

Personal Politics In Indiana 1816-1840

(Concluded)

By ADAM LEONARD

STATE POLITICS, 1828 TO 1840

Only twice under the old constitution did the people of Indiana vote for the President of the nation and the governor of the state in the same year. In the presidential year of 1816 they elected a governor but the legislature chose the presidential electors. The quadrennial presidential elections and the triennial governorship elections threw the two together again in 1828 and also in 1840. Naturally the national question became a greater factor in these years than in any other in the election of the governor but even then its influence was not nearly so great as in more recent times owing largely to the fact that the two elections did not occur on the same date. The governorship election was held in August and the presidential in November. In other years the national question was scarcely felt at all in the governorship election.

Governor Jennings had been elected for a second term; Governor Hendricks had been sent to the United States senate, and it was generally expected that Governor Ray would be a candidate again in 1828. He announced himself as a candidate in April but made no mention of party or of his position in national politics.¹ Milton Stapp at the same time announced as a candidate for lieutenant governor. He also made no mention of national politics. The Jackson forces would not be satisfied with a neutral candidate. Even earlier than this the Jacksonian press had informally brought forward Dr. Israel T. Canby of Madison, a man of well-known Jacksonian sentiments, as a candidate for governor.² His candidacy had, however, not been seriously urged and when Ray announced it was rumored that Ray's correspondence with Jack-

¹ *Western Sun*, April 26, 1828.

² *Ibid*, Feb. 2, 1828.

son had converted him to the Jackson cause. Counter rumors were circulated, and the Jackson central committee to leave no doubt as to his position met at Salem June 28,³ and adopted the preamble:

Whereas it has been represented that Major Henry S. Handy has recently received a communication from Governor Ray expressive of his sentiments on the presidential election favorable to the election of Andrew Jackson and it appearing that Governor Ray had denounced the party (Democrats) opposed to the reelection of Mr. Adams as "A violent atrocious faction which every good man ought to unite in suppressing."

This was followed by a resolution calling upon Major Handy to produce Ray's letter to him. Major Handy explained that a report had reached the central committee that Jackson's letter to Ray had completely converted Ray to the cause of Jackson. The committee believing this, had appointed a committee to wait upon the governor and find out the truth of the matter, and also whether he would allow his name to be placed upon the Jackson ticket as a candidate for governor. Major Handy being the chairman of that committee had written to Governor Ray and the letter in question had been addressed to Handy.

Ray writing under date of May 15, 1828, said:

I must admit that although I have constantly recognized a numerous corps of my old political and personal friends in the Jackson ranks, yet I was not looking for a concentration of the whole force of that formidable and respectable party in my favor, notwithstanding, I feel satisfied that my course better deserved the confidence and friendship of the friends of the general than that of either of those gentlemen whom you presume will be my competitors, viz.—Moore, Thompson or Graham—wishing never to subject myself to the charge of inconsistency in politics, I will give you a brief history of my cause and feelings in politics and the presidential question.⁴

He declared that Clay had been his first choice and Jackson his second but that he had determined to judge the Adams administration by its acts, that these were not bad, therefore he had determined to be neutral. He did not believe the charge of corruption against Clay or that Jackson was opposed to the

³ *Ibid*, July 19, 1828, also the *Indiana Palladium*, July 12, 1828—the *Palladium* also withdrew its support from Ray.

⁴ *Ibid*, July 19, 1828.

tariff or internal improvements. He did not think that a Jackson administration would be different from the present. He concluded:

I am in your hands; dispose of me and my name as you in your wisdom think proper. I wish to be elected governor of the state on my *merits*. I shall not become a partisan but shall have no objection to receiving the united support of the Jacksonians. I shall not undo what they see fit to do in state elections, and will admit the election to be a test of strength. But must be permitted for the good of the cause to object to a publication before the election of the letter of the committee to me or my reply. By that course the cause will be weakened thousands in numbers. If you wish me to succeed by a great majority, leave me as much liberty as possible, allow latitude. It is enough for you to take up a man who is not against you and support him without drawing from him anything for publication to give offense to the opposite side, and he who allows himself silently or tacitly to be supported in your name stands committed by implication as strong as the Andes. You ought to have confidence in the man you support and not place him in an attitude that will weaken him.

Major Handy also submitted to the committee an extract from the Brookville *Repository* (date not given) which gave an extract from a speech two hours in length delivered by Ray in Brookville. It said in part:

Among the numerous subjects embraced in his excellency's address, the presidential question occupied a prominent position. With his course on this subject, under the existing circumstances, we could not coincide nor do we believe that it met the wishes of the people generally, as he practiced studied indecision or in other words refused to give his opinions on the question of the candidates of the high office of national executive, or to which, Mr. Adams or Mr. Jackson, he would give his personal support; assigning as his reason that he wished to avoid giving encouragement to either of the parties which now oppose each other on that subject, by lending them his name to aid in keeping the nation at that stage of high excitement which now agitates it. That as he conceived the present contest from the manner in which it is prosecuted directly calculated to destroy the liberties of a people and prostrate the free institutions of the country, it was his duty to keep aloof from both and employ his influence to assuage the storm; that measures and not men constituted his rallying point, and that whoever might be called to administer the government he was prepared to go with and support them so far as they pursued a correct policy, or in other words support of the American system.

The editor of the *Repository* did not agree with this attitude and sought the governor after the speech and put a series of questions to him from the Adams point of view. Ray in his answers declared: 1st. That the present administration was constitutionally established; 2nd. He did not believe the charges of bargain sale and corruption prepared against Adams and Clay; 3rd. The opposition to the administration is an outrageous and violent faction; 4th. It is the duty of every good man from the governor of the state downward to oppose such a faction.

Ray was a man who was not able to seize the "tide at its flood" or rather he belonged to the type of politicians who, "having eyes see not." Mere chance had made it possible for him to be governor. He had never been forced to risk a stand on an issue and he did not care to do so now. Moreover he could not see that the personality of political personages was being merged into party spirit. This induced him to stand alone and play a game of duplicity in bidding for the votes of both factions. In doing so he lost the support of partisans on both sides. The report of Major Handy to the convention determined the action of the Jacksonians, and one week later, July 5, 1828, Israel T. Canby announced himself as a Jacksonian candidate for governor. In his formal announcement Canby declared:

The election of Adams violated that fundamental principle of the republican form of government—that *the representative is bound by the wishes of his constituents however known to him*. The contest is therefore no longer personal but this important principle is involved—shall the people or their representatives who disregard the will of the people make the president.⁵

The administration forces had already brought out Harbin H. Moore of Corydon as their candidate for governor. The contest from now on was a three cornered struggle between the administration forces supporting Moore, the Jackson forces supporting Canby, and Ray as an independent candidate. Ray had the attacks of the other two factions aimed at him and was kept busy warding off their thrusts. On July

⁵ *Western Sun*, July 19, 1828.

9th, writing from Bloomington he said he understood it was reported that he had written letters to friends of Adams saying he would vote for him and to friends of Jackson saying he would vote for him and that these letters have been or are to be published.⁶ He declared that if such letters made their appearance they were base forgeries. In regard to the editorial in the *Brookville Repository* he said:

This I never did consent to. This publication grossly misrepresents me. I deny it as it appears in the newspapers. All editors in the state will please insert this in their papers.

He also promised to explain the circumstances and contents of Handy's letter from Indianapolis. Writing from Indianapolis under date of July 14, 1828, he tried to meet the charges of the Jackson central committee. He said:

Learning in the course of a few days past that the state is filled with lies and misrepresentations intended and calculated to destroy my election and myself forever, I feel it is a duty I owe to my political friends, to the state of Indiana and myself to step forth and meet the flood of calumny which my base political enemies are thundering in the ears of the people. All is kept quiet as the grave until a few days before the election, and then all at once a concerted attack is made on me from every quarter of the state, when it is impossible for me to go everywhere to explain.⁷

On the presidential question he said:

I was elected governor of Indiana when there was no party question and when I saw an attempt being made to divide the state into two parties, I determined I would not become the executive of one party to the exclusion of the other. Being elected by both parties I must continue the executive of both as long as my term lasts. Two great men have come in contact and we must choose between them. If I cannot be elected because I will not come out and abuse one or the other of these men I must fail.

He declared that he had always written uniformly well of both candidates and anything to the contrary was a base forgery. He denied having ever written letters to any one declaring that he would vote for either Jackson or Adams. He declared that Thomas H. Blake, candidate for congress in the

⁶ *Ibid.*, July 26, 1828.

⁷ *Indiana Palladium*, July 26, 1828.

First district, had been with him in ten counties and would tell the world that his cause had been uniform and that he had always been in favor of the present administration and had tried to show the people that they should be. He said that no officer to be elected next August should have anything to do with the presidential election; that there was no reason for making a question out of it; and that a man should be elected governor of the state upon his own merits and not upon popularity of another man.

