 when Wisconsin and Illinois could not agree concerning the title to a section of land which lay between them, Governor Doty recommended that "the people of the district might decide for themselves, independently of Congress, whether they would join the new state or remain in Illinois."[2] There were also signs in the United States Congress that the principle of popular sovereignty might serve a useful purpose. The doctrine was basic to resolutions offered by Daniel S. Dickinson in the Senate in the closing weeks of 1847. Even earlier, "Representative Caleb Smith of Indiana and Representative Leake of Virginia had hinted that the slavery issue might well be left to the people of any territory for decision."[3] Before 1847, however, none of the

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[1]McLaughlin, Lewis Cass, p. 231.

[2]H. Sanford, "State Sovereignty in Wisconsin," Annual Report of the American Historical Association for 1891 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1892), p. 136.

[3]Nevins, op. cit., p. 29.

attempts to implement the principle of popular sovereignty were clear or formal enough definitely to establish the doctrine as an active political principle.

Lewis Cass

1848 Political Campaign

Cass was the leading Democratic candidate for the presidency in 1848. His public letter to Nicholson had served to keep his name before the public as a political leader. "Perhaps if Cass had stated his ideas more briefly or had coupled them with some catch phrase . . . his letter would have won him even greater acclaim. Even as it was, abounding in the long, turgid sentences of a constitutional lawyer, the letter moved Cass to the head of the party."[1] There was of course some immediate opposition to the ideas expressed in the Nicholson letter, especially from the North; but Cass was aware that the president was to be elected by all the states. No man representing one section of the country had the least chance of becoming president at that time. Popular sovereignty was national in scope; and it therefore appealed in some degree to both sections of the nation.

The Democratic Party was a national organization which represented two hostile sections of the country.

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[1]Hewlett, op. cit., p. 98.

The concept of local self-government was not new, but popular sovereignty was a new application of it that might help to unite the party. Cass said that the true danger which threatens us is

> . . . the danger of sectional interests and passions arraying one section against another. A spirit of compromise was necessary to create this confederation; and it is equally necessary to preserve it in its integrity and efficiency. The solution lies in kindness, not denunciation; argument, and not recrimination; and a desire to reconcile conflicting opinions as harmoniously as is compatible with the nature of the controversy.[1]

The doctrine of the Michigan statesman was ingenious and well-timed. It was basic to Jefferson, to Jackson, and to the Baltimore platform of 1840. He had discovered a symbol which could be employed to assuage the sectionalism that was vitiating the Democratic Party concerning the most important issue of the day. On this point the Hillsdale Gazette said: "While the Northwest peculiarly claims him as her own, he is in its broadest sense, a national man pledged to no faction or locality."[2] Cass may be said to have placed his confidence in national integrity as a stronger motivation in American life than sectional consciousness.

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[1]Lewis Cass as quoted by the Hillsdale Gazette, December 6, 1849. M.H.C's.

[2]Hillsdale Gazette, January 8, 1852. M.H.C's.

Motives of Cass

The question arose as to whether Cass was more concerned with becoming president when he wrote the Nicholson letter than he was with the plight of the nation. This was much discussed at the time the letter was published. His opponents claimed that the document was an insincere and desperate bid for presidential votes. It is true that the letter was a carefully prepared campaign document which had widespread approval on the national level before it was released. Kinsley Bingham testified that before publication the letter "was shown about for several days among the Southern members, for their approval."[1] Cass himself admitted:

> My letter on the Wilmot Proviso was seen, I suppose by from thirty to fifty members of Congress in manuscript before its publication.[2]

In spite of the fact that the Nicholson letter was a campaign device to unite the Party and to win votes, it was also a sincere and true expression of the political philosophy of Cass. In Chapter I of this study, it was stated that confidence in the people's ability to decide their own domestic affairs was well established in the mind of

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[1]Kinsley S. Bingham, Globe, 36th Congress, 1st Session, p. 2313.

[2]Copy of a letter written by Cass, February 15, 1848. Lewis Cass Papers. B.H.C.

Cass when he was governor of Michigan Territory.[1] At that time, over twenty years before the Nicholson letter, he consistently put this idea into practice. Later while in France, Cass wrote:

> The subject of emancipation of two millions and a half of human beings, living among another population of different race and colour, and with different habits and feelings is one of the gravest questions which can be submitted to society to solve. It can be safely left, only to those who are to be so seriously affected by it; and there it is left by the Constitution of the United States. It is a matter with which the General Government has no concern.[2]

therefore it should have been no surprise to anyone in 1847 when Cass placed his confidence in the people of the territories to determine whether or not they would have slavery.

Cass was also motivated by the hope that popular sovereignty might hold the Union together. The old nationalists who felt as he did were fast disappearing by 1850. The new generation of Senators was almost contemptuous of the Union. They sought to benefit their own sections at the expense of the Union. Cass was doubtless sincere when

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[1] "An extreme bent toward local government was given Michigan by Lewis Cass . . . . Under this governor, Michigan from the first, adopted the type of township government which uses the New England town meeting, and the local centers of interest set up in this way have done much to magnify in Michigan this local form of government at all times." W. O. Hedrick, "The Financial and Tax History of Michigan," Michigan History Magazine, XXII (1938), 34 - 35. "Governor Cass believed wholeheartedly in government by the people wanting them to have a voice in their own government . . . . " Bald, op. cit., p. 183. "The opinions of the people were held in respect . . . from the people emanates all power in a republican government . . . ." Young, op. cit., p. 100.

[2] Lewis Cass, Right of Search, p. 67.

he said: "I have no sectional feeling to interfere with my sense of justice, and I love the South as the North and the West. I have been so much a wanderer, during my life, that sectional feeling is absorbed in a general one, and I love my country, my whole country, with equal ardor."[1] Those who knew Cass never doubted that his ideas on preserving the nation as a unity were the true convictions of a dedicated public leader. Neither the North nor the South, however, was predisposed to listen when he pleaded:

> Let us live together as friends, as brethren, as members of one vast family where the rights and interests of each are sacredly regarded and protected by the power of all. Let us be one people, with one country and one government, and let us have no other struggle but for the common glory and common prosperity of this great Confederation, whose boundaries are already swept by breezes that come from the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans.[2]

It may be fairly stated, first, that the philosophy of popular sovereignty was basic and consistent with earlier beliefs expressed by Cass and by his actions, and secondly, that he truly desired to employ the doctrine as a means of preserving the union.

The Senate

In January of 1850 Cass delivered a ponderous dissertation on popular sovereignty. "He spoke for the greater portion of two days with great clearness and force, and

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[1] Cass, Globe, 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 519.

[2] Cass as quoted by Young, op. cit., pp. 406 - 407.

this speech stands today the most complete defense of the doctrine of 'squatter sovereignty' that has ever been given."[1] Cass stated that Congress has the right to establish "local governments, there ceases the constitutional action of Congress, and the internal legislation should be committed to the people to be affected by it."[2] The Michigan statesman based his argument upon constitutional principles which were in accord with the elemental and sentimental spirit of American government. "It was precisely this claim of unlimited legislation," said Cass, "which led to our revolutionary struggle and to our separation from England."[3] It was the notion that the people, especially the settlers and frontiersmen, should be relatively free of the strong hand of a central government. Cass asked:

> Are not the people of the territories competent to manage their own internal affairs? Are they not of us, and with us? - - bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh? The same people, with the same views, habits, and intelligence; all, indeed, which constitutes national identity.[4]

These views expressed anti-colonialism. They were basic to a nation's right to set up its own kind of government through self-determination. Every man moving from a state to a territory carried with him the right to determine his laws and institutions. The people themselves, exhorted

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[1] McLaughlin, Lewis Cass, p. 267. "This speech constituted Cass' disquisition on government." Hewlett, op. cit., p. 175.

[2] Cass, Globe, 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 59.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Ibid.

Cass, through their "territorial legislatures possess the full authority over all the concerns of life; over the relations of husband and wife, of parent and child, of guardian and ward, and the relations of master and servant."[1] Congress could not, as the Wilmot Proviso declared, rule on the status of slavery in the territories. The "powers of our government are both defined and limited, and before the authority of Congress can be brought to bear upon any subject, the constitutional grant must be clearly pointed out."[2] Exclusion of congressional authority rested not upon state sovereignty but rather upon a strict interpretation of the Constitution. Congress had not been assigned the authority. Therefore, Congress did not possess it.

Perhaps non-intervention, the label which Cass applied to his doctrine, was a better title than popular sovereignty. In the last defense of his Manifesto, a two-day speech on May 12 and 13 in 1856, the Michigan statesman said:

> This principle has been designated as popular sovereignty, squatter sovereignty, territorial sovereignty and marked by other sneering terms, used contemptuously as nicknames, rather than descriptively as definitions, and which served to cast reproach, and often designedly upon a great element of human freedom, and to bring it into discredit.[3]

Cass made it quite clear that the word "sovereignty" implied the rights of the people. This he said was not the essence of his thesis; but rather, it was the limitations placed upon

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[1] Ibid. [2] Ibid.

[3] Cass, Globe, 34th Congress, 1st session, p. 513.

the power of Congress that left to the people the right to control their own domestic affairs. Cass, himself, however, eventually referred to his doctrine as popular sovereignty.[1] It has since been recorded in history under this title.

Opposition

Ironically some of the most disturbing opposition to popular sovereignty came from Michigan. George R. Griswold lamented: "From the signs of the time, I do not think his [Cass'] prospects are near as bright as they were previous to his slavery letter."[2] Two other Michiganders corroborated:

> W. A. Richmond: Many fear the anti-Wilmot position from our statesman Genl. Cass may injure him in the North . . . .[3]
>
> H. Stone: The sentiments of his [Cass'] late letter I do not in all respects like . . . .[4]

When the Michigan Democratic convention met in 1848, the delicate situation was described by James Hunt: "Our State convention will probably nominate Genl. Cass and slip round the proviso some way, there will be a storm about then --

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[1] Ibid., p. 521.

[2] Letter from George R. Griswold to A. Felch, March 26, 1848. Alpheus Felch Papers. B.H.C.

[3] Letter from W. A. Richmond to A. Felch, January 17, 1848. Alpheus Felch Papers. M.H.C's.

[4] Letter from H. Stone to A. Felch, February 14, 1848. Alpheus Felch Papers. M.H.C's.

but what can we do . . . ?"[1] Griswold predicted a gloomy future: "I still think . . . that the Genl's letter will tend to hurt him. No man ever dallied with the South more than Mr. V. B. did; yet he never dared to aspire the ultra position of the Genl.; and I fear the result will be that the South itself will become suspicious that the letter is a mere ruse and will tend to distract rather than unite upon him [Cass]."[2] Several years later Kinsley Bingham made an after the fact observation:

> It is also due to truth for me to say that it [the Nicholson letter] was read to the Michigan delegation in Congress at that time, and that they unanimously disapproved both its principles and of the policy of promulgating it.[3]

Yet the Michigan Democrats remained loyal to Cass in spite of their difference of opinion. Griswold expressed a common feeling; "I am free to say that if I were to consult my personal feelings alone I should oppose the general; but being from our own state . . . I will contribute my humble efforts to aid him."[4] Felch, too, desiring the Proviso but realizing it could never overcome the opposition of the South wrote to his wife that he would support the

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[1]Letter from James B. Hunt to A. Felch, January 24, 1848. Alpheus Felch Papers. M.H.C's.

[2]Letter from George R. Griswold to A. Felch, February 27, 1848. Alpheus Felch Papers. M.H.C's.

[3]Kinsley S. Bingham, Globe, 36th Congress, 1st session, p. 2313.

[4]Letter from George R. Griswold to A. Felch, February 27, 1848. Alpheus Felch Papers. M.H.C's.

General's doctrine: "I wish we could obtain an absolute prohibition, but that cannot be effected. The next best thing in my opinion is to let the people decide it for themselves."[1]

It was not only from Michigan that opposition to popular sovereignty arose. Southern Democrats in Charleston declared:

> 'The opinions of Gen. Cass, promulgated in his late letter, that the inhabitants of a territory . . . have the right . . . to exclude from its limits the property of fourteen of the states-- has been repudiated by the press of the whole South. It is a doctrine too monstrous to be tolerated-- an ostracism too degrading to be endured.'[2]

The New York Tribune asserted:

> To talk as Gen. Cass does of the inherent right of the people of the territories to settle this question of slavery for themselves is quibbling, shuffling, pattering. It is humbug, it is knavery, to talk of awaiting the action of the people of the territories on this subject. The thing is not even possible.[3]

The Republicans charged "that the Democrats found virtue in popular sovereignty only as a pretense for the extension of slavery."[4] An Interesting footnote in Allen Nevins' Ordeal of the Union casts some light upon the reception

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[1]Letter from A. Felch to his wife, June 28, 1850. Alpheus Felch Papers. M.H.C's.

[2]"Cass and Taylor on the Slavery Question" (Boston: Damrell and Moore, 1848), p. 12.

[3]New York Tribune, January 23, 1850. N.R.R. Library of Congress.

[4]Dumond, op. cit., p. 425.

which popular sovereignty received when Cass first introduced it in the Senate in his Manifesto speech:

> On January 21, 22, 1850 Cass had made a speech which pleased neither North nor South. Under instruction by the Michigan legislature to vote for the Wilmot Proviso, he announced that he would do nothing of the sort and went on to explain his special doctrines. 'I saw Webster scowling at him whilst he spoke with that awful Websterian scowl which portends an earthquake,' John P. Kennedy wrote to his wife, January 22, 1850; Kennedy Papers, Boston. . . . 'Clay laughed at the novelties of the doctrine. As for the Southerners, they almost unanimously renounced him. Brown of Mississippi, Venable of North Carolina, and Seddon of Virginia publicly attacked his views; twenty other Southerners did so privately. He was thought to be trimming his sails to the wind of popularity -- and his expedients had recoiled against himself.' L. P. Waldo, Washington, to Welles, February 24, 1850; Welles Papers.[1]

Opponents of the doctrine argued that Congress laid out the boundaries and authorized the establishment of a government in the territories. How could a creature of Congress, the territorial government, do something that Congress couldn't do-- rule on slavery? Do a handful of rough and illiterate prospectors in the barren wastes of New Mexico have the right to join together and establish a sovereign government?[2] Can they decide the status of slavery

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[1] Nevins, op. cit., p. 304.

[2] The "doctrine assumed that slavery was a local issue. It had been once, but that time had passed. It had become the most serious national issue before the country; and to northern leaders, even those who were abolitionists, it seemed absurd to let a handful of pioneers decide a great question for the whole country." Ralph V. Harlow, The Growth of the United States (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1925), p. 442. "And was it not true that while a territory was in a state of pupilage, the general government had a right to see that it did not conduct its affairs in a manner detrimental to the

for the millions of future citizens of that territory? The derogatory term "squatter sovereignty" was used to imply this idea. Cass was asked when do the settlers become numerous enough to determine their own institutions? When the first wagon train arrives, the second, the twenty-fifth? The Michigan statesman answered, when they have "organized communities." Later he held that this decision could not be rendered at least until the territorial legislature was in existence.[1] Furthermore, there was nothing to prevent a territorial legislature from revising its previous decision on slavery if the majority of the people so desired.

Speaking for the South, Jefferson Davis declared that it was the right of the people of the South to carry slaves into any portion of the territories and Congress must not only permit them to do so, but must protect slave property while there. The Dred Scott decision in February of 1857 legally confirmed this position. Davis also argued that the exclusion of slavery from the territories could rightfully

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welfare of the nation? A small group of settlers, looking forward to incorporation in a larger population and meanwhile dependent on that body, could not before incorporation took place conduct all their concerns precisely as if they formed an independent entity." Nevins, op. cit., pp. 31-32.

[1] Douglas said that it "can only be exercised where there are inhabitants sufficient to constitute a government, and capable of performing its various functions and duties--a fact to be ascertained and determined by Congress. Whether the number shall be fixed at ten, fifteen, or twenty thousand inhabitants does not affect the principle." Stephen A. Douglas, "The Dividing Line Between Federal and Local Authority, Popular Sovereignty in the Territories," Harper's Magazine, XIX (1859), 537.

come only from agreement of the states. Neither local nor federal authority could keep out or deprive slavery of protection until the framing of a constitution, and not as Cass had proposed during the territorial legislative period. The Mississippi Senator did not believe that Cass meant to deceive the South, but he did maintain that Cass wanted popular sovereignty not for constitutional reasons but because only the North could possibly win the territories in the contest of popular sovereignty. "Davis was . . . contending that the 'impartial' Cass was actually using dice which were loaded against the South. On the Senate floor Cass did his best to refute Davis' arguments, but he could not so easily allay the distrust which sectional feeling had inspired in his northern birthright."[1]

Cass was a moderate. His non-sectional position on the slavery question is one indication of this. He was a Senator from the North, but he endeavored to represent the Union rather than Michigan alone. For this he suffered constant criticism from both sections of the country. The Richmond Enquirer stated: "We know we speak the universal sentiment of the South in reprobating the conduct of Genl. Cass, and in repudiating his pretensions to Southern

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[1]Hewlett, op. cit., p. 212. Apparently, however, Cass and Davis still trusted and consulted each other: "Before the meeting of the Senate tomorrow with your permission I will converse with you on the amendments and other things bearing on the question." Letter from Jefferson Davis to Cass, March 10, 1857. Lewis Cass Papers. W.C.L.

confidence."[1] On another occasion the same journal added:

> 'He [Cass] has severed the last cord which bound him to the Democracy of the South. Henceforth he must rank with Benton and Van Buren, as one who has insulted our feelings, and betrayed our confidence. The weak attempt to serve two masters has placed him with these illustrious apostates, in the limbo of lost and dishonored politicians.'[2]

In the North the Marshall Statesman was no kinder when it commented that General Cass "depends upon circumstances to make him President, and does not, like a strong man, take his own independent positions, and have his own original and characteristic principles. His course uniformly has been to take the popular opinions and measures for his principles and measures, rather than to impress his own principles upon the public mind and to derive his popularity from them."[3]

The moderate view expressed in popular sovereignty was sometimes interpreted as doughfaceism. Cass was accused of insincerely pandering to both the North and the South. Sumner was quick to label his colleague a "northern man with southern principles." The Michigan statesman replied:

> . . . every man in the North who does not believe it to be his duty to enter into a crusade against the South, and to cover the country with blood and

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[1]Richmond Enquirer as quoted by the Hillsdale Whig Standard, October 31, 1854. M.H.C's.

[2]Richmond Enquirer as quoted by the Detroit Daily Democrat, October 10, 1854. D.P.L.

[3]Marshall Statesman, August 10, 1847. W.C.L.

> conflagration to abolish slavery, is considered by a large portion of his fellow citizens as a dough-face-- that is the cant term-- sold by his hopes and his fears to the South. And this is the condition of every man who avoids extremes in periods of great excitement, whether that excitement is moral, social, political, or religious. History is full of the most impressive lessons on this subject. While the excitement continues, you may as well say to the whirlwind, stop, and expect to be obeyed, as to endeavor to check its progress till time and reason come to your aid.[1]

The Washington Union defended Cass when it declared: "'These are the supporters of the Constitution, the order-loving citizens of the North, who recognize no North, no South, no East, no West, but a common bond and a common brotherhood throughout the Union.'"[2]

Popular sovereignty was argued and debated until both Congress and the nation were confused in a welter of semantic jargon. If the doctrine meant the right of the people to decide the question of slavery, then the South had lost the argument. Stripped of its moral and legal implications, popular sovereignty was a contest of strength. In such a contest, slavery was doomed to failure. The North had the advantage because of greater economic strength, more men, more money, and an equal determination.

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[1]Cass, Globe, 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 399. Cass "did not cater to the new sentiment, but consistently maintained a moderate attitude." William O. Lynch, "Anti-Slavery Tendencies of the Democratic Party in the Northwest, 1848-50," Mississippi Valley Historical Review, XI (1924), 321. Cass' doctrine had "unmistakably associated him with the cause of compromise in the Senate." Hewlett, op. cit., p. 176.

[2]Ibid., p. 261.

Stephen A. Douglas

Rationale

As early as 1848, Stephen A. Douglas expressed his approval of the doctrine of popular sovereignty. After the publication of the Nicholson letter, Douglas appeared to be pleased with its results; and he privately advised Cass: "Write no more letters. The South are satisfied with your views on the slavery question, as well as all others."[1] Several years later, the Illinois Senator himself adopted popular sovereignty and gambled his political fortune upon it.[2]

Douglas traced the concept of local self-government back to colonial days. He based his popular sovereignty principle on the American Revolution. "This was the principle upon which the colonies separated from the crown of Great Britain, the principle upon which the battles of the Revolution were fought, the principle upon which our republican system was founded."[3]

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[1]Letter from Stephen A. Douglas to Cass, June 13,1848. Lewis Cass Papers. W.C.L.

[2]"The 'Little Giant,' a ready and active debater in years when Cass was beginning to feel the burdens of age, leveled his lance in agile defense of this proposition so often and so valiantly, that to him has been attributed a paternity to which he has no right." McLaughlin, Lewis Cass, p. 232. "Douglas is the inventor of that monstrous humbug 'popular sovereignty.'" Grand Rapids Weekly Eagle, August 16, 1860. M.H.C's.

[3]Harlow, op. cit., p. 441.

Like Cass, Douglas also went to the Constitution. He stated:

> After the Constitution had been finally adopted with its federal powers delegated, enumerated, and defined, in order to guard in all future time against any possible infringement of the reserved rights of the states, or of the people, an amendment was incorporated into the Constitution which marks the dividing line between federal and local authority so directly and indelibly that no lapse of time, no partisan prejudice, no sectional aggrandizement, no frenzied fanaticism can efface it.[1]

Douglas then cited that section of the Constitution which reads: "The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people."[2] The nation had always allowed the people of a territory to decide what kind of a school system, banking system, tax system, and franchise system they should have. Then why not let them decide upon their own labor system? He continued:

> You confer upon them the right to legislate on 'all rightful subjects of legislation,' except Negroes. Why except African slavery? If the inhabitants are competent to govern themselves upon all other subjects, and in reference to all other descriptions of property-- if they are competent to make laws and determine the relations between husband and wife, and parent and child, and municipal laws affecting the rights and property of citizens generally, they are competent also to make laws to govern themselves in relation to slavery and Negroes.[3]

The Illinois Senator declared further that none of the trans-Mississippi states could ever be slaveholding.

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[1] Douglas, op. cit., p. 528. [2] Tenth Amendment.

[3] Douglas, op. cit., p. 535.

It was useless for the South to talk of equilibrium between the free and slave states because that was a moral and physical impossibility. Douglas predicted that seventeen states would ultimately be carved out of the western domain and they would all be free whether Congress prohibited slavery or not. Thus, he said, it was fruitless to argue over the Proviso and congressional exclusion. Accept popular sovereignty because no matter what you legislate, that will be the final determinant anyhow. Douglas attempted to convince the North that they had nothing to lose by adopting popular sovereignty. Excess population from the North with anti-slavery attitudes would fill up the new territories guaranteeing their forever being free.[1] If this be true, then popular sovereignty might be considered to be an anti-slavery doctrine. As such, it was a better plan for the North than congressional exclusion because southern congressmen would not accept the Wilmot Proviso. There is no reason to believe that Cass thought of his doctrine as being an anti-slavery device. When he introduced it in 1847, it had appealed as much to the South as to the North.

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[1]"It is clear . . . that Douglas had no intention of establishing slavery in the territories. He was willing to make such establishment legally possible, to win southern support for a northern Pacific road, but he felt that climatic conditions would effectively bar slavery out of that part of the West. He insisted that the prairies were dedicated to freedom by divine law." Harlow, op. cit., p. 442.

Weaknesses

Douglas lent his support to a move to impose military control in Utah in order to prevent the Mormons from driving out other immigrants if it could be proved that they were defying the national government. This presented a serious paradox. It dramatized the weakness of popular sovereignty and the ethics of Douglas. The Republicans snapped it up to try to show that the Democrats were using popular sovereignty to extend slavery. Douglas was asked what he would do if the people of Utah, who were chiefly Mormons, should frame a constitution tolerating polygamy and should petition for admission into the Union. Would he refuse them?

> The present people of the territory, in forming and 'regulating their domestic institutions in their own way,' have adopted polygamy. Inasmuch as their sovereignty, under the new-fangled doctrine of non-intervention by Congress, is to be 'subject only to the Constitution of the United States,' and as that Constitution interposes no barrier to the institution of polygamy; we want a fair, categorical answer to the above question. Shall we have it?[1]

Lincoln was successful in convincing the people that the Dred Scott decision and Douglas' popular sovereignty thesis were contradictory. It is true that after 1857 popular sovereignty was legally outlawed by the Court. In one of their famous debates, Lincoln asked Douglas what he

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[1]Grand Rapids Eagle, August 16, 1856. M.H.C's.

planned to do about this. The latter, a master at circumlocution, found himself in an untenable position. He replied, however, that the test case in the courts must arise out of an attack of a territorial legislature upon slavery, which was not so in the Dred Scott case. Furthermore, the power of the territorial legislature had not been argued by council. The Supreme Court decision had been obiter dictum; it had been read into the case by the Court. Finally, Douglas declared that you cannot force people in any community to have slavery if they don't want it. They would be so hostile toward it that slavery could not possibly exist, the law notwithstanding. This, of course, did not answer Lincoln's question.

Popular sovereignty was a device which had been employed by Cass and later by Douglas as a solution to the slavery question in the territories and as a means of uniting the Democratic Party.[1] All that remained that was national were the political parties. They were the cement of the nation. Popular sovereignty also provided a means of taking a strong national position in regard to slavery without appearing sectional in order to acquire the presidency. In this respect it failed for both Cass and Douglas.

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[1]Douglas "felt that his party was in grave danger of dissolution because it had no unifying principle to consolidate it. This lack he endeavored to supply in his doctrine of popular sovereignty." Harlow, op. cit., p. 442.

Kansas and Nebraska

The superior position enjoyed by the Democrats in 1853 was due more to the weakness of the Whigs than to Democratic strength. "The magnificent structure of political supremacy which Andrew Jackson had constructed in the West twenty-five years before was beginning to disintegrate under the impact of sectionalism."[1] All that was required to display the disorganization and dissension in the Democratic Party was the controversial Kansas-Nebraska Bill.[2] The great debates in the Senate in 1856 were centered about Kansas and Nebraska, not that they were so important in themselves; but they provided a means of expressing bursting sectional patriotism and condemnation.[3]

When Douglas introduced the Kansas-Nebraska Bill, he was proposing that the Missouri Compromise be invalidated. He suggested that in their territorial legislature the people of a territory, rather than Congress, should determine the status of slavery. This was unacceptable to the South, which asserted that a territory could not decide upon slavery

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[1] Hewlett, op. cit., p. 267.

[2] "In place of one hundred fifty-nine disciplined followers who put the Kansas-Nebraska Bill through, the Democrats had only seventy-five in the new Congress." Harlow, op. cit., p. 444.

[3] "The Kansas-Nebraska Bill opened new strife between the two contending sides which by regular steps led straight to Civil War." John S. Bassett, A Short History of the United States (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1918), p. 488.

until the time of a constitutional convention. The bill was so constructed as to compromise both positions. The power of the territorial legislature to pass on slavery was to be left to court decision. Because of this, some southern congressmen supported the legislation. The North probably gained a temporary victory at this point in that the bill denied the southern claim to federal protection of slaves as property in the territories before the status of slavery was decided.

In his speech "Kansas -- the Territories," presented in May of 1856, Cass carefully reviewed the constitutional principles explained in his Manifesto speech of January, 1850. The Michigan statesman lamented the reopening of the slavery contest by this bill. He reaffirmed that the complete recognition of popular sovereignty was the only means of preserving the peace. This was his last speech in Congress on the subject. "With the benefit of hindsight, Americans today may praise Cass for his understanding and for his sincere faith in the democratic process. But the fact is that his efforts were scarcely appreciated in 1856."[1]

The passing of the Kansas-Nebraska Bill was a disaster for the Democratic Party and its leaders. The Grand Rapids Grand River Eagle observed:

> This is an unhealthy season in Kansas, but the astonishing mortality, and all in the Democratic Party, is unparalleled.[2]

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[1]Hewlett, op. cit., p. 278.

[2]Grand Rapids Grand River Eagle, August 19, 1858. M.H.C's.

Thousands of Democrats left the Party to join the great moral crusade of the new Republican Party. One paper in Michigan labeled Douglas an "unmitigated demagogue, the same subservient doughface, and the same dishonest schemer, as ever."[1] Like Cass, Douglas tried to please the North and the South and eventually became despised by both sections.

Settlers from the South and the North poured into Kansas, and the contest took on the character of a crusade. Each side set up its own territorial government and sought recognition from the national government. Blood flowed and hundreds were killed as popular sovereignty in Kansas degenerated into a disgraceful brawl. Few cared to see again the status of slavery in a territory determined in this fashion. It was repulsive to the whole nation; and because popular sovereignty had failed for them, the South especially rejected the doctrine. It was an ignominious end to what at first appeared to be a reasonable and fair answer to the slavery question in the territories.

No permanent solution was ever found. The Wilmot Proviso, the Compromise of 1850, the extension of the Missouri Compromise line to the Pacific, court action, the Calhoun and Davis positions, and popular sovereignty -- all failed. Perhaps there was no possible solution because the problem of the status of slavery in the territories was fundamentally a question of whether slavery would continue to exist in

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[1] Ibid.

the United States or whether it would be abolished. It was only a matter of time before the final showdown which was to decide the matter by power and force. In such a contest, the South was at a disadvantage by 1861.

Summary

1. Although the idea of popular sovereignty can be traced back at least as far as the American colonial period, it was Lewis Cass in 1847 who was the first clearly and formally to introduce it as an active political principle in American government.

2. It is believed by some observers that Cass propagated the states rights concept to unite the Democratic Party in the campaign of 1848 in order to achieve the presidency. The doctrine, however, was a sincere statement of his political beliefs. It was compatible with the concept of local self-government in New England, where Cass was raised; and it was consistent with the type of government which he encouraged for eighteen years as governor of Michigan Territory.

3. Cass argued popular sovereignty in the Senate as an answer to the slavery question in the territories in an effort to save the Union. He defended his doctrine five times in 1850, once in 1854, and again in 1856 in Senate addresses.

4. Some opposition to the doctrine came from all parts of the nation. The North declared that Congress had

the power to decide the status of slavery for the territories. The South was willing to let the people of the territories decide but not in their territorial legislatures as Cass had desired. The South demanded that the people wait until the time of their constitutional convention to rule on slavery.

5. By 1856 Douglas was employing popular sovereignty in an effort to unite the Party and to win national support for himself. When in 1857 the Dred Scott decision outlawed the doctrine as a legal principle of government, the Illinois Senator found himself in a hopeless political position.

6. The failure of popular sovereignty in Kansas convinced nearly everyone that it was not the solution to the slavery question in the territories. Perhaps, however, the doctrine did not lose all its validity as a political principle in a democratic society in that no solution short of war was ever discovered to the vexing problem.

Chapter Three

ANALYSIS OF LOGICAL PROOF

On January 21 and 22, 1850, Lewis Cass delivered a lengthy speech in the United States Senate. It was the Michigan Senator's first and most comprehensive statement dealing with popular sovereignty.[1] Within the next six years, Cass presented six more speeches in the Senate in which he defended the same doctrine, but all were shorter in length and were what might be termed restatements of portions of the first speech.[2] It seems proper therefore that the Manifesto speech should be analyzed in considerable detail. The conclusions drawn from the analysis with respect to organization and logical processes will then be compared with conclusions relating to the same data in the other six speeches on the subject.

The present chapter is primarily concerned with the background and setting in which the speeches took place, the major issues, the reasoning processes, the types of supporting materials, and the refutation devices employed by the speaker.

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[1] "Aside from its momentary effect upon the Senate, the speech was the most complete and fundamental statement of his political theories that Cass ever made. It complemented and explained the Nicholson letter; it established the course which Cass was to follow in all his subsequent debates on the slavery question." Hewlett, op. cit., p. 172.

[2] For convenience, the first speech by Cass on popular sovereignty will be referred to as the Manifesto Address.

Speech One: "On the Constitutionality and Expediency of the Wilmot Proviso."

Occasion

In 1846 a young Democrat by the name of David Wilmot[1] attached to an appropriations bill for the Mexican War an amendment which sought to prohibit the introduction of slavery into any lands that might be acquired from Mexico. Congress and, indeed, the whole nation reacted violently with cheers and protests.[2] The Wilmot Proviso cut through both political parties on a sectional basis. It represented the extreme northern point of view as expressed by the anti-slavery people of the Free Soil and Liberty Parties, and later of the Republican Party of 1860.

In December of 1849, two weeks of vituperation and invective prevailed in Congress before even the Speaker of the House of Representatives could be elected. Every measure was apparently viewed from the inflamed sectional bias established by the slavery issue. "Northern abolitionists

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[1] R. Sternberg believed that Wilmot introduced his Proviso because he was being identified as a "doughface" and was up for re-election. He needed to do something dramatic to prove his loyalty to the North. If this was true, it worked. He was re-elected. Richard R. Sternberg, "The Motivation of the Wilmot Proviso," Mississippi Valley Historical Review, XVIII (1932), 535-41.

[2] "Our foolish legislature passed resolutions in favor of the Wilmot Proviso, which I regretted to see. Our party in this state is strong and the agitation of that question at this time may distract the party and perhaps tear it to pieces as bad as N Y democracy." Letter from William Anderson to A. Felch, February 19, 1848. Alpheus Felch Papers. M.H.C's.

and southern 'fireeaters' had one conviction in common: the Union must go."[1] The national crisis over slavery in the territories provoked outstanding speeches in the Senate during the early months of 1850. Cass delivered his Manifesto speech on January 20 and 21; Clay spoke with passion for the Compromise on January 29 and 30; Calhoun's last speech was read for him by Mason of Virginia on March 4; and on the seventh, Webster spoke for the Union.

Mr. Foote of Mississippi offered a resolution in the Senate on December 27, 1849 to the effect "that it is the duty of Congress at this session to establish suitable territorial Governments for California, for Deseret [Utah], and New Mexico."[2] Cass explained in the introduction of his Manifesto Address why he was moved to speak upon Mr. Foote's resolution. He said that "the resolution is an abstract one, calling for no actual legislation."[3] It would be properly attended to in time. The Michigan statesman added, however, that "the notice of the Senator from New Hampshire, that he intended to move the application of the Wilmot Proviso to this resolution, opens the subject for discussion; and . . . I propose to express my views upon it

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[1]Harlow, op. cit., p. 420. Cass wrote to a friend: "I am deeply troubled about the present state of public matters. Things look bad -- never worse. What is to be the end of it all God only knows." Letter from Cass to a friend as quoted by the Adrian Michigan Expositor, March 9, 1850. M.H.C's.

[2]Congressional Globe, 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 58.

[3]Ibid.

at this time."[1] Thus, it was not the resolution itself that attracted the attention of Cass, but rather it was the attachment of the Proviso issue because the latter was a direct refutation of the principle of popular sovereignty.

Organizational Plan

In their work Speech Criticism, Lester Thonssen and A. Craig Baird state that "in its broadest sense, disposition [organization] embraces the following matters: the emergence of a central theme, the general method of arrangement adopted for the speech, and the order in which the parts of the discourse are developed."[2] The "central theme" of the Manifesto speech was that it would be unconstitutional and inexpedient for Congress to legislate over the internal affairs of the people of a territory. This stood out clearly. The "method of arrangement" was topical in respect to the question of constitutionality and was logical in respect to the question of expediency. By means of a meticulous inductive reasoning process for each of twelve separate topics under constitutionality, Cass tried to show that Congress did not have the right to legislate over the internal affairs of the territories. Chiefly by causal relation, the

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[1] Ibid. "Not only did the Proviso lay bare the ugly question of slavery which had been a delicate issue in politics from the time of the founding fathers; but even worse, it was presented in those unbending, unrealistic terms which spelled 'ultraism' to Cass." Hewlett, op. cit., p. 90.

[2] Lester Thonssen and A. Craig Baird, Speech Criticism (New York: The Ronold Press Co., 1948), p. 393.

Michigan Senator demonstrated that even if the Constitution granted Congress the right in question it would be inexpedient for Congress to exercise that right. The "parts of the discourse" were developed as independent entities under the question of constitutionality. That is, Cass took each of the twelve arguments of the opposition, gave it an introduction, a statement of the case, supported it adequately, refuted it, and provided a conclusion. Any one of the twelve sections could stand alone as a complete argumentative speech.

Introduction. -- Most rhetoricians agree that among the functions of the introduction[1] of a speech are (1) gaining the attention of the audience, (2) winning rapport and goodwill, and (3) introducing the subject. The nature of the subject, the audience, and the occasion are factors which influence the speaker in his efforts to fulfill the above functions. Cass made no attempt to gain attention in the introduction other than to say that he would address his remarks to the Proviso. This statement, however, might have been far more attention-demanding than we are able to appreciate today for the Wilmot Proviso was a highly controversial and exciting topic in January of 1850. His only remark which appears to have had any direct bearing upon

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[1] "The introduction, which Aristotle said conformed to the prologue in poetry, is intended to enlist the attention and interest of the listeners, to render the audience well-disposed toward the speaker, and to prepare the way for the ideas to come." Thonssen and Baird, op. cit., p. 398.

winning rapport was "with the permission of the Senate, I propose to express my views upon it at this time."[1] This is the typical courteous statement which is often heard in legislative assemblies even today. The Michigan Senator then stated that he wished to discuss the relationship of the Proviso to Mr. Foote's pending resolution. Consequently, the beginning can be labeled a statement-of-purpose type introduction.

Body. -- Two main issues were developed in the speech:

1. Congressional exclusion of slavery in the territories would be unconstitutional.
2. Congressional exclusion of slavery in the territories would be inexpedient.

The Manifesto Address was primarily concerned with the first issue; the second received only brief attention. The body of the speech consisted largely of refutation by Cass of twelve contentions which either were used or could be used to justify the constitutionality of congressional exclusion of slavery in the territories.

Although the overall organization of the speech was for the most part clearly observable, consistent, easily outlined, and marked by frequent transitions, there were two instances in which the speaker deviated from his orderly plan. The first occurred when Cass came to the twelfth proposition under issue one, which he supported with a

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[1] Cass, Globe, 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 58.

statement by John Adams. At this point the Michigan statesman interpolated an irrelevant argument into the speech. Adams had expressed certain opinions in his diary relating to another matter to which the sensitive Cass strongly objected. Cass took the opportunity to leave the central idea of his speech in order to condemn the comments in Adams' diary. These arguments by Cass, however, had no relation to the subject at hand. So far as the logical development of the speech is concerned, this long emotional digression inexorably weakened the overall sequence of reasoning and vitiated the centrality of purpose which everywhere else was consistent.[1] The other minor instance of lack of organization was a case of redundancy which occurred for no apparent reason when Cass refuted the same arguments of the opposition in two widely separated sections of the

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[1]Cass established the fact that Adams supported the twelfth proposition, which he was about to refute. Anything that would have discredited Adams as an individual might have weakened Adams' prestige concerning that which he advocated, e.g., proposition twelve. This was clearly an example of argumentum ad hominem and was fallacious reasoning, of course, because the personal condemnation of Adams had no relation to proposition twelve. It is the writer's opinion that the Michigan Senator derogated Adams solely because the former president had used unfair language in speaking of the South. Cass stated that in Adams' diary the former president foolishly wrote that "almost everything which has contributed to the honor and the welfare of the nation has been accomplished by the North in spite of the South; and that everything unpropitious and dishonorable, including the blunders and follies of their adversaries may be traced to the South." Cass could not refrain from attacking these Union-rending remarks, which he believed were a threat to the security of the nation. Ibid., p. 69.

body of this speech. It gives the reader an impression of carelessness on the part of the speaker and makes what otherwise might be described as excellent organization less than perfect.

The central idea of the Manifesto Address was the popular sovereignty thesis, that the people of a territory ought to be permitted to legislate for themselves, in respect to their internal affairs. Slavery, Cass believed, was an internal affair. The Wilmot Proviso, which sought to exclude slavery from the territory to be acquired from Mexico, was antithetical to popular sovereignty. Although the title of the Manifesto speech was "On the Constitutionality and Expediency of the Wilmot Proviso," Cass actually argued popular sovereignty, a broader topic than the Proviso issue. Just before, and also within, the conclusion as a natural result of his arguments for popular sovereignty, the Michigan Senator returned to the narrower view and made a short plea to the Senate for the rejection of the Proviso.

The Manifesto speech was primarily a speech of refutation and was characterized by close reasoning and a considerable amount of evidence. Cass attempted to prove that each of the twelve reasons given to justify congressional legislation over slavery in the territories was unconstitutional. The speaker then briefly made the point that even if the power were constitutional it was inexpedient for Congress to exercise it.

Conclusion. -- The conclusion was lengthy. There was no summary or even allusion to the twelve propositions of constitutionality raised against popular sovereignty. Cass did, however, make a plea for the rejection of the "unconstitutional" Wilmot Proviso. He acknowledged the dilemma which he faced. The legislature of the state of Michigan, which had appointed him to Congress, had since ordered him, in January of 1849, to support the Proviso. Cass not only opposed the Proviso, but he was one of its most bitter opponents. The Senate was his audience, but his concluding words were directed to the Michigan legislature on the subject of the troublesome instructions:

> I will endeavor to discharge my duty as an American Senator to the country and to the whole country, agreeably to the convictions of my own duty and of the obligations of the Constitution; and when I cannot do this, I shall cease to have any duty to perform.[1]

Thus far it appeared as if Cass would vote as he saw fit and in terms of what he regarded as best for the whole country, the Michigan legislature notwithstanding. He soon qualified the above statement by declaring:

> I am precluded from voting in conformity with my sentiments. I have been instructed by the legislature of Michigan to vote in favor of this measure. . . . I acknowledge the obligations of the instructions I have received and cannot act in opposition to them. Nor can I act in opposition to my own convictions of the true meaning of the Constitution.[2]

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[1] Ibid., pp. 73-74.

[2] Ibid., p. 74.

At this point there was some doubt as to how the Michigan Senator would vote. Cass then clarified the matter with a cause to effect inference implying that if the instructions still prevailed when a vote was called for, he would resign rather than betray the Michigan legislature or his own convictions:

> When the time comes and I am required to vote upon this measure, as a practical one, in a bill providing for a territorial government, I shall know how to reconcile my duty to the legislature with my duty to myself, by surrendering a trust I can no longer fulfill.[1]

Through these statements and others, Cass was in a moderate sense appealing to the emotions of his listeners. He pictured himself as facing a great moral dilemma, because he was in an almost unanswerable position so far as taking action was concerned. The conclusion was nevertheless characterized by restraint, high ethical purpose, and sincerity. Alan Monroe referred to this type of conclusion as "personal intention." It was an indirect approach to persuasion. Rather than saying, "I urge you to do this," the speaker says, "This is what I intend to do."[2]

Lines of Argument

Issues. -- There were two major issues in the Manifesto speech. The following is an outline of the manner in which Cass dealt with them:

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[1] Ibid.

[2] Alan Monroe, Principles and Types of Speech (Chicago: Scott, Foresman, and Co., 1955), pp. 302-03.

I. Congressional exclusion of slavery in the territories would be unconstitutional.
   A. I shall refute the following twelve arguments which declare that Congress has the right to legislate over slavery in the territories because of
      1. The clause in the Constitution which authorizes Congress to "dispose of, and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property belonging to the United States."
      2. The war and treaty-making powers.
      3. The right to admit new states.
      4. The right to sell public land.
      5. The right of ownership.
      6. The right or duty of settlement.
      7. The right of sovereignty.
      8. The nature of government.
      9. Nationality.
      10. The principles of agency and trust.
      11. That provision of the Constitution which declares that "all debts and engagements entered into before the adoption of the Constitution shall be as valid against the United States under this Constitution as under the Confederation."
      12. The confirmation of the Ordinance of 1787 both by the adoption of the present Constitution and by the "debts and engagements" clause in the present Constitution.

II. Congressional exclusion of slavery in the territories would be inexpedient.
   A. The Wilmot Proviso would rend the Union.
   B. There is no present need for the Proviso.
   C. The Proviso would not be worth the price it would exact.

Reasoning. -- Because the argumentative procedure was almost identical in the refutation of each of the twelve propositions, a detailed analysis of proposition one will suffice to give the reader an understanding of how the other propositions were treated by the speaker. The following is an outline of the first proposition supporting the consti-

tutionality of the Wilmot Proviso, which Cass undertook to refute by the inductive method:

I. It is contended that Congress has the right to legislate over slavery in the territories because of the clause in the Constitution which authorizes Congress to "dispose of and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property belonging to the United States."
   A. The word territory is confusing.
      1. It has been interpreted in some quarters to mean political communities.
         a. New York legislature, April, 1848.
         b. National House of Representatives.
      2. The old meaning of "territory" was a region with no established government.
         a. Act of Congress, May 20, 1785.
         b. Act of Congress, April 17, 1785.
         c. Act of Congress, May 9, 1787.
         d. Act of Congress, May 12, 1787.
         e. Synonyms are "district," "country," "land," and "domain."
   B. Framers of the Constitution gave Congress the right to make "needful rules" regarding a geographic location but not a political community.
      1. Property alone is the subject of the grant.
         a. "territory" means property.
      2. "Needful rules" does not mean unlimited political jurisdiction.
         a. See the Constitution.
   C. It is contended that Congress has complete jurisdiction over property itself and over all persons living within it.
      1. Mr. Hudson so argues.
      2. Congress has the power to regulate only land.
         a. Supreme Court decision: United States versus Gratiot.
         b. This power does not include unlimited political jurisdiction.
            (1) American citizens are not property.

D. It is contended that jurisdiction over the land justifies jurisdiction over the people.
   1. Vattel
   2. Unnamed authority
   3. Mr. Rockwell
   4. Such a ridiculous proposition cannot be argued.

E. It is contended that Congress has the right to legislate over the internal concerns of the territories.
   1. Judge Baldwin
   2. Baldwin is wrong.
      a. Supreme Court decision
      b. See the Constitution.
         (1) Marriage and murder do not concern the land.

F. John Adams said that Congress has the right to legislate over the internal concerns of the territories.
   1. Preamble of the Constitution
   2. We must carefully define "needful" and "concern the land."
      a. Both are limitations.
         (1) Definition
      b. Federalist Papers
      c. Judge Story

G. Judge Story said that laws relating to public land cease to operate once the land is sold or is withdrawn from the category of public property.
   1. Legal code

H. It is contended that "needful rules" means needful laws.
   1. Mr. Starkweather
   2. This assumption which would carry complete jurisdiction everywhere, is too ridiculous to argue.

I. It is contended that the power must apply to more than mere land, inert matter.
   1. Mr. Starkweather
   2. Inert matter may be the subject of legislation.
      a. See our legal code.
         (1) Laws governing estates

In beginning his refutation of proposition one, Cass explained that the word "territory" was confusing. Some individuals interpreted it to mean political communities. He cited as evidence actions by the New York legislature,

April, 1848 and the national House of Representatives. The former meaning of the word "territory" was a region of a country with no established government and belonging to the United States. As supporting examples, Cass quoted from an act of Congress of May 20, 1785 in which the original meaning was employed. He added several more quotations from acts of April 13, 1785, May 9, 1787, and May 12, 1787. Synonyms for "territory" in each of these acts, said the Michigan statesman, were "region," "district," "country," "land," and "domain." By means of the technique of definition, Cass pointed out that the framers of the Constitution gave Congress the right to make needful rules regarding a "geographic location" but not a "political community," which the word had come to mean. "It is property alone which is the subject of the grant"[1] of power. "The phrase 'territory and other property' makes territory one of the classes of property."[2] When men argue that this means that Congress has "complete legislative jurisdiction over the property itself and over all persons within the territories of the United States,"[3] they are reading new meaning into the Constitution.

The Michigan Senator restated proposition one; and he supported it with the arguments of Mr. Hudson, a Representative from Massachusetts. In his refutation of Mr.

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[1] Cass, Globe, 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 60.

[2] Ibid. [3] Ibid.

Hudson's position, Cass called attention to a Supreme Court decision, United States versus Gratiot, in which the court stated that "the term 'territory' is merely descriptive of one kind of property, and is equivalent to the word'lands.'"[1] He repeated that Congress had only the power to "regulate land," which did not mean unlimited "political jurisdiction" over the residents of that land. Relying upon emotion, Cass said:

> He who considers American citizens as property, and seeks upon this assumption to establish a great constitutional power, should not come to promulgate his doctrine in these halls, whose foundation was laid by Washington and whose superstructure is dedicated to the principles of constitutional freedom.[2]

The above example of argumentum ad veracundiam is not considered to be a sound type of argument.

Cass again restated the proposition of the opposition. He quoted "Vattel," one unidentified speaker, and Mr. Rockwell at length (nearly a thousand words) expressing arguments in favor of the proposition, the essence of which was that jurisdiction over the land justified jurisdiction over the people. This position was shocking to a Jeffersonian. The Michigan Senator's refutation by dismissal was terse:

> I cannot argue such a point as this; nor undertake to refute the proposition that unlimited jurisdiction over large bodies of our fellow citizens, embracing in its operation all the rights which belong to man, whether natural or political, is 'a thing which is the property of Government.'[3]

Cass repeated proposition one, this time in the form of an argument by Judge Baldwin. In his refutation by

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[1] Ibid. [2] Ibid., p. 61. [3] Ibid.

definition, the Michigan Senator first quoted from a Supreme Court decision. He went next to the Constitution, where he called attention to the words "needful" and "concern the land." "And both of these injunctions," said Cass, "are limitations, and guarded ones, too, upon the exercise of legislative power. Needful, not for all purposes; not for general jurisdiction."[1] Also, it must "concern the land." This means, among other things, "the right to survey it, to convey it, to improve it, to protect it."[3] But how does this concern such internal affairs such as marriage and murder? asked Cass who was zealously guarding the rights of the people and attempting to guarantee for them the authority to regulate their own domestic affairs without the interference of a strong central government.

