

**THE GUBERNATORIAL CAMPAIGNS OF LEWIS S.
POPE (1927 - 1934)**

KENNETH GENTRY LANCASTER

THE GUBERNATORIAL CAMPAIGNS
OF LEWIS S. POPE (1927-1934)

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Master of Arts

by
Kenneth Gentry Lancaster

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ABSTRACT

Lewis S. Pope made five attempts to win the governorship of Tennessee between 1927 and 1934. These attempts included three Democratic primaries and two general elections. Winning the Democratic nomination during this period assured a candidate of victory in the general election.

Pope was a well-educated lawyer and had extensive experience in Tennessee government before beginning his campaigns. He had expected Austin Peay's support in 1928, but the governor died the year before, and Henry Horton became the incumbent. Horton was able to gain much of the Peay vote in the primary and also had the support of the Luke Lea machine. When Hill McAlister of Nashville entered the 1928 campaign, Pope became the third man in a two-man race. Horton easily won the nomination and the general election.

Pope didn't seek the governorship in 1930, but after the re-election of Horton in that year he became involved in the public protest against the corruption of the Horton Administration that began to be revealed after the general election.

In 1932, Pope entered the Democratic primary and faced Hill McAlister and Malcolm Patterson. After the primary, and McAlister's narrow victory, Pope contested the voting results. The contest concentrated on voting frauds in Shelby County and Memphis. When Pope's contest failed, he ran as an Independent, supported by the "Straight Democrats" of the state. McAlister was again victorious as a result of the votes in Memphis and Shelby County.

Pope at first considered withdrawing from politics after 1932 in favor of seeking an appointment with the newly elected Roosevelt Administration. But circumstances again drove him to seek the governorship in 1934. In the Democratic Primary, Pope faced the incumbent, Hill McAlister. Governor McAlister easily won the nomination but Pope again claimed that frauds in voting had been carried out by the Memphis-Shelby County machine of E.H. Crump. Instead of contesting the primary results, Pope and the "Straight Democrats" who supported him joined with the Republican Party in a Fusion movement. This attempt also failed.

As a candidate, Lewis S. Pope was able to keep alive a spirit of opposition within the Democratic Party. He publicly condemned the Luke Lea organization that dominated the governorship after the death of Austin Peay. When the Lea machine was displaced by that of E.H. Crump of Memphis, Pope again played the role of a leader of the opposition faction within the Democratic Party. The campaigns of Lewis S. Pope were representative of the large amount of discontent within the Party against machine-rule politics and the growing influence of urban areas in determining the outcome of primary elections.

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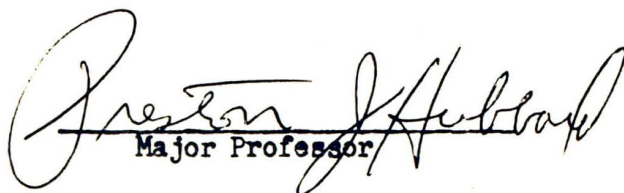
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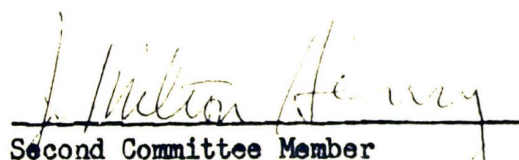
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Kenneth Gentry Lancaster
June 1975

To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a Thesis written by Kenneth Gentry Lancaster entitled "The Gubernatorial Campaigns of Lewis S. Pope (1927-1934)." I recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts, with a major in History.


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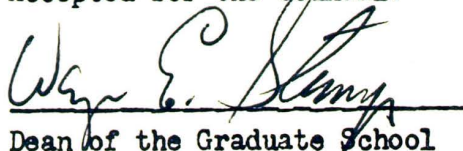

Dean of the Graduate School

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CHAPTER I

BIOGRAPHICAL AND POLITICAL BACKGROUND (1878-1927)

Lewis Shepherd Pope was born August 16, 1878, in Bledsoe County, Tennessee, near the small town of Pikeville. Lewis was the son of William Rankin Pope, a leading farmer and businessman in Bledsoe County, and Mattie E. Pope. Mattie's maiden name was McReynolds. This would make Lewis a first cousin of the future Tennessee Congressman, Sam McReynolds. William R. Pope's father was Thomas Alexander Pope, an important political leader in the Sequatchie Valley area and a member of the State Senate in the Thirty-seventh General Assembly of Tennessee during the years 1871-1873.¹

Lewis S. Pope was named after Lewis Shepherd, the husband of William R. Pope's sister, Lila. Lewis Shepherd was an attorney, a Civil-War veteran of the Confederate Army, and a member of the Tennessee General Assembly in 1877 and again in 1890. Shepherd was a member of the Democratic Party until 1877 but deserted it that year and joined the Republicans. Lewis S. Pope stated at one time that he tried to pattern his life and career after that of Lewis Shepherd. The Shepherd and Pope

¹ Biographical Directory: Tennessee General Assembly 1796-1969, No. 26 (Nashville: Tennessee State Library and Archives, 1969), pp. 9-10, hereafter cited as Biographical Directory.

families remained close in both marriage and politics throughout much of Lewis S. Pope's career.²

A legal career became an early goal in Lewis S. Pope's life. Pope once stated that he could not remember a time he didn't want to be a lawyer. Much of Pope's early education was in the public school system of Bledsoe County. His pre-law and college preparatory education began at People's College in Pikeville, a school founded by businessmen in the Pikeville area. After some work at People's College, he went to Emory and Henry College, Emory, Virginia, in 1897. An obituary on Mr. Pope, published by the Nashville Tennessean in 1972, stated that he graduated from Emory and Henry, but the Alumni Directory of the school lists him as a non-graduate.³

The excellent program of speech and oratory at Emory and Henry probably helped Pope to master those skills and apply them in his legal and political career. Pope's curriculum at Emory and Henry would have included a broad program of languages, science, philosophy, social sciences and the required ". . . regular exercise in Declamation . . ." and the "original orations in the chapel before the faculty and students."⁴

²Biographical Directory, No. 29, p. 69; Who's Who in Tennessee: A Biographical Reference Book of Notable Tennesseans of Today (Memphis: Paul and Douglas Co., 1911), p. 68; Louise Davis, "How Lew Pope was done in Twice," Nashville Tennessean Magazine, August 2, 1964, p. 7.