In speaking of the immediate charges he said he was opposed at the last election by certain lawyers and political men, generally Adams men, and that these men declared opposition to him as soon as he was sworn into office. These men were again at the head of the administration party of the state, and last winter they had deliberately planned to ruin him. These administration men, at the time the two conventions met in January, had conferred with the Jacksonians and requested them to draw the line and bring out a candidate for governor, and then assured them that they would do the same thing and in that way they could have beat him on mutual ground. If they found they could not leave him out in that way that they would join with the Jacksonians and defeat him in that manner and if he became the friend of Adams they would bring out another candidate. He met the Handy letter by showing that the question was put to him by Jackson men and that he could not refuse their support while at the same time it was necessary that he maintain his independent position on the national question. He branded the charges in the Brookville *Repository* as absolutely false. The governor also tried by explanation to lessen the force of the expressions "outrageous and violent faction."⁸ Both Editor Jocelyn of the *Repository* and Governor Ray procured affidavits to prove their side of the question. The editor asserted that the words were used and Ray, that they were not.⁹

Public speaking was more conspicuous in this campaign than in any previous one. But speaking, however, was done primarily by the candidates themselves. Ray mentions that

⁸ *Indiana Palladium*, July 16, 1828.

⁹ *Ibid.*, July 16, 1828.

Thomas H. Blake had been with him in ten counties. On June 1, we have notice that he had been in Lawrenceburg on the previous Tuesday,¹⁰ on July 4, Ray and Stapp visited Vincennes. Ray, at a country dinner, made a speech two hours in length. Opinions of him were so varied that the Jackson paper refused to give its opinion.¹¹ Judge John Test, candidate for congress in the Third district, was in Lawrenceburg on July 4, and H. H. Moore on the Thursday previous. The open letters by the candidates scarcely appeared in this campaign. The letter of Ray in answer to the charges brought out by the Jackson central committee was the only one of note issued by the candidates for governor except the ones giving a formal announcement of their candidacy. Letters signed by fictitious names had also almost disappeared. There was only one of these worthy of note dealing with local affairs—that of “John Van Blaricum” originally published in the *Indianapolis Gazette* and copied by the press of the state.¹² It was an announcement as a candidate for governor given in bombastic language, after the style of Ray and was intended to make Ray appear ridiculous.

Since the candidate depended upon personal contact with the voters to make his impression upon them, Ray had the decided advantage over both Moore and Canby. He had been before the state for three years as its governor and had been about as successful as his predecessors. Also he had announced his candidacy early and was “on the stump” before either Moore or Canby became candidates.¹³ Then the partisan question was not raised until so late in the campaign that it did not have time to gather momentum sufficient to turn the election. Ray drew his strength in proportionate numbers from each of the two party candidates and was elected by a vote of 15,141 to 12,315 for Canby and 10,904 for Moore.¹⁴ Although Ray had won a personal victory in defiance of both parties it was due to the fact that state elections had never before centered about the national question, and because the

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, June 7, 1828.

¹¹ *Western Sun*, July 12, 1828.

¹² *Indiana Palladium*, July 5, 1828.

¹³ *Ibid.*, May 24, 1828.

¹⁴ *House Journal* 1828-29-30 and appendix A.

party candidates could not overcome the handicap of Ray's early lead in so short a time. Ray, however, was Indiana's last governor who professed to be independent of national politics. The national question did not enter the contest for lieutenant governor and Milton Stapp was elected over Abel C. Pepper by the close vote of 17,395 to 17,262.¹⁵

The presidential question entered strongly into the congressional elections. The struggle was most bitter in the First district. It began as early as January, when the *Western Sun* urged Samuel Judah to become a candidate.¹⁶ It said in an editorial that it was the will of the voters and of a majority of the delegates to the Jackson convention that he be their candidate. By March the sentiment of the leaders was fairly well known and Judah realized that he could not win over Blake, who was then serving his first term in office. He accordingly withdrew from the race in favor of Ratliff Boone.¹⁷ On the date of his withdrawal he addressed a letter to the Knox county vigilance committee in which he said:

It is undoubtedly the duty of the friends of the election of Andrew Jackson to endeavor to elect as their representative in congress men who will support all the rightful measures of his administration, when success shall have crowned our labors by his elevation to the presidency. To succeed in a party contest it is necessary to bring forward as a candidate that man who will unite the most of the party strength.

Two weeks later Ratliff Boone and Thomas Blake both formally announced themselves as candidates for congress.¹⁸ Although their political preferences were well known, neither of them mentioned politics in his announcement. At the same time Samuel Judah announced himself as a candidate for the state legislature from Knox county. The struggle between Boone and Blake centered mainly about the presidential question. It, however, had its local aspects. The friends of Blake circulated the report that Boone while a member of congress had voted against the Wabash canal bill. They made considerable political capital of the story, but Boone soon silenced

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 1.

¹⁶ January 26, 1828.

¹⁷ *Western Sun*, March 29, 1828.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, April 12, 1828.

them by securing statements from Jennings and Hendricks, who were in congress at the same time, stating positively that he had voted for the bill.¹⁹ Boone also charged that he was unfairly beaten by Blake in the last election. Blake challenged him to prove it, and he published a statement of facts in an attempt to do so.²⁰ The quarrel continued, however, throughout the campaign.

While there was a distinct alignment on the party issues neither party declared himself as a party candidate. The vote, however, was rather closely drawn on party lines. Boone was elected over Blake by a majority of 91.²¹ The *Western Sun* said of the election:

The presidential question operated no doubt upon this election. The friends of this administration as far as my acquaintance extends, presented an undivided phalanx in favor of Mr. Blake. The same cannot be said in favor of the friends of Jackson and it will not be denied that hundreds of them voted for Mr. Blake.²²

In the Second district the party lines were not so closely drawn. Mr. Jennings again became a candidate. He had voted for Jackson in the election in congress, but his sympathies for the administration were well known. The Jackson forces supported John H. Thompson, but the popularity of Jennings was too much for them to overcome and Jennings was easily elected by a vote of 6,932 to 2,521.²³

In the Third district O. H. Smith announced himself as a candidate for reelection early in the year (April 26).²⁴ His announcement was followed by that of Judge John Test on May 13,²⁵ and that of Jonathan McCarty on May 17.²⁶ Smith and Test were both administration men while McCarty was a Jackson man. While Smith was in the capital attending the session of congress Test was busy rallying his supporters of the two previous campaigns while McCarty was rousing up

¹⁹ *Ibid*, June 21, 1828.

²⁰ *Ibid*, ———.

²¹ *Niles' Register*, October 11, 1828.—Boone received 7,345 votes to 7,243 for Blake.

²² August 23, 1828.

²³ *Niles' Register*, October 11, 1828.

²⁴ *Indiana Palladium*, April 26, 1828.

²⁵ *Ibid*, May 3, 1828.

²⁶ *Ibid*, May 17, 1828.

the Jackson men to his own support. When Smith returned and became aware of the situation he realized that he could not be elected and in June he withdrew from the race. He gave as his reason that with three candidates in the field the one who should be elected would be a minority candidate. And if the minority should send a delegate to congress it would be contrary to the American principle of majority rule. He also left those who had been "circulating falsehoods" against him to their own reflections.²⁷ The campaign for election was made almost entirely along party lines, although the personal popularity of Judge Test no doubt affected the result, and Test was elected over McCarty by a vote of 6,415 to 4,985.²⁸

We know but little about the details of this election to the state legislature. The retiring legislature had been largely composed of administration sympathizers. The senate contained 17 administration men and four Jackson men, while the house contained forty administration men, thirteen Jackson men and four neutrals.²⁹ There seems to have been a very strong tendency by both parties to avoid the national questions in this election. In Manchester township in Dearborn county a convention to select delegates to a convention of four townships passed a series of resolutions dealing with local conditions. The fourth resolution declared:

We will not be influenced by the presidential question in selecting our state representatives.³⁰

Even Samuel Judah, who was perhaps the most radical Jackson man that served in the house of representatives in this period, did not mention national politics in his announcement as a candidate.³¹ There were three candidates opposed to him and all of them confined their public utterances to local issues and personalities although Judah digressed far enough once to give his opinion on the tariff.³² When the legislature met Judah and Isaac Howk, an administration man from

²⁷ *Ibid*, June 21, 1828.

²⁸ *Niles' Register*, Oct. 11, 1828.

²⁹ *Ibid*, Jan. 19, 1828.

³⁰ *Indiana Palladium*, March 10, 1828.

³¹ *Western Sun*, April 12, 1828.

³² *Ibid*, Aug. 2, 1828.

Clark county, were the candidates for speaker. Mr. Howk was chosen.³³ Party lines were now drawn never to be obliterated.

No one was less able to see and take the advantage of the rise of party spirit than the governor, James B. Ray, and his action hastened to drive local politics into national alignment. As soon as the elections were over he published an open letter or "statement of facts" in which he rehearsed the letter in reply to the charge of the Jackson central committee and then added:

It was also stated by me that if I were the successful candidate, after the election was over, should either party claim me as having been elected by them exclusively a statement of facts should be made. An extensive tour through the state and an intimate acquaintance with the policies of the people enable me to say that with great certainty though elected by a majority of 2,500 votes over my Jackson competitor, Dr. Canby, and by between 4,000 and 5,000 over my administrative competitor, H. H. Moore, I feel free to assert that I was not elected by the friends of either side in a party controversy. The votes I received were for governor of the state and not to effect any other purpose.