Proposition one was again restated. It was supported by the able arguments of John Adams, who broadly extended the meaning of the word "needful." Adams based his reasoning upon the preamble of the Constitution. In repudiation of Adams' position, Cass quoted from the Federalist and from Judge Story. Both of these sources denounced any reliance upon the preamble of the Constitution to enlarge the powers of any department of government. "Mr. Adams," said Cass, "separates 'needful' from the context as though the words 'territory or other property' did not exist, and maintains that any power may be exercised which is 'needful' to promote

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[1] Ibid. [2] Ibid.

justice."[1] "If so," Cass continued indignantly, "this little word 'needful' becomes a constitution, or rather leaves us without one."[2] He pointed out that laws relating to public land cease to operate once this land is sold or is withdrawn from the category of public property. "It belongs to the United States no longer, and it is, therefore, no longer subject to the jurisdiction of Congress."[3] Cass corroborated the last statement with a quotation from Judge Story.

In the sixth and last cycle of refutation, proposition one was again introduced. It was supported by Mr. Starkweather, who had argued that "needful rules" means "needful laws." The refutation by Cass of the position taken by Mr. Starkweather was by repudiation and dismissal. He declared curtly that "this reasoning, if it can be dignified with that term, carries complete jurisdiction everywhere."[4] Mr. Starkweather, however, had further maintained that the power must certainly have applied to more than mere land, "inert matter." Cass asserted that "'inert matter' may be the subject of legislation as is shown by almost every page of our legal code, and of every other legal code."[5] His only support for the last statement was an allusion to the laws governing estates.

The above constitutes a detailed description of the inductive refutation by Cass of proposition one: Congress

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[1] Ibid., p. 62. [2] Ibid. [3] Ibid.
[4] Ibid. [5] Ibid., p. 63.

is authorized by the Constitution to legislate over the internal affairs of the territories because it is given the expressed right to "dispose of and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property belonging to the United States."[1] Cass handled each of the other eleven propositions in essentially the same manner.

The Michigan Senator gave ample space to the statement and exposition of the opposition's position.[2] Each time that Cass provided a new cycle of refutation to the same proposition, he restated the proposition, cited one or more of its exponents, and liberally quoted their arguments in favor of it. In one section of the speech, Cass submitted opposition arguments in succession, with almost no comment between them, by Judge Story, Mr. Mann, Mr. Dix, Mr. Murphy, Mr. Rockwell, Mr. Stuart, Mr. Berrien, Mr. Petit, and Mr. Calhoun.

The movement of the speaker from one proposition to another was unmistakably marked by clear transitions:

> The second argument urged in support of the authority of Congress to legislate over the territories is derived from the war and treaty-making powers, which bring with them as an incident the right of acquisition and this is followed by the right of legislating over the country acquired.[3]

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[1] Constitution, Article IV, Section III.

[2] "Damaging was his insistence upon recognizing the valid arguments on both sides of congressional debate. In a day when the issues before the nation were taking on more and more of a moral flavor, this practice appeared to many of Cass' contemporaries to be not only unwise but actually amoral." Hewlett, op. cit., p. 5.

[3] Cass, Globe, 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 63.

> Another assumed ground for the exercise of this power, is the right to admit new states.[1]

And within the propositions themselves, there were transitions to make the reasoning process clear: "Now, sir, to congressional precedents."[2]

The second major issue Cass treated briefly just before the conclusion of the speech. The reasoning was a cause to effect inference with little amplification:

II. Congressional legislation over the internal affairs of the territories would be inexpedient.
  A. The Wilmot Proviso would rend the Union because the South would never accept it.
  B. There is no need for the Proviso because slavery could not be profitable in the territories of California, New Mexico, and Deseret [Utah].
  C. The Proviso would not be worth the price it would exact nor the wounds that would be inflicted; and the feelings that would be excited no right-minded man can contemplate without the most serious apprehension.

Support Materials. -- The following outline is a compilation of the various types of evidence employed by Cass in his refutative arguments in the Manifesto Address:

I. Statement of the proposition
  A. Liberally supported by the authority and argument of prominent exponents
    1. Usually judges and congressmen

II. Refutation of the proposition
  A. Most often by authority
    1. Quotations of judges and congressmen
    2. Court decisions
    3. Acts of the Continental Congress
    4. Acts of the United States Congress
    5. Acts of state legislatures
    6. The Federalist

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[1] Ibid., p. 65. [2] Ibid., p. 70.

7. Newspaper editorials
    a. national
    b. foreign
8. Textbooks on government
9. Government documents
10. Senate committee reports

B. Personal experience
C. Statistics
D. Historical examples

Cass repeated the cycles of refutation as much as seven times in his effort to refute a single proposition. He amassed evidence upon evidence in an impressive display of research and argument.[1] For this reason, the Manifesto Address is tedious to read and may have been tedious to listen to.[2]

Cass relied most frequently upon authority to substantiate his arguments. He quoted statements from four acts of Congress, May 20, 1785, May 13, 1785, May 9, 1787, and May 12, 1787; from the legislature of Virginia (resolutions of 1799); from George Washington, Judge Story, John Adams, Chief Justice Marshall, and Alexander Hamilton; from Senate committee reports; from a Supreme Court decision (United States versus Gratiot); from writers of textbooks on

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[1] "Divorcing himself from emotional appeals, Cass assumed the manner and the techniques of a professor of law. The speech was a carefully organized, even scholarly legal brief. Bristling with citations from constitutional authorities, the forty-eight columns of fine print in the Globe would try the patience of the most avid reader. If we are not impressed by the weight of his evidence, we may be moved by the cold logic and clarity of Cass' major arguments." Hewlett, op. cit., p. 172.

[2] "His speeches were often too learned and too long to be convincing." McLaughlin, Lewis Cass, p. 221.

government (Grotius and Puffendorff); from the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution; from the Federalist, the National Intelligencer, and "a late London Journal"; and from a host of Senators and Representatives. Cass employed Judge Story, John Adams, and Chief Justice Marshall as authorities not only in support of the contentions of his opponents but also in support of his own refutation. He did not, of course, do this with regard to the same argument.

Cass occasionally relied upon personal experience for proof. In answer to Mr. Berrien's remark that a territorial training period was necessary before a region could become a state, Cass said:

> I have lived under territorial governments the greater part of my active life, and I had to learn till now (sic) that they had any peculiar congressional training which prepared them for their political transformation.[1]

Although the territories are young, said Cass, the citizens inhabiting them may be as mature and as intelligent as any in the Union. As a matter of fact, life on the frontier often inspires men to great deeds and lifts them from the apathy "that a man sinks into at home."[2] Another example of the use of personal experience for support is the following allusion to congressional leniency toward the territories:

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[1] Cass, Globe, 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 65.

[2] Ibid.

> As a Western man, however, living when and where the credit system for the sale of the public land once prevailed, I rejoice that Congress did not sell the land upon the condition that every purchaser who did not make a payment the day it was due should suffer death and 'hold his peace.' Had this been so, I might not have been here this day to draw your attention to these considerations . . . .[1]

Cass sometimes employed statistics to verify a point. By an effect to cause inference with statistical support, he showed that Mr. Berrien had attributed the wrong cause to territorial qualification for statehood. It was not experience in a territorial condition that determined readiness; but rather, as the law declared, a territory simply had to have a given number of inhabitants to qualify for statehood no matter what the length of its territorial experience. Cass statistically demonstrated that there was no uniformity of territorial experience previous to statehood:

> Ohio was trained, as it is called, thirteen years, Indiana, sixteen years, Tennessee, six years, Louisiana, seven years, and Iowa, nine years; and while Alabama, more precocious than her sisters, required but two years of congressional education, Michigan and Arkansas . . . each lived the life of a scholar for almost one-third of a century.[2]

Cass was well-informed on the subject of history. His speeches were replete with historical examples, which he drew from the ancient Greek period as easily as from the American scene. In his refutation of the treaty-making power of Congress as a justification for congressional legislation over the internal affairs of the territories,

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[1] Ibid., p. 67. [2] Ibid., p. 65.

Cass stated:

> Within the original limits of the United States, nine territorial governments have been established, five in whole and one in part north of the Ohio, and three south of that river, and all but one of them since the adoption of the present Constitution. . . . In 1776 the men of the Revolution rejected the authority of England, and assumed the position of independence as their right, and maintained it, too, by exertions and through trials almost without parallel in the struggles of oppressed nations. And when the end came, and came happily for them and for us, and for those we may well hope who are to come after us, they treated with the British Crown as equals, and utterly rejected every proposition for a grant of independence, absolute or conditional. 'America does not ask it of you,' said M. de Vergennes to the British minister, in the presence of Dr. Franklin; and in this spirit was the treaty concluded. . . .[1]

Refutation Devices. -- The techniques of refutation used most frequently by Cass were definition, surprise and amazement, lack of need, repudiation and dismissal, overwhelming evidence, comparison and contrast, reductio ad absurdum, the authority of the Constitution, admission, and sarcasm.

Definition played a part in refutation by Cass. Occasionally the validity of an argument turned upon the manner in which a word or phrase in the Constitution was to be interpreted, e.g., "needful rules," "debts and engagements," "concern the land." In his refutation of proposition one, the initial effort of the Michigan statesman was to determine the definition of the word "property." Did it include

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[1] Ibid., pp. 64-65. "Cass showed a depth of historical knowledge . . . which made him the equal of Webster and of Benton in these debates." McLaughlin, Lewis Cass, p. 225.

people? He contended, with support from a decision of the Supreme Court and four acts of Congress, that "property" meant "land," "territory," "region," "country," "domain."[1] He used this carefully documented definition to prove that congressional jurisdiction was limited to the land and did not imply "political jurisdiction."

Cass also relied upon surprise and amazement to discredit the argument of the opposition. His reasoning in this case was by sign and implication. He would express shock at the temerity of an opponent's statement: "And this is the constitutional reasoning of the president of the United States."[2] "These are views bequeathed to us by an eminent citizen John Adams . . . ."[3] "And this judgment is pronounced upon the land of Patrick Henry . . . ."[4] "I have been forcibly struck with many of the extraordinary opinions which have marked this discussion . . . ."[5] "And this is followed by much more of the same sort, and all of this time amid a profuse display of learning . . . ."[6] "These doctrines sound strangely to my ears."[7]

Cass used a method of refutation which is familiar to debaters when he claimed that there was "no need" for the exercise of the congressional power in question. Mr. Dix was quoted by the Michigan Senator as claiming complete

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[1] Cass Globe, 31st Congress, 1st session, pp. 60-61.

[2] Ibid., p. 62. [3] Ibid., p. 69. [4] Ibid.

[5] Ibid., p. 63. [6] Ibid., p. 61. [7] Ibid., p. 70.

jurisdiction by Congress over the domestic affairs of the settlers in the territories. Chiefly by means of causal reasoning, Cass pointed out that the preservation of legal order in the territories was our goal and that it had been achieved and could continue to be maintained without congressional legislation over the internal affairs of the settlers. If this was true, such a power as asserted by Mr. Dix was unnecessary. Cass continued:

> The territorial governments have in all cases conducted the internal affairs of the territories . . . . That peace and good order, which gentlemen consider so essential to the sale of public land, have been preserved by territorial, and not by congressional legislation. I repeat emphatically that not a single exception to this proposition is to be found in the statute book.[1]

The status quo being satisfactory, there was no need for congressional interference.

Somewhat similar to the technique of surprise and amazement, in that it is also related to the reasoning process of sign and implication, is refutation by repudiation and dismissal. These broad powers which were so boldly claimed, said Cass, lie "out of the Constitution. . . . I dismiss the proposition without further examination."[2] "All I can make out of it is that there is some mode of conferring power by the Constitution neither expressed nor implied, but tacit."[3] Perhaps others who deem it worthy of more elaborate consideration, and who are more fortunate than I am in comprehending

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[1] Ibid., pp. 66-67. [2] Ibid., p. 67. [3] Ibid., p. 70.

it"[1] will wish to consider it further. "I do not pretend to comprehend with any distinctness what is here meant."[2] "The other -- but I will not speak of it as I might well do. Better that it had been entombed . . . ."[3] "I do not understand it at all."[4] "I am at a loss to know what is meant by the 'enjoyment of the territory.'"[5] "I merely state the proposition, leaving it to those who think it merits refutation."[6] This statement "is proof that if we have not fallen upon evil times, we have fallen upon strange ones."[7] "I cannot argue such a point as this."[8]

When a debater has an exceptionally strong case, he may meet his opponent directly by dealing with issues which are the most obvious, and by supplying a great deal of argument and evidence in support of each issue. Cass overwhelmed the opposition with evidence in support of arguments opposing congressional intervention in the territories. More evidence was produced than was necessary to establish a plausible case. As cycle followed refutation cycle, voluminous new proof was revealed in support of the same proposition.[9]

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[1] Ibid.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Ibid., p. 64.

[6] Ibid., p. 70.

[7] Ibid., p. 71.

[8] Ibid., p. 61.

[9] "Intellectually, Cass was the equal of most statesmen of his day. Certainly he was neither precocious nor quick in his thinking; but he demonstrated an ability to think problems through and to peruse his subject far into the depths of scholarly detail." Hewlett, op. cit., p. 12.

Cass on a few occasions employed comparison and contrast as a refutation technique. He compared at considerable length, for example, sections of John Adams' Farewell Address with sections of Adams' diary, noting the contradictions in philosophy and sentiment between the two documents. The Michigan Senator also pictured with commendable imagery the nation at peace and immediately contrasted this scene with a vivid description of the nation torn by civil war. Armed conflict, he contended, was "inevitable" if Congress failed to discover a solution to the slavery question in the territories.

Reductio ad absurdum was likewise used occasionally as a refutation device in the Manifesto Address. The example cited earlier indicating the speaker's use of statistics was also an instance of the reductio technique. Cass used it twice in the following passage in an effort to refute the implication that any power could be assumed by Congress which would render more easy and more profitable the exercise of another power:

> 'To borrow money' is one of the powers of Congress, and a law which would render highly penal the employment of capital in private enterprise for a year or two years, or any longer time, would certainly ensure the desired loan quicker and cheaper than it could be procured without such provision; and, indeed, the object might be unattainable without it. . . . And so with respect to the public land; the means proposed bear no fair relation to the object of the express grant of power. The vicinity of the Indians has greatly retarded the sale of the public lands. May they be driven from their possessions for the mere purpose of increasing the value of 'our property' in their neighborhood,

and of promoting the sale?[1]

In spite of the variety of argument and evidence which he provided, Cass generally concluded his refutation of a proposition by referring to the Constitution. Congress did not have the power in question because the Constitution did not give it to Congress:

> These powers are not only strictly defined, but carefully limited by the emphatic declaration, which, in reserving to the States respectively, or to the people all powers not delegated to the United States says, to all the functionaries of the government, 'thus far you may go, and no further.'[2]

Other examples are: There is "a proneness to seek out of the Constitution the powers of government which ought to be sought for only within it."[3] "A power exercised by Congress and not derived from the Constitution! Such a doctrine requires no refutation, and in fact, admits none."[4] Cass, the thorough, meticulous constitutional lawyer, did not think in the terms of the logical, ethical, or pragmatic philosophies which influenced many of his colleagues. When seeking a solution to the question in point, these men asked what is right? What is reasonable? What have we done in the past? What will work now? Unconcerned with such matters, Cass asked only what does the Constitution say?

> Men like Cass . . . were preeminently students of the Constitution. Whatever their true motives, they justified their actions on constitutional grounds. So fundamental were constitutional prin-

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[1] Cass, Globe, 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 66.

[2] Ibid., p. 67. [3] Ibid. [4] Ibid., p. 70.

> ciples in the thinking of such men that their political careers cannot be correctly understood without some reference to the mass of legalistic arguments which they produced.[1]

Later Addresses on Popular Sovereignty

(Speeches Two through Seven)

In addition to the Manifesto Address presented January 21-22, 1850, Cass delivered in the Senate six later speeches in which he discussed the doctrine of popular sovereignty. They were as follows:

Speech Two: "On the Dissolution of the Union and the Constitution of California" February 20, 1850.

Speech Three: "Power of Congress" March 13-14, 1850.

Speech Four: "Compromise Bill" June 11, 1850.

Speech Five: "Sovereign Power" September 12, 1850.

Speech Six: "Kansas and Nebraska" February 20, 1854.

Speech Seven: "Kansas -- the Territories" May 12-13, 1856.

Occasion

In January of 1850, Cass presented his Manifesto speech, and in February he delivered "On the Dissolution of the Union." His third speech, the "Power of Congress," came on March 13-14, 1850. The three speeches were presented within a period of fifty-three days. The setting had changed little by the time of speech three from that

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[1]Hewlett, op. cit., p. 95.

described for speech one. The Compromise was still being argued. The immediate topic was one aspect of the Compromise Bill, California. The Senate was discussing the admission of the territory of California into the Union.

The date of "Compromise Bill" (speech four) was June 11, 1850. The speech was lengthy and occupied nearly the entire working day in the Senate. Insurmountable opposition to the Compromise developed as the debate continued. The Compromise Bill contained so many diverse provisions relating to slavery that it was almost impossible to get everyone to agree on all of the parts. A Senator might reject the Bill because he objected to only one of its several facets.[1] Cass was not only eager to support the Compromise in his effort to preserve the Union; but because popular sovereignty was basic to the Compromise, the Michigan Senator had another opportunity to defend his doctrine.

"Sovereign Power" was the last of a group of five speeches which Cass presented in 1850 dealing with popular sovereignty. The subject of debate on August 12, 1850, was the admission of California. During the discussion, Mr. Berrien remarked that Cass was one of the few people who didn't believe that Congress had full authority to legislate over the internal concerns of the territories. It is

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[1] Douglas discovered later that the only way to pass the Act was to break it up into several measures, each dealing with one phase of the original Compromise Bill. As separate units treated one at a time, Douglas was successful in getting the original omnibus package accepted by the Senate.

likely that the fifth defence by Cass of popular sovereignty was inspired by Mr. Berrien's allusion to him a few moments before he rose to speak.

Nearly four years elapsed between speeches five and six. The latter, "Kansas and Nebraska," was presented on February 20, 1854, when the Senate had under consideration the organization of the territory of Nebraska. Cass called attention to the four years of peace in the Senate, which had been made possible by the Compromise of 1850. In 1854, the Senate was again forced to reopen the discussion of slavery in the territories as it related to Kansas and Nebraska. The Michigan Senator described the ominous occasion in these words:

> Mr. President, but four brief years are passing away, brief in the life of a nation, since this Hall resounded with angry and agitated discussions upon the very topics that now disturb and divide us . . . . But yesterday the whole hemisphere was without a cloud, even in the distant horizon. To-day the signs of an approaching tempest are audible and visible, and the only question which can put to hazard our union and safety, presents itself for solution.[1]

The last address by Cass dealing with popular sovereignty, entitled "Kansas--the Territories," occurred on May 12-13, 1856. The Senate, in a Committee of the Whole, had under consideration a bill to authorize the people of the territory of Kansas to form a constitution and state government preparatory to their admission into the Union. The

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[1]Cass, Globe, 33rd Congress, 1st session, p. 270.

contest between the North and the South for the possession of Kansas was raging. Armed ruffians had poured into Kansas from Missouri to hold the territory for slavery. They established a pro-slavery government early in 1855. Meanwhile, equally adamant Free-State men had formed a constitution and applied for admittance into the Union. Cass was opposed to the recognition of any constitution agreed upon by only a portion of the inhabitants. He was in favor of all the people voting freely and fairly upon a constitution. The Michigan Senator spoke on this subject as he defended popular sovereignty for the last time in May of 1856.

Organizational Plan

Introduction. -- As in the Manifesto Address, Cass employed a clear and usually brief statement-of-purpose type introduction for speeches two, three, four, five, and seven. In stating his purpose, Cass was in the habit of alluding to a remark made by another Senator which especially provoked his own speech. Note how the following introductions fit into this pattern:

"Dissolution of the Union":

> I do not deny the right [to petition] thus secured is an important one, but I do not rate it by any means as highly as the honorable Senator from Ohio [Mr. Chase] appears to do.[1]

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[1]Cass, Globe, 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 330.

"Power of Congress":

> On this subject, sir, I agree precisely with what was said by the distinguished Senator from Kentucky [Mr. Clay]. I shall vote for the reference.[1]

"Compromise Bill":

> I beg leave to refer to some of the remarks made by the distinguished Senator from Missouri [Mr. Benton] in his speech yesterday.[2]

"Sovereign Power":

> The Senator from Georgia, at the commencement of his remarks, made an allusion to the doctrine I have maintained in relation to the power of Congress over the territories. I rise to put myself right. . . .[3]

The introductions employed by Cass were generally terse; but within the context in which they appeared, they were not as abrupt as they seem to be when extracted. In most cases the subject had been under consideration before Cass rose to speak.

The statement-of-purpose introduction to "Kansas -- the Territories" was direct. As in the Manifesto speech, it clearly partitioned the subject:

> The bill under discussion, relating to Kansas, presents itself in a double aspect to the consideration of Congress. It involves not only the present condition of that territory and the measures proper to be taken with reference to it, but it involves also the general principles connected with the territories of the United States, and the extent, as well as their rights, as of the constitutional power of Congress over them. I propose to submit to the Senate some remarks upon both of these topics, but principally upon the latter . . . .[4]

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[1] Ibid., p. 517. [2] Ibid., p. 803. [3] Ibid., p. 1528.

[4] Cass, Globe, 34th Congress, 1st session, p. 512.

The only introduction among the seven Senate speeches on popular sovereignty which was not relatively short and which was not statement-of-purpose in type was the introduction to "Kansas and Nebraska" (speech six). Besides being lengthy, it was somewhat labored in respect to language. It is true that Cass had not discussed popular sovereignty for nearly four years. With some emotion, he reviewed the previous four years of peace and called attention to the return of the slavery question in Congress. In spite of its length, the introduction only vaguely suggested the central idea and was therefore in contrast with the typical direct and relatively short introductions used in the other speeches. The following is only part of the introduction to "Kansas and Nebraska":

> Mr. President, but four brief years are passing away, brief in the life of a nation, since this Hall resounded with angry and agitating discussions upon the very topics that now disturb and divide us, and since every breeze that spread out to the heavens the flag that waves over us -- our fathers' flag, and blessed by God, yet our own -- brought us from crowded city and from lonely cabin, from hill, valley, and prairie, from ocean and lake, the echoes of anxiety and alarm, passing over the country, and which announced that a great people has reached a crisis in their destiny, which, for weal or woe, might mark their history during long ages to come.[1]

Generally without any planned effort to win attention or to establish rapport, Cass moved quickly into the body of his speech after a brief introduction. Because the topic in most cases had been under discussion before Cass

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[1]Cass, Globe, 33rd Congress, 1st session, p. 220.

began his speech, there was little need for focusing attention upon his subject. The courteous language employed by Cass may have indirectly aided in establishing rapport. In his introductions, the Michigan Senator used such phrases as "the distinguished Senator from Missouri,"[1] "the distinguished Senator from Kentucky,"[2] "the honorable Senator from Ohio,"[3] and "I beg leave to refer to."[4]

Body. -- The popular sovereignty speeches of Cass which were subsequent to the Manifesto Address followed a topical pattern with the individual subheads or topics developed logically within themselves. In most cases, the arrangement was poor because of needless digressions, repetition of subheads, irrelevant eulogy and invective, and interruptions by other Senators. Cass generally consumed much more time than was necessary to present his case, and this superfluous verbiage may have weakened the effectiveness of his main arguments. Most of the speeches on popular sovereignty which were given by Cass were not presented from manuscript and appear to have been hastily prepared. Exceptions to this statement were the Manifesto speech and "Kansas and Nebraska" (speech six).

The central ideas which were developed in popular sovereignty speeches two through seven were as follows:

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[1]Cass, Globe, 31st Congress,1st session, p. 803.

[2]Ibid., p. 517. [3]Ibid., p. 330. [4]Ibid., p. 203.

"Dissolution of the Union":

> The peaceful dissolution of the Union is unconstitutional and would be impossible to accomplish.

"Power of Congress":

> Congress immediately ought to admit California into the Union.

"Compromise Bill": Adopt the Compromise.

"Sovereign Power":

> The plea of California for statehood ought not to be ignored by Congress.

"Kansas and Nebraska":

> The people, whether in the territories or in the states to be formed from them, are free to regulate their domestic institutions in their own way, subject only to the Constitution of the United States.

"Kansas--the Territories":

> The claim of Congress to legislate over the internal affairs of the territories is unconstitutional.

The central idea developed in "Dissolution of the Union" was that the peaceful dismemberment of the Union is unconstitutional and would be impossible to accomplish.

The overall arrangement pattern was topical, but each of the topics was supported within itself logically. The organization was loose, probably because the speech was not given from manuscript nor even from detailed notes.[1] When

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[1]Mr. Clemens in alluding to speech two said: "The Senator from Kentucky [Mr. Clay] has favored us with a bloody and disastrous picture of disunion, and the Senator from Michigan, a short time afterwards, in a carefully prepared speech, followed in the same lugubrious strain." Cass interrupted Mr. Clemens with the statement: "There was no preparation on the subject. The remarks never occurred to me until the moment they were delivered." Ibid., p. 398.

Cass arose to speak, he had intended to discuss only Mr. Hale's motion to peaceably dissolve the Union. After being interrupted by Mr. Hale and Mr. Clemens, however, the Michigan Senator made a transition as a result of their remarks to the topic of slavery in the territories. Cass was then provoked by Mr. Clemens to defend his Manifesto speech of a few weeks earlier. This digression consumed more time than did his original remarks regarding Hale's resolution.

The theme of "Power of Congress" (speech three) was that Congress ought to admit California into the Union immediately.

After the introduction, but before beginning his arguments concerning California, Cass at some length eulogized Mr. Bell of Tennessee and Mr. Foote of Mississippi. Calhoun was then disparaged for labeling George Washington "a Southerner." Seward was even more severely criticized for suggesting that the fugitive slave provision of the Constitution was immoral. Cass finally led into the central idea by stating his popular sovereignty thesis: "That a law might be passed authorizing the people of the territories to govern themselves . . . is my wish and my hope."[1]

The method of arrangement was logical. Perhaps the loose and somewhat unclear organization can be traced in part to the twenty-six interruptions which occurred. The normally placid Cass became so exasperated that he said:

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[1]Ibid., p. 527.

"Gentlemen will remember that my time is very limited,"[1] and seven interruptions later: "May I be permitted to say that I must request Senators no longer to interrupt me."[2]

The central idea of "Compromise Bill" (speech four) was: Accept the Compromise.

The method of arrangement was by the topical pattern. At great length Cass refuted the anti-compromise arguments of Mr. Benton and Mr. Mann; he reviewed the history of the Wilmot Proviso; he defended Henry Clay, the author of the Compromise; and he analyzed the separate aspects of the Compromise Bill and pleaded for the acceptance of these measures as a group package. The separate topics were clearly related to the central idea and to each other by frequent transitions such as: "Now, sir, we have a plan before us which, if carried out, promises to do this"[3]; "Still, sir, we are asked . . . by the Senator from Missouri, why are these measures joined together?"[4]; "Now, sir, what are the objections to this course?"[5]; "But, sir, to return to the objections to the union of these measures"[6]; "Well, sir, in the exercise of the powers of government, thus necessarily assumed, what may a legislature do, or rather, what may it not do?"[7]

The speech was relatively long, occupying nearly

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[1] Ibid., p. 529. [2] Ibid. [3] Ibid., p. 803.
[4] Ibid., p. 804. [5] Ibid., p. 805. [6] Ibid., p. 810.
[7] Ibid., p. 808.

the whole of June 11, 1850, on the Senate agenda. There were no interruptions. This fact, as well as the careful organization, the dull plodding progression which also characterized the Manifesto Address, the abundance of detailed evidence, and the clarity of the materials leads the writer to believe that if there was not a manuscript employed, at least very complete notes were probably used.

The main idea developed in "Sovereign Power" (speech five) was that California's plea for statehood should not be ignored by Congress.

This short address was developed logically. One of the original twelve propositions denying popular sovereignty had been reasserted by Mr. Berrien, and Cass rose to refute it. He employed the arguments and evidence which he had used in the Manifesto Address to repudiate the same proposition. By arguing that Congress had no right to establish territorial governments, Cass tried to prove that California's government, which had been established by the people of the territory of California, was perfectly legitimate.

The central idea of "Kansas and Nebraska" (speech six) was: "The people, whether in the territories or in the States to be formed from them, are free to regulate their domestic institutions in their own way. subject only to the Constitution of the United States."[1]

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[1] Cass, Globe, 33rd Congress, 1st session, p. 270.

This was the only speech after the Manifesto Address in which the Michigan Senator used repeating cycles of refutation in respect to a given proposition. Cass stated the proposition to be refuted, provided abundant evidence and argument by its exponents in favor of it, and then refuted it. He repeated the above process five times.

The last third of the speech appeared to be an appended series of digressions in which the Michigan Senator discussed the Fugitive Slave Bill, his personal attitude toward slavery, and southern "stubbornness." The first section of the speech held to the central idea and was clearly organized, closely argued, and meticulous in analysis of the subject. The second section was digressive, disorganized, and badly argued because of a lack of specific evidence. It appears that after delivering a carefully prepared speech Cass rambled on in an impromtu fashion for a considerable period of time.

The theme of "Kansas--the Territories" (speech seven) was that the claim of Congress to legislate over the internal affairs of the territories is unconstitutional.

Cass laboriously reviewed the Manifesto speech by citing the arguments and evidence relating to each of the twelve propositions which denied the validity of popular sovereignty. Three new propositions had arisen since the date of the Manifesto six years earlier. It was to propositions thirteen, fourteen, and fifteen that the Michigan Senator gave his attention. The organization was topical

but very loose. There were irrelevant digressions, and the same material was repeated in several different parts of the speech.

In summary it can be said that the Manifesto speech was probably much more carefully prepared than any of the other six speeches in the series and was superior in terms of clarity of organization, analysis of subject matter, and integrity of reasoning. Most of the arguments relating to popular sovereignty in the subsequent speeches had already appeared in the Manifesto Address. Three new arguments were introduced in "Kansas-the Territories," the last speech by Cass on popular sovereignty.

Conclusion. -- No matter how poorly prepared the body of some of the addresses by Cass might have been, he generally provided a warm and carefully planned conclusion. It was his habit in the conclusion to call upon the Deity for assistance and to stress unity, cooperation, and moderation as he spoke to both the North and the South. Note the consistency of Cass in the following examples:

"Dissolution of the Union":

> May he who guided our fathers in times of peril direct us in the paths of peace and safety.[1]

"Power of Congress":

> But, sir, instead of depreciating one section and exalting another, let us all join together to thank that God who enabled our fathers to assert their rights, and who, we may humbly hope, will enable their sons, if they are not struck by judicial blindness, to

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[1]Cass, Globe, 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 399.

> maintain them, and to transmit them, unimpaired, to their posterity.[1]

"Compromise Bill":

> Why not terminate this whole controversy, and thus banish its remembrance from our councils and country . . . ? That done, we should enter again upon a glorious career, with none to trouble or to make us afraid. God grant, that the denunciation contained in the command to the prophet may not already have gone out against us, 'Say ye not, a confederacy, to all them to whom this people shall say, a confederacy; neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid.'[2]

The conclusion to "Kansas--the Territories" (speech seven) especially evidenced self-conscious literary effort. It was mildly emotional and leaned heavily upon the Deity for support:

> Mr. President, many and signal have been the interpositions of Providence in our favor, since the commencement of our national existence. We have been carried forward in a career of prosperity, unexampled in the history of the world. Difficulties and dangers have beset us, upon the right hand and upon the left; but we have safely passed through them, gathering strength in our progress, till we have nothing to fear but ourselves and the just judgments of God. A question is around us, among us, exciting angry passions, and arraying one portion of the country against another -- a sectional question, the most difficult and delicate with which we have to deal. And a way has been found to deal with it which requires no sacrifice of principle of pride, or of opinion, by one part of the Confederation to the other, but their mutual submission of the controversy to the operation of the great doctrine of the right of man to govern himself, the only solid basis of republican governments. And the dispensations of Providence towards us have never been marked with more kindness, than in inclining the hearts of the American people to seek refuge from impending danger in this, the only means of averting it. There is no other ground on which

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[1] Ibid., p. 531.

[2] Ibid., p. 810.

> we can stand together. The wisdom of man can discover no other. But this is holy ground, sanctioned by a living principle, and rising above a world of waters, which has been spreading out over the land. I trust it will yet stay the flood, and rescue us from the only peril, which the patriot contemplates with doubt and apprehension.[1]

New Lines of Argument

In the Manifesto speech, Cass answered the twelve major arguments denying the validity of popular sovereignty. Only three new propositions opposing his doctrine were raised after the Manifesto Address. It was in speech seven, "Kansas -- the Territories," that the Michigan Senator attempted to refute the three latest objections.

New Issues. -- Cass told the Senate:

> I have said, that three new sources of power have recently been discovered to justify congressional interposition, and I now add that these are:
>
> 13. The right and duty of guardianship.
> 14. The transmissible power, by which the constitution of another country is substituted for that of the United States.
> 15. What may be called paternal power which places the General Government in loco parentis.[2]

Reasoning. -- The following is an outline of the refutation by Cass of the last three propositions which opposed the doctrine of popular sovereignty:

> It is claimed that Congress may legislate over the internal affairs of the territories because of
>
> I. The right and duty of guardianship.
>
> A. This argument has been recently

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[1] Cass, Globe, 34th Congress, 1st session, pp. 525 - 26.

[2] Ibid., p. 514.

urged in the House of Representatives.

B. I leave it without argument -- an epitaph, I may say, for it will soon need it, as its tenure of life must be a brief one.

II. The transmissible power, by which the powers of another country are substituted for those of the United States.

A. This argument is proposed by Mr. Harlan, Senator from Iowa, and by one of the most respectable and justly esteemed journals of our country.

B. It is claimed that by the direct purchase of Louisiana the United States succeeded to all the rights and sovereignty possessed by the grantor and hence became the actual, full, complete, and exclusive sovereign of the territory.

1. Louisiana was a part of the dominions of France, which was its absolute sovereign. Through purchase the government of the United States must have succeeded to the same unrestricted rights and may hold, exercise, and enjoy them, until she chooses to confer them upon another country.

a. I am not going to employ my time and that of the Senate so badly as to argue this point. To undertake to refute the proposition that the Congress of the United States may seek its authority, not in our Constitution, but in that of a foreign government, and thus transfer to a Republic the power of an absolute monarchy.

2. The error of the speaker is obviously in deducing the power of Congress from the attribute of sovereignty.

a. Factors of national

independent existence, such as sovereignty, which are co-equally shared among the various nations are appealed to as grants of substantive power, to be exercised at the will of Congress.

(1) There is no general grant in the Constitution of the right of congressional legislation over the territories.

III. What may be called the paternal power which places the general government in loco parentis.

A. It is contended that the territories are the children of the states. They are minors, under twenty-one years of age, and it is the business of the states, through their delegates to Congress, to take care of these minors until they are of age -- until they are ripe for state government -- then to give them an equality with their fathers.

1. Thus our Constitution is not to be merely interpreted, but it is to be interpolated, and its supposed omissions are to be supplied by analogies.

a. Analogy is an erroneous means of arguing constitutional law.

2. The duration of a territorial government has no connection with the years of its organization.

a. A territory is entitled to admission into the Union as soon as it possesses sixty thousand inhabitants even if that event occurs within six months after the establishment of its temporary government.

The first of the three new propositions which denied popular sovereignty by defending congressional intervention

was "the right and duty of guardianship" of Congress over the territories. Without defining precisely what this meant, Cass dismissed the proposition as ridiculous and as not warranting refutation.

The second proposition which the Michigan Senator undertook to refute stated that Congress could legislate over the internal concerns of the territories because of the transmissible power, that power by which the laws of another country are substituted for those of the United States. The United States, for example, purchased the Louisiana region from France. Therefore, the United States could exercise the same power over the people of that region which France formerly exercised over them. Cass pointed out that the error in the above reasoning lay in deducing the power of Congress from the attribute of sovereignty. Attributes of national independent existence, like sovereignty, said Cass, which carry with them co-equal rights among the powers of the world, but which confer no authority upon any department of our government, unless written in the Constitution, are appealed to as grants of substantive power, to be exercised at the will of Congress. By means of a cause to effect inference, the Michigan Senator pointed out that because the power in question was not specifically granted to Congress by the Constitution, Congress could not exercise that power.

The third proposition claimed that Congress could

legislate over the affairs of the territories because of the paternal power, which placed the general government in the position of a parent. The territories were the children of the states. Therefore the states, through their representatives in Congress, could care for these minors until they were of age.

At times the refutation by Cass of proposition three was somewhat vehement. The Michigan Senator had little faith in analogical reasoning, and he attacked the opposition on this ground. "Analogy," he said, "is not only utterly erroneous as a foundation of the means of construction even, but here it is destitute of any point of similitude . . . ."[1] Later he added: "analogies, derived from the physical, are transferred to political, life, and become the foundation of some of the higest operations of government; and because a parent may rule a child, therefore Congress may rule the territories."[2] Again reasoning from cause to effect, Cass displayed the weakness in the argument which supported proposition three by reminding the Senate that "the duration of a territorial government has no connection with the years of its organization, because that depends wholly on the amount of population."[3] A territory was entitled to admission into the Union as soon as

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[1] Ibid., p. 517.

[2] Ibid. "I need not say, sir, that all this analogical illustration is a mere effort of the imagination . . . ." Ibid., p. 516.

[3] Ibid., p. 518.

it possessed sixty thousand inhabitants regardless of how long it had been in a territorial state. Cass added that the people of the territory were qualified to participate in their government as were the people of the states.

Support Materials. -- Cass substantiated his refutation chiefly by means of authority, facts, and quotation, but he relied most heavily upon authority. The Michigan Senator's basic proof in denying the right of congressional intervention was that the Constitution did not give Congress the right to legislate for the territories. The following examples are typical:

> There is no general grant of the right of legislation in the Constitution. Its provisions on that subject are as cautious, as they were wise and clear. 'All legislative power herein granted,' says our Charter, 'shall be vested in a Congress'; and then follows the enumeration of its powers, with the declaration that all powers not granted are reserved, etc.[1]

> There is no such power in the book. You can find in the Constitution no recognition of sovereignty in Congress, nor, if there were, is any grant of power attached to that condition.[2]

> We must go to the Constitution of the United States to ascertain what department of the Government, if any, can exercise those rights; and if we do not find it written down there, the power belongs to the States or to the people.[3]

Cass cited facts as evidence to clarify the rights of Congress in relation to the territories. In refuting the argument of paternal power, he stated that a territory is "entitled to admission into the Union as soon as it possesses

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[1] Ibid. [2] Ibid. [3] Ibid.

sixty thousand inhabitants, according to the original arrangement, even if that event occurs within six months after the establishment of its temporary government."[1] Other examples of the use of fact are:

> The word 'sovereign' is not to be found in the Constitution . . . .[2]
>
> The fact is that . . . .[3]
>
> In the people of the United States resides the sovereignty of the country.[4]

Cass quoted from "public journals" to show that there was a difference of opinion as to the legality of congressional sovereignty over the territories:

> 'We cannot conceive how any doubt can arise as to the full, perfect, unlimited, and sovereign power of the Federal Government over the Territory of Kansas as the agent or trustee of the existing States.'[5]
>
> 'These States can only exercise their sovereign, administrative, and governmental rights through the instrumentality of the territorial governments.'[6]

Cass also read from the report of the Committee on Territories. In their report, he said, they speak of the "sovereignty of a territory remaining in abeyance, suspended in trust for the people till admitted . . . ."[7]

Refutation Devices. -- In refuting the last three propositions which opposed popular sovereignty, Cass employed dismissal, admission, reductio ad absurdum, comparison and contrast, and sarcasm.

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[1] Ibid. [2] Ibid. [3] Ibid.
[4] Ibid. [5] Ibid. [6] Ibid.
[7] Ibid.

Cass tersely dismissed the first proposition, the right and duty of guardianship, which, he said, had recently been debated in the House of Representatives. The Michigan Senator declared that he would leave it without argument, an epitaph, for it would soon need one, because its tenure of life would be brief. In approaching the second proposition, Cass dismissed part of the reasoning employed for its support with the following statement:

> I am not going to employ my time and that of the Senate so badly as to argue this point. To undertake to refute the proposition, that the Congress of the United States may seek its authority, not in our Constitution, but in that of a foreign Government, and thus transfer to a Republic the powers of an absolute monarchy. . . .[1]

When referring to other means of seeking authority for congressional power outside the Constitution, Cass dismissed the point with:

> And these and other pretensions I have not time to examine -- to enumerate even, and which hardly need refutation, abound in the debates and discussions, which this subject, prolific in heresies, has called forth.[2]

Cass quickly admitted and minimized the significance of that which he could not refute:

> The fact is, that no one claims sovereignty for the territories, or, in other words, no one claims that they are independent nations.[3]

Cass relied upon reductio ad absurdum in order to repudiate some of the arguments of the opposition. By simplifying a weak figurative analogy of the opposition,

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[1] Ibid. [2] Ibid. [3] Ibid.

which was used to justify the paternal power of Congress over the territories, he stated it as if he believed the comparison involved to be ridiculous: "Because a parent may rule a child, therefore, Congress may rule the territories."[1] Later when it was claimed that Congress could legislate over the territories under the vague right of sovereignty, which was not written in the Constitution, Cass said that the Constitution 'grants Congress the authority to declare war. If that authority were not thus delegated, will any man venture to assert, that Congress might assume it by virtue of the sovereignty of the Nation?"[2]

Cass employed comparison and contrast to point out that the claim of sovereignty of the territories professed by Congress was reminiscent of English rather than American history:

> It seems to me, that this transfer to our Government, of some of the technical niceties of the English common law, which gladdened the hearts of Coke and his school in the days of legal metaphysics is to mistake equally our age and our country.[3]

The Michigan Senator also compared policies of some of the current statesmen with earlier political leaders in an effort to repudiate the reliance upon foreign legal codes as a basis of American domestic policy:

> Jefferson and Madison, and Taylor and Mason, and their political coadjutors, went to the Constitution for the powers of Congress, and not to

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[1] Ibid., p. 517. [2] Ibid., p. 518. [3] Ibid.

> the code of Napoleon, nor to the code of Powhatan, or Pontiac, or Tecumseh.[1]

Cass made infrequent use of the technique of sarcasm to repudiate the position of an opponent. Brown, Mann, and Seward felt the verbal barbs of the Michigan Senator. The following are two brief examples:

> If I understood correctly the honorable Senator from Mississippi Mr. Brown, in his remarks the other day, he approved and adopted these positions, and perhaps I should do so too, if I comprehend them, but as I do not, my incredulity may be pardoned.[2]

> And thus the Constitution is not to be merely interpreted, but it is to be interpolated, and its supposed omissions are to be supplied by useless analogies, drawn from youth and age, and applied with equal rashness and confidence, where there is no reason for application.[3]

Summary

1. The first five speeches by Cass on popular sovereignty were presented between January and August of 1850. Heated debates on the Compromise Bill dominated the attention of the Senate during this period. Cass spoke for the Compromise; and he specifically urged the doctrine of popular sovereignty as a means of settling the slavery problem in the territories.

2. The last two speeches of the series by Cass, "Kansas-Nebraska" and "Kansas -- the Territories," followed four years of relative peace in Congress with respect to

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[1] Ibid. [2] Ibid. [3] Ibid., p. 517.

slavery after the Compromise of 1850. Beginning in 1854, the debates concerning the territories of Kansas and Nebraska renewed the bitter sectional dispute over slavery in the territories, and Cass again found the occasion ripe for the discussion of popular sovereignty as a solution to the problem.

3. Cass employed the statement-of-purpose type introduction in six of the seven speeches on popular sovereignty. His introductions were generally brief and direct, and he frequently alluded to the remarks of another Senator which especially provoked the presentation of his own speech. The Michigan statesman made no obvious effort to gain the attention of his audience; and except for his usual courteous language, there appears to have been no planned design to win rapport.

4. The speeches usually followed a topical pattern of organization with the separate topics developed logically within themselves by means of the inductive method. The last six speeches, which followed the Manifesto Address, suffered from poor arrangement because of needless digressions, repetition of arguments, irrelevant eulogy and invective, and many interruptions by other Senators. Cass consumed a great deal of time in developing his case. The superfluous material may have weakened the effectiveness of his main arguments. The Manifesto speech was probably much more carefully prepared than any of the other later addresses. It was superior in terms of clarity of organization,

analysis of subject matter, and soundness of reasoning.

5. Though some of the popular sovereignty speeches by Cass appeared to have been hastily prepared, the conclusions were carefully planned. They were characterized by mild emotion, sincerity, and restraint. The Michigan Senator usually called upon the Deity for assistance and stressed unity, cooperation, and moderation between the North and South.

6. Cass advocated popular sovereignty chiefly by defending it against attack. The speeches herein considered were largely a refutation of the fifteen major objections to his doctrine. The first twelve objections Cass treated thoroughly in the Manifesto Address and repeated in the later speeches. Three new objections against popular sovereignty were refuted by Cass in "Kansas - the Territories," his last speech on the subject.

7. For support materials, Cass relied chiefly upon personal experience, statistics, historical examples, facts, quotations, and especially upon authority, his chief authority being the Constitution. He interpreted the document in a strict sense and held that no power which was not specifically enumerated in the Constitution could be exercised by Congress.

8. In his refutation of the fifteen propositions which opposed popular sovereignty, Cass most frequently employed the techniques of overwhelming evidence and the

authority of the Constitution. He depended often upon definition, lack of need, repudiation and dismissal, comparison and contrast, and reductio ad absurdum. Admission, sarcasm, and surprise and amazement received limited use.

Chapter Four

ANALYSIS OF EMOTIONAL APPEALS

Public speakers employ emotional persuasion in order to make their ideas psychologically acceptable to the audience. Emotional appeals are "those materials and devices calculated to put the audience in a frame of mind suitable for the reception of the speaker's ideas."[1] Aristotle remarked that by "the emotions, are meant those states which are attended by pain and pleasure, and which, as they change, make a difference in our judgments."[2] Cicero concurred when he said that "men decide far more problems by hate, or love, or lust, or rage, or sorrow, or joy, or hope, or fear, or illusion, or some other inward emotion, than by reality, or authority, or any other legal standard, or judicial precedent, or statute."[3] Although emotional appeals directed to selfish ends are the chief weapons of the demagogue, it has long been recognized by rhetoricians that the principled orator must legitimately employ emotion in order to move the audience to action.

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[1]Thonssen and Baird, op. cit., p. 358.

[2]Aristotle, Rhetoric, ii. 1. 1378[a].

[3]Cicero, De Oratore, trans. E. W. Sutton (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1942), ii. 42. 178.

The Attitude of Cass Toward Emotional Appeals in Speaking

Lewis Cass relied upon intense emotional appeals only to a very limited extent in his speeches on popular sovereignty. Infrequently and for only short periods of time in a speech would his language become extremely moving. This usually occurred (1) when he disparaged someone for advocating disunion or for exhibiting disloyalty to the Constitution or the government of the United States,[1] (2) when he vividly described the political blessings redounding to citizens of the United States, and (3) when he compared the nation at peace with the nation devastated by civil war. With these few exceptions, his emotional persuasion was confined to what might be described as mild appeals. The speeches considered in this study were relatively calm, deliberative, and unimpassioned.

Cass did not disdain emotion under all circumstances. His personal letters to his wife and to his grandson were replete with love and tender remarks. The Michigan statesman felt, however, that deliberative occasions did not call for strong appeals to man's emotions. "When passions ran rampant, first on one side of the Senate chamber, then on the other, Cass was quick to stem the tide of emotionalism."[2]

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[1] John Adams, John Calhoun, Horace Mann, and William Seward (twice) were the objects of invective by Cass for their criticism of the Constitution.

[2] Hewlett, op. cit., p. 259.

In his customary role as the moderate, he took a stand against the emotionalists of every camp. The Michigan Senator believed that political questions were best settled by rational means. His respect for deliberation and reasoning as a means of solving the nation's problems was revealed in such statements as: "It is reflection . . . which in this country stills the tempest"[1]; "Such acts are not among those which carry human reason with them as authoritative expositions of constitutional law"[2]; "Yet, among the fifteen reasons given for the exercise of this authority, there is not one which by any rational construction, leads to such consequences"[3]; I am "determined to examine this whole subject dispassionately"[4]; "The spirit of inquiry is one of the marked characteristics of the age."[5]

Reasoning, Cass maintained, was the road to truth:

> 'Error of opinion,' said Mr. Jefferson, 'may be tolerated where reason is left free to combat it.' Memorable words, and as true as they are wise. If the schoolmaster is abroad, he takes with him a great many unsound opinions, which, however, can only become dangerous by being met by resistance instead of argument.[6]

Years later Cass rephrased the same belief:

> No, the remedy is to be found, not in the change of political institutions, but in the

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[1] Cass, Globe, 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 810.

[2] Ibid., p. 71.

[3] Ibid., p. 1528.

[4] Cass, Globe, 34th Congress, 1st session, p. 525.

[5] Cass, Globe, 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 330.

[6] Ibid., p. 399.

> diffusion of education, and the free discussion and examination of whatever propositions are presented as tending to meliorate the condition of mankind. Truth was never permanently injured by free inquiry.[1]

In another speech, Cass said to his colleagues: "We should preserve our own self-respect, and exercise our own reasoning faculties."[2] The truth and validity of constitutional principles, the Michigan Senator declared, were confirmed by deliberation and argument. When speaking about an idea with which he disagreed, Cass on one occasion commented: "I cannot but think that it has not undergone, and indeed, that it cannot safely undergo, that severe investigation which can alone establish the validity of a great constitutional pretension . . . ."[3]

Cass frankly stated his views concerning the emotional attitudes of Senators and the use of emotional persuasion in Senate speeches. It was in the Manifesto speech that he cautioned his fellow senators that "strong passions were abroad, unfriendly to cool deliberation, and utterly inconsistent with calm decision."[4] In a later speech, he admonished the use of emotional argument by another Senator:

> These scenes of sorrow belong to that life of change which almost makes part of the American character. But, painful as they are, they cannot

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[1] Cass, Globe, 33rd Congress, 1st session, p. 276.

[2] Cass, Globe, 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 1529.

[3] Cass, Globe, 33rd Congress, 1st session, p. 273.

[4] Cass, Globe, 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 71.

> enter into the determination of legal or constitutional rights which appeal to rigid principles, and not to the kindlier emotions of the heart.[1]

On another occasion, Cass declared:

> No man of ordinary sagacity can doubt the tendency of the doctrines . . . that are addressed to passions, more easily excited than allayed . . . . It prostrates the judgment and almost paralyzes the conscience, and prepares the excited mind for strange delusions and dangerous deeds. The scene, which lately passed at New Haven, when God's day and God's house were desecrated by appeals to fierce passions to stimulate men to action, instead of being devoted to their true purpose of guiding and restraining them, was a spectacle to be contemplated with regret, with indignation indeed, alarm.[2]

Cass had both disrespect and fear of the power of emotion when it was employed unethically. He observed in his criticism of Seward:

> It is an old story in human experience, as the Senator knows, for he has studied the history of Rome, and referred us to the conduct of her tribunes. The office does not exist in this country; but one of the abuses which made it memorable -- that of pandering to popular prejudices -- is among us carefully cherished and often faithfully practiced.[3]

"It is dangerous," said the Michigan Senator, "to tamper with human passions. Better it is to instruct than to stimulate them."[4] In the light of these comments it is not

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[1] Cass, Globe, 33rd Congress, 1st session, p. 273.

[2] Cass, Globe, 34th Congress, 1st session, p. 521.

[3] Ibid., p. 524.

[4] Ibid. The proclivity of Cass for restrained oratory was contrasted to that of his colleagues on the stump at a mass meeting in Columbus, Ohio. The Detroit Democratic Free Press reported that the audience "listened to the great truths of democracy from the calm wisdom of Gen. Cass, the fiery eloquence of Melville, and the sound argument and happy illustration of Mr. Homer." Detroit Democratic Free Press, October 4, 1850. D.P.L.

surprising to discover that the Senate speeches of Cass were nearly devoid of strong emotional appeals.

Analysis of the Speeches

The criteria which will be employed to appraise emotional persuasion are those appeals to emotion that are most typical and inherent in the popular sovereignty speeches of Cass. The Michigan Senator relied most heavily upon the emotions of safety or security, esteem, patriotism, justice, brotherhood, and religion. These concepts are recognized as being representative emotional appeals by such authorities as Donald C. Bryant and Karl R. Wallace, and by Winston L. Brembeck and William S. Howell in their respective textbooks.[1] The seven speeches on popular sovereignty will be individually analyzed in terms of the above criteria, and they will be compared with respect to the extent to which emotional materials were used in the addresses.

Manifesto Address: (Speech One) "On the Constitutionality and Expediency of the Wilmot Proviso"

The central idea expressed in the Manifesto Address was that it would be both unconstitutional and inexpedient for Congress to legislate over the internal affairs of the territories. There was less reliance upon emotional mater-

[1]Donald C. Bryant and Karl R. Wallace, Fundamentals of Public Speaking (New York: Appleton - Century - Crofts, Inc., 1953), pp. 20-21. Brembeck and Howell, op. cit., pp. 64-76.

ials page for page in this speech than in any of the others of the series. Cass accomplished his purpose chiefly by means of reasoning. The fact that the speech was the most carefully prepared of the group may have accounted for its dearth of emotional materials. There were, nevertheless, several allusions to the Deity and a number of appeals to patriotism.

Perhaps the most striking religious appeal used by Cass was a remark which he made when he was asked from whence did the people of the territories get the power of popular sovereignty which Cass claimed they possessed. The Michigan Senator replied: "They got it from Almighty God, from the same omnipotent and beneficient Being who gave us our rights, and who gave our fathers the power and the will to assert and maintain them."[1] Woodford commented:

> If this was spread-eagling, it could be pardoned because it came straight from the heart as the purest brand of republicanism. Recalling his own policies in the administration of the Michigan territory, it was the expression of a political principle to which he had adhered throughout a public lifetime and which was a pure distillation of Jeffersonianism. There were not many men left in America who could any longer claim the true orthodoxy.[2]

Although Cass deprecated tradition as a valid argument for the perpetuation of a policy,[3] he sometimes used

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[1]Cass, Globe, 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 73.

[2]Woodford, op. cit., p. 357.

[3]"The reverence for what has been is too often the excuse for what is; and a large portion of the abuses of the world have arisen from this very predisposition to tolerate

the same argument himself. It was his habit to point to the ideas and deeds of the patriots in order to give them current sanction: Must I abandon "the allusions I have cherished respecting the wisdom of the statesmen who composed the convention of 1787?"[1]; "And this disregard of one of the canons of freedom, hallowed by our own revolution . . . "[2]; "But I did not suppose that the lessons taught by our revolutionary fathers would so soon fade from the memory of the present generation"[3]; "This appeal to first principles, with the power to apply them practically to the preservation of society, is one of our marked national characteristics, exhibited upon many trying occasions, from the Rock of Plymouth and the beach of Jamestown to the shores of the Pacific"[4]; "I love the land of my forefathers. I revere the memory of the Pilgrims for all they did and suffered in the great cause of human rights, political and religious."[5]

The most persistent patriotic appeals employed by Cass were in defense of the Constitution.[6] Commenting upon

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what has been done, and to believe it has been done well, and ought to be done again." Cass, Globe, 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 70.

[1] Ibid., p. 59. [2] Ibid., p. 58. [3] Ibid., p. 59.

[4] Ibid., p. 66. [5] Ibid., p. 70.

[6] "To Lewis Cass . . . the Constitution was sacred." Justin R. Whiting, Congressional Record, 50th Congress, 2nd session, p. 2486. The Constitution "was, in his view, an absolute necessity to the continuance of national unity, and its preservation the only guaranty of substantial protection to popular rights on this continent." James O'Donnell, Ibid., p. 2483.

a statement in John Adams' diary, Cass declared: "That the Constitution is a vicious instrument is an opinion, it seems to me, that no right-minded American can hold."[1] The Michigan Senator added:

> This condemnation of the Constitution as morally vicious is left upon record by a statesman who sought and enjoyed the confidence of his country in many stations of high honor and responsibility . . . . And this judgment is pronounced upon the land of Patrick Henry, and Jefferson, and Laurens, and Rutledge, and Sumpter, and Marion, and Madison, and Marshall, and Monroe, and Jackson, and -- above all and beyond all -- of Washington . . .[2]

Indicating his own respect for the Constitution, Cass stated:

> I will endeavor to discharge my duty as an American Senator, to the country and to the whole country, agreeably to the convictions of my own duty and of the obligations of the Constitution; and when I cannot do this, I shall cease to have any duty to perform.[3]

"On the Dissolution of the Union" (Speech Two)

The theme of "On the Dissolution of the Union" was that peaceful dissolution of the United States would be unconstitutional and impossible to accomplish. Because this short speech was inspired by a remark made by another Senator and was thus presented with no specific preparation, one might expect it to contain a great deal of emotional materials. There was, however, little more emotional

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[1] Cass, Globe, 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 69.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Ibid., p. 73.

content in this speech than was present in the other speeches. The most frequent appeals were to religion, security, and brotherhood.

The appeals to religion in the popular sovereignty speeches far outnumbered any other type of emotional entreaty that Cass employed. In fact, there were more appeals to religion than to all the other emotions combined. It is true that Cass regularly attended no single church. This is not to deny, however, that he was a devout believer. He described his canoe trek in 1820 in these words: "I never felt more profoundly the weakness of men and the power of God, than when seated in a frail birch canoe, with its ribs of cedar, and its covering of bark, descending the Mississippi in the night and approaching the juncture of this mighty river with the mighty Missouri."[1] Candidly he confided to a friend in 1831:

> I take as kindly, as I know they were kindly meant, your wishes for my religious advancement. Two of those who are nearest to me profess and feel the importance of this concern. As I advance in life, its realities become more and more important,

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[1]Cass, Three Hours at St. Cloud, p. 176 "There seemed to be something sacred in the place and circumstances. There was indeed no holy ground, nor was there near a burning bush, nor warning voice to proclaim the duty of adoration. But we all felt that we had reached one of those impressive spots in the creation of God, which speak his power in living characters; and we had reached it, covered by the shadows of night, whose obscurity, while it shrouded the minuter features of the scene, could not conceal its great outlines, though it added to the deep and breathless emotions with which we gazed around us, seeking to penetrate the narrow, gloomy barrier that shut us in." Ibid., p. 179.

> but not with that conviction, which will alone justify a person in making a publick profession of religion.[1]

Cass believed that "religion is from above, and is a question between the creature and the Creator."[2] He felt that as Governor of Michigan Territory he "should secure to all the right of worshipping God in their own way."[3] He expressed that "the ensigns of man's authority should stop at the door of the temple, and not be profanely intruded into the presence of the Most High."[4] Mrs. Cass was a regular communicant of the Presbyterian Church. When he was governor of Michigan Territory, Cass "would drive his family to church, back up to the steps and unload his wife and children who rode in the box."[5] At the close of the services, he would be waiting to bring them home.

The appeals to religion used by Cass took several forms. In "On the Dissolution of the Union," the Michigan

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[1]Letter from Cass to Satterlee, December 31, 1831. Lewis Cass Papers. B.H.C. The concern for religion shown by Cass took the form of prolific allusions to the Deity and the Bible which characterized not only his pre-Senate occasional addresses but also his Senate speeches as well as his private letters: "God grant that no untoward accident may befall you, and that I may soon again see you is the sincere wish of him

who will ever be
your affectionate
L. Cass"

Letter from Cass to his wife Elizabeth, December 6, 1806, as quoted in General Lewis Cass, p. 11.

[2]Cass, "American Historical Society Address," p. 47.

[3]Ibid.

[4]Ibid.

[5]Woodford, op. cit., p. 118.

Senator compared the absurdity of the motion to dissolve the Union with a petition denying the existence of God. He asked the Senate:

> Would you receive one [a petition] asking Congress to declare that there was no God . . . ? Would you refer such a petition -- as the Senator from New York [Mr. Seward] proposes to refer this -- with grave instructions to report the proofs of the existence of a God, and to add their feeble evidence to the testimony upon that subject which is found equally in the Book of Nature and in the Book of Revelation. . . .[1]

Brief allusions to the Deity were common: "The Being and attributes of God are assailed . . ."[2]; "God in his providence may bring it about. I do not see that man can."[3] Referring to the sectional defamation heard in the Senate, Cass said: "Instead of this eternal system of complaining, we should bow our knees in gratitude to Him who gave us these blessings, and who, I sometimes fear, will strike us with judicial blindness as He did His chosen people of old."[4]

Cass employed appeals to security as part of his strategy to persuade the Senate to accept the Compromise Bill. He pictured in vivid language the terrible results of an inevitable conflict which would result if the North and South could not compromise their differences concerning slavery:

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[1] Cass, Globe, 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 331.

[2] Ibid., p. 398. [3] Ibid., p. 399. [4] Ibid., p. 331.

> But, sir, what will gentlemen say who anticipate such danger from military power, to the danger to be apprehended to great sections of our country, when these are arrayed against each other in an armor and an attitude easy to foresee but impossible to prevent. The border would bristle with bayonets. Every commanding height would be crowned by its fortress. Standing armies would become part of the permanent organization of each. And, the probability is, judging from the lessons of history, that we shall be brought together again by some powerful leader, and find ourselves in a consolidated instead of a confederated country, under the iron rule of a military despot. God save me from witnessing that day.[1]

Attacking the views of those who advocated peaceable dissolution of the Union, Cass declared: "I do not want any man to tell me what this Union would lose, north and south, by a dissolution. It is enough to know that if not fatal to both, it would check the prosperity of both, and lead to consequences which no wise man can contemplate without dismay."[2] Cass painted a black picture of the possible results of attempted dissolution:

> To talk, then, of dissolution is to talk of war. Both are inseparably connected, and the evil day that brings the one will bring the other. And what kind of a war will it be? Such a war, sir, as this world has never seen. The nearer we have been friends, the more deadly will be our feelings as enemies. It will have all the elements of a civil war; of an intestine war. Wherever the border may be, it will be marked by blood and conflagration from one end of it to the other.[3]

In his efforts to support the Compromise, Cass also appealed to brotherhood. He attempted to show that both sides had much to gain by peaceful negotiation and much to

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[1] Ibid., p. 331. [2] Ibid., p. 399. [3] Ibid., p. 331.

lose by a resort to force: "That we have difficulties sometimes to encounter is but the common lot of humanity; individual as well as national. But when these come, let them be adjusted in a proper spirit of compromise, and the future may bring us all that the fondest aspiration can desire."[1] Setting an example of the spirit of brotherhood by his own actions, Cass said:

> I am an American, with the most kindly feelings to every portion of our beloved country. Its strength is in its union; its prosperity in its union; its hopes in the Union. I do not want any one to come here and tell me the evils the North would suffer from dissolution. I need no lesson upon that subject. If any one can explain to me what advantage either section would gain by separation, I might survey such a prospect with less apprehension than I now do.[2]

"Power of Congress" (Speech Three)

The central idea of "Power of Congress" was that Congress should immediately admit the territory of California into the Union. This speech contained more emotional persuasion than any of the other speeches under consideration. Cass began with eulogies of Mr. Bell and Mr. Foote and proceeded next with invective directed at Mr. Calhoun and Mr. Seward. Several entreaties to each of the emotions of justice, security, esteem, and brotherhood were in evidence. Religion and patriotism, however, were most prominent.

Cass asked that the Senate exercise justice in dealing

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[1] Ibid., p. 331. [2] Ibid.

with the territory of California. He argued that it was not the fault of California that her admission to statehood was being delayed, but rather it was the selfish sectional interests in Congress which were responsible for the delay. This, he believed, was a great injustice to the people of California:

> Are they to be deprived of social organization, and of all the elements of social order -- I may add, of existence, and to be treated by us with contumely and mockery, under the pretense that we can do nothing for them, because some one thinks proper to introduce the Wilmot proviso into our legislative proceedings?[1]

Speaking of the injustice of unauthorized governmental control, Cass stated. "We oppose instinctively all improper assumptions of authority over us, without stopping to inquire into the pecuniary value they may effect. No man is willing to have a measure forced upon him."[2]

Cass was concerned with the security of California when he argued for the admission of that territory into the Union. The debate had been dragging on for three months with apparently little evidence of progress. Cass reminded his colleagues: "We have occupied the whole time by the discussion of this question and no practical result has been attained: and present appearances do not indicate that such a result is near."[3] With some passion, the Michigan Senator pleaded: "Without government they cannot exist; and you have provided no government for the people of

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[1] Ibid., p. 528. [2] Ibid. [3] Ibid., p. 517.

California, and it is now contended that they have no right to provide one for themselves."[1] Arguing for the principle of popular sovereignty as a solution to the difficulty, Cass stated: "It is one chance more of terminating this fearful controversy."[2]

Cass appealed occasionally to esteem and achievement. He pointed with pride to the accomplishments of the democratic process in the government of the United States: "We have gone on, sir, increasing in power, in all the elements of prosperity, with a rapidity unknown among the nations of the earth."[3] Cass said of the Supreme Court: It is

> . . . a tribunal of which we may all be proud. There is none higher upon the face of the earth. By their ability, their dignity, their impartiality, their unimpeached probity, the judges have won the respect of their countrymen; and besides the performance of their judicial functions, they everywhere exert a salutary influence upon public opinion.[4]

Alluding to New England, the Michigan Senator said: "The pride of opinion is strong in the human breast . . . it belongs as well to communities as individuals."[5]

As might be expected, in his efforts to get the Compromise accepted, Cass often employed entreaties to brotherhood. He worked assiduously to restore harmony in the Senate, to assuage the growing bitterness between the two great sections of the nation over slavery:

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[1] Ibid., p. 527. [2] Ibid., p. 517. [3] Ibid., p. 529.
[4] Ibid., p. 530. [5] Ibid., p. 528.

> I ask, sir, when did the North seek to injure the South, or when did the South seek to injure the North, in the mere wantonness of oppression? This charge of sectional rivelry, I know, has been a fruitful theme of discussion among the political parties of the day, but it has no real foundation in the progress of our history.[1]
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> But, sir, instead of depreciating one section and exalting another, let us all join together to thank God who enabled our fathers to assert their rights, and who, we may humbly hope, will enable their sons, if they are not struck by judicial blindness, to maintain them, and to transmit them unimpaired, to their posterity.[2]

Cass constantly reassured the Senate of his own loyalty to both the North and the South:

> I have been so much of a wanderer, during my life, that sectional feeling is absorbed in a general one, and I love my country, and my whole country, with equal ardor. Abroad, it is the name of American which inspires honor and confidence, and not the name of Virginian, or Pennsylvanian, or any other less eminent in our country.[3]

Cass asked the Senate to show an attitude of brotherhood toward the inhabitants of the territory of California, who eagerly sought admittance into the Union. California, he said:

> . . . comes and asks admission because her citizens love their native country, know the value of our institutions, and desire to become bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh. They come, I repeat, not as revolutionists, but as petitioners, asking the greatest favor we can bestow upon them.[4]

As in the earlier speeches on popular sovereignty, Cass also frequently referred to the Deity in the "Power of Congress" address. He would do so to indicate grateful-

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[1] Ibid., p. 529. [2] Ibid., p. 531. [3] Ibid.

[4] Ibid., p. 528.

ness for support, to beseech further assistance, or to acknowledge omnipotence. Typical examples to be found in this speech are: "To what Medes and Persians we should have been delivered is known only to Him who holds in His hands the fate of nations."[1] "I thank God that this is so, and that a man may say here what he pleases, and as he pleases."[2] "My object is to support the Constitution which, under God, is the source of our prosperity and happiness."[3] "Let us all join together and thank God . . . ."[4] "God knows I have not the slightest wish to misrepresent the opinions or the objects of the Senator."[5] "If the South think they have rights under the Constitution, in God's name, let the Supreme Court determine the question."[6]

Cass did not rely as heavily upon appeals to patriotism in the "Power of Congress" as was generally his custom. There were, however, some. The Michigan Senator declared:

> All this provokes investigation, and the more our institutions are investigated, the stronger will they become in the hearts of the people, who will continue to love the Government, which has given them a greater measure of prosperity than any other people ever enjoyed, and will support and defend it against all assaults.[7]

When Seward condemned a section of the Constitution as being immoral, Cass followed his own advice. He defended the national Charter: "No man should come here who believes

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[1] Ibid., p. 517. [2] Ibid., p. 530. [3] Ibid., p. 518.
[4] Ibid., p. 531. [5] Ibid., p. 529. [6] Ibid., p. 531.
[7] Ibid., p. 530.

that ours is an immoral Constitution . . . . He has no right as an honest man to seek office, and to obtain it, and then talk about its being so immoral that he cannot fulfill its obligations."[1] Cass was not insincere when he warmly expressed his complete faith in a literal interpretation of the Constitution:

> My progress is within the Constitution. My age of progress is circumscribed there. If the Senator from New York is out of it, I do not believe in his progress at all. No, Sir! My object is to support the Constitution which, under God, is the source of our prosperity and happiness.[2]

Cass told Seward that "it is the duty of every man, who has sworn to support the Constitution, fairly to carry its provisions into effect; and no man can stand up before his fellow-citizens and maintain any other doctrine, whatever reasons he may urge in his vindication."[3]

Employing patriotic appeals to secure the admittance of California into the Union, Cass said: "It is our fault that they have no government -- it is not theirs; and it is because that question has divided you, and prevented you from doing your duty, that they appear here today, and ask justice at your hands."[4] In an unusual display of passion,

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[1] Ibid., p. 518.

[2] Ibid., "The key-note of his political career was the maintenance of the Union under the Constitution." James O'Donnell, Congressional Record, 50th Congress, 2nd session, p. 2483.

[3] Cass, Globe, 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 518.

[4] Ibid., p. 528.

the Michigan Senator added:

> They love the Union; they have felt its blessings, and desire to secure them to themselves and posterity. They will have no other standard to wave in the breezes of the Pacific, on the coast, but the standard of their fathers -- the stars and stripes of their country. Would to God that this feeling prevailed with equal intensity in the centre of the Republic, as it prevails at its distant extremity.[1]

When Calhoun denounced the government of the United States as being despotic, Cass retorted: "We are told, I say, that this is the most despotic Government on the face of the earth . . . . All this does serious injury to the cause of freedom throughout the world. Out of our own mouths we are condemned."[2] Cass argued that "wisdom and patriotism are found in both houses of Congress, as well as in the State legislatures, whose influence is everywhere felt and appreciated; and these are salutary checks against the abuse of power."[3] Nevertheless, grievances, imagined and real, which were suffered by both the North and the South provoked bitter and often exaggerated denunciation of the government and the Constitution, tending to bring the nation closer and closer to dissolution. Cass avowed:

> What I would do to save the Union from dissolution, if dissolution were impending over it, and to be averted only by one course of action, it is difficult to say. I would do almost anything.[4]

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[1] Ibid., pp. 527-28. [2] Ibid., p. 530. [3] Ibid.

[4] Ibid., p. 531. "If I were to select one characteristic in his public life which dominated his thoughts, words, and actions, it would be his intense love of country." Samuel J. Morgan, Congressional Record, 50th Congress, 2nd session, p. 2482.

"The Compromise Bill" (Speech Four)

This relatively long address appears to have been carefully composed. The superior organization and clarity of materials indicate that perhaps a manuscript was used by the speaker. There were no interruptions. We can assume that such emotional materials as were employed were probably not spontaneously chosen at the moment of presentation but rather were carefully planned and predetermined before the occasion. On the whole there was a dearth of emotional persuasion in the speech, although some appeals to security and patriotism were in evidence.

In supporting the Compromise which was still being argued in June of 1850, Cass appealed to national safety and security. The situation was probably as dire as he pictured it: "The last advices from that quarter are sufficiently alarming to excite our apprehension, and to hasten our action."[1] Cass was impatient that the Compromise was so slow in gaining acceptance. He was apprehensive as the months of debate dragged on that the slavery measures might never be arbitrated. Such a result, he felt, could lead only to war. Urging haste, the Michigan Senator declared: "We have a fierce internal contest, engendering the worst feelings, and threatening the worst consequences. It is

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[1]Cass, Globe, 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 807.

here and everywhere; and if it goes on, it will go on to its natural consummation -- to the destruction of our political system."[1]

> We all know that this is the very state of things, which renders our position the more alarming . . . . The more reason is there for a union of all who realize the danger and are desirous of averting it.[2]

> How long the contest would continue, and what scenes of violence it might produce, no one can tell. But all can tell that irritation and alienation would be introduced into our political family, and would lay the foundation of lasting dissensions.[3]

There were also appeals to patriotism that were used by Cass in this speech. By way of pointing to the seriousness of the slavery problem which harassed the nation, Cass stated: "There is not another country on the face of the globe, which could have passed through such a trial, and thus far, without the very foundation of its political system broken up, and the edifice scattered to the four winds of heaven."[4] Cass in his popular sovereignty addresses seldom passed up the opportunity to indicate his loyalty to the Constitution: "No man can draw a line between the power to regulate the relation of master and servant, including the condition of slavery, and the power to control the other domestic relations unless that line is found in the Constitution."[5] The patriotic references of the Michigan Senator extended to the protection from unjust defamation

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[1] Ibid., p. 804. [2] Ibid. [3] Ibid., p. 805.
[4] Ibid., p. 803. [5] Ibid., p. 809.

of contemporary statesmen of both parties: "Mr. President, in the consideration of any proceeding or recommendation of the Executive, while I discharge my duty with that freedom which belongs to an American Senator, I trust I shall never lose sight of that respect, which belongs to the Chief Magistrate of my country."[1] "Had the distinguished Senator from Massachusetts [Mr. Webster] no other claim but that to the respect of his countrymen, that would be enough for present and future distinction."[2] "But I was particularly pained at the allusion to the distinguished chairman of the committee [Mr. Clay], as I am confident was every man in the Senate, actor or auditor. The common sympathy of high talents, of long services, and of advanced years, should have spared this infliction -- to us, not to him."[3] In this connection Cass protected the law as well as those who wrote and upheld it: "And to have the validity of the laws called in question is one of the gravest evils that can afflict a community."[4]

"Sovereign Power" (Speech Five)

In "Sovereign Power," Cass pleaded for the acceptance of California into the Union. There were no appeals to security, only one each to esteem and brotherhood, and two to justice; but there were ten to patriotism.

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[1] Ibid., p. 803. [2] Ibid., p. 806. [3] Ibid., p. 803.
[4] Ibid., p. 808.

Appealing to the listener's sense of justice, Cass argued for the right of California to be admitted into the Union: "We are, or should be, flocking to the just claims of California, and not to any retrospect of our own errors."[1] He continued:

> Why, sir, this is no way to deal with human rights. You cannot stand up before the people of this country and maintain such a position. You are at war with those everlasting principles of human nature and human freedom which no power can destroy, and which, when taken from a people, are taken by force and not by right.[2]

Although there was a dearth of emotion in the "Sovereign Power" speech, appeals to patriotism were clearly in evidence.[3] Cass tried to shame Congress into recognizing its obligation to the people of the territory of California: "Here is where all parallel and precedent cease; nor do I believe there is another country on the face of the earth where such legislative neglect of great interests can be found."[4] "For never before did Congress utterly neglect its duty, and leave a rich and remote acquisition without organization, exposed to all the evils of anarchy and to be saved only by their own wisdom and firmness."[5]

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[1] Ibid., p. 1530. [2] Ibid.

[3] The people of California presented Cass with a gold ring and commendation for his devotion to the preservation of the Union. In the speech which the Michigan Senator gave at the occasion, he said: "God grant that no effort may be successful to put assunder what the Constitution . . . has joined together. That day, if it ever comes, will come in the wrath of God, and I trust that I shall not live to see it." Lewis Cass, Washington Union, September 23, 1851. N.R.R. Library of Congress.

[4] Ibid., p. 1529. [5] Ibid.

> I find the Congress of the United States has neglected one of its most important and imperative duties, the institution of a government for California; and having driven the people to do for themselves what we ought to have done for them, we have now no right to condemn their course, and to refuse their application, because they did not establish a territorial government, which could alone be established by the authority of Congress.[1]

The loyalty of Cass to the Constitution was again especially prominent in this speech. With a patriotic fervor which would not be compromised, the Michigan Senator safeguarded the people from the exercise of any power by the central government which was not specifically granted it by the Constitution. Again and again Cass reiterated:

> Whence do you derive such a power? Put your finger upon a single clause or word of the Constitution, if you can, which gives it to you.[2]
>
> This I utterly deny. Congress is vested with no one attribute of sovereignty, as the foundation of legislative power; nor is the word itself to be found in the Constitution.[3]
>
> You may go to the elementary writers to find what these rights are, but you must go to the Constitution to find how and how far their exercise has been confided to any department of the government.[4]
>
> We have something better than tradition and commentaries for the foundation of our rights. We have a written Constitution, to which we can appeal . . . .[5]
>
> And I defy any man to put his finger upon any clause of the Constitution, which expressly by necessary and proper implication, grants such a power.[6]
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> You can find no such provision in the Constitution to the law and to the testimony. Take up the

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[1] Ibid., p. 1530. [2] Ibid., p. 1528. [3] Ibid.
[4] Ibid., pp. 1528-29. [5] Ibid., p. 1529. [6] Ibid.

great charter of our country. Point me to the clause, if it exist. You cannot find the word sovereign nor any other power to be deduced from it, from the beginning to the end of the Constitution.[1]

It is a logical fallacy. It is far worse, it is a political assumption to claim for this government the exercise of any power not granted by the Constitution . . . .[2]

Here is a leap that overstrides the Constitution.[3]

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[1] Ibid., p. 1530. [2] Ibid.

[3] Ibid. Partly because of his age (he was sixty-eight), Cass felt a strong tie of nationalism and a closer bond to the Constitution than did most of the other Congressmen whose experiences did not go back to the Revolution. On January 28, 1880, John Garfield told the House of Representatives: "In the stormy spring of 1861, when the foundations of the Republic trembled under the tread of assembling armies, I made a pilgrimmage to the home of the venerable Lewis Cass, who had just laid down his great office as chief of the State Department, and for an hour I was a reverent listener to his words of wisdom. And in that conversation he gave me the thought which I wish to record. He said, 'You remember,young man, that the Constitution did not take effect until nine States had ratified it. My native state was the ninth. It hung a long time in doubtful scale whether nine would agree; but when at last New Hampshire ratified the Constitution, it was a day of great rejoicing. My mother held me, a little boy of six years, in her arms at a window and pointed me to a great man on horseback and to the bonfires that were blazing in the streets of Exeter, and told me that the horseman was General Washington and the people were celebrating the adoption of the Constitution.' 'So,' said the aged statesman, 'I saw the Constitution born, and I fear I may see it die. . . .

I have loved the Union ever since the light of that bonfire and the sight of General Washington greeted my eyes. I have given fifty-five years of my life and my best efforts to its preservation. I fear I am doomed to see it perish.'" John Garfield, Congressional Record, 46th Congress, 2nd session, p. 590.

"Kansas and Nebraska" (Speech Six)

The theme of "Kansas and Nebraska" was that the people of the territories were free to regulate their domestic institutions in their own way, subject only to the Constitution of the United States. Most of the address was reasonably well organized. A series of digressions, however, appear to have been appended to the body of the speech just before the conclusion. The added section includes more emotional materials than does the more logically developed main section. This speech along with "Power of Congress" was more emotional than the others in the series.

The entreaties to esteem, justice, patriotism, and religion were the most numerous in the "Kansas and Nebraska" speech. Appeals to patriotism were often combined with appeals to esteem and achievement. This is not surprising because Cass appeared to be most proud of the government of the United States and its people: "A beautiful tribute was furnished to the inestimable value of free institutions; for there is not another Government under heaven which could have entered into such a trial, and come out of it unscathed."[1]

> The world has never seen a truer basis of government than that established by our Pilgrim fathers the day before they debarked upon a wide unknown continent, when they associated together and signed their practical declaration of independence, solemnly asserting their right, in the presence of God and of one another, 'to combine themselves together

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[1]Cass, Globe, 33rd Congress, 1st session, p. 270.

> in a civil body politic.' . . . if the question was not settled by them it was settled by their descendants, now constituting a portion of one of the mightiest people on the face of the earth.[1]
>
> And I know something of the condition of the poverty-stricken population of Europe, and of a larger portion of the inhabitants, who lie down in sorrow and get up in care, and who pass their lives in want, many of them in a state of destitution utterly unknown in this country; and I have seen far more misery in the proudest capitals of Europe than I ever saw in our own favored land among white or black, bond or free.[2]

In 1854 Cass expressed pride in the principle of popular sovereignty, which he helped to formalize: "Instead of originating in vile motives of plunder and ministering to the gratification of such a miserable passion, this doctrine of non-intervention and of self-government is taking its place, has taken it, indeed, among the great principles of our institutions, equally just in its origin and salutary in its operation."[3]

Cass employed appeals to justice in the "Kansas and Nebraska" speech. Sometimes they were brief, such as: "Now, sir, it is a most useless injustice; a far-reaching injury, beyond the usual ken of even the most sharp-sighted politician."[4] "Now, sir, all this was equally unjust. These measures originated in no such motive -- nor were

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[1] Ibid., p. 278.

[2] Ibid., p. 276.

[3] Ibid., p. 278. Even after the ignoble failure of popular sovereignty in Kansas a few years later, Cass regarded the doctrine as a valid political principle in a republican form of government.

[4] Ibid., p. 275.

they pursued with any such object."[1] "I was in favor of the general principles of the law, and was among the earliest to urge the justice of its passage and the injury done to the South by the delay."[2] The plea for justice occasionally was expanded to include an elaborate persuasive effort when the Michigan Senator was arguing for popular sovereignty:

> It denies to a pecple the right of self-government if they do not own land, thus going pretty well back into feudal times, and practically making acres more valuable than men. Well, sir, I believe there are objects in life dearer than soil or trees, and that the right of government and the capacity to conduct it, do not depend upon the accident of a deed for a given tract of land. I may be pardoned for this heterodoxy, if it be one, because I began life merely as a self-owner, not as a land-owner; and I think, before I attained the latter character, I had some rights worth asserting, even if full knowledge did not come till brought by title deeds.[3]

> There is one barrier so plain that it cannot be overpassed through ignorance, and ought not to be through design. And that is, the internal domestic affairs of these embryo States. We know we cannot touch their domestic hearths nor their domestic altars, their family and social relations, their wives and their children, their man servants nor their maid servants, their houses, their farms nor their property, without a gross violation of the inalienable rights of man, consecrated by the blood of our fathers and hallowed by the affections of their sons.[4]

There were more than twenty references to the Deity or to the Bible in each of the last two speeches which Cass delivered on popular sovereignty. Religious appeals were also numerous in the ceremonial addresses of Cass, which

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[1] Ibid., p. 276. [2] Ibid. [3] Ibid., p. 278.

[4] Ibid., p. 279.

were presented outside the Senate.[1] When he was governor of Michigan Territory, Cass was friendly to all the religious groups in the region; and he was always eager to assist them in any way that he could no matter what their denomination. His calm tolerance of every religious faith was especially evident in 1815 when Joseph Mitchell, a circuit-riding hell-fire and brimstone preacher, rode into Detroit. His sermons created a sensation, causing discomfort to some Detroiters. They "demanded that Mr. Mitchell be denied further use of the Council House. Cass secretly enjoyed the fuss."[2] He not only refused to restrain Mr. Mitchell, but he sent the preacher a five dollar contribution. "In 1816 Cass was one of a committee who brought Mr. Montieth on as a settled minister at a salary of eight hundred dollars a year."[3] The following year the Governor acted as president of a local "Bible Society" and "in 1821, he was one of the incorporators of the first Protestant Society."[4] In his address to the Michigan Historical Society, Cass paid warm tribute to the early Roman Catholic missionaries who came to Michigan. "Nothing," said he, "could shake the fortitude of these apostles of benevolence. They lived the life of saints,

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[1]Abundant religious entreaties are to be found in the speeches of Cass before the Kalamazoo County Agricultural Society in 1850 and the Michigan State Agricultural Society in 1851.

[2]Woodford, op. cit., p. 165.

[3]Ibid.

[4]Ibid.

and died the death of Martyrs."[1]

Cass gave a long prepared speech in the Senate on May 15, 1854, on a resolution which he introduced, "on the subject of religious rights of American citizens residing or traveling abroad."[2] And on January 23, 1860 he donated a lot for St. John's Episcopal Church.[3] "Though born and educated amid the stern inculcations and immovable Puritanism of the Pilgrims, no man in his official character could be more tolerant or friendly to the religious rights of others, or more active in fostering the early attempts of persons of any religious sect to promote the moral and spiritual welfare of the people."[4]

It was the habit of Cass to allude briefly to the Deity: ". . . our father's flag, and blessed be God, yet our own . . ."[5]; ". . . who may be free in God's good time . . ."[6]; "There are certain great, inalienable rights which the bountiful Creator has given to man, as is emphatically announced in our Declaration of Independence"[7]; ". . . these contemners of the word of God and of the feelings of man, might transfer themselves with their harems to

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[1]Cass, "Michigan Historical Society Address," p. 12.

[2]Congressional Globe, 33rd Congress, 1st session, p. 681.

[3]See James Anderson Papers. B.H.C.

[4]Young, op. cit., p. 98.

[5]Cass, Globe, 33rd Congress, 1st session, p. 270.

[6]Ibid., p. 276.

[7]Ibid., p. 279.

any of the territories, and there live in open contempt of law and religion"[1]; ". . . and I have been amazed at the subtle arguments, politico - metaphysical indeed, which have been presented against the enjoyment of one of the most sacred rights which God has given to man"[2]; "Well, all this passed away by the mercy of Providence rather than by the wisdom of man . . . ."[3]

Occasionally the religious references of Cass were more lengthy:

> And men seek by the perversions of Scripture to justify acts prompted by their own libidinous passions. Resolutions have been passed by bodies of men assembled in our country, demanding . . . 'the abolition of laws for the observance of the Sabbeth'; 'the abolition of prayer in Congress'; and 'the abolition of oaths upon the Bible.'[4]

> This is a good doctrine over the water at Berlin, and Vienna, and at Petersburgh, but I hope not upon the Wabash, though we are told that God has spared a precious life upon its fertile banks in order to announce and promulgate it. The ways of Providence are often dark to us blind mortals, but seldom darker than in this case, whether we consider the messenger or the message, the prophet or the prophecy. He, without whose knowledge no sparrow falls to the ground, sometimes selects strange instruments, according to our comprehension, to accomplish his wise designs. It was so in the days of Balaam; and if a similar wonder has just occurred in our days, and in our midst, nothing is left for us but to bow and believe.[5]

Sometimes Cass chose to quote from the Bible: "There was no strife 'between the herdsmen' in the days of Abram, though now, as then, all parties were brethren; 'nor was

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[1] Ibid., p. 274. [2] Ibid., p. 277. [3] Ibid., p. 270.
[4] Ibid., p. 276. [5] Ibid., p. 278.

their substance so great that they could not live together.'"[1] "Otherwise, as strange a confusion would exist in the legal systems of the territories as existed in the language of the world when the primitive race was scattered upon the plains of Shinar, and when one man could not understand another's speech."[2]

"Kansas--the Territories" (Speech Seven)

The central idea of the last speech by Cass was that the claim of Congress to legislate over the internal affairs of the territories was unconstitutional. The Michigan Senator chose to employ emotional appeals to security, brotherhood, justice, patriotism, and especially to religion.

In refutation of the argument of congressional intervention, Cass expressed concern for the security of the nation: "No reflecting person, sir, who reads in the annals of mankind the story of the never-halting tendency of every Government to increase its power, can contemplate, without some anxiety, the additional proof which we are contributing to the experience of the world on this point."[3] "It is already doing its work, and this is the most alarming symptom in this terrible national malady."[4] Referring to

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[1] Ibid., p. 275.

[2] Ibid., p. 273.

[3] Cass, Globe, 34th Congress, 1st session, p. 517.

[4] Ibid., p. 521.

the question of slavery in the territories, Cass pointed to dire consequences: "A question is around us, among us, exciting angry passions, and arraying one portion of the country against another -- a sectional question, the most difficult and delicate with which we have to deal."[1] "This condition of the public mind excites my apprehension, and ought to awaken the attention and arouse the exertion of every true patriot before the evil day is upon us, and the deed of disunion shall be done."[2]

Southern Senators had become extremely sensitive to criticism in regard to slavery. Rebuking his northern colleagues for their constant attack upon slavery, Cass made an appeal to brotherhood:

> I felt also that this eternal warfare against half of the Union had become as disgusting by its repetition, as it was unjust in itself and dangerous in its consequences. I begin to have as little charity for many of those engaged in this crusade, as sympathy with the movement itself. The South intermeddles not with the social institutions of the North; let the North exhibit the same spirit of toleration, and we shall be the strongest and the most contented, as we are the freest nation, on the face of the globe.[3]

Cass made several entreaties for justice in Kansas. Popular elections in the Territory had been marred by threats and intimidation. The Michigan Senator observed:

> The sanctity of elections is the very palladium of our liberty. The places where they are held should be holy ground, where neither fraud nor violence should be permitted to enter. And, above all, they should not be entered by armed parties,

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[1] Ibid., p. 525. [2] Ibid., p. 522. [3] Ibid., p. 521.

> with a view to subject this living element of freedom to lawless violence, thus bringing dishonor upon our institutions, and weakening respect for the laws, and impairing their obligation.[1]

The principle of popular sovereignty represented justice to Cass. He argued against an imposed territorial government not designated by the people of the territory: "A precious kind of protection that which inaugurated a new government by a falsely-styled compact, perpetually binding this transferred population to the most solemn obligations, without their assent, and even without their knowledge."[2] "The just foundation of local legislation is laid down in the Declaration of Independence, wherein it is said: 'legislative powers, incapable of annihilation, have returned to the people at large for their exercise.'"[3]

In "Kansas--the Territories", there were the usual abundant appeals to patriotism, no less than fourteen. Most were in the category of glorifying the Constitution and demanding devotion to its literal interpretation: Congress "can exercise no authority not conferred by express provision, or by necessary and proper implication, for these are the words of the Book."[4] "In the days of the patriarchs of the Democratic faith -- of the great teachers in the school of strict construction -- such a derivation of the authority of the General Government would have

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[1] Ibid., p. 522. [2] Ibid., p. 516. [3] Ibid., p. 520.
[4] Ibid., p. 513.

been denounced as a dangerous heresy."[1] "There is no such power in the book."[2] The patriotic appeals of Cass sometimes took the form of gestures of respect and even defense of leading statesmen of both parties. The Michigan Senator could not tolerate the unfair criticism of a loyal American:

> In thus dealing with the hard and bitter words of personal imputations towards the Chief Magistrate of the country in relation to the performance of his official duties, if the Senator [Mr. Seward] forgot the respect due to that high functionary as well as to himself, he should have recollected the respect due to the Senate, and, still more, to the country.[3]

> I have no patience with Americans, who thus condemn the patriots of the Revolution, casting dirt on their fathers, as the phrase is, and seek to exercise a power over another which they would suffer no man to exercise over themselves.[4]

Although the appeals to patriotism were numerous in "Kansas--the Territories," there were many more appeals to religion. Cass argued that the people of the territory of California had the right to formulate their own government: "They have a right by the laws of God and man to form a government for themselves, and until there is a regularly organized government."[5]

> It will not do to refer to God Almighty or to any other power . . . . I have not contended that God Almighty gave them a right to pass laws before a government was organized; but I do contend that nature gives them rights which they can enforce if you put them in danger of anarchy, without law or civil government. I suppose the Senator will not deny that men have certain rights, given by God, which none but tyrants can take away.[6]

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[1] Ibid., p. 518. [2] Ibid. [3] Ibid., p. 523.
[4] Ibid., p. 522. [5] Ibid., p. 521. [6] Ibid.

There were many short references to the Deity, such as: "And when or how it is to cease is known only to Him who holds nations, not less than individuals, in the hollow of His hand, for it is beyond the sagacity of man to discover."[1] "I hope it will come to an end in our time, but it must be in God's good time . . . ."[2] "We have safely passed through them, gathering strength in our progress, till we have nothing to fear but ourselves and the just judgments of God."[3]

Some religious appeals in this speech were more fully developed and detailed than they were in any of the other speeches. Deprecating the emotional fanaticism that had characterized the anti-slavery campaign in the North, Cass said:

> It is fostered and encouraged by men professedly servants of the Most High, and ministering at His altar. It prostrates the judgment and almost paralyzes the conscience, and prepares the excited mind for strange delusions and dangerous deeds. The scene, which lately passed at New Haven, when God's day and God's house were desecrated by appeals to fierce passions to stimulate men to action; instead of being devoted to their true purpose of guiding and restraining them, was a spectacle to be contemplated with regret, with indignation indeed, and alarm. The temple at Jerusalem was defiled by the money changers, who converted it into a bank of that day, and made it a scene of abominations. Our Savior drove them out, saying, 'It is written, my house shall be called the house of prayer, but ye have made it a den of thieves.' The house of prayer is now made an armory for the collection of weapons to arm Americans against their countrymen: and clergymen are not indeed money changers, but gatherers and distributors of

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[1] Ibid., p. 522. [2] Ibid. [3] Ibid., p. 525.

> carnal, not of Christian weapons, to fight the battles of the flesh, and not the battles of the faith, forgetting that 'all they that take the sword shall perish by the sword'; and that they are warned by the Apostle of the Gentiles that 'weapons of their warfare are not carnal,' etc.
>
> Mr. President, to preach the Gospel of Jesus is work enough for any human heart and intellect. He who devotes himself to this duty, and then goes after strange gods, entering the field of politics, and mingling in its strife and bitterness, does more injury to the cause of true religion, within the sphere of his labors, than the writings of Voltaire and Hume, and all the other infidel authors who ever sought, by their sneers and malign influence, to destroy human confidence in the most precious gift of God to man. And it is a consolatory proof of the reality of revealed religion, that it is equally triumphant over the assaults of its open enemies, and the indiscretion, of something worse, its professed friends.[1]

In another lengthy religious reference, Cass paradoxically condemned Mr. Seward for employing religious appeals in order to expedite the immediate admission of Kansas into the Union. The Michigan Senator said:

> 'Believe the prophets of God,' said the King of Judah, when all the men of the kingdom, with their wives and their children, had taken refuge in Jerusalem, dismayed at the invasion of the Moabites. 'Believe the prophets of God, so shall ye prosper.' And the Senator from New York, more emphatic than impassioned, has read this portion of Jewish history, and pressed it into his service. 'Senators of the free states,' said he, 'I appeal to you: believe ye the prophets? I know ye do.' And what is the application of this oratorical apostrophe? I grieve at the lamentable descent -- at the fall from the dignity of style and subject . . . . To believe the prophets in the days of old was the safety of Israel; to believe the prophets in the days that are upon us is the safety of mines, of quarries, -- and of abolition. We were warned, in the time of

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[1] Ibid., p. 521.

> our Savior, that false prophets should come to seduce 'even the elect.' They are already upon us. May the God of our fathers, and our own God, incline the hearts of the American people to reject their evil counsels, and to hold on to our precious heritage of Union!
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> . . . . . .
>
> One of the most reprehensible passages in the whole speech of the Senator is that where he draws a parallel between Christianity and abolition; anticipating for the latter the miraculous progress, which proves the divinity of the former. 'Abolition,' he says, 'is a slow but irrepressible uprising of principles of natural justice and humanity,' etc. 'I may, however, remind slaveholders, that there is a time when oppression and persecution cease to be effectual against such movements,' etc. 'Christianity, blindly maligned during three centuries by praetors, governors, senators, councils, and emperors, towered above its enemies in a fourth; and even the cross, on which its Founder had expired, and which, therefore, was the emblem of its shame, became the sign under which it went forth evermore thereafter, conquering and to conquer. Abolition is yet in its first century.' To which I may add, may it be its last -- the last of external interference in the domestic concerns of other communities.
>
> He who runs may read that the purpose of all this irreverence is to elevate this fanatical and political firebrand to an equality with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.[1]

Summary

1. Cass employed few strong emotional appeals. Only infrequently would his language become extremely moving. This usually occurred (a) when he disparaged someone for advocating disunion or for exhibiting disloyalty to the Constitution or the government of the United States,

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[1] Ibid., pp. 523 - 25.

(b) when he vividly described the political blessings enjoyed by citizens of the United States, and (c) when he compared the nation at peace with the nation as it might be, devastated by civil war.

2. The popular sovereignty addresses of Cass were largely restrained and argumentative. Believing that political questions should be settled by rational means, he often voiced his respect for deliberation and reasoning as a means of solving national problems. Consequently the Michigan Senator not only avoided excessive emotion in his own speeches, but he admonished against the use of inordinate emotional persuasion when he observed it in the speeches of other Senators.

3. The appeals which were most characteristic of the Senate addresses of Cass on popular sovereignty were to security, brotherhood, justice, esteem, patriotism, and religion. The entreaties to patriotism and religion were by far the most numerous. In respect to patriotism, Cass refused to brook any unfair deprecation of American statesmen, living or dead, or of the United States government; and he demanded the utmost respect for the Constitution. His own devotion to the Union was unsurpassed. The appeals to religion involved gratitude for assistance, the beseeching of further aid, and a recognition of the omnipotence of the Deity. In this connection, the Michigan Senator also quoted occasionally from the Bible.

4. Because the speeches had a common body of subject matter and purpose, the amount of emotion inherent in a given speech appeared to have no relationship to issues, central ideas, or purposes. "Power of Congress" and "Kansas and Nebraska," however, evidenced considerably more mild emotional persuasion than did the other speeches in the series. The writer was able to discover no factors common to these speeches and foreign to the other speeches which might have accounted for the more extensive use of emotional materials.