In his inaugural address he again touched on the subject. He said:

I entered into the late canvass at a crisis fraught with as much danger to candidates for office, as this country ever witnessed; at a time when the most fearful public excitement that ever agitated the country had risen to its acme; at a time when the rights of friends and consanguinity were swallowed up in the general fermentation of the day; at a time when the populace were laboring under the most splendid artificial delusion and madness that ever bewitched an intelligent society; at a time when the candidate appeared to possess no other merit or demerit than that he was the friend or opposer of one or the other of the two brightest stars in our galaxy of heroes and statesmen; and at a time when the voice of merit was literally stifled by the spirit of the party.³⁵

In his first message to the legislature he again deplored the existing tendency in politics, in the statement that:

The treatment which candidates for office and public servants too frequently receive, from the highest to the lowest—the practice of saying

³³ *Ibid*, Dec. 20, 1828.

³⁴ *Niles' Register*, Nov. 1, 1828.

³⁵ *Indiana Palladium*, Jan. 10, 1829.

all manner of false and evil things about them—of slandering them without mercy—of attempting to bring them into disrepute—to destroy their usefulness—of questioning their motives—of misrepresenting their acts, private and official—deserve the unqualified animadversion of every friend to good government in the country—of every good friend to character—of the lover of justice, the lover of liberty and mind. Such wanton licentiousness must, in the process of time, induce talent, sensitive and modest worth to leave those public stations in the government, where they might honor and bless their country and themselves, to be filled by the ambitious demagogue, the designing partisan, and sometimes by the detractor of reputation himself. It is true that the public servant is the property of the people as far as it respects the free investigation of his conduct—is at all times subject to their legal will and sound discretion; but it can never be admitted that because he assumes the character of a servant, any of his rights can be invaded with impunity, his reputation plundered, his feelings lacerated without a palpable violation of the obligation that exists between him and his constituents.³⁶

If we could remove from Governor Ray the extenuating circumstances and personal pique we would see in him no doubt a valiant type of that public servant who places service above mere puritanism, but the forces on both sides were pitted against him. The spirit of partisanship was running rampant and could not be checked until it embraced the entire political system. This spirit, however, was usually emphasized in the general and was concealed as much as possible in the individual cases. As an example the *Western Sun* speaking in general terms, said:

A continuation of the same demarkation of political parties which has existed ever since the establishment of our national government, seems upon the whole, the safest course for the preservation of peace, and the principle of union.³⁷

And the Richmond *Enquirer* made an alignment of parties on the same basis as the old Federalism and Republicanism.³⁸ In the same county, the same paper printed the announcement of George Calhoun,³⁹ John McClure,⁴⁰ John C. Riley,⁴¹ and

³⁶ *Niles' Register*, Jan. 21, 1829.

³⁷ April 4, 1829.

³⁸ *Western Sun*, August 22, 1825.

³⁹ May 9, 1829.

⁴⁰ April 13, 1829.

⁴¹ April 25, 1829.

General W. Johnson,⁴² as candidates for the legislature without any mention of party politics. Later in the campaign it declared in an open letter by "Observer":

As the first Monday in August approaches, I perceive in almost all the public journals, a list of names of candidates for office rapidly increasing in number and as the political sentiments of men are public property, it is but right that the people should demand of each candidate for office, and particularly the candidates for the legislature, an unvarnished declaration of his sentiments in relation to the present administration of the general government, and his views in relation to the next president. That two great political parties do now exist in the United States, whose feelings and sentiments are widely discordant, is too self evident to admit contradiction, is it not therefore in the nature of things to expect any individual whatever who may become a candidate for any important situation to aid in the support of both parties?⁴³

There is, however, no sign of any legislative candidate declaring himself either as a Jackson or anti-Jackson man in this campaign. No candidates for minor office ever had done such a thing for many years, yet at the same time the partisan complication of the legislature became more and more marked each year. In this year the house of representatives became Jacksonian, and elected Ross Smiley, an ardent Jackson man, as its speaker.⁴⁴

Notwithstanding Governor Ray's independent position and the tendency of his legislature to draw party lines, he did not come into conflict with that body until late in the session of the legislature of 1829-30. If we may believe the *Indiana Journal's* account of the controversy,⁴⁵ a short time before the session of the General Assembly closed, a bill was passed providing for the opening of a part of the Michigan Road. The bill originated in the senate and passed that body with the name of a very respectable gentleman as commissioner. In the house of representatives, the name of that gentleman was stricken out and that of Noah Noble was inserted in lieu of it. This was not done out of any disrespect for the gentleman originally named, but on account of a preference for Gen-

⁴² June 6, 1829.

⁴³ June 13, 1829.

⁴⁴ *Western Sun*, Dec. 26, 1829.

⁴⁵ Copied in *Niles' Register*, March 27, 1830.

eral Noble, founded on an intimate acquaintance with him and a knowledge of his qualifications and also on account of his local situation which was thought to be particularly favorable for such an appointment. While the bill was pending in the house of representatives the governor was frequently in the lobby, electioneering against the insertion of Mr. Noble's name, declaring if it should be continued he would not sign it. The house disregarding these threats, passed the bill with Mr. Noble's name as commissioner. After it was reported to the senate with its amendment, the governor continued to exert his influence with the senators to have Mr. Noble's name expunged, using coarse epithets in reference to him and declaring, as he had before done, that he would not approve the law if the name were retained. The bill, however, passed both houses and was sent to the governor for his signature. After keeping the bill for two or three days he signed it and wrote at the bottom of the same page:

Indianapolis, Jan. 29, 1830

There are parts of this bill which my mind cannot sanction. The commissioner named in it I believe to be unworthy. If it had come into my hands at an earlier period of the session, it should have become a law if at all without my signature. But finding that the legislature is ready to adjourn without permitting it to remain in my hands five days I cannot consent to the sacrifice of money it must occasion to retain it. Therefore I must yield to the necessity of settling the Michigan Road question so necessary to the public and interest, even at the sacrifice of my own opinion.

JAMES B. RAY.

When the senate became aware of the remark it immediately passed the following resolution:

Resolved, that in the opinion of the senate the power of the executive over bills which pass both branches of the General Assembly does not extend to scribbling individual abuse upon them and that the indulgence of such propensity in the case of the bill for the opening of the Michigan Road is not only an uncourteous reflection upon the discrimination of the legislature but a manifestation of authority unauthorized by the constitution or official propriety.

This resolution passed by a vote of 17 to 5.

Ray and his senate were never again on friendly terms and neither ever allowed an opportunity to pass without attacking the other. The legislature passed a resolution at this session

requiring the governor to correspond with the proper authorities and ascertain as nearly as possible when and how the land donated by treaty and act of congress to the state of Indiana to open a road (Michigan) were to be surveyed and whether they were to be surveyed by the state of Indiana or the general government.⁴⁵ Ray apparently wrote to Mr. Eaton, secretary of war under whose department public lands were at that time managed but received no answer. The legislators began to murmur of neglect of duty on the part of Ray. He at once made an effort to secure evidence that he had done his duty. The new legislature which had not changed materially either in person or political complexion met on the 6th of December, 1830. Two days later Ray placed before the senate all his correspondence on the subject.⁴⁶ In doing so he complained that:

Some uncharitable persons in the public prints and elsewhere have insinuated that I have failed to do my duty with regard to this road grant, under the law of last year, out of hostility to the road or for other causes. With about the same propriety and without evidence they may charge me with the murder of my own child.

The next day (December 9) he sent another letter to the senate with the comment:

Can it still be said I have neglected this duty? Is the evidence I now submit sufficient to acquit me of censure?

Ray had promised the General Assembly early in his administration that he would codify all the laws that had been passed since 1824, and present them to the legislature before his term of office expired. On December 10, 1830, the senate passed a resolution, accompanied by a preamble giving a statement of facts, inquiring what progress he had made in collecting the laws.⁴⁷ Ray again showed his haughty and over-bearing disposition by curtly replying: 1. That he had procured a book and formed it in one hundred articles of law. 2. He would make no promises for the future. 3. This was his own undertaking and would not be placed in hands that

⁴⁵ *Senate Journal*, 1830, p. 38.

⁴⁶ *Ibid*, pages 37 to 53.

⁴⁷ *Senate Journal*, 1830, p. 59.

would abuse it. 4. A work condemned in advance is not likely to receive a fair trial.⁴⁸ The quarrel again broke out when on January 8, 1831, the senate passed a resolution requesting the committee on revision⁴⁹

to address a respectful letter to his excellency the governor soliciting him to return *Livingston's Louisiana Code* to the library for the use of the legislature during the present session of the General Assembly.

On the 10th Ray replied :

I have complied with the request of this resolution but not because I recognize in the senate the right to make such a call. The executive of this state considers himself bound by its laws and responsible for anything he does to the people of the state or their representatives; but not subject to the direction of a senate.⁵⁰

Another cause for controversy was the appointment of judges of the supreme court. The seven years' term of the judges expired January 28, 1830. On January 27, the senate by resolution offered by Dennis Pennington, a former Adams man, requested the governor to nominate to the senate James Scott, Jesse S. Holman and Isaac Blackford.⁵¹ The governor allowed the matter to rest until January 12, 1831, when he sent to the senate the nominations of Isaac Blackford, John T. McKinney, and Stephen C. Stephens as judges.⁵²

His nominations were accompanied by a letter in which he declared :

The executive does not, however, acknowledge the right of the senate to interfere directly or indirectly with the nominating power, or as to the time of their presentation for acceptance or rejection.