5. The fact that Cass employed few direct appeals to emotions in his first speech on popular sovereignty can probably be explained to a certain extent. The Manifesto speech was superior to the others in the series in respect to analysis of subject matter, quality of reasoning, and clarity of organization. It was unquestionably the most carefully planned speech of the series. The contemplative and circumspect preparation period required for this speech provided the Michigan Senator ample opportunity to develop the subject matter in the restrained and dispassionate language which he regarded as mandatory to the discussion of constitutional law in the United States Senate.

Chapter Five

THE PERSONALITY AND CHARACTER OF LEWIS CASS

Rhetoricians believe that "the force of the speaker's personality or character is instrumental in facilitating the acceptance of belief."[1] Winston L. Brembeck and William S. Howell state that ethical appeal includes two elements: "(1) the reputation or prestige enjoyed by the speaker with respect to his particular audience and subject at the moment he begins to speak, and (2) the increasing or diminishing of that prestige as a result of what he says and does during the speech."[2] James H. McBurney and Ernest J. Wrage remark that the "listeners have four sources of information on which to base their opinion of the speaker as a person-- his reputation, what he says about himself, the choices he makes during his speech, and factors over which he has limited control."[3] William M. Sattler says: "Ethos may be defined as 'totality of characteristic traits,' rather than in terms of mere custom or morally approved habits."[4] Therefore, the number of factors affecting personal appeal are manifold. The writer will select a repre-

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[1] Thonssen and Baird, op. cit., p. 383.

[2] Brembeck and Howell, op. cit., p. 244.

[3] James H. McBurney and Ernest J. Wrage, Guide to Good Speech (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1955), p. 24.

[4] William M. Sattler, "Conceptions of Ethos in Ancient Rhetoric," Speech Monographs, XIV (1947), 55.

sentative group of criteria which he believes to be useful and pertinent in the analysis of the speeches by Cass.[1] In order to give organization to these concepts, they shall be classified under the three traditional Aristotelian categories of intelligence, character, and goodwill.[2]

Intelligence

Logical Integrity of the Speeches

Both the analysis which was done in Chapter III regarding the logical integrity of materials in the speeches of Cass and the discussion in Chapter IV relating to reasoning could properly be restated here as part of the investigation of the concept of intelligence. These remarks need not be repeated. It is probably significant, however, to recognize the overlap in rhetorical principles which occurs frequently in the appraisal of speeches.

Scholarship

Andrew C. McLaughlin stated that Lewis Cass "was a scholar and man of books as well as a politician and a

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Ethical Criteria		
Intelligence	Character	Goodwill
Logical integrity	Personal habits	Rapport
Scholarship	Respect	Moderation
Mental alertness	Industry and determination	Disapproval
	Honesty	

[2]"As for the speakers themselves, the sources of our trust in them are three, for apart from the arguments there are three things that gain our belief, namely, intelligence, character, and goodwill." Aristotle, Rhetoric, ii. 2. 1378a.

statesman."[1] Milo M. Quaife affirmed: "He was a thoroughgoing scholar."[2] Letters, pamphlets, speeches, official reports, articles, and books by Cass reveal a literary ability not ordinarily expected of a frontiersman and soldier. These works are characterized by an outstanding appreciation[3] and command of the English language. Cass believed that "the philosophy of speech is itself one of the most interesting objects of human contemplation, and the structure of languages is intimately connected with the character and condition of the people by whom they are spoken."[4] His outlook was, nevertheless, usually pragmatic for he declared: "It is not the quantity of knowledge, but the capacity to apply it, which promises success and usefulness in life."[5]

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[1] McLaughlin, Lewis Cass, p. 353. "His learning was unusually wide, often surprising by its scope even those who knew him well . . . . " Ibid. "There is no question of Cass' appreciation of cultural achievements and scholarship." Hewlett, op. cit., p. 12.

[2] Statement by Milo M. Quaife, personal interview, March 16, 1957.

[3] "Greece and Rome have left in the modern tongues many witnesses of their own, and it will not be denied that a full knowledge of the English language cannot be obtained without a general acquaintance with these ancient languages . . . . These views are sufficient to redeem our schools from the imputation of an unprofitable application of their time to barren and useless pursuits." Lewis Cass, Address Before the Alumni Association of Hamilton College, August, 1830 (Utica: William Williams, 1830), p. 33.

[4] Ibid., pp. 33-34.

[5] Ibid., p. 38.

Mention has already been made of some of the writing Cass did when he served as minister to France, namely, France, Its King, Court, and Government and Three Hours at Saint Cloud, and An Examination of the Question, Now in Discussion, Between the American and British Governments, Concerning the Right of Search. In addition, Cass is reported to have written an article dealing with French judicature. He completed a twelve-page treatise entitled An Historical, Geographical, and Statistical Account of the Island of Candia or Ancient Crete, which was published in the Southern Literary Messenger, November, 1839. Cass found time to read in the French archives and there uncovered information relating to early American history.[1] Some of the historical papers which he brought back were published by the Wisconsin Historical Society.[2]

Previous to these efforts, however, "his writing was limited to shorter (Cass called them 'fugitive') pieces for literary journals."[3] McLaughlin commented that his "contri-

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[1]"The following extracts have been made from a mass of valuable MSS, relating to the early history of this part of the country, which were copied from originals in the archives of Paris by Gen. Cass while minister to France." Detroit Democratic Free Press, July 1, 1844. Detroit Public Library.

[2]"The following documents were obtained from the French archives, by Hon. Lewis Cass, when minister to that country." Lyman C. Draper (ed.), Collections of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin (Madison: Calkins and Webb, 1857), III, 139.

[3]Woodford, op. cit., p. 192. In response to a query in 1849, Cass submitted a list of his published articles.

butions to periodicals were more than mere trivialities dashed off in haste for a penny a line. They are real additions to knowledge."[1] William T. Young corroborated by saying that "his essays and reviews exhibit a most profound and extensive acquaintance with the subjects of his research . . . ."[2] American periodicals published several manuscripts by Cass concerning the American Indian,[3] a subject on which he was regarded as an authority.[4] Young claimed that "the most accurate and reliable account of the condi-

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They included: North American Review, January, 1826; April, 1827; April, 1828; January, 1830; October, 1840; Southern Literary Messenger, November, 1839; July, 1841; Democratic Review, July, 1852; May, 1838; Knickerbocker, one article between 1838-48. Letter from Cass to Henetman, January 8, 1849. Lewis Cass Papers. W.C.L. "Much of his work unfortunately remained unpublished and with the passage of time, was lost to posterity." Quaife and Glazer, op. cit., p.344.

[1] McLaughlin, Lewis Cass, pp. 355-56.

[2] Young, op. cit., p. 410.

[3] "Indian treaties and Laws and Regulations" by Lewis Cass was published by the War Department in 1826. "Service of Indians in Civilized Warfare" was printed in the North American Review, April, 1827. "Documents and Proceedings, Relating to the Formation and Progress of the Board in the City of New York for the Emmigration, Preservation, and Improvement of the Aborigines of America" appeared in the North American Review in January, 1830.

[4] "He knew their manners and customs, their disposition and life-- for he had summered and wintered with them, in peace and in war." Young, op. cit., p. 375. "His articles in the 'North American Review' treat generally of Indian and Western subjects, and show his great acquaintance with the Indian character, and of the problems which affect our country's progress. These essays are long and discursive, written at a time when our important magazines invited profound and exhaustive treatment of interesting and serious topics." McLaughlin, Lewis Cass, pp. 354-55.

tions, traits of character, and philological peculiarities, of the Indian tribes is to be found in the articles of General Cass . . . ."[1] John J. McElhone, Senate stenographer during the mid-nineteenth century, said the Michigan Senator's "knowledge of his country and its resources was simply astonishing . . . . He . . . could tell Indian stories by the hour."[2]

Cass read a paper at the first meeting of the Michigan Historical Society concerning the early history of Detroit and the conspiracy of Pontiac, which one historian termed a "valuable contribution to historical literature."[3] While Secretary of War, Cass wrote, at the request of President Jackson, an account of the Battle of New Orleans, which was published in the American Quarterly Review. He delivered a scholarly address in 1830 before the alumni of Hamilton College; and in 1836, as the first president of the American Historical Association, Cass read a paper "which bears the marks of thoughtful preparation, as well as knowledge and appreciation of the great truths of history and political philosophy."[4]

The literary works of Lewis Cass were carefully

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[1]Young, op. cit., pp. 410-11.

[2]John J. McElhone, Detroit Tribune, February 17, 1889. B.H.C.

[3]McLaughlin, Lewis Cass, p. 354.

[4]Ibid.

composed and manifested a wide scope of knowledge[1] and a respect for education.[2] His prepared speeches, whether for the Senate or for ceremonial occasions, revealed meticulous research. "What was worth doing at all seemed worth doing well; his orations at agricultural meetings and at great industrial celebrations show the customary breadth of scholarship and careful preparation." In an address before the Kalamazoo County Agricultural Society in October of 1850, Cass expressed an almost devout faith in the value of education:

> The improvement of the intellectual faculties, in all the stages of life, constitutes one of the most rational and active sources of human pleasure. It enlarges our views of the works and designs of Providence; it opens new channels of information; it removes those prejudices, we are so prone to entertain, when circumscribed within a narrow horizon, and it extends the sphere of our utility, as well for others as for ourselves, by that increase of knowledge, which is the ablest element of power, or rather, as Lord Bacon says, which is power itself.[3]

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[1] "By 1845 there was no better educated man in the Senate than Lewis Cass." Hewlett, op. cit., p. 3. "His contributions to the North American Review, in the days of its commanding influence and superiority, added as well to the celebrity of that magazine. . . ." Young, op. cit., p. 410.

[2] "The judgement may be improved and strengthened by a contemplation of the condition and progress of mankind, in ages long gone by, and of the reflections which the historians of these events have bequeathed to us." Cass, "Hamilton College Address," p. 36.

[3] Lewis Cass, "Address Delivered Before the Kalamazoo County Agricultural Society, October 11, 1850." In another speech before the American Historical Society, the optimism shown by Cass for the improvement of the condition of the American Indian was based upon a program of enlightenment. He declared: "Let us indulge the hope that the prospects of the aboriginal race are brightening, that their removal

This speech was replete with specific, detailed, and statistical scientific information relating to agriculture. Young appropriately remarked that "the acquaintance manifested by the writer with minutia of agricultural science, is indeed astonishing . . . ."[1] In addition there were numerous allusions to history, geographic locations throughout the world, the Bible, and ancient literature.[2] The same

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and re-establishment in the trans-Mississippi world will elevate their hopes, stimulate their exertions, improve their condition, and gradually prepare them for the full blessings of Christianity and civilization." Lewis Cass, Discourse Pronounced at the Capitol of the United States in the Hall of Representatives Before the American Historical Society, January 30, 1836 (Washington: P. Thompson, 1836), p. 30.

[1]Young, op. cit., p. 417.

[2]Cass alluded to ancient literature in most of his prepared speeches. Some examples are: "Shade of Quintilian! What a figure for a disciple who invokes thy name and appeals to thy authority." Cass, Globe, 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 866. "The Adademy and the Lyceum of Athens, are well known to all scholars, from the peculiarity of their doctrines, the high reputation of their masters, and the number and celebrity of their pupils." Cass, "American Historical Society Address," p. 13. In his speech to the Alumni of Hamilton College, Cass took issue with the significance placed upon the writings of Aristotle. He said: "I allude to the effect of the writings of Aristotle; and in the whole progress of human intellect, there is no event more striking than the dominion which they acquired and exercised over the opinions of mankind. A system of verbal metaphysics, acute indeed, and evincing great fertility of genius and labor of investigation, but utterly useless for any of the purposes of life, either in the abstract or practical sciences; professing to be a guide in the discovery of truth, but involving its disciples in intricate and insignificant subtleties, difficult to be understood, and useless when known, enchained the faculties of the world for twenty centuries. The despotism it exerted is an historical monument, once stately and imposing, now fallen and in ruins, but still worthy of contemplation, like other monuments of human wisdom and human folly. Superstition, in her darkest hour, never ruled her coteries with more despotic sway . . . . It is one of

comments obtain concerning the September, 1850, speech by Cass in Detroit before the Michigan State Agricultural Society.

Like Cicero, Cass recommended a broad base of education and learning as an indispensable prerequisite to excellent eloquence. He said in 1830 at Hamilton College:

> The master spirits of our fatherland, they who guided the councils of England in her career of prosperity and glory, whose eloquence was the admiration of their contemporaries, as will be of posterity, were deeply imbued with classical learning. They drank at the fountain and not at the stream, and they led captive the public opinion of the empire, and asserted their dominion in the Senate, and the cabinet. Nor have we been wanting in contributions to the general stock of eloquence. In our legislative assemblies, at the bar, and in the pulpit, many examples of elocution are before us, not the less cheering in the rewards they offer, than in the renown which follows them. And if our lamps are lighted at the altar of ancient and modern learning, we may hope that a sacred fire will be kept burning,not indeed with pagan hopes and pagan rites, but to shed its influence upon the institutions and duration of the republic.[1]

Education, too, Cass asserted, in the same speech, is the foundation of republican government. The "schoolmaster

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the most brilliant and signal, but barren triumphs, which genius has ever achieved. Freed as we now are from its thraldom, it is difficult to appreciate the influence it exerted . . . .

Bacon was the first who fully perceived the unfounded pretensions of this imposing pageant, which had so long fascinated the attention of the world. He saw that the great truths of nature would not appear at the call of a syllogism, and that the system of the sophists, attempting with equal presumption and folly to explore the wonderful operations in the world around them, by the light of categories and predicables (sic), was a blind guide, leading not to truth, but to useless and endless disputations. It instituted artificial rules for laboratories and observatories." Cass, "Hamilton College Address," pp. 26-27.

[1]Cass, "Hamilton College Address," pp. 37-38.

is a more powerful antagonist than the soldier and the alphabet a more efficient weapon than the bayonet."[1] He proceeded to trace the historical influence of education upon the character of governments.[2] He said:

> The whole structure of our institutions rests upon public opinion, and if that opinion be not enlightened in its views, and virtuous in its tendency, the desolating blast will sweep over us, as it has swept over so many fair portions of the world, destroying the flower and the fruit, the promise and the enjoyment of those blessings which come to us by inheritance, but may be lost by improvidence. We must look forward to an enlarged and vigorous system of education, as the sheet anchor of our institutions-- a system which shall extend the elements of useful knowledge to all, and which will enable those who may desire it, to prosecute their researches into the depths of ancient and modern learning; and a system which shall add to the cultivation of the intellectual faculties, that mental and moral discipline, and those habits of life and conversation, without which the highest powers of the human understanding are equally dangerous to the possessor himself, and to those, who are destined to feel their operation.[3]

Throughout his long lifetime, Cass lent considerable support and encouragement to educational organizations. In Washington before the American Historical Society, he reminded listeners that "the philosophy of history requires laborious investigation and deliberate decision."[4] Cass

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[1] Ibid., p. 8.

[2] "Throughout all his long public life, under all circumstances, he advocated the education of the people as the only safety for a republican form of government." Edward P. Allen, Congressional Record, 50th Congress, 2nd session, p. 2488.

[3] Cass, "Hamilton College Address," pp. 28-29.

[4] Cass, "American Historical Society Address," p. 24.

firmly believed that there was a dire need for "rigid investigation, and of extensive collections where accounts can be collated and corrected."[1] He urged, for instance, that there be immediate research into the habits of the American Indian while the data were still available:

> Much has indeed been written about them-- much, no doubt, that is true, but a great deal that is false, and still more having a tendency to make false impressions. . . . Our military outposts furnish excellent places of observation, where the best materials for Indian history can be collected; and the graduates of the Military Academy, who are sent there, could not devote their leisure to a pursuit more interesting in itself, nor richer in the rewards it offers. . . . The traditional legends of the Indians are passing away. All that is not arrested within a few years will be beyond the reach of discovery. Although their tales of former ages cannot be viewed as authentic materials for history, yet, they may dimly shadow out events, which have left no other materials; and they are valuable as the manuscripts of a rude people, illustrating their peculiar opinions.[2]

It may be that the most significant contribution to scholarship which was made by Cass was his unremitting insistence upon the collection and preservation of documents, papers, and primary data relating to American history.[3]

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[1] Ibid., p. 22.

[2] Ibid., p. 30.

[3] "Mr. Johnston will much oblige me by inquiry at York whether there are at any publick archives at that place any letters or other documents relating to the early history or settlement of Detroit or any part of the territory of Michigan." Copy of a letter from Cass to Mr. Johnston, July 31, 1824. Lewis Cass Papers. B.H.C. "It has occurred to me that you have Mavois' collection of voyages and travels. If you have and if in the collection, there are any of the voyages to or travels in this country, (the U.S.) or Canada, I will thank you to lend me the volumes containing them." Letter from Cass to William Woodbridge, December 27, 1824. Lewis Cass Papers. B.H.C.

He realized that some materials needed to be rescued from oblivion and protected in some official repository for future scholars. Before the American Historical Society Cass declared: "There should be one place in our country, where every work may be found, which has any relation, however remote, to the discovery, settlement, and history of America; and that place is here."[1] With considerable foresight, Cass stated that "we can garner up for others, though not for ourselves; we can lay by treasures, whose value will increase beyond the dreams of avarice. Let us do so. Let us, at any rate, lay the foundation."[2]

Mental Alertness

As a Senator, Cass was occasionally the object of innuendo for an alleged lack of mental alertness. Some critics at times preferred the word "senility." Cass was sixty-three years of age when he became a senator and seventy-eight when he left the Senate. Certainly his age and his obesity hindered him somewhat in the exercise of mental discipline. In March of 1850, when he was being criticized by Senator Hunter,

> . . . General Cass clutched his pen and filled a half sheet of paper with notes, which he held in his left hand, while with his right (his eyes resting with all his mind upon the orator), he reached for a sand stand, but instead, caught hold of an inkstand full of ink, which he poured all over his

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[1]Cass, "American Historical Society Address," p. 17.

[2]Ibid., p. 29.

> notes, his left hand, coat sleeve, vest, and inexpressibles. He was a sight in a moment--that uniformly neat and well-dressed gentleman.[1]

A few months later Felch wrote to his wife: "We have had for the last two weeks some very hot weather, not enough to roast one. . . . Gov. Cass sweats like a butcher these hot days."[2] In April of 1856, Cass did something which perhaps caused many of his colleagues to question his judgment. "Apparently without even reading its contents, Cass presented a petition from the Topeka Assembly. Only after he had presented it and had asked that it be printed did Cass discover that the petition was in all probability not authentic, but the work of irresponsible Kansas Free Soilers."[3]

There were numerous unkind remarks made about the mental and physical capacities of Cass. A biographer of Zachary Taylor described Cass in the Senate: "Fat and ponderous, he had lost much of his former zeal and zest. . . . Age and obesity were crawling up on the brain and body of the portly Detroiter."[4] Oliver Dyer asserted that

> . . . General Cass was a dull, phlegmatic, lymphatic, lazy man. He had an unusually large brain, but it was so torpid that nothing but a powerful appeal to his selfishness or his vanity could arouse it into action; and when it was aroused its activity was spasmodic and could not be counted upon for sustained energy.[5]

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[1] Hillsdale Gazette, March 19, 1850. M.H.C's.

[2] Letter from Alpheus Felch to his wife, June 28, 1850. Alpheus Felch Papers. M.H.C's.

[3] Hewlett, op. cit., p. 275.

[4] Holman Hamilton, Zachary Taylor, Soldier in the White House (New York: Bobbs-Merrill Co., [illegible]), p. 277.

[5] Dyer, op. cit., p. 45.

Allen Nevins felt as Dyer did that Cass was "inert and indolent, his intellect stirred to action only by some powerful appeal to self-interest, vanity, or resentment. . . ."[1] The Hillsdale Gazette referred to Cass long before he retired as an "aged and beloved man."[2] The Baltimore Sun of September 27, 1856 stated: "'In Michigan the people are determined to send old Genl. Cass back to the United States Senate. . . .'"[3] Shortly after Cass left the Senate, the Cleveland Plaindealer reported: "'Gen. Cass is in a critical state of health.'"[4] During the same period, President Buchanan had become "aware of the General's frequent attacks of Vertigo, and his intellectual lapses, of his growing impatience with detail and routine."[5]

Even more alarming than the above comments concerning the mental alertness and general physical fitness of Cass were the confessions which he himself made to others on the

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[1]Nevins, op. cit., p. 193. "Certainly, as some writers have pointed out, Cass' role of elder statesman did not comport with the dynamic qualities which are usually ascribed to the leader of a national party. He did not take the initiative in debate; he did not formulate the catch phrases and stereotypes which help to unite a political group and inspire it to greater effort. The truth was that after 1848 Cass was not a great party leader in the usual meaning of that term." Hewlett, op. cit., p. 168.

[2]Hillsdale Gazette, April 7, 1853. M.H.C's.

[3]Baltimore Sun as quoted by the Washington Union, November 1, 1856. N.R.R. Library of Congress.

[4]Cleveland Plaindealer as quoted by the Grand Rapids Grand River Eagle, August 19, 1858. M.H.C's.

[5]Hewlett, op. cit., p. 283.

same subject. As early as 1828 when he was still governor of Michigan Territory, Cass wrote to Woodbridge: "But a very few years of publick life remain to me . . . ."[1] In 1852, five years before he became Secretary of State, Cass expressed publicly at a ratification meeting in Washington: "I trust I know myself well enough to know that my time for public office is fast passing away. . . ."[2] The following year in a moment of depression the Michigan Senator avowed to Franklin Pierce: "I am an old man. My race is almost run. I ask nothing of mortal man. . . . For myself, I have been altogether quiet, not out of sight of my house, since my return. I have received a stroke from which I can never recover and life has no future for me."[3] Soon thereafter Cass reiterated to a friend: "I am fast passing beyond scenes of active life. I shall never hold an office other than the one I now fill, never. I am a disinterested spectator of passing events, rather than an actor . . . ."[4]

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[1]Letter from Cass to William Woodbridge, January 8, 1828. Lewis Cass Papers. B.H.C.

[2]Lewis Cass, "Ratification Meeting Address" in Washington, June 9, 1852, as reported in the Hillsdale Gazette, June 17, 1852. M.H.C's.

[3]Copy of a letter from Cass to Franklin Pierce, August 30, 1853. Lewis Cass Papers. W.C.L.

[4]Letter from Cass to Samuel Beardsly, December 13, 1853. Lewis Cass Papers. W.C.L. After writing this letter, Cass served four more years in the Senate and three beyond that as Secretary of State.

Four years later, however, Cass assured his son: "As to my health, it couldn't be better."[1] A Senate stenographer declared: "In Congress he always impressed me more than any other man there. He was a very exact man, always punctual and insisted on the same qualities in others."[2] McLaughlin wrote: "Those still living, who knew Cass in his vigor, are not willing to admit, whatever may have been their political convictions, that in real strength and capacity, in mental virility or acumen, he was overmatched by any save the very greatest of his day."[3] It is difficult to determine the exact time in the life of Cass to which McLaughlin was referring. Perhaps it was the same period in 1844 when the Detroit Democratic Free Press said:

> Gen. Cass returned home to this city this morning in the steamer St. Louis from Cleveland. He was never in better health or spirits. He is to leave the first of next week for Indiana to fulfill some engagements to address the people there.[4]

A decade later in 1854 one observer reported that General Cass "is full of vigor, and walks down from Willard's [Hotel] to the capitol, which is a good mile, every morning, with a frame as erect and a step as seemingly elastic as if he were

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[1]Letter from Lewis Cass to Lewis Cass, Jr., December 7, 1857. Lewis Cass Papers. W.C.L.

[2]John J. McElhone, Detroit Tribune, February 17, 1889. D.P.L.

[3]McLaughlin, Lewis Cass, p. 190.

[4]Detroit Democratic Free Press, October 5, 1844. D.P.L.

but twenty-five."[1]

Character

Personal Habits

There is considerable evidence which shows that the personal habits and morality of Cass were beyond reproach.[2] "Governing frontier settlements where rough characters abounded and roystering habits prevailed, he was always in his own deportment courteous and complaisant, always abstemious, always self-respecting. . . ."[3] During one of his official visits to Washington, the Michigan Governor wrote home to Woodbridge: "I shall probably leave here the beginning of the week, and shall with great pleasure hasten home. This place does not suit me, nor am I fit to live here. There is too much high living and too many parties."[4] McLaughlin commented that his "moderation reached beyond the limits of meat and drink, and showed itself in a life

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[1]Letter from Mike Walsh to a constituent, quoted in the Detroit Daily Democrat, February 15, 1854. D.P.L. If anyone doubts the ability of Cass to think clearly on his feet and argue effectively, let him read the impromptu exchange between Cass and Webster in the Senate over the McCloud incident. Globe, 29th Congress, 1st session, pp. 627-28.

[2]"[His] many years in Indian service had proven him fearless and determined, absolutely honest--a man who valued his word as he valued his life." Silliman, op. cit. p. 195.

[3]Cooley, op. cit., p. 204.

[4]Letter from Cass to William Woodbridge, January 7, 1823. Lewis Cass Papers. B.H.C.

strongly regular and methodical, prolonged in consequence."[1] The Ann Arbor Signal of Liberty said of Cass: "His moral character is said to be irreproachable, and he has through life been a strict total abstinent man."[2] Harper's Weekly reiterated that Lewis Cass is "an exemplar of morality, severe, staid, frugal. . . ."[3] In 1813 Cass objected to the return of Judge Woodward because of his vices. The Michigan Governor wrote to a friend: "Is Woodward to return here as a judge? If he does I shall consider it as a curse to the Territory. The Government, if they could just appreciate his character would not permit him to return."[4]

A great deal of liquor was consumed per person in the United States during the nineteenth century. It was often the hospitable custom to offer it to guests in the home. Although Cass seldom drank,[5] he was known to serve the

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[1] McLaughlin, Lewis Cass, p. 356.

[2] The Ann Arbor Signal of Liberty as quoted by the Detroit Democratic Free Press, July 15, 1844. D.P.L.

[3] Harper's Weekly, April 11, 1857. W.C.L. Cass said that "the moral principles may be fortified and invigorated by didactic essays which are honorable to the masters of the Lyceum and the Academy." Cass, "Hamilton College Address," P. 36.

[4] Letter from Cass to Thomas Worthinton, November 28, 1813. Lewis Cass Papers. B.H.C.

[5] "He seldom tasted wine of any kind, though not refusing to provide his guests with the best." McLaughlin, Lewis Cass, p. 356. "You will oblige me by calling at half past 12 today to take a glass of wine." Letter from Cass to William Woodbridge, July 28, 1831. Lewis Cass Papers. B.H.C. Mary Bingham reported that Cass drank champagne with her at dinner. Letter from Mary Bingham to her sister,

finest spirits to his friends. The Michigan Governor, however, as ex-officio superintendent of Indian affairs in the Northwest Territory did his utmost to keep alcohol out of the hands of the Indian. Cass stated: "the inordinate indulgence of the Indians in spiritous liquors is one of the most deplorable consequences, which has resulted from their intercourse with civilized man. . . . As long as the stimulus can be obtained, an Indian abandons himself to its indulgence, with the recklessness of desperation."[1] Eliner Houser wrote:

> Congress had already forbidden the sale of liquor to the Indians; and Governor Cass from the first to last strenuously opposed such sale. Yet in spite of all legal and official restrictions, the traders, true forerunners of modern bootleggers, plied their traffic. . . .
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> . . . . . .
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> Governor Cass consistently urged white men to keep whisky from the Indians, and the Indians to keep away from whisky. 'If your people would only cease the use of whisky,' he told the latter, 'you would all be prosperous and happy.'[2]

In 1814 Governor Cass issued a proclamation enjoining "all persons to refrain from selling or disposing of any spiritous

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December 11, 1849. Kinsley S. Bingham Papers. M.H.C's. "He alluded to the 'Distillery' and 'wine' fabrications, and stated the extraordinary fact that he had never used intoxicating drinks; and attributed his uniform health to total abstinence." Hillsdale Gazette, reporting on a Democratic Mass Meeting at which Cass spoke, October 14, 1852. M.H.C's.

[1]Lewis Cass, Remarks of the Policy and Practice of the United States and Great Britain in their treatment of the Indians (Boston: Frederick T. Gray, 1827), p. 42.

[2]Eliner Houser, "Wet or Dry", Michigan History Magazine, XIV (1930), 279.

liquid to any Indian. . . ."[1] He placed a fine of one hundred dollars as punishment for violation of this decree. When Cass became Secretary of War, he abolished the grog ration in the army. During the same period, he became active in a temperance movement in Washington. "In the Senate chamber, February 26, 1833, on a call signed by twenty-five members of Congress there was a meeting at which was organized the Congressional Temperance Society."[2] Cass was elected president.

Respect

Cass, of course, enjoyed a great deal of respect and prestige because of the high political offices which he held. Andrew Jackson wrote to Cass in 1843:

> Having full confidence in your abilities and republican principles I invited you to my cabinet, and I never can forget with what discretion and talents you met those great and delicate questions which were brought before you whilst you Presided (*sic*) over the Department of War. . . .[3]

Polk, too, had respect for Cass, who had been gracious in the loss of the Democratic nomination to him in 1844. Cass had even campaigned enthusiastically for Polk in Michigan. Hewlett stated that "on May 6 [1846], on the basis

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[1]Document dated August, 1814. Lewis Cass Papers. W.C.L.

[2]John Fitzgibbon, "King Alcohol: His Rise, Reign, and Fall in Michigan," Michigan History Magazine, II (1918), 742.

[3]Letter from Andrew Jackson to Lewis Cass, July 8, 1843 as quoted in General Lewis Cass, p. 24.

of dispatches from General Taylor, Polk called a meeting of his top advisers: Vice-President Dallas, Secretary of War Marcy, Secretary of State Buchanan, and Senator Cass."[1]

Perhaps the prestige of the Michigan Senator was never higher than when he returned to the Senate in 1849. Hewlett described it well:

> In 1849 Cass came to Washington not only well-known but as a man of great prestige and dignity. It was no longer necessary for him to carry his opinions to others; younger men would now come to him for the benefit of his judgment and experience. His political career had reached its climax just one year before in the Presidential race. Now with ambition mellowed and spirit tempered by many political conflicts, Cass virtually 'retired' to the Senate. He had made his mark; he was willing to leave the petty strivings for position to younger men. He refused appointment to any of the standing committees of the Senate. Leaving the preparation and presentation of bills to others, Cass was content with a pointed question on routine problems; with a few words to clear the air and soothe the nerves in times of crisis; with a voluminous, learned, set speech on great issues before the Senate. By remaining aloof from work-a-day functions of the Senate, Cass was able to achieve something of the role of the elder statesman, one who could be called on when the problems of state became too big for ordinary men. If he was not of this calibre, at least he was able to convey that impression to many people in 1850.[2]

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[1]Hewlett, op. cit., p. 84. "I desire to see you for a few minutes this morning if it shall be convenient for you to call." Letter from Polk to Cass, March 20, 1846. W.C.L.

[2]Hewlett, op. cit., pp. 166-167. "During his second term in the Senate 1851-57, Cass dominated if he did not completely control the foreign policy of the Democratic Party." Ibid. A ball was given February 22, 1851 at Tammany Hall in honor of Cass. Felch received an invitation, which is to be found in the Alpheus Felch Papers. M.H.C's.

For several years previous to and subsequent to the climax of his political career in 1848, Cass enjoyed great respect and prestige. The Ann Arbor Signal of Liberty stated that "as an individual we have respect for the General."[1] The Baltimore Sun, alluding to Cass, remarked in 1852: "'There is an innate dignity in some men, which cannot be eclipsed even by what would appear as grotesque in other persons.'"[2] The Hillsdale Gazette affirmed: "No one, it is believed, has the strong hold on the nation's affections that Gen. Cass has. His whole career is public and without reproach."[3] The owner of the Detroit Free Press in 1853 was W. F. Storey. Charles Perry said of him:

> In the conduct of his paper he gathered an able staff around him and ruled them with an iron discipline. He respected no man's opinions with the possible exception of those of Lewis Cass. He declared that he wanted no friends, as having friends would hamper his freedom in printing the news.[4]

Harper's Weekly referred to Cass as a "monumental figure. No man has filled so large a place in American history. Many presidents will rank, in after times, beneath Clay, Webster, Calhoun, Marcy, and Cass."[5] From another quarter

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[1]The Ann Arbor Signal of Liberty, July 15, 1844. M.H.C's.

[2]Baltimore Sun as quoted by the Detroit Free Press, September 15, 1852. D.P.L.

[3]Hillsdale Gazette, January 8, 1852. M.H.C's.

[4]Charles M. Perry, "The Newspaper Attack on Dr. Tappan," Michigan History Magazine, X (1926), 499.

[5]Harper's Weekly, April 11, 1857. W.C.L.

Cass was honored:

> The Indians who as late as the last council in Detroit, of the Chippewas, Ottawas, and Pottawatomies July 25, 1855, testified their respect for and confidence in him by abandoning their discussion, flocking about him, grasping his hand and saluting him as an old and valued friend when he unexpectedly entered the council room.[1]

Apparently there was a rapid decline in the popularity of the Michigan statesman after he was forced to leave the Senate. Even the friendly Detroit Free Press admitted: "More than any great statesman alive does he [Cass] occupy the position of a disinherited patriot."[2] Between 1844 and 1856, the Free Press had anticipated the stump engagements of Cass by announcing his itinerary as well as naming the other Democratic speakers appearing on the program with the Michigan Senator. During these years the name of Cass invariably led the list: "Gen. Cass, Gov. Felch, and Gov. McClelland . . . ."[3] Beginning in 1856, however, the same journal began to report: "Speeches by Breckinridge, Dickinson, Preston, Cass and Felch."[4] "No longer to be reckoned with as a power in the West, Cass was virtually forgotten in the Democratic strategy which preceded the Cincinnati Con-

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[1]Thomas W. Palmer, Congressional Record, 50th Congress, 2nd session, p. 2002.

[2]The Detroit Daily Free Press, September 11, 1856. D.P.L.

[3]Ibid., October 19, 1852. D.P.L.

[4]Ibid., September 7, 1856. D.P.L.

vention of 1856."[1]

> The historian has looked in vain for any expression of Cass' opinion on the momentous issues of 1858, 1859, and 1860. . . . As a cabinet officer [Secretary of State], he was forgotten to a degree that hardly seems possible. Even the Michigan Democracy disowned him. In the state convention which met in Detroit in June, 1860, a delegate moved that Cass, who was in the city, be invited to attend the convention as a guest; but after a brief discussion the motion was tabled and forgotten.[2]

The active political career of Cass came to an end when he resigned the position of Secretary of State. Stripped of the respect and prestige which for years had been his as head of the Democratic party, his return to Michigan was a sad affair. Cass was, in effect, going home to die after a long political life which had been marked with misfortune. He had been defeated for the presidency in 1848; the nation had condemned his popular sovereignty thesis after its ignominious failure in Kansas in 1856; he had been repudiated by his own state and forced out of the Senate during the same year; and he found himself in 1861 in a position which left him no alternative but resignation. Moreover, "he now saw simultaneously with the defeat of his party which he loved, the country which he had served, going rapidly, he believed, to inevitable dissolution and destruction."[3]

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[1]Hewlett, op. cit., p. 279.

[2]Ibid., p. 291.

[3]William E. Chandler, Congressional Record, 50th Congress, 2nd session, p. 2007.

In 1889 W. F. Poole suggested to the Houghton-Mifflin Company,[1] which was publishing a series of biographies dealing with great American statesmen, that Andrew C. McLaughlin[2] be asked to do the life of Lewis Cass. John T. Morse, editor of the Statesmen Series, replied that the Series was closed.[3] Later, however, Morse changed his mind. His letter to McLaughlin casts some light upon the subject of the prestige of Cass at the time, twenty-three years after his death:

> Several months ago it was suggested to me that you might like to write a life of Cass for the American Statesmen Series. It did not, at the time, fall in with my plan to include Cass in the Series, but upon further consideration I am inclined to revise this decision. The political growth and characteristics of the Northwest are not depicted in any volume as yet, and I think that this leaves a hiatus which I ought to fill. It is rather for this purpose than because Cass himself seems to me, as an individual, to deserve to be included, that I have made up my mind [to] add his biography. . . . I say this only in order to show you the motive which I should like to have you bear in mind in writing the book, if you undertake it. I do not conceive that Cass

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[1]"I have just written a letter to Houghton-Mifflin and Co., warmly commending the paper you read at Washington, and advising them to ask you to prepare a life of Gov. Cass for the series of 'American Statesmen'." Letter from W. F. Poole to A. C. McLaughlin, January 14, 1889. Andrew C. McLaughlin Papers. M.H.C's.

[2]Andrew C. McLaughlin was a professor of history at the University of Michigan. He had read a paper in Washington entitled "The Influence of Governor Cass on the Development of the Northwest," which had considerably impressed W. F. Poole. Although McLaughlin was a Republican, his subsequent book presented Cass as a truly great statesman. This is the only biography of Cass that has been done by a professional historian.

[3]Letter from John T. Morse to James J. Angell, January 15, 1889. Andrew C. McLaughlin Papers. M.H.C's.

> did much in the way of shaping the policy, or controlling the fortunes of the country, or in creating public opinion; therefore his personality should not be the dominating interest of the book, as in the case of Jefferson and Hamilton.[1]

A granddaughter of Cass informed McLaughlin that her mother was pleased about the fact that an historian was going to write a biography of her father. Heretofore, said Elizabeth Cass Goddard, "everything relating to him that has been published has been for some political purpose, and therefore most unsatisfactory."[2]

Industry and Determination

Testimony.--Lewis Cass set high aspirations for himself, and in order to achieve them he had to work hard. At least during his early political years, he was "possessed of abounding energy and driven by an insatiable curiosity."[3] Sometimes, in fact, the people with whom Cass associated believed that he was too ambitious. William Woodbridge was such a person. Woodbridge and Cass were nearly lifelong acquaintances. They worked closely together for many years when Cass was territorial governor of Michigan and Woodbridge was Secretary of Michigan Territory and acting governor during the frequent absences of Cass. Cass had exerted consid-

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[1]Letter from John T. Morse to Andrew C. McLaughlin, April 16, 1889. Andrew C. McLaughlin Papers. M.H.C's.

[2]Letter from Elizabeth Cass Goddard to Andrew C. McLaughlin, August 29 (no year provided). Andrew C. McLaughlin Papers. M.H.C's.

[3]Quaife and Glazer, op. cit., p. 145.

erable influence in order to get Woodbridge appointed to the post of Secretary.[1] Letters written by Woodbridge, however, make it clear that he was jealous of the ambitious behavior of Cass. He confided to J. Lanman: "I had hoped to have found a friend in Gov. C-- the same friend I thought him 20 years ago - - but he has tasted of power and wealth here and the friend is lost in the politician and the calculator - - the man in the mere political artificial existent."[2]

An overworked Senator Felch from Michigan admitted to his wife in 1850: "Gen. Cass is of course employed all the time preparing, delivering, and sending away his speeches - - so I have most of the work from our state in the way of business to do."[3] Perhaps it was partly because of the assiduous efforts of Cass and partly for political reasons that his ambitious behavior was reviled by the hostile Detroit Daily Advertiser:

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[1]See Cass letter dated August 8, 1814. Lewis Cass Papers. B.H.C. There are letters from Cass to Woodbridge dated 1822, 1823, 1828, and 1832 in which the Governor expresses his desire to forget their differences and renew their long friendship. Lewis Cass Papers. B.H.C.

[2]Letter from William Woodbridge to J. Lanman, December 12, 1822. William Woodbridge Papers. B.H.C. See also Woodbridge letter dated February 5, 1825 for a similar sentiment. Woodbridge delivered a vitriolic speech against Cass at a meeting of the Friends of General Taylor in Detroit in September of 1848. See New York Weekly Tribune, September, 1848. W.C.L.

[3]Letter from Alpheus Felch to his wife, February 5, 1850. Alpheus Felch Papers. M.H.C's.

> Let the people answer whether there is nothing but the self-aggrandizement of Gen. Cass worth looking after. Has he not already lived long enough upon the public crib? Is nothing to be thought of but retaining Gen. Cass a bloodsucker upon the people's money? Has Michigan no interest to look after . . . ?
>
> Gen. Cass has been in the United States Senate for years, swaying a powerful influence, but has it been for the interest of his constituents, or has it been for his own aggrandizement? Has he not shuffled and danced to every possible tune to advance his own interest without regarding the interests of Michigan . . . ?
>
> Let the people tell Gen. Cass, through the ballot boxes, on Tuesday next, in thundertones, not to be mistaken, that his course has ever been false to them -- that he has neglected and sacrificed all to advance his individual interest -- to surfeit his aspiring ambition to be President of the United States.[1]

The Washtenaw Whig reported:

> 'Fitness for any responsible office . . . means a servile submission to the nod of this General -- a blind adherence to his views, right or wrong, and a pledge to devote the people's time and money to the furtherance of his interests, even though these interests, in every respect run counter to the interests of the people themselves. . . . No man, say they, must be nominated for Congress, who is not pledged, to work for Gen. Cass! To secure his nomination to the Presidency in 1852.'[2]

The New York Daily Tribune proclaimed a few months later:

> Gen. Cass is a Western land speculator, who has made a fortune out of the industry and labor of the hardy pioneers of the West; and the tact with which he has played the parts of a steady flatterer of the North and West for needful popularity, is really wonderful.[3]

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[1]Detroit Daily Advertiser, November 2, 1850. N.R.R. Library of Congress.

[2]Washtenaw Whig as quoted by the Detroit Daily Advertiser, Ibid.

[3]New York Daily Tribune, January 24, 1850. N.R.R. Library of Congress.

Woodford remarked that Elizabeth Cass "was the perfect counterpart to the driving, ambitious Lewis."[1]

Choices.--The speeches by Cass on some occasions revealed forceful statements indicating his strong determination. He would say: "I do not; and so believing, I shall ever avow the belief. My opinions were known to the people of Michigan before they last sent me here, and my adhesion to those opinions is due to my conviction and my consistency . . . ."[2] "Sir, I hold the doctrine . . . in utter abhorrence; and from the day it was proclaimed here before an indignant Senate, down to this day, I have denounced it whenever the occasion called for the expression of my views."[3] "The proposition is incontrovertible . . . ."[4] "But, sir, the difference between that proposition and mine is so marked with a boundary as broad and clear as ever divided truth from error."[5] "I repeat the sentiment -- and with a stronger conviction, if possible, than ever of its truth and importance."[6] "Till I change my convictions I shall neither seek to conceal nor disavow them."[7]

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[1]Woodford, op. cit., p. 115.

[2]Cass, Globe, 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 530.

[3]Ibid., p. 279.

[4]Cass, Globe, 34th Congress, 1st session, p. 515.

[5]Ibid., 33rd Congress, 1st session, p. 279.

[6]Ibid., 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 331.

[7]Ibid., p. 398.

In behalf of the territory of California, Cass said:

> I am as strong as anyone in the conviction, that California should be admitted, and as determined so far as my voice and vote will go, that the admission shall take place. And I have not a doubt, but I am best promoting this object by advocating the proposed Union.[1]

When popular sovereignty was failing in Kansas, the determination of the Michigan Senator to advocate his doctrine was not lessened:

> Whatever unjustifiable proceedings have taken place in Kansas -- and there have been too many of them -- they have not shaken in the slightest degree, my conviction of the right of man to govern himself, nor my confidence in the salutary operation of that true principle of human authority.[2]

After a courteous but sharp exchange of words with Cass, Senator Brown of Mississippi replied: "Well, sir, I do not feel disposed to pursue this matter, as I perceive that my friend from Michigan and myself will never be able to agree upon the question."[3]

The career of Cass was, of course, also sparked by industry and determination. Often he traveled far from home under difficult conditions in order to discharge the responsibilities of his office, whether it was circuit attorney on the Ohio frontier or Governor of Michigan Territory.

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[1] Ibid., p. 805.

[2] Ibid., 34th Congress, 1st session, p. 521.

[3] Albert G. Brown, Globe, 34th Congress, 1st session, p. 521. "No one can read these speeches without being convinced of Cass' thorough sincerity and intense moral earnestness." McLaughlin, Lewis Cass, p. 272.

He journeyed to the habitat of the Indian to negotiate twenty-one treaties which procured land for the settlers of the Northwest. The Michigan Governor made several long canoe voyages to determine the state of Indian affairs, to investigate mineral deposits in the Territory, and to attempt to discover the source of the Mississippi. Even his official trips to Washington were long and arduous in early nineteenth century conveyances.[1]

As Secretary of War, the conscientious Cass overworked himself. He admitted: "I am so pressed by applications and business that I have scarcely time to get through the indispensable duties of office."[2] Apparently he was in need of clerical assistance for copies in his own hand of the hundreds of official letters which he sent out are to be found in the War Department files of the National Archives. In the same files is a seven thousand word document in the hand of Cass to the President in which the Secretary of War outlined the operations of his department and offered "suggestions for the improvement of the several branches of the public service committed to its care."[3] In this case, the

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[1]"I reached home last evening after a most tedious uncomfortable journey of twenty-two days, and found my family in good health." Letter from Cass to Solomon Sibley, February 13, 1823. Lewis Cass Papers. B.H.C.

[2]Letter from Cass to Callender Ervine, December 29, 1832. War Department Records of the National Archives. Washington, D.C.

[3]Document from Cass to Andrew Jackson, November 25, 1832. Ibid.

industry of the Michigan statesman may have cost him his good health. Suffering from fatigue and dyspepsia, Cass resigned his post.

Cass was a hard-working member of the Democratic Party. He said: "It is the duty of all to labor zealously and efficiently for the good of the party; and especially it is the duty of everyone to submit with cheerfulness to its will when once expressed."[1] As a Senator, Cass was one of the workhorses of the Party in the biennial campaigns. In 1854, he wrote from Washington:

> The present crisis of our country demands the exertion of every true democrat, and I shall return home without delay, after the adjournment, to take my part in the pending contest, upon the issues which in my opinion, depends the permanence of the Union and the Constitution.[2]

Harper's Weekly said Lewis Cass is a man with a "great capacity for labor."[3] His stump speaking itinerary would have challenged the strength and endurance of a young man. In 1856 at the age of seventy-six, Cass spoke in twenty-nine localities between September 3 and election day.[4]

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[1]From a speech by Cass at the Dinner of the Jackson Democratic Association, January 8, 1852. Hillsdale Gazette, January 29, 1852. M.H.C's.

[2]Letter from Cass to the Dayton, Ohio Democratic Committee, September, 1854, as reported in the Detroit Free Press, September 4, 1856. D.P.L.

[3]Harper's Weekly, April 11, 1857. W.C.L.

[4]His itinerary included the following: "Sept. 3, Tippecanoe; Sept. 5, Kalamazoo; 6, Pontiac; 8, Detroit; 17, Flint; 18, Saginaw; 20, Goodrich; 22, Monroe; 23, Adrian; 23, Toledo; 24, Hillsdale; 25, Coldwater; 26, Centerville;

Daniel Webster and the nation got an insight into the persistent determination of Cass when the latter was minister to France. The abhorrence which Cass had for the British practice of stopping and searching United States vessels provoked him in 1842 to give Secretary of State Webster some unsolicited advice.[1] Webster and Lord Ashburton were negotiating a treaty in which the United States was endeavoring to convince the British to renounce their stop and search practices. When Webster ultimately backed down on this demand, Cass was furious. There was a heated exchange of messages between the Secretary of State and the Minister to France. The last letter written by Cass, in which he resigned his post, climaxed the series:

> I feel that I could no longer remain here honorably for myself, or advantageously for our country. In my letter to you of the 15th February last. . . I took the liberty of suggesting the propriety of demanding from Lord Ashburton, previous to entering into any association, a distinct renunciation of this claim to search our vessels. . . . The pretension, itself, was one of the most flagrant outrages, which could be aimed at our independent Nation and the mode of its enunciation was as cooly contemptuous as diplomatic ingenuity could suggest. . . . And the concluding paragraph of the British correspondence tells us, in effect, that we may take whatever course we please, but that England will adhere to this pretension to board our vessels,

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26, Three Rivers; 27, Cassopolis; Oct. 1-2, Detroit; 7, Lapeer; 10, Port Huron; 14, Jackson; 15, Charlotte; 17, Marshall; 18, Niles; 21, Grand Rapids; 22, Iowa; 23, Lansing; 24, Howell; 30, Corunna." Hewlett, op. cit., p. 280.

[1] Cass was well informed on the subject. He had just written a seventy-seven page treatise entitled An Examination of the Question, Now in Discussion Between the British and American Governments, Concerning the Right of Search.

> where and when her cruizers may find them.
> . . . . . .
> The proceedings . . . have placed me in a false position, whence I can escape but by returning home with the least possible delay.[1]

Cass left Paris immediately without waiting for confirmation or acceptance of his resignation. He placed his secretary and son-in-law, Henry Ledyard, in charge of American affairs in France until his diplomatic replacement should arrive.

A parallel incident occurred nearly two decades later when, as Secretary of State, Cass urged Buchanan to fortify the southern forts and enforce the law of the federal government in the South. When Buchanan refused, Cass resigned:

> I have urged at various meetings of the cabinet that additional troops should be sent to reinforce the forts in the harbor of Charleston, with a view to their better defense should they be attacked, and that an armed vessel should likewise be ordered there, to aid if necessary, in the defense and also should it be required in the collection of the revenue, and it is yet my opinion that these measures should be adopted without the least delay. . . . While the right and the responsibility of deciding belong to you, it is desirable that at this perilous juncture there should be as far as possible unanimity in your Councils with a view to safe and efficient action.
> I have therefore felt it my duty to tender my resignation of the office of Secretary of State . . . .[2]

Although there are several extant letters by Cass in which he affirmed, "I never sought the Presidency of the

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[1]Letter from Cass to Daniel Webster, October 3, 1842. Foreign Affairs Records of the National Archives. Washington, D.C.