The senate immediately confirmed the nomination of Blackford but rejected that of Stephens and McKinney.⁵³ On January 25, the senate justified its stand by a long report and a set of resolutions by a special committee.⁵⁴

⁴⁸ *Senate Journal*, 1830, p. 63.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 230.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 249.

⁵¹ *Senate Journal* 1830, p. 159.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 255.

⁵³ *Senate Journal* 1830, p. 259-260-261.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 347-355.

On January 28, the governor nominated Stephens and McKinney and the nominations were confirmed by a vote of 11 to 10.⁵⁵ The entire affair was complicated by the fact that Scott, Holman and Blackford were the judges whose terms were expiring, while Stephens and McKinney were members of the senate.

The three years' struggle between Ray and the legislature not only ended the career of personal politics as applied to the higher state officials but it ruined Ray both politically and professionally. When he retired from the governor's office he resumed the practice of law but received very little business. "He seemed to be run down at the heel" and although he was at the prime of life the public appeared to think him superannuated, as having passed his day of usefulness. In 1835 he became a candidate for clerk of Marion county and for a time appeared to make a lively canvass but before the election came off he gave up the conflict. He did not withdraw but he had no tickets printed and but few votes were cast for him. In 1837 he ran for congress in the Indianapolis district against William Herrod but received only 5,883 votes to 9,635 for his opponent. This ended his public career.⁵⁶

By the time for the campaign for the election of governor in 1831, the party spirit had developed to such an extent that the candidate's worth was judged by his attitude toward the national question. In the campaign there was a vigorous activity throughout the party organization and an alignment of parties back of candidates but no candidate made the race on the fundamental principle of being a party man. On December 18, 1830, the Jacksonian members of the state legislature met at the governor's house⁵⁷ and passed a series of resolutions to the effect that all friends of Republicanism had confidence in Jackson and his administration. (2) They had the utmost confidence in him and his administration. (3) In the hands of an honest man the interests of all men are safe. (4) Accountability of public officials, payment of the public debt, and the equalization of the burdens of all classes of

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 394-396.

⁵⁶ Woolen, Wm. W., *Biographical and Historical Sketches of Indiana*, 62.

⁵⁷ *Western Sun*, Jan. 22, 1831.

people are objects of primary importance. (5) They indorsed the president as a candidate for the next election. (6) They provided for the distribution of 5,000 copies of the President's message. They also appointed a standing central committee of twenty persons and instructed them to publish an address to the people of the state. This committee met immediately and provided for the appointment of county committees of five, also vigilance committees in every township in the state.

The anti-Jackson forces, however, had their candidates in the field before the Jackson forces did. Early in February General Noah Noble announced himself as a candidate for governor and David Wallace announced for lieutenant governor. Noble was one of the best known men in the state, he had been removed from the office of collector of public money in Indianapolis by Jackson, and had been the object of special attack by Governor Ray in the Michigan Road incident. He was well calculated to win support from both the anti-Jackson and the anti-Ray factions in the state. He is described by O. H. Smith as follows:

His person was tall and slim, his constitution delicate, his smile winning, his voice feeble, the squeeze of the hand irresistible. He spoke plainly and well but made no pretense to eloquence.⁵⁸

Wallace was a promising young lawyer, a graduate of West Point, and for the last three sessions had been a member of the state legislature. These men made no mention of party in their announcements, but their principles were too well-known to need any formal declaration. In May James G. Read of Daviess county announced himself as candidate for governor.⁵⁹ He did not refer to the national question in any manner. Read was by no means so well known as Noble, but although he did not at first mention his party preference it was well known that he was the candidate of the Jackson forces. Personally, as a speaker he was loud, impressive, impulsive, at times eloquent. He was always fortified with facts and brought them to bear with all his powers, upon his audience. In person he was below the common height, but strongly

⁵⁸ Smith, O. H., *Early Indiana Trials and Sketches*, 87.

⁵⁹ *Western Sun*, May 14, 1828.

formed, head large, hair and eyes coal black, complexion dark, features good.⁶⁰ On June 4 Ross Smiley was formally announced as a candidate for lieutenant governor, with the comment:

Mr. Smiley was one of the electors for President and Vice-president at the last presidential election, and voted for Andrew Jackson.⁶¹

Mr. Smiley was better known both personally and politically than was Mr. Read. Milton Stapp, the lieutenant governor, became an independent candidate for governor, and James Gregory, state senator from Shelby county, was an independent candidate for lieutenant governor.

On May 10, 1831, Read issued from Washington, Indiana, a letter to the "Freemen of Indiana" stating his principles.⁶² He declared that the general policy of the existing administration was decidedly approved by him. He concurred in the opinion expressed in the late message of the president on the tariff and internal improvements. He opposed the disorganizing doctrines of southern nullifiers, and those of northern consolidationists. He recognized the people as the source of all sovereign power. He touched only in very general terms the question of state issues. In connection with his deploring the action of the "southern nullifiers and northern consolidationists" it is worth while to note that Governor Ray in his annual message to the legislature in 1830 said:⁶³

I have received and shall lay before you resolutions of the states of Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Louisiana declaring that the tariff of 1828 accords with the constitution of the United States and is not injurious to the southern states. Corresponding resolves are expected of you.

These people evidently did not question the constitutionality of South Carolina's act, but rather condemned the policy of it.

On May 10, Noble issued a letter, "To the people of Indiana."⁶⁴ He sketched his life in Indiana; said that it was his

⁶⁰ Smith, O. H., *Early Indiana Trials and Sketches*, 343.

⁶¹ *Western Sun*, June 4, 1831.

⁶² *Western Sun*, June 4, 1828, also *The Indiana Republican*, June 16, 1831.

⁶³ *Senate Journal*, 1830, p. 14.

⁶⁴ *Western Sun*, June 4, 1831; also *The Indiana Republican*, June 16, 1831.

attachment to the civil institutions of our common country, his devotion to the interests of Indiana, the character in public and private life that he had built among them, and on the opinion his fellow citizens might entertain for his qualifications that he rested his pretensions, looking to the people all, and not to party discipline. He declared that the tariff was too vital to the interests of the state for him to oppose it. He pronounced the militia system a failure that should be replaced by some more efficient system. He pledged himself never to be a candidate for any higher office, and asked the people not to judge him until he had visited every county and given them a chance to see and hear him.

Each of the candidates stumped the state, visiting every county. This practice which was just coming into vogue in 1826, was very nearly universal by 1831. In their campaign the candidates were not only expected to make speeches setting forth their positions upon the question at issue but they were expected to refute all charges that might be brought against them and answer any questions that should be asked. In Knox county Wilson Lagow, a candidate for a local office (in 1830) gave notice to the voters that:

I will meet the voters of Palmyra township at Johnathon Hombick's on the 19; on the 22, the voters of Harrison township at the place of holding their election; on the 23, the voters of Johnson township at the place of holding their election; on the 24, the voters of Decker township at the place of holding their election; and on Saturday before the election at the courthouse in Vincennes, at which time and place I will be fully prepared to refute the calumnies heaped upon me by my opponent and show to the people that I have been vilely traduced and grossly slandered. At Vincennes I will have all the evidence necessary to a full and complete investigation.⁶⁵

What he declared he would do here seems to be the things that were expected of all candidates.

The candidates themselves perhaps did not draw the political line so closely as did the press. The *Indiana Palladium* early in May made a strong plea for party alignment when it said:

⁶⁵ *Western Sun*, July 10, 1830.

In the first place they try to make it impossible for any man to come out on the question as they call it. What do they do next? Whenever a Jackson man is a candidate for any office they immediately raise the cry that he has "come out on the question," and how often they have defeated the election of known and tried Republicans? * * * Do you know a Clay man in all your acquaintance who ever voted for a Jackson man for the legislature? In the eyes of the Clay man the Jackson man never has merit. They invariably find merit on the Clay side. * * * I ask this sincerely, do Jackson men support the administration when they elect men who support different measures?⁶⁶

The *Madison Herald* of June 1, made the same complaints when it said:

What is it that prompts the Clay party in this state to oppose every friend of General Jackson who aspires to office? What is it that induces them to cry question, question, the moment a Jackson man appears in the field? They will tell you they are opposed to the principles and measures of his administration and they want to put them down. That they cannot conscientiously support a man who favors the policy of the president. Avowing this they have the effrontery to ask the Jackson men to support them.⁶⁷

While the politician, the orator, the partisan press have reached the stage of such acute party alignment that it was practically impossible for a non-partisan candidate to be elected, the party lines were not yet so closely drawn around the bulk of citizens that the national question should determine the state issue. There was no doubt but what the state was safely Jacksonian upon the national question but on the state issue the prestige of the name of Jackson could not overcome the personal popularity of Mr. Noble and he was elected by a vote of 17,959 to 15,168 for Read and only 4,424 for Stapp, the independent candidate.⁶⁸ Noble's running mate, David Wallace, was elected lieutenant governor by a vote of 17,101 to 12,858 for Smiley, the Jacksonian candidate, and 5,346 for Gregory, the independent.

The party line was less closely drawn in the legislative election than in the gubernatorial. The most notable feature was the tendency of the party toward bringing out local

⁶⁶ *Western Sun*, May 28, 1831.