[2]Copy of a letter from Cass to James Buchanan, December 12, 1860. General Lewis Cass, pp. 34 - 35.

United States,"[1] there are also indications that were the position offered to the ambitious Michigan statesman, he would have accepted it. Cass made it plain to John S. Bagg that "if his [Van Buren's] friends should conclude not to press his claims at present, then I confess that one of my dearest wishes is that my own State should support me"[2] for the nomination at the Baltimore Convention. Cass also expressed his sentiments to the convention delegates from Michigan: "Should it be thought by the convention with reasonable unanimity that the party had better present my name to the country at this time, I shall submit, and prepare myself for the contest."[3] A surprised James K. Polk, however, got the nomination. Cass accepted Polk's victory at the convention with the best of sportsmanship. There would be another election in 1848 and his own prospects were good. From the Senate in 1846, Cass wrote to S. P. Beers:

> Be good enough to transmit to me the names of something like 100 prominent democrats thro' the State of Connecticut, who take an interest in the Oregon question. I am preparing for publication my remarks in the Senate, on the ratification of the Oregon treaty, and as I desire that both sides of the story should be told, I wish to distribute them with that object.[4]

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[1]Letter from Cass to the Delegates of Michigan to the Baltimore Convention, May 19, 1844. Lewis Cass Papers. B.H.C.

[2]Letter from Cass to John S. Bagg, May 18, 1844. Lewis Cass Papers. B.H.C.

[3]Letter from Cass to the Delegates from the State of Michigan to the Baltimore Convention, May 19, 1844. Lewis Cass Papers. B.H.C.

[4]Letter from Cass to S.P. Beers, September 21, 1846. Lewis Cass Papers. Library of Congress.

It is true that after losing to Taylor in 1848, Cass exerted some pressure on his friend Felch to sustain his political life:

> I wish it to be distinctly understood, that in no event will I consent to the withdrawal of my name, now before the Senate.
>
> If an opportunity, favorable for my confirmation, should be presented, I hope advantage will be taken of it.
>
> Under any circumstances, I presume, a rejection can be avoided, and this I trust will be guarded against it (sic).[1]

Honesty

Testimony.--There were people who claimed that Cass was not to be trusted. These were few compared to those who thought him honest. The long public career enjoyed by Cass is probably an indication that most of his constituents and his colleagues had faith in his integrity. Believing to the contrary, however, was Samuel T. Douglas who wrote to his wife during the 1848 presidential campaign: "Between Cass and Taylor I don't care a straw-- one is able but not to be trusted entirely, the other honest, but probably wholly incompetent and this military enthusiasm I utterly abhor."[2] Lincoln cleverly combined humor and ridicule in an attempt to convince the members of Congress that Cass was dishonest. He accused Cass of appropriating public money far beyond his

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[1] Letter from Cass to A. Felch, December 20, 1848. Lewis Cass Papers. B.H.C.

[2] Letter from Samuel T. Douglas to his wife, July 11, 1848. Samuel T. Douglas Papers. B.H.C.

needs for his personal use while he was governor of Michigan Territory. "This large sum was reached," said Lincoln, "by assuming that he was doing service and incurring expenses at several different places, and in several different capacities in the same place, all at the same time."[1] Poignantly the Illinois representative continued:

> But I introduced General Cass' accounts here, chiefly to show the wonderful physical capacities of the man. They show that he not only did the labor of several men at the same time, but that he often did it at several places many hundred miles apart, at the same time. And at eating, too, his capacities are shown to be quite wonderful. From October, 1821, to May, 1822, he ate ten rations a day in Michigan, ten rations a day here in Washington, and near five dollars' worth a day besides, partly on the road between the two places. . . . By all means, make him President, gentlemen. He will feed you bounteously--if--if there is any left after he shall have helped himself.[2]

Charles Trowbridge, who served with Cass in Michigan Territory, is quoted by Woodford as confirming that Cass

> . . . 'was very peculiar in his method of transacting any business of the government. He was scrupulously honest to the last penny. He would never allow himself to make any gain from sending government funds through the banks. . . . He would never allow his own account to be made part of the government account. He would never allow any advantage from his connection with the government. He would never allow his son or daughters to take a pen from his table that came from the government stock, but made them take pens and paper from his own stock.'[3]

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[1] Abraham Lincoln, Globe, 30th Congress, 1st session, p. 1043.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Charles C. Trowbridge as quoted by Woodford, op. cit., p. 151.

The honest methods employed by Cass in dealing with the Indian are well known. He affirmed that "when, in the progress of improvement, the hunting grounds of the Indians give place to cultivated fields, it is our duty to render them full equivalent."[1] Sue Sullivan reported: "In contrast with the honorable methods of Cass and Sibley, the squatters and many of the settlers with whisky and trickery obtained the choice lands within twelve years which had been reserved to the Indians forever."[2] Felch said that "the justice . . . of his dealings with the Indians did much to pacify and quiet them and dispel the fears of the settlers of the hostile attacks from them."[3]

There is no lack of testimonials relating to the honesty of Cass. The Brighton-Howell Livingston Courier stated, "We have the confidence to assert that he is an honest man."[4] The Hillsdale Gazette remarked, He is a man "of the most transcendent abilities, uncompromising honesty, and sterling integrity."[5] Trowbridge said:

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[1]Cass, "Treatment of the Indians," p. 6.

[2]Sue Sullivan, "The Chicago Indian Treaty of 1821," Michigan History Magazine, VI (1922), 195 - 96.

[3]Alpheus Felch, "Address Delivered at a Celebration, June 15, 1886," The Semi-Centennial of the Admission of the State of Michigan into the Union (Detroit: Free Press Printing Co., 1886), p. 172.

[4]Brighton-Howell Livingston Courier, January 29, 1845. M.H.C's.

[5]Hillsdale Gazette, June 24, 1852. M.H.C's.

> 'I consider the General a scrupulously honest man in all pecuniary matters. I say this because you have seen charges against him for his heavy demands upon the treasury. I presume no man of our nation ever devoted so much and rendered so much service, in the acquisition of territory for a smaller compensation.'[1]

Elsewhere Trowbridge repeated: "'While he would resort to every means in his power to gain preference for a useful citizen, who could serve the community, he asked little for himself.'"[2] McLaughlin declared: "He was fair and honest, winning by his frankness the confidence of fellow partisans and opponents."[3] Representative James O'Donnell of Michigan commented that Cass "was devoid of the arts of the demagogue and ignorant of political charlatanry."[4] McCarty added that "Gov. Cass labored tirelessly and effectively for the welfare of the territory."[5]

Choices.--There is considerable evidence in the speeches of Cass which points to the conclusion that he made a sincere effort to be honest and fair in his analysis and interpretation of data and in his final decisions based

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[1]Copy of a letter from C. C. Trowbridge to a friend, September, 1848 as quoted by Quaife, "Detroit's Presidential Candidate," p. 31.

[2]Charles C. Trowbridge as quoted by Woodford, op. cit., p. 151.

[3]McLaughlin, Lewis Cass, p. 349.

[4]James O'Donnell, Congressional Record, 50th Congress, 2nd session, p. 2483.

[5]McCarty, op. cit., p. 132.

upon the data. Often he would say: "I will try to deal with the doctrine as fairly as I can . . . ."[1] "Now, sir, I shall deal fairly with this subject."[2] "I have listened to all that has been said, with an earnest desire to do justice to the views of others, as well as to form my own."[3] "My course, if worthy of notice, is open to public examination, and I trust will bear it."[4] "So far as respects the proposition connected with Texas, I am myself prepared to consider it in a spirit of fairness and liberality."[5] Cass prefaced his censure of John Adams with: "I take no pleasure in the expression of these views. But the document [Adams' diary] has been given to the country, and, regret it as we may and must, it has already passed into history. . . ."[6] It was mentioned in Chapter III that the Michigan Senator restated his opponents' arguments and evidence at considerable length before he began his refutation of their position. He presented their case fully and fairly.

Cass especially strove to be honest in his dealings with the South. When a northern colleague, such as Seward, engaged in unjust and exaggerated deprecation of the South, Cass could match that Senator's vituperation by denouncing him for it. Cass, as much as any northern Senator, attempted impartially to consider and fully understand the southern

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[1]Cass, Globe, 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 61.

[2]Ibid., p. 808. [3]Ibid., p. 810. [4]Ibid., p. 398.

[5]Ibid., p. 517. [6]Ibid., p. 69.

point of view in respect to slavery. He stated: "It would be a pledge of our sincerity, and of our desire to do justice to that great section [the South] of our common country."[1] He told the Senate: "I accord them the full meed of praise, for I have no sectional feeling to interfere with my sense of justice, and I love the South as well as the North or West."[2] Attempting to be objective even though this provoked the epithet of doughface, Cass stated that "like other human institutions, it [slavery] has neither all the advantages its friends claim for it, nor all the evils its enemies deplore."[3] Openly he admitted: "I have no doubt, if I were a southern man, I should feel just as southern men feel."[4] The Michigan Senator reminded the North that "slavery is an existing institution in the South for which no living man is responsible."[5] Cass honestly faced the situation:

> I am no panegyrist of the South. It needs none. I am a northern man by birth, and a western man by the habits and associations of half a century. . . . [But] I should despise myself if any narrow prejudices of intemperate passions should blind my eyes to the intelligence and patriotism of other sections of our united country.[6]

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[1] Ibid., p. 518. [2] Ibid., p. 531.

[3] Cass, Globe, 33rd Congress, 1st session, p. 276.

[4] Ibid., p. 278.

[5] Cass, Globe, 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 399.

[6] Ibid., p. 70.

Goodwill

Rapport

Testimony.--Perhaps most politicians strive to be friendly and charming if they depend upon the ballot box for their posts. Cass, at the age of twenty-three, "was richly endowed with self-assurance which, leavened by a sincere and kindly interest in others, provided him with a quality of leadership."[1] He could not be described as an extremely gregarious man; but, as governor of Michigan Territory, he managed to attend the local social functions. "On winter evenings there were banquets, balls, and assemblies. Cass led out his partner with the best of the beaux. And because his official position made it politic that he dance with each lady present, he sometimes complained that he was unable to get home until late."[2]

Cass was "familiarly referred to by his fellow townsmen as 'the General'."[3] McLaughlin claimed that "his courteous demeanor and his frank friendliness, which knew not jealousy or envy, endeared him to political foes and disarmed

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[1] Woodford, op. cit., p. 32.

[2] Ibid., p. 167. Two decades later in the national capital, he avoided parties, which were frequent in Washington then as now. "He was not fond of general society; his simple tastes and quiet, abstemious habits held him back from an indulgence in the mere frivolity and formality of Washington life." Young, op. cit., p. 119.

[3] Frank B. Woodford, Yankees in Wonderland (Detroit: Wayne University Press, 1951), p. 3.

factious opposition."[1] During his administration of eighteen years as territorial governor, Cass developed a

> . . . genius for getting along with people. His attitude toward the people of the territory, and Detroit in particular, was admittedly paternalistic. . . . He proved himself a master politician by contriving to remain aloof from factional controversies, meanwhile never yielding the public respect.[2]

Cass felt more comfortable with individuals or small groups than he did with crowds. "Among company he was inclined to be taciturn, but a respectful listener."[3] However, "to those who came to him for aid or advice he was an interested friend; young men especially attracted him, and he took great pleasure in giving them encouragement. . . ."[4] Visitors found him to be a rather plain and conservative person.[5]

> While agreeable and entertaining in private conversation, showing wide reading and broad comprehension, impressing all who listened to his unpretentious talk with the feeling that they were in the presence of a well-informed and cultured gentleman, he had none of the rarer charms of personal grace of wit or brilliance; there was no sudden genius or

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[1] McLaughlin, Lewis Cass, p. 221.

[2] Woodford, Lewis Cass, p. 151. It was said of Cass in later years that he "at least equaled the 'little Magician' in all the graceful and honorable arts of statesmanship." McLaughlin, Lewis Cass, p. 190.

[3] Woodford, Lewis Cass, p. 167.

[4] McLaughlin, Lewis Cass, p. 351.

[5] Though Cass was a man of considerable wealth, he lived unostentatiously in Detroit. "There was no show of unusual splendor about his dwelling to mark it as better than his neighbor's." Young, op. cit., p. 419.

> warmth of kindling enthusiasm over a keen or subtle argument.[1]

One unfriendly critic went so far as to assert that "there was not a bit of chivalry in Cass' character, nor an atom of magnetism in his nature."[2] These he gave as reasons why Cass was "incapable of inspiring that personal popularity which counts for so much in great political contests."[3]

If Cass was unable to inspire the masses, he certainly made a friendly impression upon those who met him personally.[4] In a letter to his wife, John Mason wrote:

> Gov. Cass has given us something for the moment to talk about. He has just left us, in returning our visits, and is as agreeable as ever, the same plain, good humoured unaffected man as you knew him. He looks well and has fixed on Detroit as his permanent residence, on which I congratulate its inhabitants for he has great talent in contributing à les agreements de la societé.[5]

When Cass received the Democratic nomination for the presidency in 1848, Felch confided to his wife: "I regret much to have him retire from the Senate. He has treated me with

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[1]McLaughlin, Lewis Cass, pp. 351-52.

[2]Dyer, op. cit., p. 46. [3]Ibid.

[4]Pierre Margry wrote to McLaughlin who was seeking primary materials for his biography of Cass: "My age during the period from May 1839 to December 1842, the time during which I had the good fortune to know General Cass, would make the notes which I could give you very unimportant for publication, even though I still have personally some very happy memories." Letter from Pierre Margry to A. C. McLaughlin, January 23, 1890, translated by F. Clever Bald. Andrew C. McLaughlin Papers. M.H.C's.

[5]Letter from John T. Mason to Emily V. Mason, December 13, 1842. John T. Mason Papers. B.H.C.

the utmost kindness and consideration, and as a colleague has been of much service to me. I shall miss him very much."[1] A few months thereafter a member of the opposite party, Charles Trowbridge, said: "'He has been my friend for thirty years. When I say this I do not speak of it as a light and varying friendship, but as one which has continued through all trials and adversities. . . .'"[2] Mary Bingham, who journeyed to Washington in the same coach with Cass in 1849, told her sister: "We had the company of Gen. Cass and Gov. Felch all the way from Syracuse, and a more agreeable and unassuming old gentleman than the General is, I never saw. He talks so familiarly with one just as if you were an old acquaintance."[3] Seth Reed, a neighbor of Cass in Detroit after the latter's retirement in 1861, remarked:

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[1]Letter from A. Felch to his wife, May 25, 1848. Alpheus Felch Papers. B.H.C. Forty-five years later Felch avowed to a friend: "My long association and intimate relations with him, I believe I may say with truth, were never clouded by a moment's interruption or break in our mutual confidence and regard, and I look back to that association as one of the most pleasant incidents of my life." Letter from A. Felch to Edwin C. Lyons, June 20, 1893. Alpheus Felch Papers. B.H.C.

[2]Letter from C. C. Trowbridge to a friend, September, 1848 as quoted by Quaife, "Detroit's Presidential Candidate," p. 31.

[3]Letter from Mary Bingham to her sister, December 11, 1849. Kinsley S. Bingham Papers. M.H. C's. "His [Cass'] placid, kindly disposition won for him a lasting affection among those who knew him." McLaughlin, Lewis Cass, p. 190. "Affable and courteous to all, he wins the respect and friendship of those who approach him." Young, op. cit., p. 419. He is "genial, kindly, faithful to all lengths. . . ." Harper's Weekly, April 11, 1857. W.C.L.

> He was a genial neighbor; he was a delightful companion in conversation. He did not dwell upon his own qualities, or his own performances. . . .
> I would pass his house almost daily; and when the weather was pleasant I would see him sitting on a veranda, ready to give a word of cheer and a pleasant bow and smile to his neighbors as they passed by.[1]

During the debates in the Senate on the Oregon question, Cass used the word "inevitable" so often in referring to an impending conflict with Great Britain that his colleagues chuckled about it:

> General Cass was apt to be quite earnest whenever he spoke on the Oregon question, and almost invariably would use the word 'inevitable,' creating a smile or laugh in the Senate. On one of these occasions, on rising, he said he was not going to make a war speech, nor use the word 'inevitable,' but soon let fly the 'inevitable war,' and was reminded of his expression by a general laugh; joining in the laugh, he said, 'Well, I will not say 'inevitable war,' but 'inevitable collision.'[2]

Another such incident occurred in March of 1850 in the normally serious and august atmosphere of the Senate. Senator Hale drew a ripple of laughter from a well-phrased but uncomplimentary remark which he had directed at Senator Foote. The latter pretended not to hear the jibe, and asked Cass what it was that Hale had said. Cass repeated Hale's statement to Foote "with his sides shaking all the while--an immensity of laughter which seemed to do him good."[3]

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[1]Seth Reed, "Lewis Cass Day Speech," George N. Fuller (ed.), Michigan Historical Commission (Lansing: Wynkoop Hallenbeck Crawford Co., 1916), p. 8.

[2]Nathan Sargent, Public Men and Events (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, and Co., 1875), p. 272.

[3]Hillsdale Gazette, March 19, 1850. M.H.C's.

The Hillsdale Gazette reported upon the first meeting between Cass and Zachary Taylor, which occurred about four months after Taylor's victory over Cass in the presidential election of 1848:

> (Cass:) Gen. Taylor--Oh, General How do you do? I am very glad indeed to see you. . . .
>
> (Taylor:) Thank you General, I am very glad to see you (shaking hands all the time.)
>
> (Cass:) By the way, General, you had the advantage over me (alluding to recognizing him first.) That's twice you've had the advantage over me! (This was said with great drollery, and caused the General and everyone present to laugh heartily.)[1]

Later Cass was stopped by a stranger who said: "Well, General, in all the States where I stumped it, you got the vote."[2] Cass' laughing rejoinder was: "Well, my friend, I am very much obliged to you, but--I wish you had stumped it in two or three more!"[3]

The sense of humor displayed by Cass won the praise of Mary Bingham. After their coach ride together from Syracuse to Washington, she admitted to her sister:

> I really liked him and he is so full of joking too. He sat opposite to us all the way at meal time and I drank champaign with him at dinner. I never had anything do me so much good. It seemed to go to the right spot. The General said he was very glad I was going to Washington to take care of my husband, for indeed said he I must tell you that Mr. Bingham is no better [off] than the rest of us--we all laughed.[4]

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[1] Hillsdale Gazette, March 22, 1849. M.H.C's.

[2] Ibid. [3] Ibid.

[4] Letter from Mary Bingham to her sister, December 11, 1849. Kinsley S. Bingham Papers. M.H.C's.

Choices.--The Michigan Senator was sometimes alluded to as "Cass, the courteous."[1] This epithet may have been provoked in part by his elderly, dignified, and formal appearance. However, his language, too, was usually considerate. Before resuming the second half of a long speech which he had begun the previous day, Cass, with careful attention to proper protocol would say:

> Thanking the honorable Senator from Kentucky for his kindness in moving an adjournment yesterday

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[1] Early in life, Cass learned something about respect at Exeter Academy. Benjamin Abbot, the headmaster at Exeter, was fond of telling the following story:

> "'Lewis Cass was a very wild boy. One day his father, Major Cass, came and asked me if I could take his son.'
>
> 'Certainly, but why do you ask?'
>
> 'O! The youngster is headstrong, and hard to manage.'
>
> 'What does he do?'
>
> 'Plays truant, runs away from his work, steals off without my permission to go gunning or swimming, and is full of pranks.'
>
> 'Well, send him to me, and I'll see what I can do with him.'
>
> 'But you have no rules here, as I understand.'
>
> 'Nevertheless _____'
>
> 'The boy was placed under my charge. Several months later I met his father, and asked him how his son was getting along.'
>
> 'Well, sir,' said he, 'if Lewis was half as afraid of the Almighty as he is of you, I should never have any trouble with him.'" Benjamin Abbot as quoted by Frank H. Cunningham, Familiar Sketches of the Phillips Exeter Academy (Boston: James R. Osgood and Co., 1883), pp. 143-44.

> [Clay had actually interrupted Cass' speech with the motion] and tendering my acknowledgments to the Senate for the patience with which they listened to my constitutional arguments, I shall resume the discussion at the point where I closed my remarks, and proceed in the course of argument I have marked out for myself.[1]

Aware of the burden upon his listeners due to the length and boredom of his argumentative speeches, Cass sometimes, as above, alluded to the patience of the audience: "Mr. President, I will terminate my remarks as speedily as possible, and I trust the Senate will bear with me a little longer."[2] "I am already tresspassing too much on the indulgence of the Senate."[3] When there were hurt feelings because his statements had been misunderstood, Cass quickly and courteously corrected the matter: "Would the Senator permit me, for I would not pervert his language for the world?"[4] "If any gentleman supposes that I had the slightest idea of casting censure upon one human being, he is utterly mistaken; such a sentiment never occurred to me."[5]

Cass was generally patient when he was interrupted in his Senate speeches even though the questions asked of him took him off the course which he had planned. On one occasion after requesting Cass to yield to questioning, Mr.

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[1] Cass, Globe, 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 67.

[2] Ibid., p. 530.

[3] Cass, Globe, 34th Congress, 1st session, p. 520.

[4] Ibid., 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 1530.

[5] Ibid., p. 528.

Downs, Mr. Foote, and Mr. Borland took the floor from him and engaged in a debate among themselves. Cass waited silently until they were finished and then courteously but firmly stated: "I hope I shall be allowed to go on, as my time is short, and I will finish what I have to say in a few minutes. I am generally quite accommodating, but upon this occasion I must insist that there be no more interruptions."[1]

Even in the heat of debate, Cass was careful to control his temper and use proper language: "I beg the honorable Senator's pardon; it is so stated in the speech . . ."[2] The Michigan Senator was never more emotionally disturbed with any Senator than he was with Seward on May 13, 1856. Nevertheless, as angry as he must have been, Cass was careful to be courteous when he said: "But while I shall do this plainly, as the importance of the subject demands, I shall do it, I trust, in a proper spirit, and with kind personal feelings toward the Senator. I shall apply to him no allusion nor epithet--for it is not my habit--that ought to offend even fastidious delicacy."[3]

Cass usually mitigated his refutation of the arguments

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[1] Ibid., p. 529. [2] Ibid., p. 519.

[3] Ibid., 34th Congress, 1st session, p. 523.

of another person by prefacing it with a word or statement of praise: "The Senator has presented this branch of the subject with great force and ability, as indeed he does all other, but . . . "[1]; "It is a great comfort when one is pressed by a powerful opponent"[2]; "For the third of these sources of power we are indebted to one of the most experienced and intelligent Senators who ever occupied a seat among us"[3]; "The feelings of respect and kindness which I entertain for that Senator are, I am sure, a guarantee to him that I do not allude to this subject in any spirit of complaint"[4]; "Why, sir, the honorable senator from Virginia [Mr. Mason] whom the whole Senate holds in the highest respect, and deservedly so. . ."[5]; "Why, sir, it is only a day or two since one of the most accomplished members of this body told us . . ."[6]; "We have heard this view disputed by a gentleman [Mr. Webster] to whose opinions upon constitutional law, the Senate, and, indeed, the country, always look with great respect"[7]; "And one of the most intelligent representatives from New England [Mr. Winthrop], a gentleman, whom to know is to respect, partakes of this apprehension . . . "[8]; "Really, Mr. President, I find it difficult to treat this topic as seriously as my respect for the Senators who urge it would prompt me"[9];

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[1] Ibid., p. 1529. [2] Ibid., p. 1531. [3] Ibid., p. 517.
[4] Ibid., 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 398.
[5] Ibid., p. 399. [6] Ibid. [7] Ibid., p. 809.
[8] Ibid. [9] Ibid., p. 805.

"William Penn, the great apostle of peace . . . whose high moral qualities no man appreciates better than I do. But . . ."[1];

> And I have seen in the public journals a letter recently published from this distinguished citizen [Senator Davis] now high in the councils of his country, but no higher than in the confidence and esteem of his countrymen, in which he speaks in rather reproachful terms, contemptuous, I might say, of those . . . .[2]

All of these blandishments are followed by refutation.

Usually the compliment or praise was very brief, in a word, preceding or within the rebuttal: "And yet this principle of limitation, so obvious, and so obviously just, is considered by an eminent lawyer in the Senate as absurd"[3]; "And a distinguished Senator from South Carolina goes even further in the denunciation of this recognition of human rights . . . "[4]; "The honorable Senator from New York [Mr. Seward] . . . ."[5] Although these brief gestures of respect before criticism were quite common in the Senate, Cass occasionally launched into a eulogy of his argumentative opponent previous to his refutation. Of Calhoun, he said:

> I have enjoyed the pleasure of his acquaintance, both as a public and a private man, for a long period of time; and I have learned to admire that vigorous intellect and those extensive acquirements which, though they are known and acknowledged through the

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[1] Ibid., p. 331.

[2] Ibid., 33rd Congress, 1st session, p. 270.

[3] Ibid., 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 72.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Ibid., p. 518.

> whole country, are the more appreciated the more nearly they are approached. And I have learned to admire still more those qualities of the heart without which the powers of the understanding become a dangerous gift, as well to the possessor as to others.[1]

Cass expressed of General Scott:

> Few men, sir, have a warmer regard for Gen. Scott than I have, and perhaps still fewer place a higher estimate upon his services than I do. He has won a high station among the great captains of the age, and he has also won imperishable honor for himself and for his country. The campaign from Vera Cruz to Mexico is among the proudest feats on military record. But. . . .[2]

In attempting to ascertain the rapport which Cass was able to establish in the Senate, the investigator must look to the predisposition of the Michigan Senator to be tolerant.[3]

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[1] Ibid., p. 71.

[2] Ibid., p. 331. It is ironic that Cass deprecated Horace Mann for employing the same technique of praise before criticism when Mann denounced Webster. Cass stated: "And this gross misrepresentation of the opinions of a colleague in the National Legislature is accompanied with professions of admiration of his powers, gratitude for his past services and of his own diffidence in dissenting from his views. Can insincerity go further?" Cass, Ibid., p. 806.

[3] It has been stated that Cass was generally tolerant and disposed to yield to the many questions which interrupted his Speeches:

"Mr. Butler: Will the honorable Senator allow me to ask him a question?

Mr. Cass: Certainly.

. . . . . .

Mr. Chase: Will the Senator allow me to ask him a question?

Mr. Cass: Certainly; I stand ready to be catechized all day on this subject, if Senators desire it."

Globe, 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 528.

When he was governor of Michigan Territory, Cass had been the first to forgive and forget when he and Woodbridge had shared bad feelings for each other. The Michigan Governor wrote to the Secretary of the Territory: "But a very few years of public life remain to me, and certainly in that time I have no wish to lose old friends for the sake of new ones."[1] When this apparently had little effect, Cass followed it up a week later with: "It is painful for me to be upon bad terms with anybody, and perhaps I have rated human nature too high. If so I am willing to die in the error."[2] In 1841 while in France, Cass was "brought the melancholy news of the death of General [President] Harrison . . . ."[3] The fact that William H. Harrison was a Whig did not deter the United States Minister from delivering a moving eulogy of the deceased President.[4] The reader cannot discover in the tolerant language which Cass employed that the two men were of opposite political faiths. A further indication of the open-minded regard of Cass for the rival party was when he was passing through Cumberland, a few months after he had been defeated for the presidency. Having been asked to say a few words to the crowd which had gathered to see him,

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[1]Letter from Cass to William Woodbridge, January 8, 1828. Lewis Cass Papers. B.H.C.

[2]Ibid., January 16, 1828. Lewis Cass Papers. B.H.C.

[3]Letter from Cass to a friend, May 4, 1841. Lewis Cass Papers. Boston Public Library.

[4]This 7000 word speech was printed on the front page of Ann Arbor's Michigan State Journal, a Whig paper, July 13, 1841.

Cass expressed:

> Fellow Citizens: I am not prepared to make a speech; and even if I were, it would be in bad taste to make a political one under the circumstance. The country has just passed through a most sanquinary political contest, and it becomes the duty of all to throw aside all acerbity of political feeling and rally in support of the Constitution which governs our happy Union.[1]

Notwithstanding the fact that his demeanor tended to be somewhat formal and conservative, Cass had a sense of humor. He was not above poking fun at himself when he would tell the story of how as a circuit rider on the Ohio frontier he had to ford swollen Scioto Salt Creek:

> My steed was a bad swimmer, who, instead of advancing after losing his footing, amused himself by sinking to the bottom, and then leaping with his utmost force; and this new equestrian feat he continued, till rider, saddle, saddle-bags, and blankets were thrown into the water, and the recusant animal emerged upon one side of the Creek, and the luckless traveler crawled out upon the other, as he best could--while the luggage commenced its journey for New Orleans. It appears to me now that a more dripping spectacle of despair was never exhibited, than I presented, while surveying, many miles from a house, this shipwreck of my traveling fortunes.[2]

In 1822 Cass jokingly wrote to Solomon Sibley: "It is late Thursday evening, and we have a great party at Palmer's where it is said that John Palmer and Miss Deming are to be married. I do not however vouch for this report. I have not yet put on my best petticoat."[3] While campaigning for Polk

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[1] Hillsdale Gazette, April 19, 1849. M.H.C's.

[2] Cass, France, pp. 109-10.

[3] Letter from Cass to Solomon Sibley, January 10, 1822. Lewis Cass Papers. B.H.C.

in 1848, Cass attempted to expurgate a rumor which was circulating concerning an alleged infamous ancestor of the Democratic candidate. The Marshall Statesman reported: "He [Cass] strained at much sarcasm, mixing it with far-fetched wit, when he came to treat upon the patriotic deeds of James K. Polk's ancestor, the notorious 'Zeke.'"[1]

Moderation

Testimony.--Cass was known in the Senate for his moderation. There would be nothing unusual today about such an attitude; but during the ante-bellum period, it was regarded with scorn[2] by many observers when nearly everyone in Congress was a sectionalist. There have been several reasons suggested to account for the moderation of Cass. Hewlett said that "it was undoubtedly his inability or unwillingness to make quick decisions which was responsible for his moderate response to the pressing questions of the day."[3] Allan Nevins stated that Cass "had lost his early energy and passed into a phase of slow, phlegmatic conservatism."[4]

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[1] Marshall Statesman, September 19, 1844. W.C.L.

[2] "The undramatic, indistinct nature of his activity makes obscurity or even ridicule the fate of the moderate in history" Hewlett, op. cit., p. 5. "Historians of my day were too harsh with Cass. He was a better man than most historians give him credit for having been." Statement by Milo M. Quaife, personal interview.

[3] Hewlett, op. cit., p. 12.

[4] Nevins, op. cit., p. 193.

Another reason offered is that Cass believed "that absolutes have no part in the democratic process."[1] His political opponents, of course, claimed that the Michigan Senator was trying to please everybody in order to promote his own selfish interests.[2]

Although the popular sovereignty doctrine expressed in the Nicholson letter was a somewhat dramatic political move, it took a moderate position in that it was non-sectional. It intentionally favored neither the North nor the South in respect to slavery. Cass "was motivated by national and constitutional considerations which placed him high above sectional interests."[3] His letter, however, received rebuke by William Woodbridge and Kinsley Bingham among others. The New York Tribune called it "cold blooded sophistry. It is the basest bid for the presidency ever yet made."[4] It is perhaps probable that Cass had the presidency in mind when he wrote the letter, but as shown in Chapter II the sentiments expressed in the Nicholson letter were consistent with the political philosophy of Cass dating back to the beginning of his administration as governor of Michigan Territory.

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[1] Hewlett, op. cit., p. 81.

[2] "The General bids about as high for Southern votes at the next presidential election as any Western or Northern candidate is likely to do." New York Tribune, January 24, 1850. N.R.R. Library of Congress.

[3] Hewlett, op. cit., p. 115.

[4] New York Tribune, October 3, 1848. N.R.R. Library of Congress.

Certain individuals capitalized upon the policy of Cass toward moderation to try to show that he had no definite political philosophy, that he was spineless and two-faced. He was accused of leading a "whiffling, trimming, twoddling, office-seeking course."[1] A week later the same paper added: "The defeat of Gen. Cass will be a deadly blow at the coalition of Northern propagandism.'[2] Some of his own colleagues labeled him a doughface, and others quickly picked up the sobriquet.[3]

> Even among present-day historians, who are reluctant to challenge Cass' moral uprightness and sincerity, the shadow of suspicion still falls upon the Michigan Statesman. If the word 'doughface' seems too strong today, such adjectives as 'indolent,' 'ponderous,' 'senile,' 'obese,' are deemed not out of place in describing Cass.[4]

"[Cass'] middle-of-the-road position, constantly a changing one, filled his career with contradictions and seemingly inexplicable actions."[5] He admitted to Lucious Lyon in 1844, "I thought I was not ultra enough for the ultras."[6] After Cass reversed his stand on the Wilmot Proviso

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[1] Ibid., October 18, 1848. W.C.L.

[2] Ibid., October 25, 1848. W.C.L.

[3] "They call Cass a 'Boss Doughface and Demagogue.'" New York Daily Tribune, November 6, 1848. N.R.R. Library of Congress.

[4] Hewlett, op. cit., p. 4.

[5] Ibid., p. 3.

[6] Letter from Cass to L. Lyon, April 13, 1844. Lucius Lyon Papers. W.C.L.

in a speech in March of 1847, the New York Tribune commented: "[We] never knew a man to destroy his future more easily or rapidly than Gen. Cass in this speech. He will be abandoned by his North, whom he deserts, and despised by the South, to whom he succumbs."[1] Following the Michigan Senator's Manifesto speech in January of 1850, the same unfriendly Tribune sarcastically remarked: "If our discriminating readers want more on that side of the question, let them wait for the speech of Calhoun, Meade, Venable or some other champion of Slavery whose heart is in his work."[2] Calhoun told the Senate: "The Senator [Cass] and myself have two distinct and different conceptions as to the mode of saving the Union. His whole course has been a course of palliatives. And, sir, of all courses, that is far the worst."[3]

Choices.--In answer to the charges that he was a doughface, Cass tried to explain to the Senate:

> It requires little exertion to swim with the current, while he who opposes it must put forth all his strength, and even then may become its victim. Popular feeling is a power hard to resist, and reproach of being a doughface belongs to him who panders to it, and not to him who strives to maintain the constitutional rights of all, even in opposition to

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[1]New York Tribune, March 3, 1847. N.R.R. Library of Congress. "Mr. Miller of New Jersey was astonished at the course Gen. Cass had taken. It was unexpected after the sentiments attributed to him last session." Ibid.

[2]Ibid., January 23, 1850. N.R.R. Library of Congress.

[3]John Calhoun, Globe, 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 519.

> his own community, which holds in its hands his political life or death.[1]

Although it is true that Cass was capable of an outburst of denunciation, the language of his speeches, for the most part, was characterized by moderation and restraint. His calm, deliberative reasoning and the qualifying remarks which frequently prefaced his arguments were evidence of this: "So far I have been able to ascertain . . . "[2]; "If I read [interpret] the Constitution rightly . . ."[3]; "If I understood correctly the honorable Senator from Mississippi . . . . "[4]

In addition, Cass was a self-appointed watchdog in the Senate over unrestrained and extreme sectional criticism. Unfair assertions tending to provoke dissension between the sections were challenged by the Michigan Senator with such statements as: "Mr. President, no man who attends the discussions in the Senate can fail to perceive the predisposition which prevails here to push principles to their extremes."[5] "They should be decent in their language . . . ."[6] "As to the frightful pictures which have been drawn of cruelty

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[1]Cass, Globe, 33rd Congress, 1st session, p. 277.

[2]Ibid., 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 61.

[3]Ibid., p. 807.

[4]Ibid., 34th Congress, 1st session, p. 518.

[5]Ibid., 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 330.

[6]Ibid.

on one side, and suffering and wretchedness on the other, they are gross exaggerations . . . ."[1] "I think it proves to the satisfaction of every moderate man that the whole matter is greatly exaggerated-- sometimes indeed in an impossible form-- which furnishes no justification for the serious conclusions presented to the country."[2] "We lose all confidence in the force of language, and in the authority of years and intellect, when such extravagant assertions are presented to us."[3]

Restraint generally does not characterize a major political campaign, but in 1848 Cass requested that his supporters refrain from personal abuse of Van Buren and Taylor. In a letter to the Democratic National Committee, Cass urged:

> If we should add to all this an example of mutual respect for the motives of the contending parties, so that the contest might be carried on with that firmness and energy which accompany deep conviction, and with as little personal asperity as political divisions permit, we should do more for the great cause of human freedom throughout the world, than by any other tributes we could render to its value.[4]

In the 1852 campaign while speaking in Baltimore in behalf of Franklin Pierce, who was running against General Scott, Cass "'alluded to the principles of the two parties, and

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[1] Ibid., 34th Congress, 1st session, p. 276.

[2] Ibid., 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 531.

[3] Ibid., p. 530.

[4] Copy of a letter from Cass to the Democratic National Convention, May 30, 1848. Lewis Cass Papers. B.H.C.

remarked that those who came to hear him abuse Gen. Scott would go away disappointed-- that he was a high-minded, honorable man . . . .'"[1]

Disapproval

Choices.--To say that Cass was adept at establishing rapport is not to deny that he was above expressing censure or reproach by means of sarcasm, abruptness, and invective.

(1) Sarcasm.--At times the sarcasm employed by Cass was indirect. He would quip impersonally: "He who denies this, is beyond the reach of philological reasoning."[2] "He who should seriously advocate it would hardly need the certificate of a physician to prove his qualification for a madhouse."[3] More frequently, however, Cass sneered at the argument itself: "This reasoning, if it can be dignified with that term were it good for anything, applies . . . "[4]; "The bare denunciation of such a proposition carries with it its own refutation. I cannot deal with it as a subject of argumentation"[5]; "It is worse than idle to advance such a proposition."[6]

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[1] Baltimore Sun as quoted by the Washington Daily Union, September 2, 1852. N.R.R. Library of Congress.

[2] Cass, Globe, 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 60.

[3] Ibid., 34th Congress, 1st session, p. 513.

[4] Ibid., 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 63.

[5] Ibid., p. 61.

[6] Ibid., 33rd Congress, 1st session, p. 273.

> And we are to be conducted through some politico-metaphysical process of reasoning, and asked to prove, step by step, the right of one hundred thousand American citizens to provide for their own social existence, and to apply for admission into the Union, as you would require proof to establish the ownership of a horse?[1]

When Cass wished to make a sarcastic remark more pointed, he named the recipient: "The Senator [Mr. Seward] is quite didactic in his speech, and passes happily and readily from one topic to another . . ."[2]; "A member of the other house, whose zeal certainly outstripped his discretion . . ."[3]

> Mr. Rhett, indeed, in a remarkable speech in this body, remarkable for an American citizen in an American legislature, undertook, by a peculiar process, to hold this government responsible for the measure-- making it one sin more in his long catalogue of offenses.[4]

> If I understood correctly the honorable Senator from Mississippi [Mr. Brown] in his remarks the other day, he approved and adopted these positions, and perhaps I should do so too, if I can comprehend them, but, as I do not, my incredulity may be pardoned.[5]

Perhaps the most severe sarcasm to be found in the speeches in point was directed at representative Horace Mann, because he had assailed Cass and especially Webster in the Boston Liberator. The Michigan Senator's disparagement of Mann in the Senate was accomplished with sarcastic humor:

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[1] Ibid., 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 1529.

[2] Ibid., 34th Congress, 1st session, p. 524.

[3] Ibid., 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 68.

[4] Ibid., 33rd Congress, 1st session, p. 273.

[5] Ibid., 34th Congress, 1st session, p. 518.

> The writer is certainly a brave man-- I am satisfied of that; for he distinctly announces it . . . . Martyrdom is cheaper now than in the olden time. It is gained by words, not by fire and fagots.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> And am I not right in saying, that whatever other qualities he may want, a man, with my letter [to Nicholson] before him, who could say that I never took the ground that slavery could not exist in the new territory, does not want moral courage?
>
> But this writer is not only a brave man; he is also a philanthropic one. His article abounds with declarations upon the subject, made where this kind of philanthropy costs nothing but studied phrases, and in here he is safely removed from the difficulties and the dangers of the question. But his philanthropy is tempered not with prudence merely, but with thrift. He has more solid arguments than charity.[1]

For nearly three columns of fine print in the Congressional Globe, Cass continued in this vein against Mann.

(2) Abruptness.--Closely related to the topic of sarcasm was the tendency of Cass to be abrupt. He interrupted Mr. Hale with the terse statement: "It was asking us to do what we could not do -- that is all. I have not another word to say."[2] When Cass had expended his arguments on a subject, he would sometimes drop it abruptly. Once during a short exchange with Mr. Downs, Cass read a portion of a speech by Calhoun to support his contention and added: "I have not another word to say, Mr. President. If these remarks do not justify the conclusion I have drawn from them, I do not know what can."[3] On one occasion a Senator interrupted Cass to discuss a point with which the Michigan Senator was not con-

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[1] Ibid., 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 806.

[2] Ibid., p. 331.

[3] Ibid., p. 529.

cerned at the moment. Cass courteously heard him out and then replied tersely: "Mr. President, I will not argue this point. I was about to say . . . . "[1]

In Chapter III, the familiar technique of Cass of repudiation and dismissal was discussed. This device was another example of the Michigan Senator's habit of abruptness. Cass would cite an argument of the opposition and then remark acidly: "I do not pretend to understand the process. I only state it."[2] "I feel that I should waste my own time, and that of the Senate, by the further consideration of a proposition conducting to such results."[3] "I leave without further comment, this rule of interpretation to those, who can find either wisdom or safety in its application."[4] "I am not going to employ my time and that of the Senate so badly as to argue this point."[5]

(3) Invective.--Cass was most severe when someone unfairly denounced the Constitution, the federal government, or one section of the country. In answer to a proposal which he believed to be contrary to the philosophy of the Constitution, Cass declared: "He who expects such a result is either already in an insane hospital or ought to be placed there."[6]

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[1] Ibid., p. 518.

[2] Ibid., 33rd Congress, 1st session, p. 274.

[3] Ibid., p. 275.

[4] Ibid., 34th Congress, 1st session, p. 514.

[5] Ibid., p. 517.

[6] Ibid., p. 331.

Senator Toombs felt the condemnation of the Michigan Senator: "Had we not witnessed the zeal with which this utter contempt of all the principles of law and ethics is maintained and defended, we might well doubt whether a single man could be found to contend for such a monstrous usurpation."[1] When he castigated the sectionalism of Horace Mann, Cass was harsh: "And this tissue of bad taste, bad morality, and bad logic, is printed by charitable subscriptions, and scattered through the land, to influence the feelings of one section of the country against another . . . ."[2] Such heated derogation was not frequent in the speeches of Cass. Somewhat self-consciously he admitted after his recrimination of Mann: "The Senate will bear me witness, that it is very seldom I enter upon such a task as this. It suits neither my taste nor my habits."[3]

Summary

1. The predisposition of Cass toward scholarship was evidenced in his letters, speeches, and literary works and in his unremitting insistence upon the collection and preservation of documents, papers, and other primary data relating to American history.

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[1] Ibid., 34th Congress, 1st session, p. 516.

[2] Ibid., 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 806.

[3] Ibid.

2. Perhaps because of his age and his obesity, the Michigan Senator was accused of being phlegmatic and lacking in mental alertness. There is some evidence to indicate that infrequently this was true. His repartee and exchange in debate, however, reveal Cass as being quick and capable when he needed to be.

3. The personal habits and morality of Cass were beyond reproach, and his long public career was unmarred by improper deeds. As governor of Michigan Territory, Secretary of War, and president of the Congressional Temperance Society, he worked to reduce the consumption of liquor by the Indian, the soldier, and the civilian.

4. The record of Cass as governor of Michigan Territory earned for him a great deal of respect. For eighteen years, Cass distinguished himself as an honest and hard-working administrator. Much later, however, just previous to and subsequent to 1848, he reached the climax of his political career. After 1852 his prestige waned rapidly until he retired as Secretary of State in 1861, a post in which Buchanan almost completely ignored him.

5. Cass was an ambitious and determined individual, and his energy and effort created some jealousy among his colleagues. The Michigan statesman was an active Party worker who labored assiduously in the biennial campaigns. Hostile elements accused him of seeking the presidency at any cost, but his actions show that he did not place his own interests and welfare before those of the Party.

6. At a time when dishonesty in government was winked at, Cass maintained a record of unscrupulous integrity. His honesty not only related to material matters; but as a Union man, he endeavored to regard the interests of the South as well as the North.

7. Cass did not possess the magnetic personality which impressed large new audiences. He was much more effective with small groups or with individuals. His patient ability to listen, his sense of humor, his courtesy, and his restraint in dealing with heated issues helped to establish rapport for him in the Senate.

8. The doctrine of popular sovereignty advocated by Cass was a compromise between the extreme northern and southern positions regarding slavery in the territories. For his efforts to serve the interests of the entire nation, the Michigan Senator was labeled a doughface, a northern man with southern principles. The constantly changing middle-of-the-road position of Cass filled his career with contradictions and seemingly inexplicable actions.

9. To say that Cass was adept at establishing rapport is not to deny that he was above expressing censure in the form of sarcasm, abruptness, and invective. The Michigan Senator was particularly sarcastic and abrupt with those individuals who condemned American patriots and statesmen. He could employ invective when anyone was critical of the United States government or the Constitution.

Chapter Six

ANALYSIS OF LANGUAGE

The public speaker's choice of words, composition, and techniques of embellishment are means of manipulating language so as to achieve the response which he desires. "According to the broad conception, style or language is important only to the extent that it helps prepare and subsequently open the minds of the hearers to the ideas developed in the speech."[1]

It is impossible to divorce the speaker's language from the speaker as a person. "Style inevitably expresses the personality of the speaker. There is much truth in the observation of the French naturalist Buffon that 'style is the man himself.'"[2] Thonssen and Baird state that style "should help to reveal the character of the speaker; it should not seem to clash with his personality."[3] Perhaps a better understanding of Cass the man can be achieved by investigating the language he chose to employ. Young, who wrote a favorable biography of Cass, remarked:

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[1]Thonssen and Baird, op. cit., p. 429.

[2]Robert T. Oliver and Rupert L. Cortright, New Training for Effective Speech (New York: Dryden Press, 1955), p. 252.

[3]Thonssen and Baird, op. cit., p. 416.

> Certainly no better illustration of the strength and power of the English language can be found than in his writings. For felicity and clearness of expression, for using just the right word in the right place, and an entire absence of all fantastic barbarism of expression, they hold a high rank in the world of letters.[1]

The criteria which will be employed in analyzing the language of Lewis Cass are classified into three groups: (1) choice of words, (2) composition, and (3) embellishment devices. The items selected are those which are most relevant and peculiar to the style of Cass. Strange words, foreign words, common expressions (clichés, axioms and proverbs), and geographic references will be discussed under the heading of word choice. Composition will relate to such matters as parenthetical remarks, inverted word order, repetition, parallel structure, "purple patches," and transitions. Embellishment techniques include direct address, figures of speech, comparison and contrast, humor, literary allusions, and rhetorical questions.

Choice of Words

"Good style is, first of all, clear. The proof is that language which does not convey a clear meaning fails to perform the very function of language."[2] The vocabulary of Cass, although rich and variegated, was not stilted.

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[1] Young, op. cit., p. 410.

[2] Aristotle, Rhetoric, iii. 2. 1404[b].

His language was scholarly and somewhat formal, but he did not strain for unusual or polysyllabic words. Furthermore, there was little evidence of slang or mundane word choice in the addresses on popular sovereignty. The Brighton-Howell Livingston Courier reported: "While his remarks are firm and decided in their tone and character, they are enforced with great clearness and precision."[1] The Ionia Gazette said of the Michigan Senator's "Kansas-Nebraska" speech: "His exposition of the Kansas and Nebraska bill was clear, candid, and convincing."[2]

Strange Words

Some words that were used by Cass which are seldom seen today but which may not have been unusual in the mid-nineteenth century were "twain," "train" (to mean wake or trail), "whence," "aright," "consentaneous," "animadversions," "latitudinarian," "supererogation," "ergo," "Q.E.D.," "contemporaneous," "apologue," "olden times," "pandects," and "chrysalis."

The Oxford English Dictionary indicates that the use of "twain" "in the Bible of 1611 and in the Marriage Service, and its value as a rhyme-word, have contributed to its retention as an archaic and poetic synonym of two."[3]

[1]The Brighton-Howell Livingston Courier, December 31, 1845. M.H.C's.

[2]Ionia Gazette as quoted by the Detroit Daily Free Press, October 11, 1854. D.P.L.

[3]The Oxford English Dictionary, J.A.H. Murray (ed.) (Clarendon Press, 1933), XI, 517.

The Oxford describes "train" meaning wake or track as being rare, and first records the term in 1908. Apparently Cass was ahead of his time in 1850 when he gave the above meaning to "train." "Whence" has become obsolete and is generally replaced with from where. "Olden" also is archaic and literary. "Aright," "consentaneous," "animadversion," "latitudinarian," "supererogation," "ergo," "apologue," "pandects," and "chrysalis," though not generally considered colloquial words, are still in use today. Q.E.D. was employed by Cass with no explanation. It is a Latin abbreviation for quod erat demonstrandum meaning which was to be demonstrated. "Cotemporaneous" is listed today as an erroneous version of contemporaneous.