⁶⁷ *Ibid*, June 11, 1831.

⁶⁸ *House Journal*, 1831, p. 29.

tickets. The Jacksonians in Dearborn county met at Lawrenceburg March 30, 1831, and drew up a series of ten resolutions.⁶⁹ The first nine of these endorsed the administration of Jackson while the tenth provided a committee of three from each township in the county to meet on the fourth Saturday in April to arrange a county ticket for the party. This is one of the first instances of the kind found in the state. The party preference of all candidates was well known but the voters were just as little inclined to vote the party ticket as they were in the case of the governor. Three weeks after the election the *Western Sun*, while not able to give the result, predicted an increase in the Jackson strength in the state legislature, and comments that

It is a remarkable fact that with a large majority of the state in favor of Jackson there has at all times been a majority of Clay and Adams men in the legislature.⁷⁰

This election was no exception. In the previous legislature the anti-Jackson forces claimed an actual majority of twenty⁷¹ while in the election of United States senator William Hendricks, a Clay man, who was just completing a term of service, was elected over Ratliff Boone, the Jacksonian candidate, by a vote of 44 to 26 with twelve votes distributed between John Law and Charles Dewey, both Clay men.⁷² Before the returns from the election were all in the Lawrenceburg *Palladium*, a radical Jacksonian paper, conceded that 39 Clay men were elected to the house and seven to the senate, while 30 Jackson men were elected to the house and six to the senate,⁷³ while the *Indiana Clarion*, a Clay paper, claimed a majority of two to one for the anti-administration forces in the senate.⁷⁴ This legislature also had to elect a United States senator. Senator James Noble died in February, 1831. Governor Ray appointed Robert Hanna to serve until the General Assembly should meet. The Assembly, however, passed by the appointee and

⁶⁹ *Western Sun*, April 16, 1831.

⁷⁰ *Ibid*, August 20, 1831.

⁷¹ *Niles' Register*, December 25, 1830.

⁷² *Ibid*, January 8, 1831.

⁷³ *Ibid*, September 3, 1831.

⁷⁴ *Ibid*, September 10, 1831.

chose Gen. John Tipton, a man who supported Jackson, but opposed his bank policy. The party lines were not drawn in this election. Tipton received 55 votes to 36 for Jesse L. Holman and 14 scattering.⁷⁵

In 1829 the General Assembly passed a law advancing the time for holding the congressional election from 1830 to 1831, making it occur biennially from the latter date.⁷⁶ The state and local elections were accompanied this year by a vigorous congressional campaign. In the First district Ratliff Boone, the Jacksonian incumbent, was opposed by John Law. Party lines were as usual more closely drawn here than elsewhere. The record of Boone in congress was also an issue. Boone was elected by a vote of 11,281 to 10,905 for Law. His majority was the largest that he had yet received.⁷⁷

In the Second district, where there had previously been practically a unanimous sentiment in favor of Jennings, there were six candidates, Jennings being one of them. While he had always been a Clay man, he had never allowed the national issue to enter into his canvass for election to congress. The development of the party spirit made it almost impossible for an independent to be elected. Jennings' personal habits,⁷⁸ especially the use of intoxicants, had so weakened him that he could not give as good service at this time as formerly, hence his defeat was practically assured before he entered the race. James B. Ray was also an independent candidate but his troubles during his last term as governor had destroyed his popularity and he stood no chance. John H. Thompson and Isaac Howk were also independent candidates. William W. Wick, the son of a Presbyterian minister from Cannonsburg, Pennsylvania, where Jennings, Hendricks, and Dr. Wylie had attended school, was the Anti-Jackson candidate. Wick was well known, popular, and a good campaigner. His political sentiments were perhaps not firmly fixed for he became a Jacksonian four years later.⁷⁹ Gen. John Carr, a soldier of the

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, December 24, 1831.

⁷⁶ *Laws of Indiana*, 1829 (13th session), 28.

⁷⁷ *Niles' Register*, September 17, 1831.

⁷⁸ Woolen, *Biographical and Historical Sketches*.

⁷⁹ See the letter of Wick to Mr. Payne of Texas in Woolen's *Biographical and Historical Sketches*, 252.

War of 1812 who had been a presidential elector on the Jackson ticket in 1824 was the Jacksonian candidate. The national question was waged between Wick and Carr while the other men depended upon local issues and personal popularity. In the election Carr received 4,855 votes, Wick 4,610, Ray 1,732, Jennings 1,681, Thompson 1,486, and Howk, 454.⁸⁰ The success of Carr was not due to the fact that voting was carried on along party lines, but rather to the fact that the independent vote was distributed among so many men. Carr's vote was less than one third of the total vote cast.

In the Third district Jonathan McCarthy became the Jacksonian candidate. In the opposition O. H. Smith had not forgotten events of the campaign of 1828 when John Test and McCarty became candidates during his absence and made such a thorough campaign that Smith saw his case to be hopeless upon his return and withdrew from the race, giving as his excuse that the one elected would represent a minority and he did not care to do so. By this time however, he had forgotten the dangers of being a minority representative, and while Test was in Washington City he became an active candidate. Test said of the affair in an open letter:

Last fall before I left here for Washington City and while Mr. Smith was understood to be an applicant for a seat upon the supreme bench, I gave positive assurance to his friends and my friends that I would certainly be a candidate. Mr. Smith never gave me the least intimation that he had any intention or even a desire to be one nor did ever a friend of his give me any information of the kind and until I saw it in the western newspapers at the city of Washington I did not believe he would offer.⁸¹

The Jackson forces centered all their efforts upon McCarty while the opposition was about equally divided between Test and Smith. A few days before the election rumors were sent all over the district bearing the information that Test had withdrawn from the race as Smith had three years previous.⁸² It was too late for Test to refute the report and hundreds deserted Test for Smith. McCarty however, was elected.

⁸⁰ *Niles' Register*, September 17, 1831.

⁸¹ *Indiana Republican*, September 22, 1831.

⁸² See Test's open letter, *Indiana Republican*, September 22, 1831.

He received 6,243 votes to 5,289 for Smith and 3,107 for Test.⁸³ The Jacksonian party while it had polled much less than half the votes cast upon the congressional question, had secured all the congressmen. This was due to their perfect unity, harmony and organization. The opposition had not yet learned the lesson of concentration.

The local elections in 1832 were overshadowed by the national election and we know but little about them. All discussions of local issues or local candidates were omitted for the more important discussion of the Bank question. After the election however, both sides claimed the victory. The *Indiana Democrat* said:

Of the ten senators who were to be elected, five Jacksonians are certainly elected, and the sixth not heard from. Of the seventy-five members of the house of representatives to be elected forty-one out of the sixty-nine already returned are Jackson men, twenty-eight Clay men and two Anti-Mason, leaving four to come in, and a probability that at least two of them will be for the administration. One of the Anti-Masons was for Clay and the other for Jackson. Thus has Indiana stood her ground in spite of the outcry against the veto (Bank), and without the least exertion has she entirely changed the state of parties in the house of representatives and will probably have the majority on a joint ballot on the Jackson side.⁸⁴

At the same time the *National Intelligencer* quoted a letter from a gentleman from Indianapolis which said:

A large majority of National Republicans are elected to the legislature and I have no hesitation in answering you that the electoral ticket favorable to Henry Clay and John Sergeant will be secured in the fall by an overwhelming majority. I perceive that some of the Jackson politicians are reckoning Indiana among the doubtful states. She is not doubtful.⁸⁵

Party lines were not sharply drawn in the legislature and when that body had to elect a successor to Senator Tipton, thirty of the Clay men voted for Tipton, who was a moderate Jackson man, and he was easily elected, although the Clay men had a majority of at least six on joint

⁸³ *Niles' Register*, September 17, 1831.

⁸⁴ *Niles' Register*, September 1, 1832.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, September 1, 1832.

ballot. Other candidates were Boone, McCarty and Read, Jacksonians and Smith, Blackford and Patterson, Clay men.⁸⁶ Tipton's election was due to his personal popularity and his excellent record as well as his personal opposition to the bank program of Jackson.

The census of 1830 showed such an increase in the population of the state that the number of representatives in the lower house of congress was increased from three to seven. The redistricting of the state caused new alignments of politicians and gave room for many new men. The excitement of the campaign of 1832 was followed by a relaxation of party spirit and candidates depended more upon their personal popularity and merits in the election of 1833 than they had done in the two previous congressional elections. The campaign was waged about the two national questions, the Bank and Public Lands.⁸⁷ The Jacksonians appealed to the party spirit and the need of giving support to the administration in its legislative program. The opposition, besides opposing the policies of the administration decried the reign of party enthusiasm. The *Vincennes Gazette*, a radical Clay paper, said in an editorial:

If the people, out of the names before them do not choose good men and true men, honest and capable, to represent them in congress the senate and the house of representatives it will be their own fault. The demon of party excitement now being dormant if not entirely dead, we consider this a most favorable time for the people to make good selections from amongst those who are seeking their favor and we hope sincerely that they will again return to the old Republican maxim above quoted, which of late years has been entirely neglected.⁸⁸

This radical Clay publication failed to mention the national question in connection with any candidate during the campaign. The election resulted in almost a complete victory for the Jacksonians. Ratliff Boone was elected in the First district, John Ewing in the Second by a majority of two votes: John Carr in the Third, Amos Lane in the Fourth, Jonathan McCarty in the Fifth, Edward A. Hannegan in the Seventh.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, December 22, 1832; January 5, 1833.

⁸⁷ See letter of Amos Lane, in *Indiana Palladium*, July 27, 1833.

⁸⁸ June 22, 1833.

"All thoroughgoing, died-in-the-wool Jacksonians except Ewing."⁸⁹ This was the first time in four years that the state legislature had not been required to elect a member of the national senate. For that reason it was more free from the national question than it had recently been and that question was not argued in the election that year.

The first candidate for governor ever selected by a State convention in Indiana was James G. Read, the Jacksonian candidate in 1834. The convention met in Indianapolis Monday, Dec. 9, 1833. Only 27 counties sent representatives, Samuel Milroy was made chairman of the convention. It was provided that friends of the administration who chanced to be present from the unrepresented counties should act as delegates. It was also provided that each county should have as many votes as it had representatives in the General Assembly.⁹⁰ The *Vincennes Gazette* gave a vivid characterization of the convention in its account of its proceedings. It said:

The convention, composed of about seventy very respectable looking, in most cases, self-constituted delegates, held their meeting December 9, in the hall of the house of representatives which had adjourned to accommodate them. After a great deal of argument, and confusion, an adjournment was agreed upon in order that the contending interests might each ascertain their respective strength and form such combinations and coalitions as would insure a majority on the first ballot, for some one of the many aspirants for the nomination to the office of governor and lieutenant-governor, by a committee styling itself Democratic-Republican; but in reality it was an assemblage of office seekers, pensioners of the treasury, office holders and men who held their politics in their hand for sale to the highest and best bidder. A small portion of the members were no doubt good honest men animated by a desire to sustain principles.⁹¹

James G. Read was nominated on the second ballot for governor over Jacob B. Lowe of Monroe county. David Cully of Dearborn county was nominated for lieutenant governor over Ross Smiley, Read's former running mate. The convention also appointed three delegates from each congressional

⁸⁹ *Vincennes Gazette*, September 7, 1833.

⁹⁰ *Indiana Journal*, December 11, 1833.

⁹¹ December 16, 1833.

district to attend a national convention should one be held. Read was notified of his nomination by a committee appointed for that purpose and he accepted through the publication of a short circular letter.⁹²

Noble and Wallace as governor and lieutenant governor had been extremely popular officials and they were generally regarded as candidates for reelection long before their terms expired. They were unopposed within their own party and became the candidates by merely announcing themselves as such.

Candidates by this time depended almost entirely upon the stump rather than the press to influence public opinion. Read and Cully and Noble and Wallace visited every part of the state. The *Comet* published at Charleston, Indiana, complained:

The country is much annoyed this year by smallpox, measles, cholera, snakes, tatlers, mad dogs, and long speeches.⁹³

The *Western Constellation* published at Covington, gives the following estimate of the nature of the campaign gathered from the speeches of Read and Noble given in Covington on Wednesday, July 30, 1834:

The canvass appears to be conducted by both of them with an unusual degree of spirit and zeal. Upon the great questions of the day—the bank of the United States, the public land, etc.—they differ entirely, Judge Read being opposed in the most positive terms to the adoption of Mr. Clay's land bill and the recharter of the Bank of the United States.⁹⁴

The popularity of Noble was too much for Read's appeal to partisanism to overcome and Noble was easily elected by a vote of 27,676 to 19,994 for Read with 25 scattering.⁹⁵ It is a significant fact that the total vote 48,795 was more than ten thousand greater than the total vote cast three years previous, which was only 37,549. This was largely due to the increased population. Wallace's vote was almost two thousand greater than that of Noble. He received 29,451 to 14,260 for Cully.

⁹² *Western Sun*, February 8, 1834.

⁹³ *Ibid*, May 31, 1834.

⁹⁴ August 1, 1834.

⁹⁵ *House Journal*, 1834, p. 35.

Beyond the election of Andrew Jackson vs. John Quincy Adams and Henry Clay the people of this state have never been drilled to wear the collar of party. Our state legislature has never been thus constituted and it has elected senators in congress from Clay districts and vice versa. This is in the main as it should be. When the time comes throughout this union that all our state elections must be shaped by predilections for a pair of competitors for the presidency then you may talk about state sovereignty and rights but it will be nothing but talk. The president may then speak of his money, his officers, his army and his navy, for they will be his to all intents and purposes, for forwarding his imperial designs.⁹⁶

The *Western Sun*, offered this as an apology for the election of Noble. A little later it gave perhaps a better estimate of conditions within the state when it said:

Indiana is Democratic to the core—that circumstances wholly unconnected with general politics may have occasionally presented a state of things which would perhaps lead those who are unacquainted with our local affairs to a different conclusion is no doubt true. That our gubernatorial election; that our election for members of congress and to the state legislature may have resulted in a choice sometimes of those who differ from the great body of the Democratic party in their views of men and measures, so far as the general government is concerned is also no doubt true—the gubernatorial question then I repeat, had nothing to do with general politics, or with the succession to the presidency.⁹⁷

The election of the state legislature attracted little attention beyond the personality of the local candidates. There is little or no newspaper comment upon the subject except the mere announcement of candidates and of speaking dates, and in these there is no reference to party. After the election, the *Indiana Democrat* claimed a Jacksonian victory. It said:

Notwithstanding the vain boasting of the opposition that Jacksonism was totally demolished in Indiana at the late elections our readers may rest assured that there is a majority of Jackson men elected to the house of representatives; and in the senate there are more Jackson men than ever before took their seats in the senate of Indiana.⁹⁸

There was no occasion for a political division and we have to depend upon such comments to get the political complexion

⁹⁶ *Western Sun*, September 13, 1834.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, December 18, 1834.

⁹⁸ *Western Sun*, September 20, 1834.

of the legislature. It is certain however that on joint ballot it would have been Anti-Jacksonian.

Party spirit which had run at such high tension for the last ten years was now beginning to lose its force. Jacksonianism had now accomplished its purpose. It had vindicated Jackson. The issues about which it had rallied were either settled or the Jacksonians had strength enough to determine them as they wished. Then with Jackson vindicated, in the absence of a vital issue, and with the existing hard times, a lull in the political storm was to give away to a reaction against the Jacksonians when the flush times were followed by the panic of 1837.

In the election of 1835 there was a decided lull in the party spirit. For congress in the First district,⁹⁹ Ratliff Boone was opposed by J. G. Clendennen; in the Second, John Ewing was opposed by John W. Davis; in the Third, John Carr had as his opponent Charles Dewey while in the Fourth, Amos Lane's seat was contested by George H. Dunn. In the Fifth, Jonathan McCarty had John Finley and James Rariden opposed to him. In the Sixth, there was not enough opposition to George Kinnard to attract a rival candidate, but in the Seventh, Edward A. Hannegan had two opponents in the persons of Thomas J. Evans and James Gregory. The campaign was remarkably free from the national question. Hannegan declared in his announcement of his candidacy that, should the election of president fall upon the house he would stand by the majority in his district,¹⁰⁰ while the *Western Sun* urged the voters, a few days before the election to:

Let every man act as becomes a freeman, as such we all have principles to maintain. Vote for such men as will advocate and maintain them and all will be well.¹⁰¹

These were the nearest approach to the national question, to be found. The election showed the return of all the Jackson men and the supplanting of Mr. Ewing by Mr. Davis. The *Western Sun* in commenting upon the election of Davis said:

⁹⁹ *Ibid*, April 25, 1835.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid*, March 23, 1835.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid*, August 1, 1835.

The district has been redeemed, regenerated and disenthralled by the virtue and intelligence of a free people.¹⁰²

More modern political methods, than heretofore, were perhaps used in this election. Mr. S. L. Halbert of Mt. Pleasant complained in a column and a half article in the *Western Sun*,¹⁰³ about the use of party tickets in the congressional election. He also charged that a contractor on the National road had used influence to cause his men to vote against Mr. Ewing. In the same issue the editor defends the things that Mr. Halbert complains about. He said:

What freeman will deny the right of another to have tickets printed with such name or names on them as he likes best.

In the legislative elections, party division was entirely lacking this year.

The only local election of importance in 1836 was that of the legislature. The body chosen at this election would have to elect a United States Senator to succeed William Hendricks. This, and the fact that it was a presidential year brought the national question into the legislative election.¹⁰⁴ Both sides claimed a majority on joint ballot,¹⁰⁵ but the Anti-Jackson forces had a decided majority. In the senatorial election, Senator Hendricks was opposed by Governor Noah Noble, Ratliff Boone, and Oliver H. Smith. The Jacksonian members of the General Assembly, preferred Smith to Noble and when it was seen that the cause of either Hendricks or Boone was helpless they threw their strength to Smith and he was elected on the ninth ballot by a majority of sixteen votes over Noble.¹⁰⁶

The loss of the state by the administration forces in 1836 left that party defeated and grasping for some issues about which they could rally their forces. They could not hope to elect a governor by an appeal to partisanism for the majority in the state was now clearly against them. Their cause in the

¹⁰² August 15, 1835.

¹⁰³ September 26, 1835.

¹⁰⁴ See *Western Sun*, August 6, 13, and October 8, 1836.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, September 3, 1836.