Foreign Words

Occasionally Cass used a foreign word or phrase.[1] Some of these foreign terms have since become so common that they are now considered to be a part of the English language. Foreign terms which were italicized in the speeches of Cass but which are commonly understood as English expressions today are noted in the following examples: "And the territory becomes ipso facto a part of the United States"[2]; "We may

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[1] It was not unusual for Cass to quote several lines of Latin in his ceremonial addresses which were delivered outside the Senate. See p. 45 in the American Historical Society speech, p. 37 in France, Its King, and Court, and p. 45 in the Michigan Historical Society speech.

[2] Cass, Globe, 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 63.

well presume he speaks ex cathedra . . . "[1]; Can the people "find a better remedy for the preservation of personal liberty than the writ of habeas corpus?"[2]; "If this clause remains the status quo, slavery remains with it"[3]; "The power having been expressed de facto . . . "[4]; "At the same time, I think, that the emigrant who went to Kansas to become a bona fide settler was in the exercise of his constitutional rights."[5]

Cass employed some foreign phrases which, though they may appear obscure to the lay observer, might have been readily understood by the legally educated Senate audience of 1850: "Rules and regulations for the public land ex vi termini mean 'plenary' legislative power"[6]; "If, therefore, this power required a special clause creating it, a fortiori the power to govern people living on the property . . ."[7]; "If it is a casus omissus, the people alone can supply the omission . . ."[8]; "Let me ask him if anyone ever doubted the power of the people of the state . . . to substitute . . . the cotûme de Paris . . ."[9]; "As a citizen of the Northwest, I object toto coelo to this humiliating difference . . ."[10];

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[1] Ibid., p. 808. [2] Ibid., p. 68. [3] Ibid., p. 809.
[4] Ibid., p. 71.
[5] Ibid., 34th Congress, 1st session, p. 514.
[6] Ibid., 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 62.
[7] Ibid., p. 64 [8] Ibid. [9] Ibid., p. 68.
[10] Ibid.

"Some of the opinions of the judges on this subject are obiter opinions . . ."[1]; "A legislative measure adopted sub silentio settles nothing . . ."[2]; "I am afraid there is no vis medicatrix to be found in political nature, or out of it, which will supply its place"[3]; "And e con verso, does a southern man possess the same right?"[4]; "But, sir, how far is this exemption from the lex loci to be carried?"[5]; "Our supervisory power arising out of our connection with these States in posse involves considerations which all will not view alike"[6]; ". . . may be called paternal power, which places the General Government in loco parentis."[7]

Common Expressions

In addition to the strange words and foreign language terms, Cass on rare occasions relied upon clichés, axioms and proverbs. Only a few clichés were evident in the series of seven speeches. They were: "Well, sir, if this is not a tempest in a teapot, so far as regards this ground of difference, I do not know where we shall find one"[8]; " . . .

[1] Ibid., p. 70. [2] Ibid., p. 71. [3] Ibid., p. 810.

[4] Ibid., 33rd Congress, 1st session, p. 274.

[5] Ibid., p. 275. [6] Ibid., p. 279.

[7] Ibid., 34th Congress, 1st session, p. 514. Several of the above expressions were employed more than once: ex vi termini (twice), ex cathedra (twice), sub silentio (twice), a fortiori (twice), ex cathedra (twice), in loco parentis (three times). There were about as many foreign language terms in the Manifesto speech as there were in the other six speeches combined.

[8] Ibid., 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 809.

from the cradle to the grave"[1]; "He came as a messenger of peace to pour oil upon the troubled waters"[2]; "In the days of Solomon, it was said that there was nothing new under the sun . . . ."[3] Axiomatic expressions, too, were scarce. Only the following were observed: "A little spark kindleth a great fire"[4]; "We can all suppose a case; but sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof . . . "[5]; " . . . making still more true the old adage that he is a wise child who knows his own father."[6]

Although Cass himself employed the above examples of axioms, he was known in one case to have been critical of the use of the axiom by the opposition:

> 'Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old enough he will not depart from it.' This paternal injunction has no place here, and least of all is it the foundation for the exercise of this great power.[7]

Geographic References

Cass alluded to geographic locations in making comparisons. It was his habit to refer to foreign rivers and cities as if they were familiar to everyone. Perhaps most of them were. In refutation of the arguments of his opponents, Cass said: "It is a doctrine better suited to the Neva than to the Wabash."[8] "Congress is made to confer a

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[1] Ibid., p. 331. [2] Ibid., p. 517. [3] Ibid., p. 529.
[4] Ibid., 34th Congress, 1st session, p. 524.
[5] Ibid., 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 530.
[6] Ibid., p. 276. [7] Ibid., p. 65. [8] Ibid., p. 73.

power it does not possess, and thence it follows that these unfortunate communities may be sold into slavery, and so on to the end of the chapter from Poland to Oregon."[1] "There are many of them found in Europe, and in other quarters of the world. There is one at St. Petersburg, another at Constantinople, and another at Vienna . . . ."[2] "This is a good doctrine over the water at Berlin, and Vienna, and at Petersburg; but I hope not upon the Wabash."[3] When Calhoun referred to the United States government as being despotic, Cass replied: "What will be thought and said of this in Europe--in republican Europe--in monarchical Europe? Why, sir, it is on its way to Siberia already."[4] Calling attention to the freedom of expression and action allowed in the United States, Cass stated:

> Go to Europe, to Asia, to Africa for the answer, if you need one. He who should make such an experiment in St. Petersburg would find himself on the road to Siberia in half an hour; and in Constantinople, he would find the bowstring around his neck in the same time. In England, it would send him to Australia.[5]

Composition

Composition refers to the manner in which words are arranged into sentences, sentences into paragraphs, and

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[1] Ibid., p. 530.

[2] Ibid., p. 530.

[3] Ibid., 33rd Congress, 1st session, p. 278.

[4] Ibid., 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 530.

[5] Ibid.

paragraphs into the whole. Such matters will be discussed as relate to parenthetical expressions, inverted word order, repetition, parallel structure, "purple patches," and transitions.

Parenthetical Remarks

Many of the sentences in the Senate addresses of Cass were made unwieldy[1] and somewhat ambiguous by the interpolation of parenthetical remarks. The Michigan Senator would often pause in the middle of a thought to define, explain, or amplify a word or phrase: "It will hardly be denied -- the time for denial has not yet come, though appearances indicate it as fast approaching -- that these indirect or incidental powers are . . ."[2]; "But if the power to make needful rules and regulations for the property of the United States -- for this is the grant, and all the grant -- conveys full legislative authority over . . ."[3]; ". . . with one of those sneers of intelligence with which great minds -- alas for the infirmities of human nature! -- are but too prone to . . . "[4]; "The first ordinance, (for that of 1787 is the second) the ordinance of April 23, 1784, which was . . ."[5]; "I see the effort is made here to show -- and

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[1] "His cumbersome sentences were not always enlivening." McLaughlin, Lewis Cass, p. 221. Cass used sentences up to 250 words in length. See Cass Globe, 34th Congress, 1st session, p. 514.

[2] Cass, Globe, 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 59.

[3] Ibid. [4] Ibid., p. 61. [5] Ibid., pp. 68-69.

indeed it is pretty clearly shown -- that some of the opinions of the judges . . ."[1]; ". . . whatever evils it brings with it -- and they are many -- still it brings with it one consolation, and that is . . . "[2]; ". . . no section has acquired a 'triumph' -- to use a patriotic phrase to which I shall hereafter refer -- over another"[3]; "But, sir, whether the Government of the United States is sovereign or subordinate, supreme or inferior, confederated or consolidated -- and consolidated it will become, if some of these doctrines prevail -- are questions not worth . . ."[4];

> I am surprised, is yet the frequent remark of the traveler from the Eastern States -- and formerly it was the universal one when visiting the western country -- I am surprised at the respectability and intelligence of your people. But while he pays this equivocal compliment -- intended, however, to be unequivocal -- he forgets the fact that this population . . . .[5]

Inverted Word Order

Occasionally Cass employed an inverted word order, which gave a dramatic effect to his language: "But this we cannot do"[6]; "I am warranted in saying that the President so considers it, because . . ."[7]; "Well, sir, during all this period, be it longer or shorter . . ."[8]; "How happens it, then, that if the right to . . . "[9]; "Sir, I am no

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[1] Ibid., p. 70. [2] Ibid., p. 803. [3] Ibid., p. 804.
[4] Ibid., 34th Congress, 1st session, p. 278.
[5] Ibid., 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 65.
[6] Ibid., p. 807. [7] Ibid., p. 808. [8] Ibid., p. 810.
[9] Ibid., 33rd Congress, 1st session, p. 272.

defender of the South. It needs not my aid"[1]; ". . . when he has prepared for it -- how I know not . . ."[2]; "The South intermeddles not with . . . ."[3]

Repetition

Cass made use of repetition. This practice gave greater clarity and emphasis to his important ideas: "I repeat, that I do not call in question the motives of the administration. Far from it"[4]; "As I have said . . ."[5]; "I repeat, the cession made, whence comes the political power of legislation over the people? And I repeat also . . ."[6]; ". . . how happens it, I repeat, that this right does . . ."[7]; "I repeat, then, what prevents . . ."[8]; "As I have already remarked, the difficulties . . ."[9]; "I repeat, by . . ."[10]; "I repeat that . . ."[11]; "As I have said . . ."[12]; "Mr. President, I repeat, that I have no design. . . ."[13]

At times for effect Cass reiterated a word or phrase

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[1] Ibid., 34th Congress, 1st session, p. 522.
[2] Ibid., 33rd Congress, 1st session, p. 276.
[3] Ibid., 34th Congress, 1st session, p. 521.
[4] Ibid., 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 808.
[5] Ibid., p. 398.
[6] Ibid., p. 1531.
[7] Ibid., 33rd Congress, 1st session, p. 272.
[8] Ibid., p. 273.
[9] Ibid., p. 274.
[10] Ibid., p. 275.
[11] Ibid.
[12] Ibid.
[13] Ibid., 34th Congress, 1st session, p. 514.

several times within a sentence: "The Wilmot proviso is offensive -- justly offensive -- to the southern section of the confederacy -- offensive, independently of its practical consequences"[1]; "The proposition is, that the public domain belongs equally to all, because acquired by all, and that therefore all have equal constitutional rights to settle upon it with all their property"[2]; "And this tissue of bad taste, bad morality, and bad logic . . ."[3]; "Hard thoughts are followed by hard words, and if these are not followed by hard blows, it will be owing more to the mercy of God than to the wisdom or moderation of man"[4]; "It is robbery without a robber, an aggression without an aggressor, an injury with none to commit it, and none to benefit by it"[5]; " . . . whether we consider the messenger or the message, the prophet or the prophecy"[6]; "No, sir, no . . . ."[7]

Parallel Structure

Cass employed parallelism in his speech composition, although this characteristic of his style was not a dominant feature. For instance, these passages constitute the majority of cases in which Cass used this rhetorical device

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[1] Ibid., 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 528.

[2] Ibid., 33rd Congress, 1st session, p. 272.

[3] Ibid., 34th Congress, 1st session, p. 806.

[4] Ibid., 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 399.

[5] Ibid., p. 517. [6] Ibid., p. 278. [7] Ibid., p. 808.

in his popular sovereignty speeches: "It is essential therefore, to ascertain whence this power comes, that we may ascertain how far it may go; essential, that we may not violate a fundamental principle of freedom . . ."[1]; "For myself, I will take part in no such effort. I will minister to no . . . . I will engage in no . . . . I will endeavor to . . ."[2]; "'Discussion' has come, 'voting' has come, and 'agitation' has come with them"[3]; "He denominated Washington the illustrious southerner! Not the renowned warrior -- not the eminent statesman -- not the distinguished citizen -- not the great American -- not the beloved Virginian -- but the illustrious southerner"[4]; "No one asks it -- no one expects it"[5]; "Its strength is in union, its prosperity in its union, its hopes in the Union"[6]; "No man should come here . . . no man should come here . . . no man . . ."[7]; "I do not want anyone to tell me . . . . I do not want anyone to come here and tell me . . ."[8]; "Again: power is given to . . . . Again, sir, ... Again: Congress debars itself . . . . Again: Congress hands itself to . . . ."[9]

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[1] Ibid., p. 59. [2] Ibid., p. 73. [3] Ibid., p. 810.
[4] Ibid., p. 517. [5] Ibid., p. 518. [6] Ibid., p. 399.
[7] Ibid., p. 518. [8] Ibid., p. 399. [9] Ibid., p. 331.

"Purple Patches"

Perhaps in part because there was a dearth of entertainment media, the nineteenth century audience often expected to be entertained as well as informed by the public speaker. The self-conscious literary effort, which probably would not be tolerated today by most audiences, was appreciated and applauded a century ago. This is not to say that it was appropriate in the Senate. The "purple patch" was relatively scarce in the Senate addresses of Cass. There were, however, a few instances which ought to be pointed out. The introduction to "Kansas and Nebraska" (speech six) and the conclusion to "Kansas--the Territories" (speech seven) are cases in point:

> Mr. President, but four brief years are passing away, brief in the life of a nation, since this Hall resounded with angry and agitating discussions upon the very topics that now disturb and divide us, and since every breeze that spread out to the heavens the flag that waves over us -- our father's flag, and blessed be God, yet our own -- brought us from crowded city and from lonely cabin, from hill, valley, and prairie, from ocean and lake, the echoes of anxiety and alarm, passing over the country, and which announced, that a great people had reached a crisis in their destiny, which, for weal or woe, might mark their history during long ages to come.[1]

> But this is holy, sanctified by a living principle, and rising above a world of waters, which has been spreading out over the land. I trust it will yet stay the flood, and rescue us from the only peril, which the patriot contemplates with doubt and apprehension.[2]

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[1]Cass, Globe, 33rd Congress, 1st session, p. 270. Note that this long quotation is a single sentence.

[2]Cass, Globe, 34th Congress, 1st session, p. 526.

Transitions

Cass made skillful use of transitional expressions. It is true that some of his speeches received little specific preparation in advance of presentation; but those speeches which were carefully prepared evidenced planned and frequent transitions such as the following: "And this brings me to the nature of this congressional legislation, and its effect upon the people of the territories"[1]; "The second argument urged in support of the authority of Congress to legislate over the territories is derived from the war and treaty-making powers, which bring with them as an incident the right of acquisition . . ."[2]; "Now, sir, to congressional precedents"[3]; "And this brings me to the consideration of the true ground of these complaints, and how far they have any real foundation"[4]; "The second objection which I propose to consider . . ."[5]; "But, Mr. President, let us look at this matter in another respect"[6]; "A few words more upon another point introduced by the Senator from Mississippi, and I quit this branch of the subject"[7]; "Passing now, sir, from these topics, I shall briefly refer to the occurrences in Kansas connected with the

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[1] Ibid., 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 73.

[2] Ibid., p. 63. [3] Ibid., p. 70.

[4] Ibid., 33rd Congress, 1st session, p. 273.

[5] Ibid. [6] Ibid., p. 275. [7] Ibid., p. 279.

organization of its government . . . ."[1]

Embellishment

It was Cicero who believed that the highest distinction of eloquence consists in amplification by means of ornament.[2] Quintilian agreed that ornament pleased the audience. It was ornament, he said, which was largely responsible for the success of Cicero in achieving sublimity and splendor of speech. No matter what the speaker's purpose, he must achieve and retain the attention of the audience in order to accomplish that purpose. Embellishment techniques assist the speaker in holding the attention of the audience.

Most of the available testimony concerning the language of Cass relates to embellishment. The Washington Union stated that the addresses of Cass were characterized by "beauty of conception, felicity of expression, and excellence of sentiment."[3] The Detroit Democratic Free Press reporting on one of his campaign speeches in 1848 said: "Though calm, cool, and collected, his periods were most thrillingly eloquent and of unsurpassed beauty."[4] Four years later the Free Press commented on a speech which Cass delivered at Campus Martius

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[1] Ibid., 34th Congress, 1st session, p. 522.

[2] See Book III of Cicero's De Oratore.

[3] Washington Union as quoted by the Adrian Watchtower, July 18, 1854. M.H.C's.

[4] Detroit Democratic Free Press, October 3, 1848. D.P.L.

in downtown Detroit: "The beautiful elogium he paid to the memory of Daniel Webster . . . was by far the most beautiful and touching tribute to the mighty dead that ever fell *impromptu* from the lips of the honored living . . . ."[1] An English traveler remarked in 1846:

> Crossing the Rotunda, we passed into the Senate, and heard General Cass, of Michigan, delivering a set speech on the Oregon Question. I thought the style of this oration better than its spirit.[2]

A visitor from New England stated that Cass' "periods were well rounded."[3] The observer added, however:

> The body of the discourse was his usual song -- old times -- British and Indians and this big country -- interspersed with quotations from Scripture and Shakespeare thrown in indiscriminately like jewels in a hog trough . . . .[4]

McLaughlin said that "his eloquence had the old fashioned sonorous quality. He offered none of the 'foam of Aphrodite of Bacchus's sea,' nor the froth and airy nothingness of modern after-dinner speech-making. There was little to lighten the heavy rhythm of his sentences."[5] The New York *Daily Tribune* reported on the Manifesto Address of Cass:

> After giving it careful reading, we decided that our columns could be far better employed than in printing it, and omit it accordingly. Those who

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[1] *Ibid.*, November 27, 1852. D.P.L.

[2] Charles Lyell, *A Second Visit to the United States of North America* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1849), I, 196.

[3] Woodford, *Lewis Cass*, p. 290. [4] *Ibid.*

[5] McLaughlin, *Lewis Cass*, pp. 191-92.

> have a taste for such prosing may look for it in some repository of kindred dullness -- we'll none of it.[1]

The ceremonial addresses of Cass were replete with embellishment. Hewlett said of a speech by the Michigan statesman delivered at the opening of the Erie-Wabash Canal that it was "beautiful, patriotic, and classical."[2] Outside the Senate, Cass could be as florid and grandiloquent as the most accomplished nineteenth century speaker of his period. His stylistic efforts at their grandest can be observed in addresses before the New England Society of Michigan, the Michigan State Agricultural Society, the Kalamazoo Agricultural Society, and the American Historical Society. The predisposition of Cass toward a grandiose style in the ceremonial speech is seen in a statement which he made before the alumni of Hamilton College:

> Generous and glowing sentiments . . . abound in the classical treasures which our institutions of education are pouring out before the American youth, not in harsh or repulsive form, but in splendid diction, and adorned with all that taste and genius can supply.[3]

Cass alluded to the language of his colleagues in the Senate in a manner which hinted at his impressions concerning the use of stylistic embellishment in Congress. The Michigan statesman sarcastically accused Horace Mann of using

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[1]New York Daily Tribune, January 23, 1850. N.R.R. Library of Congress.

[2]Hewlett, op. cit., p. 44.

[3]Cass, "Hamilton College Address," p. 36.

"choice flowers of rhetoric, culled from some garden."[1] I cast my eyes upon it "with a view to catch its spirit and some of its figures of rhetoric."[2] Commenting on another speech, Cass said: "This rather smells of the shop."[3] In his condemnation of Seward, the Michigan Senator stated:

> The speech of the Senator must be yet vivid in the recollections of the Senate. However intended, it came upon us with a kind of theatrical effect. Instead of being a grave and severe discussion, befitting the subject and the place, much of it took on the appearance of scenic representation; and we have an impeachment, in a 'comedy of errors,' rather than a dispassionate statesmanlike investigation.[4]

Direct Address

Cass employed several forms of direct address. As was the custom in the Senate, he frequently made a direct reference to the president of the Senate to whom technically he was speaking: "Perhaps so, Mr. President; but there are many here, who will contest that point"[5]; "Why, sir, these are the very times and circumstances which bring such questions to trial . . ."[6]; "Sir, we have the same power . . ."[7]; "But, sir, I may well appeal . . ."[8]; "Mr. Pres-

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[1] Cass, Globe, 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 806.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Ibid., 34th Congress, 1st session, p. 522.

[4] Ibid., p. 523.

[5] Ibid., 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 803.

[6] Ibid., p. 71.

[7] Ibid., p. 64.

[8] Ibid., P. 73.

ident, yesterday, I submitted . . ."[1]; "Really, Mr. President, I can hardly treat this subject . . ."[2]; "Now, sir, this application . . . ."[3]

Cass addressed individual Senators personally: "I ask the honorable Senator from New York, in his place now, if the word 'territory' in the Constitution means a political territory? If the power of governing the territories is derived from the authority to dispose of land, how can you exercise the power where you have no land?"[4] "Now, I ask the Senator from New York if he believes . . ."[5]; "Now, sir, let me ask the Senator, if this be the true derivation of the power of Congress, by what authority were territorial governments established in those portions of the United States which were not acquired by treaty . . ."[6]; "Will the Senator permit me . . . ?"[7]

There were times when Cass addressed the entire Senate directly: "Is there a Senator on this floor who would accept of a proposition to apply the principle of non-intervention to a party of the territory . . . "; "Do not, therefore, ask us to accept blindly the silent action of Congress . . ."[8]; "Can any man say that they correspond at all with

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[1] Ibid., 34th Congress, 1st session, p. 521.

[2] Ibid., p. 524. [3] Ibid., p. 525.

[4] Ibid., 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 518.

[5] Ibid. [6] Ibid., p. 1529. [7] Ibid., p. 1530.

[8] Ibid., p. 71.

the magnitude of the evils which must follow in their train"[1];

> But how does a murder concern the land? or a marriage? or a note of hand? or any of the infinite variety of acts which pass between individuals in civilized communities? And if they do not, whence comes the congressional power of legislation, by which such acts are to be commanded, or prohibited, or punished? [2]

Occasionally the use of direct address by Cass took the form of a quotation or a paraphrase of statements made by individuals: "Mr. Baldwin . . . was interrupted by the latter [Mr. Borland] who said: . . ."[3]; "When we approach a termination, are we to be told, sit still, leave the territories without governments, or otherwise you will agitate the country"[4]; "We have a right to bind you by legislation in all cases whatsoever, said the British Government to the Colonies"[5]; "We tell California that there is but one door through which you can enter, and that door we keep shut. You must pass through a territorial government"[6]; "They said: You have no right to legislate upon this subject of slavery. It is not in the bond which binds us together. If you do so, the bond is broken. Let it alone. It belongs to the people to regulate in their own way"[7]; "Still, sir, we are asked, and with much emphasis, by the Senator from Missouri, why are these measures joined together?"[8]

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[1] Ibid., p. 73. [2] Ibid., p. 62. [3] Ibid., p. 70.
[4] Ibid., p. 808. [5] Ibid., p. 1531. [6] Ibid., p. 528.
[7] Ibid., p. 804. [8] Ibid.

Figures of Speech

Personification.--There were a few scattered instances of the use of personification in the speeches. The last example cited above under direct address employed personification. Several other examples were observed: "The articles are utterly silent on the point, and the exercise of the power was an open assumption of authority."[1] "When translated into plain English, this means that the South has fattened upon the North, as the wolf is gorged with his prey."[2] "There is a preservative force in this country which would laugh to scorn the efforts of military power."[3] "It [the Compromise of 1850] had said to the waves of agitation, Peace,be still, and they became still."[4] "It is the South, upon which the North has laid its heavy hand . . . ."[5]

Similes.--As in the case of personification, Cass relied sparingly upon the use of simile. The following are among the few examples evidenced in the speeches: "The Wilmot proviso, like a threatening cloud, was hanging over the country"[6]; "Though from their shoulders and upwards, like the first king of Israel, they may be taller than any of us, still I trust they do not so overshadow us, as, like the oak,

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[1] Ibid., p. 68. [2] Ibid., p. 69. [3] Ibid., p. 331.

[4] Ibid., 33rd Congress, 1st session, p. 270.

[5] Ibid., p. 275.

[6] Ibid., 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 808.

to suffer only stunted shrubs to grow in the shadow of their tall foliage"[1]; "The stars and stripes would have still been like the cloud by day and pillar of fire by night, to conduct our gallant countrymen . . ."[2]; "Among other dangerous signs, a spirit of fanaticism is evoked, before which the guarantees of the Constitution may be prostrated, as easily as the marks on the sand are obliterated by the incoming tide of the ocean"[3]; "It [Kansas] was looked upon as the olive branch, announcing the recession of the waters of bitterness."[4]

Metaphors.--"It is metaphor, above all else," said Aristotle, "that gives clearness, charm, and distinction to the style."[5] Cass employed numerous metaphors in every speech. There were about a dozen in each of the longer speeches. When the language of the Michigan Senator tended toward grandiloquence, it was generally because of the use of metaphors. Typical examples were: "Mr. Hudson is the new Galileo to whom we owe the discovery that the people . . ."[6]; "This is as far as the heresy till now has been pushed. But

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[1] Ibid., p. 803.

[2] Ibid., p. 331.

[3] Ibid., 34th Congress, 1st session, p. 521.

[4] Ibid., p. 522.

[5] Aristotle, Rhetoric, iii. 2. 1405[a].

[6] Cass, Globe, 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 61.

a new chapter is opening upon us"[1]; "It is 'necessary and proper' that any measure required to give effect to the clauses of the preamble, should be adopted, and thus we have a rod, which in the hands of a necromancer, is to swallow up all its competitors"[2]; "Never in the history of the world was there such a theatre for human actions . . . "[3]; "While the fire remains, the conflagration is liable to break out, and to extend indefinitely. There will never be wanting persons enough to supply the fuel and to fan the flame"[4]; "His principal aim is at higher game than myself--at one of the Senators from his own State . . . . The allusion to me is rather an episode in the play, than any needful portion of it"[5]; "The proviso is the true apple of discord . . ."[6]; ". . . and make the country a desert . . ."[7]; "During the last autumn, there was quite a flourish of trumpets . . ."[8]; "Certainly the sub silentio assumption of jurisdiction is but a sandy foundation for the exercise of power . . ."[9]; ". . . returned to the fountain whence they issued -- to the people . . . ."[10]

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[1] Ibid., p. 62. [2] Ibid. [3] Ibid., p. 803.
[4] Ibid., p. 804. [5] Ibid., p. 806. [6] Ibid., p. 808.
[7] Ibid., 33rd Congress, 1st session, p. 276.
[8] Ibid., 34th Congress, 1st session, p. 516.
[9] Ibid., p. 519. [10] Ibid., p. 520.

Comparison and Contrast

To some extent in every speech, Cass employed comparison and contrast. It was a vital factor in his reasoning process; and it served as an embellishment device, which added interest to the subject matter. Some of the comparisons were handled briefly: "while they wish to come in, there are those who wish to go out."[1] "The whole land was before them and theirs, and is enough for us and ours . . ."[2] "If the right of the southern planter to hold his slaves is called into question, so is the right of the northern land owner to hold his land."[3] "In Europe it is generally exercised by the monarch, here by Congress."[4]

Certain comparisons received greater amplification. Cass contrasted the role of the Constitution in times of congressional tranquility to periods of turmoil:

> When the public atmosphere is untroubled, the political business of the country goes on untroubled also; and even without a constitution, there would be little danger of the adoption of measures wrong in principle, or ruinous in practice. But when the storm comes, then comes the necessity of some agent to guide it or to allay it; and this is the peculiar province of the Constitution, whose obligations none deny, however they may differ as to their extent or application.[5]

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[1] Ibid., 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 528.

[2] Ibid., 33rd Congress, 1st session, p. 275.

[3] Ibid., p. 276.

[4] Ibid., p. 277.

[5] Ibid., 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 71.

Cass compared the slave systems of two regions in defending slavery in the South:

> To emancipate a comparatively small number of slaves in a West Indian island, which may be covered by the troops and surrounded by the fleets of the mother country, is one thing. To do the same deed of liberation in a far-spreading region, measured not by miles, but almost by great circles of the globe, and destitute of a military force to restrain the revengeful promptings or the dangerous suggestions of suddenly acquired freedom, is another, and quite a different thing![1]

Humor

Cass seldom employed humor in the Senate, but there were a few occasions when the serious discussions involving slavery gave way to a moment of levity. After a vigorous exchange in a debate with Mr. Berrien, Cass rose and said: "Mr. President, I must have the last word. [laughter]"[2] The Michigan Senator never tired of needling England and in so doing he sometimes made use of humorous allusions:

> Lord North understood this major and minor; this right to everything, because there is an acknowledged right to do something; but he could not understand the conclusion. He began to form some conception of it about the 4th of July, 1776; but it took him seven years fully to acquire the lesson.[3]

Humor sometimes found its way into the refutation of Cass: "Truth, however, compels me, while professing my sincere adhesion to this position, to decline the honor of this

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[1] Ibid., 34th Congress, 1st session, p. 522.

[2] Ibid., 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 1532.

[3] Ibid., p. 72.

gentleman's censure . . . ."[1] "Well, sir, those of us, credulously inclined find ourselves in pretty good company, which furnishes some relief to our self-love thus sensibly wounded."[2]

When Horace Mann publicly ridiculed Cass and Webster, the Michigan Senator retorted with his most sarcastic brand of humor:

> The writer [Mann] is certainly a brave man -- I am satisfied of that for he distinctly announces it . . . . Martyrdom is cheaper than in the olden time. It is gained by words, not by fire and fagots . . . . And am I not right in saying, that whatever other qualities he may want, a man with my [Nicholson] letter before him, who could say that I never took the ground that slavery could exist in the new territories does not want moral courage.[3]

Literary Allusions

The ceremonial addresses of Cass were filled with literary references. He drew many of his examples and illustrations from the ancient Greek and Italian classics. The Michigan statesman expressed his respect and admiration for literature, especially classical literature, in his Hamilton College address:

> The learning of the ancient world, its sentiments, experience, and feelings, are embodied in those imperishable productions of Grecian and Italian genius, which have come down to us as fresh and green as when they first excited the admiration of mankind. Those fortunate and favored regions . . . were the repositories of much that was valuable in human life and the theatre, of almost all that was splendid in human action.[4]

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[1] Ibid., p. 61. [2] Ibid., p. 72. [3] Ibid., p. 806.

[4] Cass, "Hamilton College Address," p. 34.

Apparently nineteenth century audiences were accustomed to literary references. In 1856 when Cass was seventy-four years of age, he spoke at a Democratic mass meeting in Centerville, Michigan. A listener reported that he quoted from Pope.

> He began, 'Vice is a monster of such--such--such' here hesitating, he began again -- 'Vice is a monster of such--such,' and stopping short, in a fit of impatience, he turned around to Governor Barry, sitting on the stage behind him, and exclaimed in a petulant tone-- 'Governor, what is the next word? Do tell me!' The governor repeated the forgotten clause, and the General, catching the clue, gave with unfaltering emphasis the whole quotation . . . .[1]

The popular sovereignty speeches of Cass were replete with allusions to the Deity. There were also some literary references to the ancient classics: These are "metaphysical refinements which might almost provoke the envy of the Stagyrite himself, and of the whole peripatetic school he founded."[2] "Shade of Quintilian! What a figure for a disciple who invokes thy name and appeals to thy authority."[3] "But whatever may be the nature of this mission, the doctrine itself would sound better within sight of the tomb of Achilles than within sight of the tomb of Washington."[4] Cass compared

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[1]A.D.P. Van Buren, "Michigan in the Campaign of 1856," Michigan Pioneer and Historical Collections, XVII (1890), 278.

[2]Cass, Globe, 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 73.

[3]Ibid., p. 806.

[4]Ibid., 33rd Congress, 1st session, p. 278.

the self-confidence of Seward to that "of the great Roman orator, when he arraigned the proconsul of Sicily before the Roman Senate."[1] "The world has its Neroes as well as its Trajans; and, unfortunately, the class of the former is much more numerous than that of the latter."[2]

At times the literary references of Cass were in the form of religious quotations: "To your tents O Israel! would have been the cry . . ."[3]; "But though the ominous cry of woe, woe to Jerusalem! is once more heard, I do not believe . . ."[4];

> The handwriting upon the wall, 'God hath numbered thy kingdom and finished it,' announced with no more certainty to the wandering King of Babylon the destruction of his empire, and the termination of his life, than would these propositions -- if the continuance of our Union depended upon their adoption -- have announced that, 'God hath numbered our Republic and finished it.'[5]

Other literary allusions of a non-religious nature include: "They are gross exaggerations, by whatever modern Gulliver fabricated, whether man or strong-minded women . . . ."[6] "This sneer at human rights is worthy of a place in Johnson's hired pamphlet against the colonies, entitled

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[1] Ibid., 34th Congress, 1st session, p. 523.

[2] Ibid., 33rd Congress, 1st session, p. 273.

[3] Ibid., 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 803.

[4] Ibid., p. 270.

[5] Ibid., p. 517.

[6] Ibid., 33rd Congress, 1st session, p. 276.

Taxation No Tyranny."[1] "I believe we are told in this vertacious history of Robinson Crusoe that this is just what the prince of adventure did, soon as he was blessed by the company of his man Friday."[2] "'The proper study of mankind is man,' says the great English didactic poet."[3]

> For in the language of the great dramatic poet, both have 'eyes, hands, organs, dimensions, sorrows, affections, passions, fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer.'[4]
>
> 'Oh, how wretched!' says the great delineator of human character-- 'Oh, how wretched is that poor man that hangs on princes' favors!' Experience may show, that the first variorum edition of Shakespeare for Sante Fe, should read: 'Oh, how wretched is that poor man that hangs on colonel's favors!'[5]

Rhetorical Questions

Cass made extensive use of rhetorical questions. He used them singly, in groups of two and three, and in an extended series of a half dozen or more. Examples of the use of single questions are: "Now, sir, I repeat, is the contest worth the cost?"[6] "We have been three months here, and what have we done?"[7] "What then have we to fear?"[8]

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[1] Ibid., 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 59.

[2] Ibid., 33rd Congress, 1st session, p. 278.

[3] Ibid., p. 277.

[4] Ibid., p. 273.

[5] Ibid., 31st Congress, 1st Session, p. 810.

[6] Ibid., p. 73.

[7] Ibid., p. 517.

[8] Ibid., p. 59.

"What then, is the true import of this constitutional power, to make needful rules and regulations for the public property?"[1] "And why?"[2] "Do we hear aright, when we hear an American legislator contend for . . . ?"[3]

Cass sometimes grouped his questions in a series of two or three as follows: "But what kind of equilibrium could be established? Is every section of this country-- North, South, East, and West -- is every interest, manufacturing, agricultural, commercial, and mechanical, to be weighed each against the other? Is each to hold the government in a state of equipoise?"[4]

> But the question is, what political relation do they bear to that government, and what powers can it constitutionally exercise over their inhabitants? Are these inhabitants destitute of all rights, and subject to the uncontrolled will of Congress? And can that body 'sell them into slavery,' as cooly asserted in the House of Representatives by a member from Indiana?

It was not unusual for Cass to direct a battery of consecutive rhetorical questions to his Senate audience:

> But, in the meantime, and without local legislation, what is the state of this relation of master and servant, and what law governs it? How is the property to be sold? How distributed? How protected? What, in fact, becomes of the vast variety of subjects connected with it, and regulated by statutory enactments in the various slave states? Does the law accompany the property as it creates it, and secure its enjoyment in its new domicile?[6]

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[1] Ibid., p. 60. [2] Ibid. [3] Ibid., p. 61.

[4] Ibid., p. 529.

[5] Ibid., 34th Congress, 1st session, p. 513.

[6] Ibid., 33rd Congress, 1st session, p. 275.

> What, sir, would the southern States gain by sending California, after she has come here with a constitution in her hands, back again, to undergo the process of a territorial government, and then to return here in a year hence -- every year perhaps for ten years-- and revive the question anew? What would be gained by it for any portion of the country? Is it a battle worth fighting? Is the object to be accomplished worth the contest? Sir, there is no object that can be accomplished by such a course of procedure. Under existing circumstances, what kind of a territorial government can be established there? Can any territorial government be established? And is this unsettled state of things to go on from year to year, perpetuating the bitter feelings that have already sprung up between one section of the Union and the other?[1]

Summary

1. The vocabulary of Cass was extensive. Although his language was scholarly and somewhat formal, he did not strive for unusual words. The Michigan statesman, however, did employ some Latin terminology, most of which was legal in nature and probably easily understood by his colleagues in the Senate. There were also frequent references to geographic locations throughout the world and a few examples of cliché's, axioms, and proverbs.

2. The language composition in the popular sovereignty speeches of Cass was characterized by complex lines of reasoning, much detailed evidence, involved syntax, parenthetical remarks, long sentences, inverted word order, and the "purple patch." These factors tended to make the

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[1] Ibid., 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 527.

style ponderous and cumbersome. On the other hand, certain devices were employed by Cass to offset the heavy nature of the composition. These devices included the frequent use of repetition and transitions, and a few scattered examples of parallel structure.

3. The ceremonial addresses of Cass, which were presented outside of Congress, were florid and grandiloquent because of extensive embellishment. His popular sovereignty speeches in the Senate, however, were restrained and much less stylistic. The Michigan statesman deprecated excessive embellishment in the Senate speeches of his colleagues. Some language devices designed to achieve and retain the interest of the audience were, however, in evidence even in the Senate addresses of Cass. He made use of direct address, comparison and contrast, and figures of speech, chiefly personification, similes, and metaphors. There were numerous references to the Deity, and less frequent allusions to literature. Sparse evidence of humor can be noted in the speeches of Cass.

4. There was little significant variation in the amount and quality of the factors of word choice, composition, and embellishment in the speeches subsequent to the Manifesto Address. The latter, however, tended to be slightly more ponderous and literary than the other speeches in the group.

Chapter Seven

ANALYSIS OF SPEECH DELIVERY

To the rhetorician, the concept of delivery generally means voice and bodily action. These matters will be here considered and include the physical appearance of the speaker, his apparent attitudes, and other factors such as the speaker's mode of presentation and delivery in relation to length of speeches. In order fairly to appraise the delivery of Lewis Cass, it is also necessary to investigate the social context and the physical environment in which Cass spoke. This requires that a characterization of mid-nineteenth century oratory and a description of the Senate chamber be provided.

Mid-Nineteenth Century Oratory

The delivery of speeches in the United States Senate in the mid-nineteenth century differed somewhat from what we observe now in the Senate.[1] Although a United States Senator today cannot be distinguished on the street from the

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[1] "Much of the oratory of the time[nineteenth century] was of a kind which appeals but little to the reader of the present day. The speeches that have come down to us are often diffuse and occasionally florid." McLaughlin, "Publicists and Orators," p. 71. "The oratory of the period was rhetorical and some of it flatulent." Nevins, op. cit., p. 84.

American businessman, cartoons continue to depict him as his nineteenth century counterpart with long hair, high collars, stock ties, and flowing coat tails.

Perhaps because there was a dearth of entertainment media, nineteenth century audiences patiently gave their attention to the public speaker. "Senator Rives of Virginia addressed a great outdoor gathering at Auburn in New York for three hours and a half, after which Mr. Legaré of South Carolina carried on for two hours and a half more. The long endurance of mid-century audiences was marvelous."[1] O. H. Smith, an Indiana politician, said that in 1853, on his way to Memphis, he unexpectedly came upon a barbeque picnic in the town of Henderson, Kentucky. The program chairman invited him to a seat on the platform. He related:

> Of course I could not decline; but the moment I reached the seat, he announced to a large audience that 'a distinguished son of Indiana would address the audience.' I was taken wholly by surprise, entirely unprepared; but there was no backing out, and I went ahead with an extemporaneous speech of some hour and a half.[2]

This was a time "when American oratory was blazing with coruscating declarations of the glories of manifest

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[1]Morrison and Commager, op. cit., p. 553. "When General Cass concluded, the Honorable Stephen A. Douglas, of Illinois, was introduced and addressed the meeting for an hour and a half." Baltimore Sun as quoted by the Washington Union, September 2, 1852. N.R.R. Library of Congress.

[2]O. H. Smith, Early Indiana Trials and Sketches (Cincinnati: Moore, Wilstach, Keys, and Co., Printers, 1858), p. 200.

destiny and the beauties of pious imperialism . . . ."[1] The decade and a half preceding the Civil War was a "period of the keenest public interest in Washington discussions. The magnitude of the issues, the intensity of party feeling, and the forensic ability of the leaders, conspired to create a wider if not deeper concern in governmental affairs than in any other nation."[2] Audiences jammed narrow galleries to hear the slavery debates in the United States Senate.

> Great emphasis was placed on oratorical art; apt retorts were eagerly applauded; and the members were eager critics of debating skill. Since they were as yet only sixty [in 1850] in number, the body might be called truly deliberative. Dressed usually in somber, long-skirted coats, with tall silk hats, carrying watches in fobs with dangling seals, and using eyeglasses suspended on long ribbons, many of the Senators were gravity incarnate . . . . They wrote with quill pens, sanded their ink, and frequently resorted to the two great snuff boxes standing on the Vice-President's desk. Some kept wine or spirits at hand, for that too was a custom of the olden time.[3]

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[1]Andrew C. McLaughlin, A Constitutional History of the United States (New York: D. Appleton-Century Co., Inc., 1935), p. 507. "Great numbers of men, North, South, and West, agreed that Congress managed its affairs so as to produce a maximum of debate and a minimum of efficient legislative action." Nevins, op. cit., p. 186.

[2]Ibid., p. 96.

[3]Ibid., pp. 268-69.

The Senate Chamber

From 1819 to 1859, the Senate met in the eastern section of the northern wing of the Capitol Building in a semicircular room, seventy feet long, forty-five feet wide, and forty-five feet high. Sixty-four desks were arranged in four semicircular rows on a gradually rising platform. Behind the last row was a bar to prevent the intrusion of spectators. The galleries were supported by Ionic columns of dark variegated Potomac marble, the caps of which were copied after those of the Temple of Minerva in Athens. The beautiful dome ceiling was enriched with square caissons of stucco, and terminated in the skylights above.[1] A magnificent gilt chandelier hung in the room; the walls were decorated with draperies; and a large gilded eagle looked down upon the Vice-President's chair.[2] An observer in 1854 remarked: "The Senate chamber is of the same general form with the Hall of Representatives [now Statuary Hall], but has the advantage of plain walls and few recesses; consequently is a good speaking and hearing room."[3]

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[1]"Supreme Court Room" (Washington: Library of the Architect of the Capitol Publication, 1957), p. 1.

[2]George Watterston, A New Guide to Washington (Washington: Robert Farnham, 1842), p. 21.

[3]Robert Mills, Guide to the Capitol And the National Executive Offices of the United States (Washington: J. C. Greer, 1854), p. 24.

When the ladies gallery was full, the women were sometimes admitted on the floor of the Senate. Other privileged guests were allowed to stand behind the bar of the Senate floor, but one had to be introduced by a Senator to be there.[1]

> To be sure, the small chamber, with its red carpet and purple hangings, was decidedly stuffy. Even in summer, when the windows were open, the air after a debate of four or five hours became heavily vitiated; and in winter, especially when four or five hundred people jammed themselves into galleries and corners, it was positively mephitic. Smoke from the fireplaces often drifted into the room. But the Senate maintained an old-fashioned dignity.[2]

It was to here on December 2, 1823, that Monroe sent his historic message formulating the Monroe Doctrine, and it was here that Webster, Clay, and Calhoun made their farewell speeches. The room is seldom used today except for special occasions and is not open for public inspection.

Voice

Few reliable specific comments exist relating to the vocal characteristics of Cass. Newspaper accounts of political rallies provide some scant information, although they are likely to be exaggerated and often conflicting.

Projection.-- A nineteenth century orator speaking

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[1]D. R. Keim, Keim's Illustrated Handbook (Washington: 1875), p. 32.

[2]Nevins, op. cit., p. 268.

outdoors to large audiences without an amplifying system needed to project his voice considerably in order to be understood. The Nashville Union reported on a political mass meeting in Nashville, Tennessee, in August of 1844. "It seemed to the enthusiastic scribes that half the state had gathered to hear Cass speak . . . . 'Fifty acres of freemen,'"[1] they insisted, were in attendance. The Baltimore Sun pointed to some of the accoustical difficulties faced by the nineteenth century campaign speaker:

> During Gen. Cass' remarks, different wards and associations arrived in the square, bearing their flags, banners, and transparencies, containing various political mottoes, causing him to stop several times until they ceased their music . . . .
>
> It was computed that there were from twenty to twenty-five thousand persons in the square -- the whole space from Lexington to Baltimore street being completely blocked by a dense mass of persons.[2]

The following day, the Washington Union correspondent reported that "Cass electrified an audience of '30,000 to 40,000' New Yorkers at Tammany Hall."[3] Shortly thereafter the Detroit Free Press stated:

> Gen. Cass . . . addressed the Democracy of Michigan in about one third of the counties of the State. At Detroit there were present 3,000; at Ann Arbor, 2,000; at Jackson, 3,000; at Howell, 4,500; at Pontiac, 2,500; at Cassapolis, 6,000;

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[1] Nashville Union, August 17, 1844 as quoted by Hewlett, op. cit., p. 58.

[2] Baltimore Sun as quoted by the Washington Union, September 2, 1852. N.R.R. Library of Congress.

[3] Hewlett, op. cit., p. 223.

> at Monroe, 2,000; at Adrian, 1,000; at Coldwater, 3,000; at Marshall, 5,000; at Hastings, 1,500; at Grand Rapids, 7,000; at Kalamazoo, 4,000. At least fifty-three thousand people have listened to the speeches of General Cass and his associates so far [by Oct. 19] in the State.[1]

Four years later in the campaign of 1856 the Detroit Free Press said that Cass in Kalamazoo addressed an audience of fifteen to twenty thousand people.[2] The paper added that other "estimates of the numbers present range from 20,000 to 30,000."[3] The next month at a mass meeting in Howell before a "'huge assemblage . . . General Cass, whose health and voice would not permit him to speak in the open air, spoke in the court-house, which was densely packed . . . .'"[4]

Pitch and Rate.-- Woodford claimed that the voice of Cass was "resonant, clear, and rather low-pitched."[5] In 1842 an auditor, who heard Cass lecture on "Syria, Palestine, and the Holy Land," wrote to a friend: "It was exceedingly interesting but would have been moreso delivered slower. The house was crowded."[6] A Detroiter gazing upon a portrait of Cass in 1853 remarked: "No one can look into the face for any length of time without expecting momentarily to

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[1] Detroit Daily Free Press, October 19, 1852. D.P.L.

[2] Ibid., September 7, 1856. D.P.L. [3] Ibid.

[4] The Detroit Free Press as quoted by the Washington Union, November 1, 1856. N.R.R. Library of Congress.

[5] Woodford, Lewis Cass, p. 32.

[6] Letter from Mark Norris to Mrs. Benjamin Follet, January 1, 1842. Mark Norris Papers. B.H.C.

hear the sound of the General's rapid speech upon his ear."[1]

Articulation.-- In arguing to preserve the Senator's right to revise his sentence structure and grammar after delivering a speech and before that speech was printed in the Congressional Globe, Cass stated:

> Many gentlemen enunciate, as the Senator from Mississippi does, so distinctly that every word can be heard by the reporters as it is uttered. There are others whom the reporters can never report, and I am, unfortunately, among that number . . . . It is not the fault of the reporter; but there is an indistinctness in the enunciation, or a complication of sentences of some Senators, which forbids their ever being reported correctly.[2]

Hewlett contended that Cass' "poor voice . . . did not contribute to his effectiveness."[3] Commenting on the Manifesto speech, the New York Daily Tribune recommended to its readers that if they want a pro-slavery speech, they should listen to a southerner such as "Calhoun, Meade, Venable or some other champion of slavery whose heart is in his work, in preference to wasting time on that of one who mumbles and stumbles over the distastful job so bunglingly as Gen. Cass."[4]

Because Cass was able to make himself heard at large outdoor gatherings, it can be assumed that he projected his low pitched voice adequately. A rapid rate of speech and

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[1]Detroit Daily Advertiser, March 12, 1853. D.P.L.

[2]Cass, Globe, 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 596.

[3]Hewlett, op. cit., p. 192.

[4]New York Daily Tribune, January 23, 1850. N.R.R. Library of Congress.

less than perfect articulation, however, may have interfered somewhat with his communication.

Bodily Action

Enthusiasm.-- During his late twenties, Cass was described as "quick-motioned [and] full of nervous energy."[1] The Marshall Statesman reported that Cass "was very animated"[2] at a Democratic mass meeting in Marshall in September of 1844. In 1846 when Benton was arguing the Oregon question in the Senate, said Woodford, "Cass rose to answer him in his habitual pose, one hand behind him."[3] A contemporary of Cass, commenting upon a painting of the Michigan statesman, remarked: "It represents him in the act of addressing the Senate: one arm thrown behind him, in an attitude that will be recognized by all who are familiar with his manner of speaking."[4]

Nevins spoke of "the lethargic Cass."[5] "[He] was in fact not a man to inspire enthusiasm anywhere. In many ways he seemed a relic of the past."[6] McLaughlin maintained that his "earlier vigor and fire were tempered into boldness

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[1]Woodford, Lewis Cass, p. 32.

[2]Marshall Statesman, September 19, 1844. W.C.L.

[3]Woodford, Lewis Cass, p. 237.

[4]Young, op. cit., p. 420.