¹⁰⁶ Smith, O. H., *Early Indiana Trials and Sketches*, 141.

election of 1837, became all the more hopeless when David Wallace, the most popular man in the state announced himself as candidate for governor early in February.¹⁰⁷ Although the people of the state were feeling the effects of the hard times, the sale of public lands had kept money enough in circulation to do the legitimate business, and there still existed a strong tendency towards extravagant expenditure of public funds. Accordingly when Wallace advocated an extensive system of internal improvements at state expense, his popularity was very greatly increased. The Jacksonians, who had only three years previous used all the power of the administration to nominate and elect James G. Read, did not bring out a candidate against Wallace, and John Dumont, a Whig, became his opponent. The appeal for votes was made entirely upon local issues.

Mr. Dumont ran on the branch of internal improvements known as "classification," while Governor Wallace went for construction simultaneously of the whole works.¹⁰⁸

However, when the radical administration forces did not give Dumont support, as partisan opponents of Wallace the *Western Sun* in noticing his speech in Vincennes said:

Mr. Dumont, one of the candidates for governor, visited this place on Thursday last, and amused a portion of our good citizens by a display of stump oratory. I say amused for they were certainly so, and I might be in error had the word instructed been substituted. I cannot say whether he brightened his prospects here by his exhibition or not. The sovereign arbiters seemed to differ upon this point and I myself rather incline to the belief that he has had his labor for his pains.¹⁰⁹

The editor, however, urged all voters to come out on election day.¹¹⁰ The election resulted in an overwhelming victory for Wallace. He received 45,240 votes to 36,197 for Dumont.¹¹¹ David Hillis was elected lieutenant governor over Alexander Burnette by a vote of 48,823 to 22,311.¹¹¹ There

¹⁰⁷ *Western Sun*, February 11, 1837.

¹⁰⁸ Smith, O. H., *Early Indiana Trials and Sketches*, 132.

¹⁰⁹ July 22, 1837.

¹¹⁰ August 5, 1837.

¹¹¹ *House Journal*, 1837, pp. 28-29.

was no mention of national politics in the press by either side during the campaign, and even in his inaugural address Wallace did not mention the national questions of banks, currency, or hard times.¹¹² Party enthusiasm rarely gives way to complete dejection to a greater degree than it did in Indiana from 1834 to 1837.

The dejection that characterized the governorship election, gave way to Jacksonian disaster in the congressional election. For the first time party distinction is made throughout the state and the candidates are known as the Whig, and the administration or Democratic candidates. The Whig candidates were John Pitcher in the First district; John Ewing in the Second; William Graham in the Third; George H. Dunn in the Fourth; James Rariden in the Fifth; William W. Wick in the Sixth; and Albert S. White in the Seventh. These were opposed respectively by Ratliff Boone, John Law, J. S. Simonson, Amos Lane, Jonathan McCarty, James B. Ray, (also Whig) and Nathan Jackson. Two years before seven Jackson men had been elected but now all of them were defeated by substantial majorities except Boone,¹¹³ and he was elected by a majority of less than a hundred. In the Seventh district the Democrats did not carry a single county. The cause for the change was so apparent that the Democrats did not try to offer excuses. They could only abuse. The *Western Sun* in summarizing the election, while it was thought that Boone was defeated, commented that they were "all Federalists."¹¹⁴ The *Terre Haute Courier* took exception to the term and the *Sun* replied:

They are Federalist because they possess the same principles that the Federalists did in 1799 and 1800.¹¹⁵

The national question was left entirely out of the legislative election this year, but since the legislature had never been Jacksonian, there was no possible chance for it to become so this year. The slump from the Democratic ranks

¹¹² *Western Sun*, December 30, 1837.

¹¹³ *Niles' Register*.

¹¹⁴ August 19, 1837.

¹¹⁵ August 26, 1837.

continued into the next year and there was no attempt to revive the party spirit in the local elections of 1839. When the elections were over the *Indiana Journal* very modestly announced that the Whigs would have a majority of thirty votes on joint ballot in the General Assembly.¹¹⁶ This was also the year to elect a United States senator to succeed John Tipton. Mr. Tipton early in the year realized that his reelection was impossible and refused to be a candidate.¹¹⁷ "Jefferson" in an open letter, conceded that it was impossible to elect a Democrat to the senate.¹¹⁸ He urged the Democratic members of the legislature to consider well the course they should take, and for them, "to a man to vote for an honest firm and consistent member of their own party" or to cast blank ballots. The election was the most bitterly contested senatorial election yet experienced in the state. It occupied four days and went to thirty-six ballots. On that ballot Albert S. White, representative in Congress from the Seventh district, was elected. He received 75 votes to 37 for Colonel Thomas Blake, representative from the Vincennes district, 11 for Governor Noble, 16 for Tilghman A. Howard and three scattering.¹¹⁹ Mr. White was not nearly so well known as the other candidates.

The disaster of 1837 thoroughly awakened the Democrats to the real condition within the state, while the panic of 1837 and the unpopularity of Van Buren were alienating hundreds from the cause, while the popularizing of Governor Wallace's scheme of internal improvements was attaching like numbers to their opponents. In 1838 they began to prepare for the congressional campaign of 1839. The *Western Sun* again took the lead. On November 3, 1838, it admonished the party that:

The time has now emphatically arrived when the Democratic party in Indiana should assume its correct position. Too long have we permitted the enemy to dictate to us, our course of action. We should take the necessary steps to make our principles successful. At the last congressional election of this state, in almost every district, our party was unprepared. They had suffered the matter to run too long and when

¹¹⁶ *Western Sun*, August 18, 1838.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, May 12, 1838.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, September 22, 1838.

¹¹⁹ *Niles' Register*, December 22, 1838.

the trial came they were unprepared and of course defeated except in the district of the invincible Boone. From past blunders we should learn and correct what was wrong. Under every view of the case I am convinced that the correct policy is to bring our candidates immediately on the track fearlessly and openly. I cannot see that anything is to be gained by delay.

The admonition of the editor met with a ready response in his own district. The previous election had been so disastrous that there appeared to be no self-offered candidate. To meet the situation the Terre Haute *Enquirer* proposed a district convention to be held at Bloomfield in Green county.¹²⁰ The *Western Sun* seized the idea and issued a call for such a convention to be held on Monday, March 18, 1839. It requested the Democrats in each county in the district to elect delegates to the convention, and declared that, harmony and union are now necessary; principles and not men should be our motto.¹²¹ This sounded strongly like the cry of the administration forces at the time of Adams. At the same time that the *Sun* sent out its call for March 18, other calls were sent out for March 22 and the editor of the *Sun* agreed to that date.¹²² The Knox county Democrats selected their delegates on February 16, and pledged themselves to support whatever candidate of the Democratic party said District convention should nominate. There was an unanimous feeling in this meeting that the convention was necessary.¹²³ The Vigo county convention to nominate delegates endorsed the name of John Davis for congress, attached the name Federalist, condemned the Federal Whig congressman, denounced the attacks upon the administration and expressed confidence in the people. They also provided for the appointment of county committees and the distribution of the Democratic paper.¹²⁴ The district convention at Bloomfield was made up of representatives from every county within the district. It nominated John W. Davis for congress. Its resolutions expressed confidence in the administration; condemned the Federal Whigs; hoped for a

¹²⁰ *Western Sun*, January 26, 1839.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*

¹²² February 2, 1839.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, February 23, 1839.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, March 2, 1839.

speedy completion of the Cumberland road; and provided for Vigilance committees in the various counties.¹²⁵ This was the first congressional convention within the state and the name of its nominee was placed at the head of a party ticket in the newspapers of the district.¹²⁶ This is the first time that the papers had published any party ticket except presidential candidates and presidential electors. The Whigs in the same district also chose the convention plan to nominate their candidate.¹²⁷ John Ewing became their candidate. In the First district, the Democrats chose Robert Dale Owen as their candidate to the exclusion of Ratliff Boone. The cause lies in the growing unpopularity of Boone. He had been;

for the last ten years pursued by the blood hounds of the Federal press throughout the country with a spirit of malignity which has no parallel in the history of modern times.¹²⁸

Owen's opponent was George H. Proffitt. In the Third district John Carr, Democrat, was opposed by William Graham. In the Fourth Thomas H. Smith, Democrat, was opposed by George H. Dunn. In the Fifth district James Rariden, Whig, was opposed by McCarty and Thompson both Democrats, while in the Sixth district, W. W. Wick opposed William Herrod. In the Seventh, T. A. Howard, Democrat, was opposed by Thomas J. Evans. The campaign was remarkably free from personal abuse. The case of Owen in the First district was the exception. The communistic experiment at New Harmony by the Owens was not well understood throughout the state and Mr. Owens was charged with infidelity, licentiousness and other crimes against morality and religion.¹²⁹ The charges were proven false but not until too late in the campaign to save the election, and Proffitt was elected by 779 votes. The other men elected were, Davis, Carr, Smith, Rari-

¹²⁵ *Ibid*, March 30, 1839.

¹²⁶ *Ibid*, April 13, 1839.

¹²⁷ *Ibid*, May 4, 1839.