[5]Nevins, op. cit., p. 190. [6]Ibid., p. 193.

and decision in middle age . . . ."[1] Young, too, compared the enthusiasm of Cass as minister to France (1831-36) and as a campaigner in 1852: "He was then more active. His movements now [1852] indicate something of the caution of age, without any of its weaknesses or uncertainty."[2] The Washington Union of September, 1852, described the campaign speech of Cass at a rally in Tammany Hall:

> At Cass' appearance, the crowd shouted for fifteen minutes and his speech made the audience frantic with delight . . . .
>
> The enthusiasm of the audience reacted on the orator, who presently threw off his coat, waistcoat, and cravat, and with an eloquence of feeling and warmth yet tempered by that wise moderation of statesmanship which forms the staple of his powerful and patriotic mind, enlarged upon the philosophy of democracy . . . .[3]

Cass tended to be physically conservative in his total bodily movements and depended primarily upon the force of language to give emphasis to his ideas. He believed that the public speaker in the Senate ought to exercise restraint. In 1856, for instance, Cass expressed disapproval over the "theatrical manner" in which Seward addressed the Senate. The Michigan statesman declared that the speech by Seward lacked dignity and was no more than a "rhetorical exhibition."[4]

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[1] McLaughlin, Lewis Cass, p. 352.

[2] Young, op. cit., p. 419.

[3] Washington Union, September 5, 1852. N.R.R. Library of Congress.

[4] Cass, Globe, 34th Congress, 1st session, p. 523.

Facial Expression.-- As a young man, said Woodford, Cass' "expression was alive, his glance direct and bold."[1] During a campaign speech in Marshall, Michigan, reported the local journal, Cass, "with a theatrical flourish, and with a smile of triumph on his countenance,"[2] Drew a letter from his pocket. Nathan Sargent wrote that in the Senate "General Cass spoke often upon this subject [the Oregon question] and always in the tone and with the look of an alarmist."[3] This statement is, however, in contrast to McLaughlin's description of the Michigan Senator:

> In public and in private speech, his face generally maintained a certain immobility. His features were heavy, and occasionally lighted up when unusual circumstances called for the determination, boldness, and vigor of the man. Even then he was impressive, ponderous, sternly dominant. Yet a customany look of benignity softened the severity of his face.[4]

Poise.-- During the campaign of 1850, the Detroit Advertiser reported that at Wayne, Michigan, "Cass clambered onto a car-load of timber [at age sixty-eight] in front of the grocery and commenced"[5] speaking. A youthful easterner wrote home in 1851 that "'Cass is a regular old fidgety-

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[1]Woodford, Lewis Cass, p. 32.

[2]Marshall Statesman, September 19, 1844. W.C.L.

[3]Nathan Sargent, Public Men and Events (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott and Co., 1875), p. 272.

[4]McLaughlin, Lewis Cass, p. 352.

[5]Detroit Daily Advertiser, November 2, 1850. N.R.R. Library of Congress.

granny.'"[1] "His large figure and his direct bearing," said McLaughlin, "aided the dignity of his words; and often where a man of less significant appearance would escape attention, or leave an audience unaffected by his appeals, the physical poise and stateliness of Cass would arrest the attention of the heedless, and compel conviction in the doubting."[2] Nevins related that for "forty-five years down to the Civil War, the Senate enjoyed a much greater prestige than the House. Benton, Cass, Crittenden, and Douglas, together with the great triumvirate, lent it dignity."[3]

Adjustment

Physical appearance.-- As governor of Michigan Territory, Cass was described by Woodford: "His complexion is ruddy. He is clothed in a well-cut suit of dark broadcloth, has halfboots, the product of the best eastern bootmaker."[4]

> He was stocky, almost square-built, of medium height--about five feet eight or nine inches--wide shouldered, with powerful arms and legs. His hair was heavy, black with reddish lights, unruly and, after the fashion of the day, was worn fairly long. His features were coarse, his face round and full and marred by a prominent mole on his left cheek. He had no claim to masculine beauty . . . .[5]

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[1] Woodford, Lewis Cass, p. 290.

[2] McLaughlin, Lewis Cass, p. 353.

[3] Nevins, op. cit., p. 164.

[4] Woodford, Yankees in Wonderland, p. 3.

[5] Woodford, Lewis Cass, p. 32.

A New England visitor in Detroit remarked:

> 'Governor Cass . . . is not tall but is full in figure, has a large head, hair inclined to be dark red, which is, I am told, not his own--he has a red face and blue eyes--his cheeks are low and his face is widest at the mouth--it is large and stolid; and a large mole at the left of his mouth gives it a rather singular appearance. He has not the appearance of a man of great talents.'[1]

Another observer said: Cass "'is portly and altogether governorlike . . . . He is neat in his dress, and though plain, polished in his manners . . . .' A Merchant of the town considered him Detroit's best dressed citizen and thought he set a good example for others."[2] "He was a plain, positive, unpretentious citizen,"[3] commented John T. Morgan. The Michigan Expositor referred to Cass as a "uniformly neat and well dressed gentleman."[4] In 1844 Ann Arbor's Signal of Liberty printed: Cass "'is a good sized portly looking man, with quite a large head, evincing much force of character.'"[5] Describing the Michigan statesman in 1848, Hewlett wrote: At sixty-six years of age he

> . . . still possessed the stout, erect, athletic frame developed during the rugged outdoor years of his life in the West. A less active life at the court of France and in the nation's capitol had added to his sturdy build a rotundity which was often a source of merriment to whig correspondents

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[1] Ibid., p. 118. [2] Ibid.

[3] John T. Morgan, Congressional Record, 50th Congress, 2nd session, p. 2009.

[4] Adrian Michigan Expositor, March 19, 1850. M.H.C's.

[5] The Ann Arbor Signal of Liberty as quoted by the Detroit Democratic Free Press, July 15, 1844. D.P.L.

> observing him on the Senate floor. His jet black wig with its unnatural sheen and occasional rakish angle was all too obvious, but it did serve to hide the weathering effects of age. His large facial features, his dark eyes under heavy lids gave him an imperious, almost unfriendly countenance.[1]

An English traveler recorded in his journal in 1849: "He is a stout, athletic man, about middle size, but, for an American, rather corpulent and sanguiferous in his appearance."[2] A young easterner commented at this time: "'Cass has eat a good deal of beef in his day--is fat and hog-throated--the first time I saw him I thought his face looked like a wine bibbers but the other day it was not so red . . . .'"[3] Horace Greeley was even less charitable: "'The country does not deserve a visitation of that pot-bellied, mutton-headed cucumber Cass.'"[4]

In September of 1852 the New York correspondent of the Baltimore Sun submitted his impressions of the Tammany Hall speech by Cass:

> In the evening, the old statesman of Michigan addressed the Democracy of the Empire State in his usual eloquent strain, warmed additionally by the suffocating heat in the Hall, caused by the dense packing of the crowd, which not only filled the Hall, but every avenue leading to it. General Cass was obliged to strip for the encounter of the

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[1] Hewlett, op. cit., p. 117.

[2] James Dixon, Personal Narrative of a Tour through a Part of the United States and Canada (New York: Lane and Scott, 1849), p. 61.

[3] Woodford, Lewis Cass, p. 291.

[4] Horace Greeley as quoted by Nevins, op. cit., p. 209.

> evening, but his benign countenance lost nothing by its unusual costume.[1]

Young characterized the personal appearance of Cass at this time as

> . . . decidedly imposing. His person is large, robust, and well filled out, presenting a little more embonpoint than at the period of his appointment as minister to France . . . . His head is of the largest size . . . . His brows are bushy and heavy; his nose rather long . . . his eyes are blue, and, when in repose, subdued in expression.[2]

Holman Hamilton said that the Michigan Senator's "jowls, dark circled eyes, and moplike wig were hardly inspirational assets."[3] Nevins agreed: "His portly frame, morose mouth, pendulous cheeks and cold eyes gave him a forbidding look."[4]

Attitude.-- Describing Cass when he was governor of Michigan Territory, Woodford stated: "His whole attitude is one of serenity and confidence in himself and all his works."[5] He was "inclined somewhat to be sober of visage and temperament and without much humor, yet possessing a striking personality which impressed itself on anyone he met."[6] The Detroit Gazette observed that "'the urbanity

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[1]Baltimore Sun as quoted by the Detroit Free Press, September 15, 1852. D.P.L.

[2]Young, op. cit., p. 419.

[3]Hamilton, op. cit., p. 277.

[4]Nevins, op. cit., p. 190.

[5]Woodford, Yankees in Wonderland, p. 3.

[6]Woodford, Lewis Cass, p. 32.

of his manners and the soundness of his intellect . . . command the veneration and respect of an entire community.'"[1] A newspaper unfriendly toward the Democratic Party said in 1844 that at a recent political rally Cass " 'spoke briefly and comprehensively with good taste . . . .'"[2] An Adrian writer found him to possess a "fund of pleasantry and good humor, that enables him both to instruct and attract."[3]

Time Element.-- Speeches not only were lengthy during the mid-nineteenth century but there were often three or four speakers on a single program. Campaigning for the Party in 1850, Cass spoke in Zanesville, Ohio. The Free Press reported: "Though three hours were consumed by the General in his remarks, still, he was pressed to go on."[4] The next day at Delaware, Ohio, "General Cass addressed the crowd of people for nearly three hours."[5] Anything less was considered insufficient: General Cass "spoke only about an hour and three quarters and, of course, could only generalize."[6] When the Michigan statesman began his ponderous Manifesto speech, said the New York Daily Tribune, "the

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[1] Ibid., p. 118.

[2] Signal of Liberty as quoted by the Detroit Democratic Free Press, July 15, 1844. D.P.L.

[3] The Adrian Watchtower, October 12, 1852. M.H.C's.

[4] Detroit Free Press, October 2, 1850. D.P.L.

[5] Ibid., October 3, 1850. D.P.L.

[6] Ibid., September 13, 1852. D.P.L.

Senate galleries were pretty full . . . but Cass' arguments were spun out to such length that most of the people got wearied and left."[1] The speech required two days to deliver. At this time a committee was considering installing new gas chandeliers in one of the committee rooms of the Senate. Hannibal Hamlin "suggested that it would be better to hang 'old Cass' there, as he would answer the same purpose."[2]

Method of Delivery.-- Available evidence points to the conclusion that Cass may have presented three of his popular sovereignty speeches from a manuscript or from detailed notes and the others with few or no notes. The abundance of detailed supporting materials in the Manifesto Address, "Kansas and Nebraska," and "Kansas--the Territories" seem to indicate that if these addresses were not presented from a complete manuscript, at least extensive notes were employed by Cass.[3] The desultory organization and the

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[1]New York Daily Tribune, January 24, 1850. N.R.R. Library of Congress.

[2]David K. E. Bruce, Revolution to Reconstruction (New York: Doubleday, Doran and Co., 1939), p. 373. "While he was a member of the United States Senate, he developed the habit of making prolix speeches." Ibid. The Detroit Daily Advertiser complained that the stump speeches of Cass were too long and usually strayed from the subject. Detroit Daily Advertiser, March 25, 1853. D.P.L. "His thoughts often rambled far and wide in the course of his speeches." Hewlett, op. cit., p. 228.

[3]In speech seven, Cass was interrupted by Seward who challenged a statement made by the Michigan Senator in which he quoted Madison from the Federalist. Cass replied to Seward: "I will show presently exactly what Mr. Madison said;

summarized evidence presented in the remaining popular sovereignty speeches by Cass tend to suggest that they were presented extemporaneously with few or no notes. Cass admitted this to be the case in respect to "Dissolution of the Union."[1]

It is true that Cass did deliver some Senate speeches from manuscript. Joseph Rickey wrote to Cass asking him for a copy of one of his popular sovereignty speeches, and received the following reply:

> The speech was not published in pamphlet form, and I have but one copy and therefore cannot send it to you in print.[2]

Apparently Cass was referring to his own manuscript copy of the speech. In the Lewis Cass Papers of the Boston Public Library, there is one page of a manuscript of a speech on the Austrian question, which the Michigan statesman delivered in the Senate on January 4, 1850. It is triple spaced and in the hand of Cass. McLaughlin said: "He often, perhaps usually, read his speeches from manuscript. They were skillfully and elaborately prepared."[3] Woodford like-

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I have his words in my notes, and shall come to them directly." Cass, Globe, 34th Congress, 1st session, p. 518.

[1]"There was no preparation on the subject," said Cass, the remarks never occurred to me until the moment they were delivered." Cass, Globe, 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 398.

[2]Letter from Cass to Joseph Rickey, October 28, 1850. M.H.C's.

[3]McLaughlin, Lewis Cass, p. 353.

wise referred to Cass as "reading his speech" on the Oregon question, and went on to say that this method of presentation was a customary procedure on the part of Cass. An English traveler reported that he observed Cass in 1846 "delivering a set speech on the Oregon question."[1]

Cass presented some of his Senate speeches extemporaneously. In February of 1851, Mr. Davis submitted a resolution asking that the Congressional Globe print that which the stenographers heard in Congress with no revisions permitted after the speech. Cass argued against the proposition:

> I trust that, on reflection, the Senator from Mississippi will withdraw that resolution. It will place some of us in a very unjust position, and deceive the country. Certainly it would do so in my own case . . . . I have repeatedly observed the notes of the reporters of my own speeches, which sometimes contained sentiments which I never brought forward, and which were totally different from those which I had advanced . . . . I repeat, it would be exceedingly unjust to many Senators not to allow them to have an opportunity to revise their speeches.[2]

Cass seemed to be arguing chiefly from the point of view of an extemporaneous speaker. Had he always delivered his speeches from manuscript, he could have submitted copies to the reporters before or after the speech occasion with which they might have corrected their stenographic accounts. When speaking extemporaneously, however, he would have had to read

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[1]Lyell, op. cit., p. 196.

[2]Cass, Globe, 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 596.

their copy in order to determine its correctness.[1] In the "Power of Congress" speech, Cass said: And yet we are "told seriously -- not in an extemporaneous debate, such as we are now engaged in, when no man should be held to a rigid accountability for his expressions -- but in a prepared speech, written and printed before its delivery, and laid upon our tables immediately after . . . ."[2]

Outside the Senate on the campaign stump, it is likely that Cass had no manuscript and very few notes. The Detroit Free Press reported in September of 1852: The speech presented by Cass in Ann Arbor was "one of the most remarkable and effective off-hand addresses we ever listened to."[3] Two months later, the same journal commented on a eulogy of Daniel Webster delivered by Cass "impromptu"[4] in Detroit. In 1856 the Free Press stated: "The largest meeting ever held in the city of Detroit took place last night. Cass made two short impromptu speeches."[5]

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[1]Cass didn't always bother to revise the reporter's account of his speeches. They went to print in the Globe containing muddled phrases and slips of the tongue such as: "Let an American go to Europe, and if he come back, and does not say that this is the worst Government on earth--nay, if he does not say it is the best--let his countrymen distrust him." Cass, Globe, 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 530. Speech seven also contains a long phrase followed by a period, though it is an incomplete sentence. Cass, Globe, 34th Congress, 1st session, p. 518.

[2]Cass, Globe, 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 530.

[3]Detroit Free Press, September 21, 1852. D.P.L.

[4]Ibid., October 21, 1852. D.P.L.

[5]Detroit Daily Free Press, September 9, 1856. D.P.L.

General Comments.-- A few general comments shed some additional light upon the overall impression of the speech delivery of Cass. The Detroit Democratic Free Press, reporting on a campaign speech in the summer of 1844, stated that the Michigan statesman gave an effective speech last evening. It was "delivered in an impressive manner which distinguishes General Cass as a public speaker."[1] Mr. Berrien said when referring to the speech "Power of Congress" which was presented by Cass: "He founds the argument, which he has delivered with so much fervor and eloquence . . . ."[2] The Ionia Gazette in its printed account of a stump speech by Cass in 1854 related that "'there was no bombast, no affectation.'"[3] in his presentation. McLaughlin commented: "When he rose to speak on a subject in which he was much interested, he was always impressive."[4] Lewis Einstein said that Cass' "eloquence savoured of that of high collars, stock ties, and flowing coat-tails. It was sonorous and solemn . . . ."[5]

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[1]Detroit Democratic Free Press, July 5, 1844. D.P.L.

[2]John M. Berrien, Globe, 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 1531.

[3]Ionia Gazette as quoted by the Detroit Daily Free Press, October 11, 1854. D.P.L.

[4]McLaughlin, Lewis Cass, p. 221.

[5]Einstein, op. cit., p. 298.

Summary

1. The period in which Cass served in the United States Senate, 1845-57, was marked by keen public interest in national affairs. The membership of the Senate was small enough at this time to enable it to function as a truly deliberative body. The significance of the issues, the intensity of party feeling, and the forensic ability of congressional leaders conspired to make this era one of the most noteworthy in the history of American political oratory.

2. The Senate met in the northern wing of the Capitol Building in a semicircular room, seventy feet by forty-five feet. A magnificent chandelier, impressive scarlet draperies, a red carpet, galleries supported by Ionic columns of marble, a domed ceiling, and a large gilded eagle above the Vice-President's chair added to the impressiveness of the hall.

3. The fact that outdoors Cass often addressed audiences which exceeded two thousand in number may testify to his ability to project his voice adequately. Scattered comments indicate that his voice was probably low pitched and quite rapid in rate, and that his articulation was sometimes faulty.

4. Cass could be animated when he desired, but in the main his bodily action was probably restrained and conservative. His face revealed little emotion. He was known

for his distinguished and formal demeanor, his serenity, and apparent self-confidence.

5. The Michigan statesman was of medium height, square built, and wide shouldered. He wore a black wig which had a reddish sheen, and his head was large. His features were coarse and his face round and full at the mouth. By the time Cass reached the Senate, he had acquired a rotundity which made him the object of some merriment in public.

6. Public speeches were often lengthy during the mid-nineteenth century, and sometimes there were several speakers on a single program. The audiences listened patiently, though not always quietly. Cass generally spoke from one to three hours when campaigning. Three of his popular sovereignty speeches in the Senate required more than one day to present.

7. It is likely that the Michigan statesman had notes before him for most of his Senate addresses, and very complete notes, if not a manuscript for the Manifesto speech, "Kansas and Nebraska," and "Kansas-the Territories." He admitted, however, that some of his speeches were delivered extemporaneously with no notes whatsoever.

8. If Cass is remembered today as a public speaker, it is because of what he said rather than how he said it, for his speech delivery was by and large unimpressive.

Chapter Eight

RESPONSES TO THE SPEAKING OF CASS

Cass was sensitive to the power of the spoken word. In 1830, while still governor of Michigan Territory, he proclaimed in an address at Hamilton College:

> Eloquence, too, presents its triumphs and its trophies. The fierce democracies of Greece are swayed by the Athenian orator, and he alone, without power or wealth, stood between Phillip and the object of his ambition. We see the Senate of Rome convened at a moment of great public danger. Her consul, in a strain of impassioned invective, which left Catiline without defense and without friends, lays open the recesses of his conspiracy; and that solemn decree is passed, which, like the writing upon the wall, announced to every Roman citizen the approach of danger, but unlike that, carried with it its own interpretation, and the means of safety. Eloquence is again victorious, and Rome is saved -- saved indeed, but for a brief interval, to be then lost by the corruption and licentiousness of both patricians and plebeians.
>
> And what country ever offered a nobler theatre for the display of oratory than our own? From the primary assemblies of the people, where power is conferred, and may be reclaimed, to the national legislature, where its highest attributes are deposited and exercised all feel and acknowledge its influence.[1]

Nineteenth century America was a nation which "was full of life and was assured of its high destiny, a nation in which a man to be a popular leader must have . . . vitality, assurance, and a political store of winged words."[2]

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[1] Cass, "Hamilton College Address," p. 37.

[2] McLaughlin, "Publicists and Orators," p. 71.

The nature of the institutions and the political atmosphere at the time were favorable for creating such senatorial giants as Clay, Calhoun, and Webster. Public speaking played no small role in accounting for their success. By the mid-nineteenth century, some of the country's most outstanding orators were debating in the Senate. "American oratory was in its golden prime in 1850, and at its best might challenge comparison with any in the world."[1] During the critical years preceding the Civil War "all sorts of questions arose to be vehemently and earnestly discussed before an increasing number of eager hearers who felt that their destiny was in their own hands."[2]

Views Expressed by Observers and Writers

Aristotle contended that "not outward success, but a correct method, is the criterion of art; the correct method will bring success in proportion."[3] Chapters III through VII constitute an analytic judgment of the popular sovereignty speeches of Cass in terms of correct method. No matter how excellent a speech may be, however, so far as its internal craftsmanship is concerned, in a world in which success is measured by results the rhetorician must look to the verdict of the audience.

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[1] Nevins, op. cit., pp. 83-84.

[2] McLaughlin, "Publicists and Orators," p. 70.

[3] Aristotle, Rhetoric, i. 1. 1355^{b}.

> Men who play roles in the making of history -- and this includes the orators -- are judged finally by their influence upon people and events. In the eventual reckoning, men may be tested in the light of what they did. Orators will be judged by what they accomplished, either immediately or in the long run of public affairs.[1]

It is the purpose of the writer to record all the available responses which were made to the speaking of Cass. The most useful information, of course, is the reports made by observers who actually heard the Michigan statesman. Opinions and appraisals from later generations, however, ranging up to the present time will also be included. Whether considering the secondary data or the primary data of the speech situation, the rhetorical critic must regard the possibility that the biases of the observer may have considerably influenced opinions that were expressed. Newspapers of the period from which most of the firsthand reactions are derived were especially partisan and made little effort to conceal it. The Democratic papers tended to praise the speaking of Cass, while Whig and Republican papers highlighted his weaknesses. It must also be remembered that the responses of political audiences are usually enthusiastic irrespective of the merit of the speech. Therefore the fact that a speaker gets cheers and applause may not necessarily indicate that his speech is of high quality. Nevertheless by presenting all of the available information, the writer

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[1]Thonssen and Baird, op. cit., p. 448.

hopes to provide the most complete background against which the speaking of Cass can be viewed.

A chronological pattern of development will be followed in Chapter VIII. Each speaking situation from 1802 to 1856 for which there are comments about Cass will be treated in its proper time sequence.

The Pre-Senate Period (1802-1844)

The earliest available testimony relating to the speaking of Cass dates back to just after his arrival in the Northwest Territory. Dudley Woodbridge wrote to his son William in June of 1802: "Your fellow [law] student has become much of a Gallant; he bears down all before him. At Mr. Greene's, his rough eloquence and noisy bluster seemed to please the ladies amazingly."[1] The following year the same correspondents exchanged: "Mr. Cass is admitted at the Bar; he will make a tolerable speaker."[2] It was reported in 1812 that a short speech by Colonel Cass to his troops was "received with 'rapturous enthusiasm.'"[3] Early in his career, Cass was asked to speak at the opening of the Erie-Wabash Canal. The New York Tribune stated: "'A beautiful, patriotic, and classical, although somewhat desultory address was

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[1]Letter from Dudley Woodbridge to William Woodbridge, June 19, 1802. William Woodbridge Papers. B.H.C.

[2]Letter from Dudley Woodbridge to William Woodbridge, May 30, 1803. Ibid.

[3]McLaughlin, Lewis Cass, p. 60.

delivered by Gen. Cass.'"[1] An historian added that the speech was typical of the thinking of Cass, e.g., his concern for idealistic ends, his sense of progress and mission, and his nationalism. "But at the same time, his speech did not come to grips with practical politics, it did not bring him down to the common level of the electorate or give the voter anything solid to think about."[2]

The campaign of 1844, in which Cass almost got the Democratic nomination for the presidency and in which he campaigned tirelessly for Polk, provides an abundance of testimony concerning his speaking. "Cass was on the stump almost continuously until November. With a sort of joyous enthusiasm, he threw himself into the campaign and accepted speaking engagements anywhere and everywhere."[3] He received invitations not only from Michigan communities but throughout the west. "In Cincinnati Cass thrilled a large audience with his eloquent description of 'the dominion grasping propensity of Great Britain and her evident designs upon Texas.'"[4] In Nashville, the local journal described "acres" of audience listening intently to the Michigan statesman:

> 'It was a master effort of a great statesman; and the popular thunders of applause with which it

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[1]New York Daily Tribune as quoted by Hewlett, op. cit., p. 44.

[2]Hewlett, op. cit., p. 44.

[3]Ibid., p. 57.

[4]Ibid., p. 58.

> was received . . . rang through the valleys and reverberated from hill to hill unlike aught that we have ever heard before.'[1]

A partial itinerary compiled from a number of newspaper accounts indicates that Cass spoke in the following places: July 1, Detroit; July 25, Flint; August 3, Flint; 18, Indianapolis, Indiana; 21, Dayton, Ohio; 23, Milford, Michigan; 27, Howell; September 8, Niles; 10, Marshall; 17, Norwalk, Ohio; 21, Urbana, Illinois; 23, Columbus, Ohio; 24, Franklin, Ohio; 25, Zanesville, Ohio; October 1, Elyria, Ohio; 3 and 4, Cleveland; 5 and 6, Detroit.[2] Thence he went to Indiana for several more speaking engagements.[3]

On June 8, Cass wrote to Lucius Lyon: "I have been invited to address a meeting at Ypsilanti and another at Ann Arbor called to satisfy the nomination, and I think I shall be present at both."[4] Newspaper accounts of the speeches by Cass along the campaign route provide some subjective information as to the effectiveness of his stump speaking in 1844. On July 1, the Detroit Free Press stated that at Pontiac General Cass "rose amid the enthusiastic cheers of the vast

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[1] Nashville Union, August 17, 1844. Ibid., p. 58.

[2] Ibid., p. 58. Detroit Democratic Free Press, September 24, 1844. D.P.L. Brighton-Howell Livingston Courier, August 7 and 14, 1844. M.H.C's.

[3] "I must set out for Indiana on Monday, where the Central committee of that state has assigned to me nine different places to address the people." Letter from Cass to James K. Polk, October 4, 1844. W.C.L.

[4] Letter from Cass to Lucius Lyon, June 8, 1844. Lucius Lyon Papers. W.C.L.

assembly, and made an able and spirit-stirring appeal to the Democracy present to rally as one man to Polk and Dallas. The remarks of the General were frequently interrupted by loud and enthusiastic cheers from the company" of five thousand listeners.[1] On July 5, the same journal printed: An 'impressive' speech by General Cass before ten thousand people

> . . . was pronounced by all who heard it, to be one of the best democratic speeches they had ever heard in Michigan. Although he took the stand about five o'clock P.M. without any refreshment after a fatiguing ride of above eight hours on the railroad, he spoke for half an hour with energy, ability, and eloquence surprising to all, and gratifying to his friends.[2]

On the fifteenth of July, Ann Arbor's Signal of Liberty testified as to the "irreproachable" character of Cass and that he " 'spoke briefly and comprehensively with good taste'."[3] On the twenty-sixth, it was reported that his speech in Flint was a success. "The earnest and breathless attention with which that immense concourse listened evinced the effects upon the minds and hearts of all."[4] The Michigan statesman spoke again in Flint during the first week in August before an estimated audience of 1500. The Brighton-Howell Livingston Courier enthusiastically described

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[1]Detroit Democratic Free Press, July 1, 1844. D.P.L.

[2]Ibid., July 5, 1844. D.P.L.

[3]Ann Arbor Signal of Liberty as quoted by the Detroit Democratic Free Press, July 15, 1844. D.P.L.

[4]Detroit Democratic Free Press, July 26, 1844. D.P.L.

the event:

> From every part of Genesee and towns of other counties adjacent came the hardy sons of toil--the pioneers of the West--the mechanic left his work shop, the farmer his ripened harvest . . . .
>
> Gen. Cass' speech was one of the most eloquent and powerful vindications of the democracy of the country--of their principles and measures, that we have ever had the pleasure of listening to; and the earnest and breathless attention with which that immense concourse listened, evinced the effect upon the minds and hearts of all . . . .
>
> Gen. Cass closed his speech amid the deafening cheers of the audience, the thunder of the cannon and the thrilling strains of martial music.[1]

A speech by Cass at a Democratic mass meeting in Marshall the following month was reported by the Marshall Statesman, a Whig paper:

> They are determined to lie and brag their candidate [Polk] into office . . . .
>
> With the exception of that of General Cass, there was not a speech delivered which was not of the most ordinary cast, which was not puerile, and was not loaded with unmitigated blackguardism. No principles were discussed by a single speaker who followed Cass--all was stale, flat, and dirty. The speech of the General had some redeeming qualities. We agree with the Expounder that it was 'a remarkable speech'; for it was less abusive of the Whigs than the rest; consequently it was received with less demonstration of Loco Foco approbation than any other.[2]

The Norwalk Experiment stated in mid-September that General Cass " 'occupied the stand . . . for about two hours in one of the most impassioned, chaste, and eloquent speeches we

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[1]The Brighton-Howell, Livingston Courier, August 7, 1844. M.H.C's.

[2]Marshall Statesman, September 19, 1844. W.C.L.

ever listened to.' "[1] He spoke at Cleveland on the third and fourth of October. On the fifth, the Detroit Free Press announced that General Cass "returned home to this city this morning in the steamer St. Louis from Cleveland. He is to leave the first of next week for Indiana to fill some engagements to address the people there."[2] Before filling nine speaking assignments in Indiana, he addressed audiences in Detroit on the fifth and sixth of October.

The "enthusiastic campaign tour in Michigan and the Northwest had won the hearts of the Michigan Democracy. The once formidable Van Buren and Calhoun factions in the Peninsular state had disintegrated in the face of Cass' down-to-earth campaigning."[3] In spite of his strenuous efforts, however, in Ohio and Tennessee, those states went to the Whigs.

> Only in Indiana and in Michigan could the General point to the successful results of his oratory. But the full measure of Cass' contributions was to be found within the rank and file of party organization rather than in the statistics. The fact was that the vigor and enthusiasm of his campaigning had helped to heal the ugly wounds of animosity and discord which the Baltimore Convention had inflicted upon the Democratic party. This resiliency and good will which the Democrats had demonstrated in closing ranks behind Polk was looked upon by George Bancroft as one of the most momentous events in American political history. For this spirit of reconciliation, Cass was chiefly responsible.[4]

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[1] Norwalk Experiment as quoted by the Detroit Democratic Free Press, September 23, 1844. D.P.L.

[2] Detroit Democratic Free Press, October 5, 1844. D.P.L.

[3] Hewlett, op. cit., p. 61. [4] Ibid., p. 59.

Senate Period (1845-1857)

"In the first half of the nineteenth century . . . most of the political theory appeared in speeches and pamphlets directed to the accomplishment of a present and very concrete purpose . . . ."[1] Perhaps no publishing activity of the time had greater popular impact than that of the government. The country was deriving a large share of its political education from the quasi-official journal, the Congressional Globe, which contained the proceedings, debates, and the speeches of Congress for only three dollars a year. Postage was free. No other nation offered its parliamentary proceedings at so low a cost.[2]

With a great unseen audience reading their speeches in print, congressmen spoke with added significance. " 'It is very rare, sir,' said Senator John P. Hale in 1858, 'that a debate in the Senate is intended to influence the action of members here, but it is made to enlighten the country.' "[3] Felch wrote to his wife: "It is quite refreshing to get a letter from home--worth twenty wordy speeches in Congress made by men who talk for home consumption."[4] But Felch was just as concerned as other Senators with the impact of his speeches as they appeared in the Globe. He informed his

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[1] McLaughlin, "Publicists and Orators," p. 70.

[2] Nevins, op. cit., pp. 95-96. [3] Ibid., p. 96.

[4] Letter from A. Felch to his wife, February 5, 1850. Alpheus Felch Papers. M.H.C's.

wife later:

> I have been foolish enough to make another speech --rather a long one--and have just finished revising the Reporter's notes for the press.[1]

Donold Riddle said that Lincoln's severe deprecation of Cass in the House of Representatives in 1848 "was a political document, planned for home consumption . . . ."[2] The speeches which were delivered in Congress were not only carried by the Globe to a host of subscribers but they were often reprinted in pamphlet form and franked out over the nation by the Congressmen. "In the first five months of the winter session, 1857-58 . . . Senators of the free States distributed 680,000 copies of speeches and those of the slaveholding States, 130,000 -- while the House was equally busy."[3]

Cass entered the Senate in 1845; and on December 16 of that year, he delivered his first speech in Congress on a favorite theme: expansion. "For a maiden speech," said one historian,

> . . . his words showed no signs of humility or uncertainty. He spoke with the fervor and authority of a stump speaker in the West . . . . Politically the speech was a success. Cass had made the first big news of the session . . . . He had coupled the speech to some innocent resolutions providing for national defense . . . . The following day the resolutions passed 48-0.[4]

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[1]Letter from A. Felch to his wife, February 9, 1852. Ibid.

[2]Donold W. Riddle, Congressman Abraham Lincoln (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1957), p. 94.

[3]Nevins, op. cit., p. 96.

[4]Hewlett, op. cit., p. 59.

The "jaunty recklessness" which characterized his first speech soon disappeared, and Cass settled down to the type of serious and ponderous oratory which was to typify his Senate addresses. "He dredged up a mass of evidence for his long and tedious debate with Benton on the basis of the United States claims in Oregon . . . ."[1] Howel Cobb wrote to his wife:

> 'On the day you left, Gen'l Cass made a great speech on Oregon. Up to 54.40 was his proposition, and the general opinion is expressed that it is the ablest and most effective effort that has been made on the subject . . . . On the next day Col. Benton made a regular attack upon Cass, which has led to the most exciting and animated debate which I have ever witnessed in Congress . . . . Upon the whole, Cass seems to be the victor in the fight . . . .'[2]

An Englishman seated in the gallery remarked that the Oregon speech by Cass "was listened to with attention; but in spite of the stirring nature of the theme, none of the Senators betrayed any emotion."[3]

One of the most repeated criticisms of the Senate speaking of Cass was that he was inconsistent. The defamation sprang chiefly from his March 1, 1847 speech in the Senate entitled "The Wilmot Proviso." The day after the address, the New York Tribune stated that the argument by Cass on the Proviso "excited much merriment among the Whig Senators and spectators."[4] He was labeled "a cringing demagogue and a

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[1] Ibid., p. 80.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Lyell, op. cit., p. 197.

[4] New York Tribune, March 3, 1847. N.R.R. Library of Congress.

political weathercock.'"[1] Everyone was aware and Cass, himself, admitted that "when the Wilmot Proviso was first proposed, I have never concealed or denied that, had it been pushed to a vote, I should have voted for it."[2] Soon thereafter he changed his mind and vehemently opposed the Proviso. The reasons which he gave for his change of conviction were, a more careful examination of the Constitution and discussions with Judge McLean of Ohio. This incident offered those who opposed Cass for the presidency in 1848 something to talk about, and they made the most of it: "Whenever he has found himself on the weaker side, he has made all haste to abandon it"[3]; " 'General Cass' doughfaceism is viewed in its proper light by the Democracy of Ohio' "[4]; " 'One of the most serious objections to the support of Lewis Cass for the Presidency is the uncertainty of his principles' "[5]; " 'It must be admitted that the result makes Gen. Cass' principles as clear as mud, whilst it leaves no doubt that he is in favor of all things and against all things' "[6]; "The

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[1]Milan Tribune as quoted by the Detroit Democratic Free Press, October 10, 1848. D.P.L.

[2]Cass, Globe, 31st Congress, 1st session, p. 399.

[3]Grand Rapids Grand River Eagle, June 30, 1848. M. H.C's.

[4]Detroit Daily Advertiser as quoted by the Grand Rapids Grand River Eagle, July 28, 1848. M.H.C's.

[5]Sandusky Daily Mirror as quoted by the Grand Rapids Grand River Eagle, Ibid.

[6]Louisville Journal as quoted by the Grand Rapids Grand River Eagle. Ibid.

inconsistent course of our Senator in Congress by which Cass hopes to gain Southern influence . . . will no doubt arouse the sons of the Peninsula state from their narcotic slumber of party influence"[1]; " 'We do, however, require a good man and a firm man and not one who can make constant compromises of opinion for the sake of office, as Cass and Clay have done' "[2]; " 'A more unfortunate and objectionable nomination than that of Lewis Cass could not be made. Why not throw aside hypocrisy, act like a man, stand up for the right and fall in a good cause, rather than be vitiating the popular mind, prevailing in a bad one?' "[3]; " 'He has been guilty of moral treason in the cause of Republicanism.' "[4]

Lincoln, in his clever and poignant style of ridicule, entertained the Whig faction of the House of Representatives in 1848 with an interpretation of the record of Cass on the Proviso:

> These extracts show that, in 1846, General Cass was for the proviso at once; that, in March, 1847, he was still for it, but not just then; and that, in December, 1847, he was against it altogether. This is a true index to the whole man. When the question was raised in 1846, he was in a blustering hurry to take ground for it. He sought to be in advance, and to

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[1]Battle Creek Michigan Liberty Press, May 19, 1848. M.H.C's.

[2]Milwaukee American Freeman as quoted by the Battle Creek Michigan Liberty Press, June 22, 1848. M.H.C's.

[3]Southport Telegraph as quoted by the Battle Creek Michigan Liberty Press, ibid.

[4]Albany Atlas as quoted by the Battle Creek Michigan Liberty Press, ibid.

> avoid the uninteresting position of a mere follower; but soon he began to see glimpses of the great Democratic ox-gad waving in his face, and to hear, indistinctly, a voice saying, 'Back, Back, sir, Back a little.' He shakes his head; and bats his eyes, and blunders back to his position of March, 1847; but still the gad waves, and the voice grows more distinct, and sharper still-- 'Back, sir! Back, I say! Further back!' and back he goes to the position of December, 1847; at which the gad is still, and the voice soothingly says-- 'So! Stand at that.'[1]

William Woodbridge was particularly severe in his attack upon the consistency of his lifetime associate:

> Though the accredited agent of the General Government for some eighteen or twenty years of his life, in administering and enforcing the laws of Congress, he [Cass] suddenly discovers that Congress has no right to legislate for the territories; and therefore, though before tooth and nail in favor of the Wilmot Proviso, he now comes out its open, undisguised opponent . . . .
>
> Fellow citizens, can we be justified in voting for a man (amiable though he may be in private life) of such instability of purpose, of so constant and capricious change in matters, too, of so grave importance? Does he hold his principles of so little account as to shape them to suit every fitful breeze that passes?
>
> The American people require for their President a man who has some clearness of view, as I have said, some steadiness of character, some integrity of political principles, and a firmness and energy of purpose which nothing can shake or disarm.[2]

Whether he voted for or against the Proviso, Cass was forced to take a stand which could be interpreted as an expression of sectionalism. "The vote damaged the one impression of

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[1]Abraham Lincoln, Globe, 30th Congress, 1st session, p. 1042. "His sarcasm of Cass, Van Buren, and the Democratic party was inimitable; and he was often urged to 'go on; go on!' " Riddle, op. cit., p. 135.

[2]William Woodbridge, "Friends of Taylor Speech," reported in the New York Weekly Tribune, September 30, 1848. W.C.L.

himself he was trying to create for the 1848 elections: that he was a leader with purely national interests and motivations."[1]

Cass proceeded to carry on a closed mouth campaign in 1848. Having endorsed the Baltimore platform of 1840, he said that his past record spoke for itself. He was determined to write no letters, answer no inquiries, and make no public statements. The Michigan statesman returned home from Washington by way of Baltimore, Philadelphia, and New York with a campaign party composed of Benton, Allen, Foote, Houston, Bright, Bowlin, and Cobb, all of whom spoke frequently. Cass only mingled with the crowds appearing friendly and shaking hands.[2] In Cleveland he was urged to speak; but alluding to the "noise and confusion" which prevailed, he merely thanked the crowd for the warm reception.[3] During the ensuing months, the Whigs never let him forget the phrase "noise and confusion." They repeated it thousands of times all over the nation to dramatize the assertion that the Democratic candidate was afraid to discuss his true political position. Cass arrived in Detroit on the eleventh of June. An ebullient Democrat wrote to Felch: "The General got home

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[1]Hewlett, op. cit., p. 92.

[2]"Gen. Cass came here with us and meets with a most enthusiastic reception. I have but a moment to write while the cars are waiting." Letter from B. Brown to A. Felch, June 12, 1848. Alpheus Felch Papers. M.H.C's.

[3]Hewlett, op. cit., pp. 137-38.

yesterday morning. We had the largest reception meeting last night ever held in Detroit. The Whigs admit this themselves. Everything looks well here."[1] Another Democrat was less impressed: "Gen. Cass arrived in town on the 11th. We gave him a public reception. There is no news of interest."[2] Cass did no campaigning. He remained quietly at home and awaited the results.

In December of 1848, after his defeat by Taylor, Cass found time to deliver a ceremonial address in Detroit. The Free Press stated:

> We never recollect to have seen a larger or more interested assemblage than was gathered yesterday at the Presbyterian Church to listen to an anniversary address pronounced before the Society of Sons of New England by our distinguished fellow citizen Lewis Cass. Of this splendid effort, we have heard but one universal expression of enthusiastic commendation.
>
> For eloquence of structure, and beauty of diction, for searching thought, and impressive eloquence, it could hardly be surpassed. Although occupying some hour and a half in its delivery; yet all seemed to regret its close, so enchained had their attention been by the 'old man eloquent.'[3]

When Cass journeyed to Washington in 1849, to return to the Senate, he passed through Cumberland, Maryland where he was urged to make a brief impromptu speech. The audience

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[1]Letter from C. C. Jackson to A. Felch, June 17, 1848. Alpheus Felch Papers. M.H.C's.

[2]Letter from A. T. Welch to A. Felch, June 18, 1848. Ibid.

[3]Detroit Free Press as quoted by the Hillsdale Gazette, December 28, 1848. M.H.C's.

"gave him quite a warm reception."[1] The first page of the October 9 and 16 issues of the Hillsdale Gazette, which published only weekly, carried a speech by Cass to the Michigan State Agricultural Society, that he had delivered a few weeks previously in Detroit. Historian Gerald W. Johnson listed Cass as being one of the leading orators of the nation in 1849. "The country," said Johnson, "swarmed with great, or at least much-admired, orators. The fire of John Randolph's genius was flickering out, but Benton, Cass, Everett, Grundy, and Hayne were all at the height of their powers and the country resounded with rolling periods."[2] E. L. Magoon's book Living Orators in America, published in 1849, treated the nine outstanding orators of the period. Cass was included along with such men as Webster, Everett, and Calhoun. Magoon stated in his preface:

> It is believed that we have arranged a complete circle of oratorical models . . . nearly approximating perfection of its kind, and in the aggregate presenting an array of excellent worthies whom the best talents would do well to emulate, and whom the loftiest genius can only by the most strenuous efforts hope to excell.[3]

Cass presented his Manifesto speech in the Senate on January 20 and 21, 1850. Some immediate responses were:

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[1] Ibid.

[2] Gerald W. Johnson, America's Silver Age (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1939), p. 196. Webster, Clay, and Calhoun, he added, were the mightiest.

[3] E. L. Magoon, Living Orators in America (New York: Baker and Schreiber, 1849), p. viii.

> 'I saw Webster scowling at him whilst he spoke with that awful Websterian scowl which portends an earthquake,' John P. Kennedy wrote to his wife, January 22, 1850 . . . . 'Clay laughed at the novelties of the doctrine. As for the Southerners, they almost unanimously renounced him. Brown of Mississippi, Venable of North Carolina, and Seddon of Virginia publicly attacked his trimming his sails to the wind of popularity--and his expedients had recoiled upon himself,' wrote L.P. Waldo to Welles, February 24, 1850.[1]

The New York Daily Tribune ridiculed the method of refutation employed by Cass in the speech: "He parades Story, Baldwin, Adams, Rockwell, Hudson, and a host of other authorities for freedom, and then knocks them all down like ninepins."[2] Dwight L. Dumond labeled the speech "powerful."[3] "As a thorough and searching examination into a vital constitutional question, it was, perhaps, his greatest Senate speech,"[4] remarked Woodford and added that Cass "had the satisfaction of knowing that his speech made a strong impression all across the country."[5] The Democratic faction of the legislature of Tennessee informed the Michigan Senator:

> 'This oration will stand a perpetual monument in honor of your memory, and will hand your name down to the latest posterity as a scholar, learned and profound, as an orator, eloquent and powerful, as a statesman, sagacious and patriotic.'[6]

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[1] Nevins, op. cit., p. 304.

[2] New York Daily Tribune, January 24, 1850. N.R.R. Library of Congress.

[3] Dumond, History of the United States, p. 381.

[4] Woodford, Lewis Cass, p. 276.

[5] Ibid., p. 279.

[6] Young, op. cit., p. 687.

Charles Sumner responded by branding Cass a "northern man with southern principles." Said Holman Hamilton: "The long speech was dismal droning."[1] Hewlett claimed that it "constituted Cass' disquisition on government."[2] An historian of constitutional history called it "the most complete defense of the doctrine of 'squatter sovereignty' that has ever been given."[3]

In the bitter congressional strife which prevailed during the early months of 1850, Clay, Webster, and Cass were among the leading speakers for the Compromise. Woodford stated that "it was evident that Cass' February 20 speech . . . had marked the turning point. Tempers had subsided, and the Senate realized that local prejudice and vindictiveness having run their course, it was now the time to talk sense."[4] The friendly Hillsdale Gazette was pleased with the oratorical accomplishments of Cass in 1850. It said: "Today we consider him the Cato of the American Senate."[5] Hamilton took an opposite view declaring that not even the Michigan Senator was able to raise the debate above a mediocre level.

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[1] Hamilton, op. cit., p. 277.

[2] Hewlett, op. cit., p. 175.

[3] McLaughlin, Lewis Cass, p. 267.

[4] Woodford, Lewis Cass, p. 282. "No man presented California's case with more eloquence than the senior Senator from Michigan." Ibid., p. 286.

[5] Hillsdale Gazette, August 8, 1850. M.H.C's.

> Perhaps the most disappointing figure in the story is Lewis Cass. Here was a man who, had he risen to the challenge of the occasion, might logically have been the Democracy's protagonist . . . . However, Cass had become a plodder. At sixty-seven he showed his years . . . . And a potentially great Democratic exemplar permitted others to scale the heights of drama and of oratory.[1]

Another historian believed differently:

> The Compromise of 1850 had restored the Westerner's faith in the old General, and he had enjoyed a steady rise in popularity from the low mark set by his narrow margin of victory in the Senatorial race of 1849. He was still in touch with western thinking. As the 'father of the West,' he was proving that the old formulas upon which he had built his reputation still appealed in his section of the nation.[2]

1850 was an election year, and Michigan's three seats in the thirty-second Congress were at stake. It was a campaign that Cass anticipated with much pleasure and no little interest. "He seemed to enjoy stump speaking at a Michigan crossroads as much as he detested a formal speech at some great political mass meeting. Since territorial days, he had often revealed this preference for man-to-man relationships in politics as well as in business."[3] The Detroit Free Press announced that "General Cass by appointment will visit and address the people of Medina County, at Medina on the 1st day of October next, and the people of Lorain, at Elyria, on the 2nd."[4] At Columbus the sympathetic attitude

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[1] Hamilton, op. cit., p. 277.

[2] Hewlett, op. cit., p. 215. [3] Ibid., p. 198.

[4] Detroit Free Press, September 23, 1850. D.P.L.

of Cass toward the South provoked the Whigs to throw small bags of cotton upon the platform while he spoke. They also made considerable noise to disturb him.[1] In October, Cass addressed an exuberant audience at Tammany Hall:

> Upon [Cass'] entering Tammany Hall, the large room was nearly filled to overflowing and nine hearty cheers welcomed our visitor . . . .
> His remarks were frequently interrupted with loud cheers of the audience . . . .
> Considering that the notice given of the General's arrival here, and his proposed reception was only a few hours previous to the meeting at Tammany Hall, it was certainly very large and was most gratifying to all present.[2]

The campaign efforts of Cass had the opposition worried. The Grand Rapids Grand River Eagle, a Whig paper, warned: "If Cass thinks the election important enough to call him from his home and quiet after the fatigues of a ten months session, to mingle in the 'noise and confusion' of political strife, is it not a time when Whigs should be up and doing?"[3] The Detroit Advertiser, also unfriendly to Cass, thought they had an answer to account for his enthusiastic campaigning: "It becomes necessary at this time for Gen. Cass to secure the election of Mr. Buel for the reason that to return to Washington after having failed to secure his own District would, of course, be fatal to his hopes as

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[1]Detroit Free Press, October 4, 1850. D.P.L.

[2]Globe as quoted by the Hillsdale Gazette, October 10, 1850. M.H.C's.

[3]Grand Rapids Grand River Eagle, October 30, 1850. M.H.C's.

a Presidential candidate."[1] The following day the Advertiser reported on a speech which Cass gave at Wayne, Michigan, from the top of a carload of wood:

> He talked very sensibly about our republican government, but soon took a tack in another direction and commenced agitating the minds of his hearers with the great danger of disunion . . . .
> Three cheers were proposed and given by about six voices [of the 101 persons estimated to be in attendance] when Gen. Cass left . . . .[2]

When Cass returned to the Senate, some of the local journals kept their readers informed concerning his speeches. In the fall of 1851, the Washington Union carried an address of the previous week by the Michigan Senator before the Michigan Agricultural Society in Detroit. Virtually the entire March 11, 1852 issue of the weekly Hillsdale Gazette was devoted to the publication of the Senate speech by Cass "On Intervention." Also the front page of the April 8 and 22 issues of the Gazette carried two of his current Senate addresses. The Ann Arbor Primitive Expounder stated: Thanks "to Gen. Lewis Cass for his masterly speech in the United States Senate on Non-Intervention."[3]

Before the nominating convention of 1852, Cass had hopes of being again selected as the Democratic presidential candidate. Felch wrote to his wife in February:

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[1]Detroit Daily Advertiser, November 1, 1850. N.R.R. Library of Congress.

[2]Ibid., November 2, 1850. N.R.R. Library of Congress.

[3]Ann Arbor Primitive Expounder, January 22, 1852. M.H.C's.

> You inquire about the General's prospects for the presidency. They appear here to be very good. There are, however, many other candidates and some of them are very active. We cannot tell what will transpire between this and the first of June when the nomination will be made--but if the nomination were to be made today, I believe the General would receive it.[1]

Whatever his ideological qualifications for membership, Cass in 1852 was by age and reputation hopelessly separated from the political tenor of his time. "He was an 'old Fogey,' a relic of the past generation, a contemporary of the legendary 'War Hawks.' Cass had 'had his day.' "[2] Younger and more dynamic leaders of the Western Democracy were already upon the political scene. "To a building, over-confident, idealistic 'Young America,' the warnings and solemn pronouncements of the 'old Fogey' were windy and tiresome."[3] After Pierce took the nomination from him and Douglas, Cass set out to unite the Party and to win the undecided voters for the Democratic candidate, as he had done for Polk. "Long a party chieftien, Cass was now well on the way to becoming a party patriarch, a worn but still impressive symbol of Jacksonian Democracy."[4]

Congress adjourned on August 1, 1852; and Cass hurried home to begin campaigning. Declining a number of speaking engagements, he did pause long enough to speak in Balti-

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[1] Letter from A. Felch to his wife, February 22, 1852. Alpheus Felch Papers. M.H.C's.

[2] Hewlett, op. cit., p. 216.

[3] Ibid., p. 255.

[4] Ibid., p. 222.

more and New York. Arriving in Detroit on September 4, the Michigan statesman barnstormed throughout his home state with the same enthusiasm as he had displayed in 1844. He spoke almost daily. On September 10, he delivered a major address in Cleveland at a ceremony commemorating the Battle of Lake Erie. He spoke in Ann Arbor on the eighteenth; with Stephen A. Douglas in Detroit at the State Fair on the twenty-second and twenty-third; with Douglas again in Chicago before six to eight thousand people on September 25; in Jackson on the twenty-eighth; Howell, thirtieth; Pontiac, October second; Cassopolis, fifth; Adrian, seventh; Monroe, eighth; Hillsdale, ninth; Marshall, twelfth; Grand Rapids, sixteenth; Kalamazoo, eighteenth; Flint, twentieth; and Mount Clemens, twenty-third. Cass also spoke at Coldwater and Hastings.[1] At seventy years of age, the Michigan statesman was proving that age was a state of mind.

Detailed accounts of the stump engagements of Cass reveal something of the effect of his speaking. The Free Press boastfully reported on September 11:

> Had a thunderbolt fallen in the Whig ranks, it would have created no greater consternation than the announcement that CASS, the great statesman of the Northwest, with his talented and popular colleague Senator FELCH, and our worthy and eloquent Executive Governor McClelland were to address the people throughout the State in behalf of the Democracy, its men, and its measures.[2]

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[1] Ibid., p. 224. Detroit Free Press, September 11, 13, 15; October 19, 21, 1852. D.P.L.

[2] Detroit Free Press, September 11, 1852. D.P.L.

On the fifteenth, the same journal printed:

> He [Cass] spoke as a father to his children in words of warning and encouragement, and was cheered beyond anything I ever heard at a public meeting.[1]

And on the twenty-first: "Gen. Cass evidently realized that he was speaking to his friends; the electric sympathy was indeed most apparent."[2] The Hillsdale Gazette said of his speech there on October 9:

> Gen. Cass occupied a considerable portion of the afternoon in a speech characteristic of the man. It was a most happy and brilliant effort, and listened to with an interest that bespoke the deep hold which this patriotic statesman possesses in the hearts of the Democracy . . . .
>
> We only write from memory, having nothing but a 'standee' amid the dense crowd. It was a splendid effort, worthy of his high fame. He was frequently cheered, and sat down followed by three cheers for 'Michigan's Favorite Son,' heartily given by an assembled multitude.[3]

The Adrian Watchtower commented on the mass meeting held October 7 in Adrian: "The number present was from four to five thousand . . . . General Cass spoke for about two hours, and referred in his usually forcible manner to the principal topics involved in the present contest. General Cass' abilities as a stump speaker have not been over-rated by even his warmest friends."[4] On the twentieth in Flint, said the Free Press: "The old Patriot, warmed by the occasion,

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[1] Ibid., September 15, 1852. D.P.L.

[2] Ibid., September 21, 1852. D.P.L.

[3] Hillsdale Gazette, October 14, 1852. M.H.C's.

[4] Adrian Watchtower, October 12, 1852. M.H.C's.

delivered one of the most eloquent and dignified addresses ever submitted to a free people."[1]

The front page of the Hillsdale Gazette on January 20, 1853 carried a Senate speech by Cass "On Foreign Relations" and on February 24, his address on "Colonization in North America."

Mike Walsh wrote in February, 1854, that General Cass

> . . . will make a speech next week on Douglas' bill, and you may rely upon its being worthy of his fame. He evidently looks upon the whole movement and the manner in which it has been made as a despicable piece of demagogism on the part of Douglas, though he does not like to say so.[2]

The address by Cass on the Kansas-Nebraska Bill of Douglas was the only popular sovereignty speech which he presented in the thirty-third Congress. It was a long and discursive review of the arguments which he had previously discussed supporting his doctrine. This speech, said Hewlett, "showed that there had been no deterioration of his powers in debate. He proved also that he could find a common-sense, practical answer to the snares and abstractions which his colleagues cast before him."[3] Woodford remarked that the speech was "clear as the sun at noonday."[4]

Cass campaigned assiduously for the Party in Michigan

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[1] Detroit Free Press, October 21, 1852. D.P.L.

[2] Letter from Mike Walsh to a constituent as quoted by the Detroit Daily Democrat, February 15, 1854. D.P.L.

[3] Hewlett, op. cit., p. 263.

[4] Woodford, Lewis Cass, p. 289.

during September and October of 1854. A hostile journal commented on September 18: "The General made an uncommonly poor speech. We have rarely heard a poorer one on any occasion."[1] Grand Haven's Grand River Times announced on the twenty-seventh that "Gen. Cass, it will be seen, is to address the citizens of this county at Steel's landing on the 6th of next month . . . ."[2] In Lansing, reported the Free Press on October 8, "the speech of Gen. Cass was listened to with enthusiasm. His dispassionate and truthful explanation of the real issues between the political parties of the day . . . made a deep and lasting impression upon the audience."[3] Cass spoke at Marshall on the eleventh, at Battle Creek on the twelfth, and at Chicago on the twentieth. Just before the election, the Grand River Times of November 1 taunted: "Poor Gen. Cass is in a bad way and is going around from county to county fairly begging the people to go hear him, to elect members of the legislature favorable to his re-election to the United States Senate, so tenacious is he of his official life."[4] But the laborious stumping of Cass was in vain because the election was a fiasco for the Democrats in Michigan. The Michigan states-

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[1] Detroit Daily Democrat, September 18, 1854. D.P.L.

[2] Grand Haven Grand River Times, September 27, 1854. M.H.C's.

[3] Detroit Free Press, October 8, 1854. D.P.L.

[4] Grand Haven, Grand River Times, November 1, 1854. M.H.C's.

man could now predict his own political death in the near future.

In the 1856 campaign, Cass exerted his last great speaking effort for the Party. Just before leaving Washington, he wrote: " 'The present crisis of our country demands the exertion of every true Democrat, and I shall return home without delay . . . to take my part in the pending contest . . . .' "[1] Buchanan was nominated; and soon after the adjournment of Congress, Cass set out on a vigorous stump tour in the Northwest. He declined invitations to speak in Boston, Providence, Richmond, and Petersburg. He did consent to speak in Frederick, Maryland, then hurried home where he opened the campaign at a large mass meeting in Detroit with Dickinson, McClelland, and Breckinridge.[2] "Age and mental decline made it impossible for Cass to give the fire and enthusiasm to his speeches which had won the hearts of the West in 1844."[3] At seventy-four he could no longer stand the strain of a major daily speech on a continuous schedule of one night stands. Generally he delivered a morning speech, while Felch, Barry, McClelland, and John Van Buren presented the major addresses. They spoke in twenty-nine localities between September 3 and election day: September 3, Tippecanoe; 5, Kalamazoo; 6,

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[1] Letter from Cass to the Dayton Democratic Convention as quoted by the Detroit Daily Free Press, September 4, 1856. D.P.L.

[2] Hewlett, op. cit., p. 280. [3] Ibid.

Pontiac; 8, Detroit; 17, Flint; 18, Saginaw; 20, Goodrich; 22, Monroe; 23, Adrian; 23, Toledo; 24, Hillsdale; 25, Coldwater; 26, Centerville; 26, Three Rivers; 27, Cassopolis; October 1-2, Detroit; 7, Lapeer; 10, Port Huron; 14, Jackson; 15, Charlotte; 17, Marshall; 18, Niles; 21, Grand Rapids; 22, Ionia; 23, Lansing; 24, Howell; 30, Corunna.[1]

An observer at the Democratic mass meeting in Kalamazoo, September 5, 1856, recorded:

> Gen. Cass was then introduced. He came forward with trembling lips, eyes dewy with tears, amid the loud and repeated shouts of the crowd. They would not let him speak. He raised his hand and attempted to address them, but the shout went up in one tumultous voice. Once or twice he essayed to speak, but his words were lost amid the plaudits of the multitude. It finally subsided, and the vast assemblage hung with breathless attention on every word he uttered.[2]

Two days later in Pontiac: "Gen. Cass next took the stand. He was greeted by twelve cheers from the fifteen to twenty thousand people. The roar of the applause was tremendous."[3] On the eighth in Detroit: "Gen. Cass was loudly called for and upon rising, was received with tremendous cheering."[4] At Centerville on the twenty-sixth, said an auditor:

> I will not attempt to describe his hour and a half speech, but will simply confine myself to some of its incidents and to what I saw in him as a public

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[1] Ibid. Detroit Daily Free Press, September 7 and 9, October 16 and 20, 1856. D.P.L.

[2] Van Buren, op. cit., p. 277.

[3] Detroit Daily Free Press, September 7, 1854. D.P.L.

[4] Ibid., September 9, 1854. D.P.L.

> speaker that interested me. This speech was the best I ever heard him deliver. To call him 'old man eloquent' might be adorning him with borrowed feathers; but yet I thought him, on this occasion, an eloquent old man . . . . The interest was in him, to hear him discuss the political questions of the day in his own interesting manner.
>
> As a public speaker, Gen. Cass made no attempt to please, to impress himself on his hearers, to captivate and carry the crowd with stirring appeals, or 'bursts of eloquence'; but you listened to his speech as you did to a deeply interesting narrator, who held your rapt attention through his whole story. He was the 'Pylian Sage' speaking the words of wisdom and instruction . . . . And each of those ten thousand listeners, whether Democrats or Republicans, (as many of the latter were in the crowd) looked up to him as a venerable and wise statesman, and listened implicitly to his council and instruction.[1]

Though Buchanan was elected, his margin of victory was dangerously small. In Michigan the Democratic Party suffered serious losses. "The anti-slavery tide had swept away the last remnants of the Cass machine, and the General himself was guaranteed defeat in the coming Senatorial election. With both houses of the Michigan legislature firmly in their control, the Republicans could conduct the election of Cass' successor in their party caucus."[2]

General Comments

Quaife stated that Cass was constantly in demand as a commencement speaker.[3] Woodford believed that "Cass was not effective on the stump, and as a result was a poor cam-

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[1] Van Buren, op. cit., p. 281.

[2] Hewlett, op. cit., p. 281.

[3] Quaife, "Lewis Cass Papers," p. 13.

paigner. Before an audience to whom he was unknown, he was not always a success."[1] K.E. Bruce agreed: "Cass was a man of considerable ability, but was a poor campaigner."[2] In the Senate, said Hewlett, "his speeches were known to be pedantic and lacking in color. But despite his faults, Cass could expect a crowded chamber whenever he made a major address . . . ."[3] Woodford claimed that "while he lacked the oratorical fire and the warm personal charm of those giants of debate, he was a more dangerous man with whom to cross a verbal sword."[4] McLaughlin corroborated that Cass had a "natural capacity for grasping legal distinctions and for mastering details . . . . General Cass was a man who carried weight by the density and compactness of his arguments . . . . Of the statesmen of his generation, only Webster surpassed him in keenness and directness of debate."[5] He was capable of "vigor and dignity of speech which were always impressive, often eloquent, and seldom failed to influence."[6] Nevins said that Cass "spoke in the Senate with magisterial authority."[7] The reaction which he received from the audience "was, as his addresses usually were,

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[1]Woodford, Lewis Cass, p. 290.

[2]Bruce, op. cit., p. 373.

[3]Hewlett, op. cit., p. 167.

[4]Woodford, Lewis Cass, p. 290.

[5]McLaughlin, Lewis Cass, pp. 51, 190, 352.

[6]Ibid., p. 51.

[7]Nevins, op. cit., p. 190.

scholarly, philosophic, sensible, and, above all, democratic . . . . So universally thoughtful and well considered, however, were his public addresses, that mere physical greatness was not needed to make them worthy of notice."[1] W.C. Shaw referred to Cass as "the powerful northern spokesman."[2] In 1889 the Michigan statesman was still being alluded to as "old man eloquent."[3]

There was a lack of unanimity among the biographers of Cass concerning his later Senate speaking:

McLaughlin-- The last speeches of his active life in the Senate exhibit little decline in vigor of thought and feeling.[4]

Woodford-- In time, as age crept upon him, the precision and logic of which Nevins speaks were spoiled by garrulity which sometimes amused and more often bored the Senate.[5]

Hewlett-- As a member of a past generation, as a corpulent, somber, 'Old Fogey' . . . Cass made little impact upon his listeners for all his efforts. The nation had heard his warning against extremism and his appeals for reason and unity too many times to give ear to one more recitation of well-worn phrases . . . . Cass' political power had declined along with his influence in the Senate.[6]

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[1] McLaughlin, Lewis Cass, pp. 192, 353.

[2] Shaw, op. cit., p. 173.

[3] O'Donnell, op. cit., p. 2483.

[4] McLaughlin, Lewis Cass, p. 310.

[5] Woodford, Lewis Cass, p. 291.

[6] Hewlett, op. cit., pp. 278-79.

The Failure of Popular Sovereignty

According to Quaife, the influence of Cass during his time was significant:

> That Webster was a greater orator than Cass, even as he has been advertised to succeeding generations, may be granted; yet one may affirm with confidence that in qualities of statesmanship and as a mouthpiece of forces of tremendous importance, Cass is worthy to be compared with Webster or with any other man of the generation to which he belonged. In short, even as Webster, he was a man of gigantic mould.[1]

Considering his prestige and power in the Democratic Party between 1844 and 1852, it is remarkable how completely Cass has been forgotten today. The rhetorical critic sometimes finds it profitable to trace the evolution of the speaker's ideas, even after his death, in order to determine their wearability and their long range usefulness to society. "This is essentially a test of the speaker's vision, of his capacity to understand the meaning of current happenings, of his facility for appreciating their probable effect upon the course of history."[2]

Cass argued popular sovereignty from December 1847 to May 1856. In February 1854 he saw bright prospects for his doctrine in Kansas:

> The first step we took with full concurrence, when we declared in effect, by our legislation, that Congress should have no authority over the

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[1] Quaife, "Lewis Cass Papers," p. 6.

[2] Thonssen and Baird, op. cit., p. 457.

> subject of slavery in the Territories; and now we are taking another, and when taken we shall find ourselves at our goal, the prize of the Union and tranquility beyond the reach of future agitation.
>
> I said in my letter to Nicholson, and I repeat it here, that by going back to our true principle [popular sovereignty] we go back to the road of peace and safety. Leave it to the people, who will be affected by this question, to adjust it upon their own responsibility and in their own manner, and we shall render another tribute to the original principles of our Government, and furnish another guarantee for its permanency and prosperity.[1]

On May 25, 1854 the Kansas-Nebraska Bill passed the Senate; and when Pierce signed it five days later, it became law. Cass wrote to J. H. Cleveland of Detroit that the act, founded upon popular sovereignty, would withdraw the slavery contest from Congress.[2] Its miserable failure thereafter in "bloody Kansas" shocked the Michigan statesman and disgusted the members of both parties all over the nation. McLaughlin said that "the Kansas affairs . . . are of importance in constitutional history because they disclose the absurdity of popular sovereignty."[3] Cass believed that the ultimate failure of the principle was because of the misuse of democratic institutions by both northern and southern extremists. For whatever reason, popular sovereignty did not solve the problem of whether the territories would be admitted as free or as slave states.

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[1]Cass, Globe, 33rd Congress, 1st session, p. 279.

[2]Woodford, Lewis Cass, p. 302.

[3]McLaughlin, Constitutional History of the United States, p. 552.

No solution short of war was ever discovered. Had his doctrine succeeded, it is nevertheless questionable whether Cass would have received much of the credit because by 1854 the principle had become associated with its new protagonist, Stephen A. Douglas. The fact that Congress did accept popular sovereignty implicitly, if not explicitly, in the Compromise of 1850 and the fact that it was basic to the Kansas-Nebraska Bill in 1854 may be a tribute, in part at least, to the persuasiveness of Cass in the Senate. That the doctrine was an unsuccessful solution to the slavery problem in the territories may indicate that Cass erred in his judgment. It was not suitable to the particular situation to which he applied it in 1854.

Summary

1. Most of the testimony which appears in Chapter VIII relating to the speaking of Cass was derived from newspaper sources. Because nineteenth century newspapers reflected highly partisan political attitudes, comments appearing in such journals need to be evaluated cautiously. In addition, political audiences of the period tended to be highly emotional in their responses, and apparently most of the speakers on a given program got enthusiastic receptions. Thus it may be unreliable to place a great deal of emphasis upon the reaction of a mass meeting audience.

2. Cass was an eager and enthusiastic campaigner

between 1844 and 1856. The fact that he was already well known by 1844, when he began his stump career, probably accounted for some of the popular response which he received immediately. The Michigan statesman won the praise of his listeners because even in the heat of a campaign his language was moderate and restrained. This characteristic display of temperance and lack of acerbity won the respect of both parties.

3. Accounts indicate that the Michigan statesman was more effective with individuals and before small audiences than he was at the larger mass meetings. Audiences which did not know Cass well found it especially difficult to tolerate his somewhat formal and dignified mien which generally left them with a rather cold impression of the speaker. It is true that from 1844 to 1856, the years in which Cass dominated the stump in the Michigan campaigns, the Democratic Party suffered continuous and disastrous losses in the state. These two factors, it is noted, occurred concomitantly. Too many other influences are related to the ruinous losses suffered in Michigan by the Democratic Party between 1844 and 1856 to establish a valid causal relationship with the campaign speaking of Cass.

4. The ceremonial speeches by Cass at special occasions were scholarly. Laboriously prepared and containing prolific allusions to history and literature, their reception was generally one of respect and admiration for erudition and beauty if not for keen interest. Because of his

political responsibilities, the Michigan statesman declined many invitations to speak at ceremonial occasions.

5. The Senate listened to the long and ponderous speeches of Cass without emotion. They admired his capacity for legal argument and his extensive knowledge of Constitutional law. As a debater, Cass was compared with the best in the Senate. Several reliable authorities testified that in debate he was equal to Webster. Clay accorded Cass, along with Douglas and Webster, major credit for assisting in the passage of the Compromise measures of 1850.

6. In March of 1847, Cass reversed his position in respect to the hotly contested Wilmot Proviso. For this move, he received a great deal of criticism and abuse from within and without the Senate. His political opponents accused him of inconsistency, a topic of which they made the most in the campaign of 1848.

7. The major political thesis of Cass, popular sovereignty, was the central theme of his Senate speaking over a period of nine years. The fact that it was included implicitly in the Compromise of 1850 and explicitly in the Kansas-Nebraska Bill of 1854 may testify to the persuasiveness of the Michigan Senator. Its utter failure to solve the slavery question in the territories perhaps points to an error in judgment on the part of Cass because it did not prove to be a suitable solution to the problem.

Chapter Nine

CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study was to analyze the public speaking of Lewis Cass in the United States Senate as manifested in his speeches dealing with the doctrine of popular sovereignty. Specifically Chapter I was a biographical sketch of Lewis Cass; Chapter II, an investigation of the principle of popular sovereignty; Chapters III through VII, a rhetorical analysis of the popular sovereignty speeches which were presented by Cass in the Senate; and Chapter VIII, a report of the responses to his speeches as revealed by views expressed largely by the contemporaries of Cass. A detailed summary was provided at the end of each chapter.

The conclusions which follow constitute the major findings of the study and include as well some inferences by the writer which are based upon data that have been presented in earlier chapters.

(1) Cass distinguished himself early in his political career through his eighteen-year term as governor of Michigan Territory.

By making Michigan more attractive to the settler, Cass promoted the development of the Territory from a wilderness community in 1813 to the threshold of statehood in 1831. During the early years of his administration, the Governor had to overcome the extreme difficulties imposed

by disease, poverty, and harassment by the British and Indians. He worked assiduously to negotiate Indian treaties, to encourage government land surveys and the establishment of land offices, to get roads built, and to stimulate enlightenment in the Territory.

Notwithstanding the sweeping political powers that were his if he wanted them, Cass governed Michigan Territory as democratically as was possible under the circumstances. He constantly encouraged the people to accept more responsibility in the administration of their local government. Cass believed that, as far as possible, sovereignty ought to rest with the people.

Following his career as governor of Michigan Territory from 1813 to 1831, Cass served as Secretary of War under Andrew Jackson until 1836 when he was appointed minister to France. The Michigan statesman worked twelve years in the United States Senate beginning in 1845. He interrupted his Senate career in 1848 to run for the presidency on the Democratic ticket. After being defeated by Zachary Taylor, Cass returned to the Senate where he served until 1857. Immediately upon leaving the Senate, he was appointed by Buchanan to the position of Secretary of State, a post which he held until his retirement from politics in 1861. The political career of Cass, which was fifty-five years in length, is one of the longest on record.

(2) Popular sovereignty was the major political doctrine advocated by Cass during the twelve-year period in which he served as a United States Senator.

Cass, who was born and educated in New England, became predisposed early in life to the philosophy of local self-government. His doctrine of popular sovereignty, which he formalized in a public letter to A. O. P. Nicholson in 1847, reflected the Jeffersonian attitude that a central government ought not to do for the local units what they could do as well for themselves. It is believed by some observers that Cass propagated the states rights concept to unite the Democratic Party in the campaign of 1848 in order to achieve the presidency. Although the idea of popular sovereignty can be traced back as far as the American colonial period, it was Cass who was the first clearly and formally to introduce it as an active political principle in regard to the slavery question.

The Michigan statesman argued popular sovereignty in the United States Senate between 1850 and 1856 in an effort to solve the slavery problem in the territories. He presented five speeches on the subject in 1850, one in 1854, and the last in 1856. The important roles which the principle played in the Compromise of 1850 and the Kansas-Nebraska Bill of 1854 tend to point to the influence of the speeches dealing with popular sovereignty which were presented by Cass in the Senate.

The complete failure of the doctrine to solve the vexing question of slavery in the territories may indicate that Cass erred in his judgment. Popular sovereignty did not prove to be a satisfactory solution to the problem.

(3) In presenting his Senate speeches on popular sovereignty, Cass followed a topical pattern of organization.

Cass dealt with as many as twelve major topics in the Manifesto speech and as few as three in "Dissolution of the Union," speech two. The topics were developed logically within themselves by means of the inductive method.

The Manifesto Address was clearer in terms of organization than the other speeches considered. The six later speeches on popular sovereignty suffered from poor arrangement because of needless digressions, repetition of arguments, irrelevant eulogy and invective, and many interruptions by other Senators. In addition to "Dissolution of the Union," which was delivered in February of 1850, these speeches were "Power of Congress," March, 1850; "Compromise Bill," June, 1850; "Sovereign Power," August, 1850; "Kansas and Nebraska," February, 1854; and "Kansas--the Territories," May, 1856. It is reasonable to conclude that Cass probably consumed more time than was necessary to present and develop his case in his popular sovereignty speeches. Some of the materials might be regarded as superfluous and may therefore have weakened the effectiveness of his main arguments.

The Manifesto speech was probably much more carefully prepared than any of the other speeches of the group. It was superior in respect to organization, analysis of subject matter, and integrity of reasoning.

(4) While Cass used a variety of types of evidence to support his arguments in the popular sovereignty speeches, he relied most heavily upon the citation of "authority."

Cass used facts, personal experience, historical examples, statistics, and authority with which to substantiate his arguments. Among the authorities cited by the Michigan statesman were judges, congressmen, court decisions, acts of the Continental Congress, acts of the United States Congress, acts of the state legislatures, government documents, committee reports, newspapers, textbooks, but most frequently the Constitution. Whatever his true motives, Cass justified his actions on constitutional grounds. The respect which he had for the national Charter can hardly be exaggerated.

(5) Cass generally employed a brief statement-of-purpose type of introduction and a carefully planned, mildly emotional conclusion.

The statement-of-purpose type of introduction was employed by Cass in six of the seven popular sovereignty speeches. His introductions were usually brief and direct. The Michigan statesman often alluded to the remarks of another Senator which especially provoked the presentation of his own speech. He made no obvious effort to gain the

attention of his audience; and except for his typically courteous language, there appears to have been no planned design to win rapport.

The conclusions of the popular sovereignty speeches were carefully planned. They were more lengthy than the introductions and were characterized by mild emotion, sincerity, and restraint. Cass usually called upon the Deity for assistance and stressed unity, cooperation, and moderation between the North and the South.

(6) Cass made considerable use of refutation techniques in the popular sovereignty addresses.

Cass depended often upon the refutation devices of definition, lack of need, repudiation and dismissal, comparison and contrast, and reductio ad absurdum. Admission, sarcasm, and surprise and amazement received limited use.

The techniques of refutation which were employed most frequently by Cass were those of overwhelming evidence and authority of the Constitution. The Michigan statesman amassed evidence upon evidence in an exhaustive series of refutation cycles while repudiating a single objection to popular sovereignty. Cass not only relied upon the Constitution as a source of evidence for the support of his contentions, but he constantly used the Constitution to prove that the arguments of his opponents were false.

A noteworthy feature of the popular sovereignty addresses was the fact that Cass presented them as refutative types of speeches rather than as constructive. The chief

issues in most cases were statements in defense of popular sovereignty. It is interesting to speculate whether the principle would have been adopted sooner and whether it would have been more successful had Cass employed a more aggressive strategy of advocacy rather than one of defense.

(7) Cass avoided intensely emotional persuasion in his Senate addresses dealing with popular sovereignty.

The Senate speeches of Cass were restrained and argumentative. Believing that political questions should be settled by rational means, he often voiced his respect for deliberation and reasoning as a means of solving national problems. Consequently the Michigan Senator not only avoided excessive emotion in his own speeches, but he admonished against the use of inordinate emotional persuasion when he observed it in the speeches of other members of the Senate.

The emotional appeals which were found to be most frequent in the popular sovereignty speeches of Cass were to security, brotherhood, justice, esteem, patriotism, and religion. The entreaties to patriotism and religion were by far the most numerous. In respect to patriotism, Cass refused to brook any unfair deprecation of American statesmen, living or dead, or of the United States government; and as one might expect, he demanded the utmost respect for the Constitution. His own devotion to the Union was unsurpassed. The appeals to religion involved gratitude for assistance, the beseeching of further aid, and a recognition of the

omnipotence of the Deity. In this connection, the Michigan Senator also occasionally quoted from the Bible.

(8) Cass had a considerable interest in scholarship in addition to his preoccupation with the practical demands of political leadership.

Letters, pamphlets, speeches, official reports, articles, and books which were written by Cass reveal a literary ability not ordinarily associated with a frontiersman and soldier. His treatises on the American Indian of the old Northwest are among the most authentic and accurate available on the subject. The closely reasoned pamphlet "Right of Search" brought international fame to the Michigan statesman.

Like Cicero, Cass recommended a broad base of education and learning as an indispensable prerequisite to excellent eloquence. Consequently he studied daily whenever there was time to do so. Even on his long canoe voyages in the wilds of the Northwest, he had his books with him. The occasional addresses of the Michigan statesman were filled with literary and historical allusions derived from wide reading.

Perhaps the most significant contribution of Cass to scholarship was his unremitting insistence upon the collection and preservation of documents, papers, and primary data relating to American history. As president of the American Historical Society, it was his major purpose to encourage

that organization to gather and safeguard the rapidly vanishing historical data of the past.

(9) The persuasive force exerted by the personality and character of Cass was enhanced by his honesty and his effective influence in man-to-man relationships. His lack of "public" personality and his ambition, however, worked against him.

At a time when dishonesty in government was winked at, Cass maintained a record of scrupulous integrity. His honesty not only related to material matters; but as a Union man, he endeavored to regard the interests of the South as well as the North.

Cass did not possess the magnetic personality which impressed large new audiences. He was much more influential in man-to-man relationships. His patient ability to listen, his sense of humor, his courtesy, and his restraint when dealing with heated issues helped to win political support for his ideas. Before large groups, however, Cass appeared cold and formal. His inability to inspire the masses may have limited the national political success of the Michigan statesman.

Cass was an ambitious and determined individual, and his zeal and energy created some jealousy among his colleagues. Woodbridge, for example, accused Cass of undue political aspirations when the two men served together in the administration of Michigan Territory. The charge of

inordinate political ambition was also one of the major imputations made against Cass in the presidential campaign of 1848. During the twelve years in which he served in the United States Senate, Cass was a Party workhorse, who labored tirelessly in the biennial campaigns. Hostile elements accused him of seeking the presidency at any cost, but his activity in various campaigns suggests that he did not place his own interests above those of the Party.

(10) Although Cass was capable of considerable language embellishment in his ceremonial speeches which were presented outside the Senate, his addresses in Congress were characterized by a plain style.

The ceremonial addresses which Cass presented outside of Congress were florid and grandiloquent because of extensive embellishment. His popular sovereignty speeches in the Senate, however, were restrained and much less stylistic. The Michigan statesman berated excessive ornament in the Senate speeches of his colleagues. Some language devices designed to achieve and retain the interest of the audience were nevertheless in evidence even in the Senate addresses of Cass. He made use of direct address, comparison and contrast, and figures of speech, chiefly personification, similes, and metaphors. There were extensive references to the Deity, and less frequent allusions to literature.

Although the language of Cass was scholarly and somewhat formal, he did not strive for unusual words. Cass,

however, did employ some Latin terminology, most of which was legal in nature and probably easily understood by his colleagues in the Senate. There were frequent references to geographic locations throughout the world and a few examples of clitchés, axioms, and proverbs.

In respect to composition, it can be said that parenthetical remarks were plentiful, tending to make the sentences long and cumbersome and the overall composition somewhat pedantic. Cass at times inverted normal word order for special effect. The use of repetition was considerable. It was the habit of Cass to rephrase his important ideas several times in order to establish their significance and promote clarity. Transitional devices were numerous, but the examples of parallel structure and the "purple patch" were less in evidence.

(11) Cass, who was elderly and physically unattractive by the time he reached the Senate, usually delivered his speeches in an unenthusiastic manner.

Cass was of medium height, square built, and wide shouldered. He wore a black wig which had a reddish sheen, and his head was large. His features were coarse and his face round and full at the mouth. There was a prominent mole on his left cheek. By the time the Michigan statesman reached the Senate, he had acquired a rotundity which made him the object of some merriment in public. His attitude was sober, and he possessed serenity and confidence.

The fact that outdoors Cass often addressed audiences which exceeded two thousand in number may testify to his ability to make himself heard. Scattered comments indicate that his voice was probably low pitched and that his speech was quite rapid in rate and sometimes poorly articulated.

Cass could be animated when he desired, but his bodily action was generally restrained and conservative. His face revealed little emotion, and he was known for his distinguished and formal demeanor. It is unlikely that the manner in which Cass delivered his speeches added measurably to their success. His unenthusiastic mode of presentation was not inspiring to the average listener. If the speeches of Cass were effective, it was undoubtedly because of their admirable content and not because of the way in which they were delivered.

(12) The stump speaking of Cass was relatively unrewarding if it is judged in terms of Democratic losses in the areas in which he campaigned.

Cass earned the respect of both parties because of the moderate attitude and the temperate language which he displayed during the heat of the most competitive campaigns. The Michigan statesman was more effective with individuals and small audiences at a Michigan crossroads than he was at the larger mass meetings. Listeners who did not know him well were unimpressed because of his lack of charm and his

dignified mien. Although many factors are involved, it is true that from 1844 to 1856, the years during which Cass dominated the stump in the Michigan campaigns, the Democratic party suffered a continuous and disappointing loss of support in the state.

(13) Cass managed to get a favorable response to his doctrine of popular sovereignty in the Senate in 1854 only to see it fail when it was put to the test in the territory of Kansas.

With little emotion, the Senate listened to the long discourses of Cass on popular sovereignty as the Michigan Senator helped to keep the principle alive for nine years between 1847 and 1856. Cass worked hard to defeat the Wilmot Proviso, which was antithetical to popular sovereignty; and he spoke five times for the Compromise of 1850, which was friendly to his doctrine. Finally in 1854, perhaps in part because of the efforts of Cass, popular sovereignty was incorporated in the Kansas-Nebraska Bill. Its ignoble failure in Kansas made for a disappointing conclusion to the Senate career of Cass. That the principle failed does not redound to the credit of the Michigan Senator, but it must be emphasized that no solution short of war was ever found to the question of whether the territories would be slave or free.

APPENDIX

LETTER FROM LEWIS CASS TO A.O.P. NICHOLSON

The following is a public letter which was written on December 24, 1847 by Lewis Cass to A.O.P. Nicholson, a Democrat from Tennessee. It was in the Nicholson letter that Cass first publicly and formally announced his doctrine of non-intervention, later called popular sovereignty. Some observers believed that Cass wrote the Nicholson letter to win national support in order to gain the presidency. Popular sovereignty offered a solution to the question of slavery in the territories which appeared to favor neither the North nor the South. The other prevailing solutions were proposed by either northern or southern extremists and thus were highly partisan. The non-sectional principle of popular sovereignty was national in scope, and it dramatized the initiative and the dynamic leadership which Cass exerted in the Party in 1847 and 1848.

Washington, December 24, 1847.

Dear Sir: I have received your letter and shall answer it as frankly as it is written.

You ask me whether I am in favor of the acquisition of Mexican territory, and what are my sentiments with regard to the Wilmot Proviso?

I have so often and so explicitly stated my views of the first question, in the Senate, that it seems almost unnecessary to repeat them here. As you request it, however, I shall briefly give them.

I think, then, that no peace should be granted to Mexico, till a reasonable indemnity is obtained for the injuries

which she has done us. The territorial extent of this indemnity is, in the first instance, a subject of Executive consideration. There the Constitution has placed it, and there I am willing to leave it, not only because I have full confidence in its judicious exercise, but because, in the ever-varying circumstances of a war, it would be indiscreet, by a public declaration, to commit the country to any line of indemnity which might otherwise be enlarged, as the obstinate injustice of the enemy prolongs the contest, with its loss of blood and treasure.

It appears to me that the kind of metaphysical magnanimity, which would reject all indemnity at the close of a bloody and expensive war, brought on by a direct attack upon our troops by the enemy, and preceded by a succession of unjust acts for a series of years, is as unworthy of the age in which we live, as it is revolting to the common sense and practice of mankind. It would conduce but little to our future security, or, indeed, to our present reputation, to declare that we repudiate all expectation of compensation from the Mexican Government, and are fighting, not for any practical result, but for some vague, perhaps philanthropic object, which escapes my penetration, and must be defined by those who assume this new principle of national intercommunication. All wars are to be deprecated, as well by the statesman, as by the philanthropist. They are great evils, but there are greater evils than these, and submission to injustice is among them. The nation which should refuse to defend its rights and its honor, when assailed, would soon have neither to defend, and when driven to war, it is not by professions of disinterestedness and declarations of magnanimity, that its rational objects can be best obtained, or other nations taught a lesson of forbearance-- the strongest security for permanent peace. We are at war with Mexico, and its vigorous prosecution is the surest means of its speedy termination, and ample indemnity the surest guarantee against the recurrence of such injustice as provoked it.

The Wilmot Proviso has been before the country some time. It has been repeatedly discussed in Congress, and by the public press. I am strongly impressed with the opinion that a great change has been going on in the public mind upon this subject— in my own as well as others; and that doubts are resolving themselves into convictions, that the principles it involves should be kept out of the National Legislature, and left to the people of the Confederacy in the respective local governments.

The whole subject is a comprehensive one, and fruitful of important consequences. It would be ill-times to discuss it here. I shall not assume that responsible task, but shall confine myself to such general views as are necessary to the fair exhibition of my opinions.

We may regret the existence of slavery in the Southern States, and wish they had been saved from its introduction.

But there it is, and not by the act of the present generation; and we must deal with it as a great practical question, involving the most momentous consequences. We have neither the right nor the power to touch it where it exists; and if we had both, their exercise, by any means heretofore suggested, might lead to results which no wise man would willingly encounter, and which no good man could contemplate without anxiety.

The theory of our Government presupposes that its various members have reserved to themselves the regulation of all subjects relating to what may be termed their internal police. They are sovereign within their boundaries, except in those cases, where they have surrendered to the General Government a portion of their rights, in order to give effect to the objects of the Union, whether these concern foreign nations or the several States themselves. Local institutions, if I may so speak, whether they have reference to slavery, or to any other relations, domestic or public, are left to local authority, either original or derivative. Congress has no right to say that there shall be slavery in New York, or that there shall be no slavery in Georgia; nor is there any other human power but the people of those States, respectively, which can change the relations existing therein; and they can say, if they will, we will have slavery in the former, and we will abolish it in the latter.

In various respects, the Territories differ from the States. Some of their rights are inchoate, and they do not possess the peculiar attributes of sovereignty. Their relation to the General Government is very imperfectly defined by the Constitution; and it will be found, upon examination, that in that instrument the only grant of power concerning them is conveyed in the phrase "Congress shall have the power to dispose of and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory and other property belonging to the United States." Certainly this phraseology is very loose, if it were designed to include in the grant the whole power of legislation over persons, as well as things. The expression, the "territory and other property," fairly construed, relates to the public lands, as such, to arsenals, dock-yards, forts, ships, and all the various kinds of property which the United States may, and must possess.

But surely the simple authority to dispose of and regulate these, does not extend to the unlimited power of legislation; to the passage of all laws, in the most general acceptation of the word, which, by the by, is carefully excluded from the sentence. And, indeed, if this were so, it would render unnecessary another provision of the Constitution, which grants to Congress the power to legislate, with the consent of the States, respectively, over all places purchased for the "erection of forts, magazines, arsenals, dock-yards," etc. These being the "property" of the United States, if the power to make "needful rules and regulations concerning" them,

includes the general power of legislation, then the grant of authority to regulate "the territory and other property of the United States" is unlimited, wherever subjects are found for its operation, and its exercise needed no auxiliary provision. If on the other hand, it does not include such power of legislation over the "other property" of the United States, then it does not include it over their "territory"; for the same terms which grant the one, grant the other. "Territory" is here classed with property, and treated as such; and the object was evidently to enable the General Government, as a property-holder, which, from necessity, it must be to manage, preserve, and "dispose of" such property as it might possess, and which authority is essential, almost to its being. But the lives and persons of our citizens, with the vast variety of objects connected with them, cannot be controlled by an authority, which is merely called into existence for the purpose of making rules and regulations for the disposition and management of property.

Such, it appears to me, would be the construction put upon this provision of the Constitution, were this question now first presented for consideration, and not controlled by imperious circumstances. The original ordinance of the Congress of Confederation, passed in 1787, and which was the only act upon this subject in force at the adoption of the Constitution, provided a complete frame of Government for the country north of the Ohio, while in a territorial condition, and for its eventual admission, in separate States, into the Union. And the persuasion, that this ordinance contained, within itself, all the necessary means of execution, probably prevented any direct reference to the subject in the Constitution, further than vesting in Congress the right to admit the States formed under it into the Union. However, circumstances arose which required legislation, as well over the territory north of the Ohio, as over other territory, both within and without the original Union, ceded to the General Government; and, at various times, a more enlarged power has been exercised over the Territories—meaning thereby, the different Territorial Governments—than is conveyed by the limited grant referred to. How far an existing necessity may have operated in producing this legislation, and thus extending, by rather a violent implication, powers not directly given, I know not. But, certain it is, that the principle of interference should not be carried beyond the necessary implication which produces it. It should be limited to the creation of proper governments for new countries, acquired or settled, and to the necessary provision for their eventual admission into the Union; leaving, in the meantime, to the people inhabiting them, to regulate their internal concerns in their own way. They are just as capable of doing so as the people of the States; and they can do so, at any rate, as soon as their political independence is recognized by admission into the Union. During this temporary condition, it is

hardly expedient to call into exercise a doubtful and invidious authority, which questions the intelligence of a respectable portion of our citizens, and whose limitation, whatever it may be, will be rapidly approaching its termination—an authority which would give to Congress despotic power, uncontrolled by the Constitution, over most important sections of our common country. For, if the relation of master and servant may be regulated or annihilated by its legislation, so may the relation of husband and wife, or parent and child, and of any other condition which our institutions and the habits of our society recognize. What would be thought if Congress should undertake to prescribe the terms of marriage in New York, or to regulate the authority of parents over their children in Pennsylvania? And yet it would be as vain to seek one justifying the interference of the National Legislature in the cases referred to in the original States of the Union. I speak here of the inherent power of Congress, and do not touch the question of such contracts as may be formed with new States when admitted into the confederacy.

Of all the questions that can agitate us, those which are merely sectional in their character are the most dangerous, and the most to be deprecated. The warning voice of him who, from his character, and services, and virtue, had the best right to warn us, proclaimed to his countrymen, in his farewell address—that monument of wisdom for him, as I hope it will be of safety for them—how much we had to apprehend from measures peculiarly affecting geographical portions of our country. The grave circumstances in which we are now placed make these words words of safety; for I am satisfied, from all I have seen and heard here, that a successful attempt to engraft the principles of the Wilmot Proviso upon the legislation of this Government, and to apply them to new territory, should new territory be acquired, would seriously affect our tranquility. I do not suffer myself to foresee or foretell the consequences that would ensue; for I trust and believe there is good sense and good feeling enough in the country to avoid them, by avoiding all occasions which might lead to them. Briefly, then, I am opposed to the exercise of any jurisdiction by Congress over this matter; and I am in favor of leaving to the people of any territory which may be hereafter acquired, the right to regulate it for themselves, under the general principles of the Constitution. Because,

1st. I do not see in the Constitution any grant of the requisite power to Congress; and I am not disposed to extend a doubtful precedent beyond its necessity—the establishment of Territorial Governments when needed—leaving to the inhabitants all the rights compatible with the relations they bear to the Confederation.

2. Because I believe this measure, if adopted, would weaken, if not impair, the union of the States; and would sow the seeds of future discord, which would grow up and ripen into an abundant harvest of calamity.

3. Because I believe a general conviction that if such a proposition would succeed, would lead to an immediate withholding of the supplies, and thus to a dishonorable termination of the war. I think no dispassionate observer at the seat of Government can doubt this result.

4. If, however, in this I am under a misapprehension, I am under none in the practical operation of this restriction, if adopted by Congress, upon a treaty of peace making any acquisition of Mexican territory. Such a treaty would be rejected just as certainly as presented to the Senate. More than one-third of that body would vote against it, viewing such a principle as an exclusion of the citizens of the slaveholding States from a participation in the benefits acquired by the treasure and exertions of all, and which should be common to all. I am repeating—neither advancing nor defending these views. That branch of the subject does not lie in my way, and I shall not turn aside to seek it.

In this aspect of the matter, the people of the United States must choose between this restriction and the extension of their territorial limits. They cannot have both; and which they will surrender must depend upon their Representatives first, and then, if these fail them, upon themselves.

5. But, after all, it seems to be generally conceded, that this restriction, if carried into effect, could not operate upon any State to be formed from newly acquired territory. The well known attributes of sovereignty, recognized by us as belonging to the State Governments, would sweep before them any such barrier, and would leave the people to express and exert their will at pleasure. Is the object, then, of temporary exclusion for so short a period as the duration of the Territorial Governments, worth the price at which it would be purchased? Worth the discord it would engender, the trial to which it would expose our Union, and the evils that would be the certain consequence, let that trial result as it might? As to the course which has been intimated, rather than proposed, of engrafting such a restriction upon any treaty of acquisition, I persuade myself it would find but little favor in any portion of this country. Such an arrangement would render Mexico a party, having a right to interfere in our internal institutions in questions left by the Constitution to the State Governments, and would inflict a serious blow upon our fundamental principles. Few, indeed, I trust, there are among us who would thus grant to a foreign power the right to inquire into the Constitution and conduct of the sovereign States of this Union; and if there are any, I am not among them, and never shall be. To the people of this country, under God, now and hereafter, are its destinies committed; and we want no foreign power to interrogate us, treaty in hand, and to say, why have you done this, or why have you left that undone? Our own dignity and the principles of national independence unite to repel such a proposition.

But there is another important consideration, which ought not to be lost sight of in the investigation of this subject. The question that presents itself is not a question of the increase, but of the diffusion of slavery. Whether its sphere be stationary or progressive, its amount will be the same. The rejection of this restriction will not add one to the class of servitude, nor will its adoption give freedom to a single being who is now placed therein. The same numbers will be spread over greater territory; and so far as compression, with less abundance of the necessaries of life, is an evil, so far will that evil be mitigated by transporting slaves to a new country, and giving them a larger space to occupy.

I say this in the event of the extension of slavery over any new acquisition. But can it go there? This may well be doubted. All the descriptions which reach us of the condition of the Californias and of New Mexico, to the acquisition of which our efforts seem at present directed, unite in representing those countries as agricultural regions, similar in their products to our middle States, and generally unfit for the production of the great staples which can alone render slave labor valuable. If we are not grossly deceived—and it is difficult to conceive how we can be—the inhabitants of those regions, whether they depend upon their ploughs or their herds, cannot be slaveholders. Involuntary labor, requiring the investment of large capital, can only be profitable when employed in the production of a few favored articles confined by nature to special districts. and paying larger returns than the usual agricultural products spread over more considerable portions of the earth.

In the letter of Mr. Buchanan upon this subject, not long since given to the public, he presents similar considerations with great force. "Neither," says this distinguished writer, "the soil, the climate, nor the productions of California south of 36° 30', nor, indeed, of any portion of it, north or south, is adapted to slave labor; and besides, every facility would be there afforded for the slave to escape from his master. Such property would be entirely insecure in any part of California. It is morally impossible, therefore, that a majority of the emigrants to that portion of the territory south of 36° 30', which will be chiefly composed of our citizens, will ever re-establish slavery within its limits.

In regard to New Mexico, east of the Rio Grande, the question has already been settled by the admission of Texas into the Union.

Should we acquire territory beyond the Rio Grande and east of the Rocky Mountains, it is still more impossible that a majority of the people would consent to re-establish slavery. They are themselves a colored population, and among them the negro does not belong socially to a degraded race."

With this last remark Mr. Walker fully coincides, in his letter written in 1814, upon the annexation of Texas,

and which everywhere produced so favorable an impression upon the public mind, as to have conduced very materially to the accomplishment of that great measure. "Beyond the Del Norte," says Mr. Walker, "slavery will not pass; not only because it is forbidden by law, but because the colored race preponderates in the ratio of ten to one over the whites; and holding, as they do, the Government and most of the offices in their possession, they will not permit the enslavement of any portion of the colored race which makes and executes the laws of the country."

The question, it will be therefore seen on examination, does not regard the exclusion of slavery from a region where it now exists, but a prohibition against its introduction where it does not exist, and where, from the feelings of the inhabitants and the laws of nature, "it is morally impossible," as Mr. Buchanan says, that it can ever re-establish itself.

It augurs well for the permanence of our Confederacy, that during more than half a century which has elapsed since the establishment of this Government, many serious questions, and some of the highest importance, have agitated the public mind, and more than once threatened the gravest consequences, but that they have all in succession passed away, leaving our institutions unscathed, and our country advancing in numbers, power, and wealth, and in all the other elements of national prosperity, with a rapidity unknown in ancient or in modern days. In times of political excitement, when difficult and delicate questions present themselves for solution, there is one ark of safety for us, and that is, an honest appeal to the fundamental principles of our Union, and a stern determination to abide their dictates. This course of proceeding has carried us in safety through many a trouble, and I trust will carry us safely through many more, should many more be destined to assail us. The Wilmot Proviso seeks to take from its legitimate tribunal a question of domestic policy, having no relation to the Union, as such, and to transfer it to another created by the people for a special purpose, and foreign to the subject-matter involved in this issue. By going back to our true principles, we go back to the road of peace and safety. Leave to the people, who will be affected by this question, to adjust it upon their own responsibility, and in their own manner, and we shall render another tribute to the original principles of our Government, and furnish another guarantee for its permanence and prosperity.

I am, dear sir, respectfully, your obedient servant,

LEWIS CASS

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