¹²⁸ *Western Sun*, June 30, 1838. Boone immediately left the state and went to Missouri, where he entered politics as an opponent of Benton and soon became the leader of the opposition. On November 20, 1844, he waited at the wharf all day to get returns from the election. He said that he would be ready to die if Polk were elected. When the boat brought news of Polk's election he went home and died in a few hours. See Woolen's *Biographical and Historical Sketches of Indiana*, 4.

¹²⁹ Woolen, *Biographical and Historical Sketches*, 291.

den, Wick and Howard.¹³⁰ The election of Rariden was due to the fact that the Democratic vote was split between McCarty and Thompson. The *Western Sun* immediately announced that five Democrats and two Federalists had been elected to congress.¹³¹ It gave the results of the election of members of the state legislature as ten Democrats and seven Federalists to the senate and 61 Democrats and 39 Federalists to the house of representatives. It also claimed for the Democrats a decided majority on joint ballot. The failure of Governor Wallace's scheme for internal improvements perhaps caused the change in the state legislature.

The political feeling in 1840 was even more intense than it was in 1828. The contest in 1828 had centered about men, and principles entered into the contest only as incidents or political capital. That of 1840 differed from it in that it was a great party struggle. Party success was the first thing aimed at and principles were largely secondary to party and men were yet secondary to principles. While men were brought forward and contests centered about the personality of men it was done not as a reward to men for service nor as a recognition of fitness for office but rather that party success might be attained through the popularity of candidates.

Both parties were active long before the time for election. The election for governor and for president for the second time both came in the same year, 1840. Party lines were sharply drawn on state issues and both sides felt that the party which elected the governor in August would carry the state for president in November. The Democrats had recovered from their dejection and were more determined than they had ever been before. Their spirit was alarming to the Whigs. O. H. Smith wrote to Clay on September 28, 1839, that:

The party opposed to us seemed to be united and moved by one common impulse while their watchword is Democracy, understood by few but powerful with the masses; and however little the party is entitled to its name it has it, and we have to meet the false issue made for us with the additional and equally false cry of Federalism ringing in our ears.¹³²

¹³⁰ *Niles' Register*, September 21, 1839.

¹³¹ August 31, 1829.

¹³² Smith, O. H., *Early Indiana Trials and Sketches*, 252.

By the first of October, they were making preparation for a state convention to be held in Indianapolis on January 8, the anniversary of the Battle of New Orleans.¹³³ Conventions were held in almost every county in the state, and when the convention met in Indianapolis more than six hundred delegates were present. Samuel Milroy was made chairman and was escorted to the chair by two Revolutionary soldiers, Tilghman A. Howard was chosen as a candidate for governor, The nominations were unanimous. A set of resolutions was adopted praising Jackson and condemning extravagant speculation and the credit system.¹³⁴ "Union, concession, harmony, everything for the cause, nothing for men" because the Democratic motto and under it the loyal party men displayed all the determination they had shown while their party was on its rise.

The Whigs were in an awkward situation to begin the campaign. David Wallace, the Whig candidate had been elected governor in 1837 upon the question of internal improvements. He attempted to complete the entire system of roads, canals, railroads, etc., at one time. The state was fortunate in securing loans but was defrauded out of millions by speculators. This, added to the general depression in the money market, caused the system to break down. The state was left heavily in debt with an immense amount of unfinished improvements which yielded no tolls and offered no facilities to farmers for travel and added no value to real estate.¹³⁵ The failure of Wallace's scheme made it almost impossible for him to be elected in 1840 and his party determined to pass him by. The week following the Democratic convention the Whigs met in convention on January 16, 1840. The delegates began to pour into Indianapolis four or five days prior to the date of the convention. They came in wagons richly decorated, and sometimes in processions headed by bands, and bearing flashy banners. On the evening of January 15, the assembly met with Samuel Judah of Knox county, the former Jacksonian as chairman, and formed a temporary organiza-

¹³³ *Western Sun*, October 4, 5, 1839.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, January 25, 1840.

¹³⁵ See Logan Esarey, *Internal Improvements in Early Indiana*, ch. 3, 78-116.

tion. The next day the delegates formed in a monstrous procession in front of the capital and paraded the principal streets of the city. The procession was headed by a large banner bearing the likeness of General Harrison. This was followed by bands with other banners in highly decorated wagons. Near the rear was a banner bearing the inscription, "We are for a government for the people and not for a government of office holders." And on the reverse side it said: "General Harrison has fought more battles than any other general and never sustained a defeat." The rear was brought up by a number of Indianapolis boys each bearing a flag and wearing a blue sash.

After parading the streets the procession returned to the State House, but finding it too small to hold the crowd organized in the open air although it was midwinter. Samuel Judah, the author of the first address of the Jacksonians to the people (1824) was made permanent chairman. A number of resolutions were adopted and Samuel Bigger and Samuel Hall were nominated for governor and lieutenant governor respectively.¹³⁶ Bigger was judge of the Sixth judicial circuit. He was a graduate of Ohio university and a man of strict political and moral integrity. He was over six feet tall, well proportioned, fine faced, blue eyes, prominent forehead, a very commanding appearance, a fair stump speaker, plain and candid in his statements, leaving a lasting impression upon his audience always closing with an eulogy on the life and character of General Harrison.¹³⁷ The president of the convention appointed a committee of five senators and five representatives to manage the campaign. Upon them fell the burden of managing the entire campaign both state and national.

The state campaign was merged in the National. Prior to the August election the Democrats met the Whig cry of Harrison and Reform with the cry of Howard and reform, redeem the state.¹³⁸ However, at the time of his nomination Howard

¹³⁶ For proceedings of the convention see the *Logansport Telegraph*, February 8, 1840; also *Indiana Journal*, January 18, 1840.

¹³⁷ Smith, O. H., *Early Indiana Trials and Sketches*, 349.

¹³⁸ *Western Sun*, July 11, 1840.

was a representative in congress and refused to resign until the close of the session for which he was severely attacked by the Whig papers. Later he did resign to take part in the campaign and the Whigs attacked him for drawing \$8.00 per day for electioneering.¹³⁹ The charge was false, however. Bigger was everywhere called the Federalist candidate by his opponents, while the Whigs complained of their opponent as belonging to the "Standing army of Van Buren."¹⁴⁰ Scores of able speakers visited every part of the state during the summer.¹⁴¹ An attempt was made to draw Howard out on the question of Internal Improvements. He replied that he considered the system attempted as too expensive and favored a more limited work according to capital. Since the campaign was waged largely upon the national issues, the memory of the panic of 1837 and the local popularity of Harrison were too much even for the popularity and noble character of Howard. The enthusiasm was almost entirely upon the side of the Whigs and the Democrats were driven to resort to admonition and ridicule. The celebration of the battle of Tippecanoe was termed a show.¹⁴² Bigger said nothing that was very smart or very exceptional in his speech in Vincennes.¹⁴³ The Democrats were admonished that the "Federal party" intended getting up a free dinner and distributing as much liquor as possible in each township (Knox county) and that they must taste not and touch not the unclean thing, let their opponents act as they might.¹⁴⁴ The Democrats were warned that the Whigs appealed to their passions instead of a deliberate examination of the great questions upon the right decision of which depended the prosperity of their government. They wished to secure their suffrages as they would the huzzas of a child, by exhibitions, by parades, by music, by processions, by flags.¹⁴⁵ When the election was over the Whigs were accused of buying up votes with liquor.¹⁴⁶ In the August elec-

¹³⁹ *Western Sun*, July 11, 1840.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid*, June 27, 1840.

¹⁴¹ Smith, O. H., *Early Indiana Trials and Sketches*, 350.

¹⁴² *Western Sun*, June 6, 1840.

¹⁴³ *Ibid*, May 2, 1840.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid*, July 25, 1840.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid*, August 1, 1840.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid*, August 8, 1840.

tion Bigger received 62,678 votes and Howard 54,083.¹⁴⁷ National politics had for the first time determined a state election, General Howard had received three thousand more votes than his party was destined to poll in the November elections but he could not break the spell of the Whig-Harrison-Log-Cabin and Hard-cider campaign.

There was an overwhelming land-slide in the legislative election. There were 14 Whig and 2 Democratic senators and 77 Whig and 23 Democratic representatives elected from the same districts that had sent nine Democrats and 7 Whigs senators and 62 Democrats and 38 Whigs representatives at the last election.¹⁴⁸ Upon the resignation of Howard as Representative Edward A. Hannegan became the Democratic candidate to fill the vacancy, while Henry S. Lane was the Whig candidate. The campaign was entirely on national issues and in addition Hannegan had a wider acquaintance and a greater popularity than Lane. Lane however, was easily elected by a vote of 10,883 to 9,427 while the year before Howard, Democrat, had carried the same district by a majority of 1,754. The Whigs had made a gain of 3,210 votes.¹⁴⁹

Indiana had now become as thoroughly partisan in state politics as she was in national. Local officials, except legislators, were not for a few years elected upon a party ticket, but party spirit was so strong that it was the rule for a Whig to vote for a Whig and a Democrat to vote for a Democrat although neither party had a distinct ticket. From this time forward, national issues determined state elections and independent voting almost ceased to exist.

¹⁴⁷ *House Journal*, 1840, p. 30.

¹⁴⁸ *Niles' Register*, August 22, 1840.

¹⁴⁹ *Niles' Register*, August 22, 1840.