³Tennessean Magazine, p. 7; Biographical Directory, No. 26, pp. 9-10; Nashville Tennessean, February 28, 1971, Section B, p. 3; May 15, 1972, pp. 1, 17; "Alumni Directory," Emory and Henry Bulletin, Vol. 28 (July 1936), No. 3.

⁴Emory and Henry College Catalogue (1897-1898), pp. 14-17. Copies of pages quoted were provided by the Reference Assistant, Frederick T. Kelly Library, Emory and Henry College.

Pope left Emory and Henry in 1898 and enrolled in the Vanderbilt School of Law in Nashville, Tennessee. The two-year law program followed by Pope did not use the case-study method that would be introduced in 1903. Pope attended Vanderbilt when Thomas H. Malone, best known for his work in Equity Jurisprudence, was Dean of the School of Law. None of the teachers in the School of Law were full-time instructors but they were able men. The faculty included J.M. Dickinson, future Secretary of War under President Taft; Horace Lurton, eventually a member of the U.S. Supreme Court; Charles Burch, the chief attorney for the Illinois Central Railroad and William B. Reese, a respected Tennessee judge.⁵

Pope graduated from Vanderbilt in 1900 and was admitted to the Tennessee Bar in that same year. He then returned to Pikeville and entered private practice. It is at this point that he began to reveal his great business ability. Using one of his first legal fees, amounting to six-hundred thirty five dollars, Pope invested in a lumber business that would eventually make him a wealthy man. In the meantime, he married Mariah Blanch Crow on February 22, 1906. They would eventually have four daughters: Elizabeth, Helen, Ann and Marion.⁶

The popularity and tradition of leadership held by the Pope and Shepherd families probably helped to set the course of Lewis S. Pope's life after 1900. Despite his early success in private practice and business, the call of public service and politics soon directed him

⁵The Vanderbilt Alumnus, Vol. 8, No. 2 (November 1922), pp. 44-46 and Vol. 17, No. 7 (May 1932), p. 198; Edward Sims, History of Vanderbilt University (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 1946), pp. 98, 213-215.

⁶Biographical Directory, No. 26, pp. 9-10; Tennessean Magazine, p. 7.

into a political career that would extend over five decades. He was elected Mayor of Pikeville in 1911⁷ but his real career began when he entered state-wide politics the next year.

Lewis S. Pope was elected in 1912 to the State Senate of the Fifty-eighth Tennessee General Assembly. Pope, a Democrat, represented the Ninth District, including Bledsoe, Cumberland, Meigs, Rhea, Sequatchie, Van Buren, and White Counties. This was the general area, with some changes, which Pope's grandfather, Thomas Alexander Pope, had represented in the Thirty-seventh General Assembly. The Ninth Senatorial District had for years narrowly elected Democrats to serve in the General Assembly; however, in 1910, during the bitter state-wide fight over the election of State Supreme Court judges, a Republican had been elected. Lewis S. Pope faced the Republican incumbent, Walter White, in the 1912 election and narrowly defeated him by a vote of 4,190 to 3,268.⁸

The Fifty-eighth General Assembly, beginning in 1913, was one of the most violent legislative sessions in Tennessee political history. The issue of prohibition and enforcement of the state's 1909 prohibition laws dominated Tennessee politics in 1913. As a result of the prohibition issue the Tennessee Democratic Party underwent one of its

⁷Citizen-Appeal (Nashville), September 9, 1929, p. 1; Memphis Press-Scimitar, July 1, 1932, p. 4. These two newspapers made note of the fact that Pope had served as Mayor of Pikeville.

⁸Biographical Directory, No. 26, pp. 9-10, 51; Tennessee Election Manual, 1900-1902, p. 48; Tennessee Pocket Manual and Official Vote, 1902-1904, p. 41; Ibid., 1908, p. 62; Ibid., 1910, p. 62; Tennessee Directory and Official Vote, 1912, p. 20 (Nashville: Office of Secretary of State).

periodic fits of violent division and factionalism. One faction of Democrats joined with prohibition-minded Republicans, forming the Fusion Movement. The Fusionists were able to elect Ben W. Hooper, a Republican, to the governor's chair in 1910. Hooper was the first Republican-elected governor since 1880 and one of only two elected in the first half of the twentieth century.⁹

The chief issue in the 1913 session of the General Assembly became the proposed laws, demanded by Hooper and the Fusionists, for the strict enforcement of Tennessee's 1909 prohibition laws. The faction called Regular Democrats opposed the Fusionist laws. The important Shelby County delegation shifted between the Fusionists and the Regular Democrats according to its own political needs. Although it is difficult to determine what faction most of the members belonged to, the journal of both the Senate and the House attempted to label the members according to their political alliances. Concentrating on the Senate, of which Pope was a member, the journal states that there were six Republicans, five Independent Democrats, or Fusionists, six Regular Democrats and sixteen members who preferred to be called Democrats without a qualifying title attached. Pope was included in this last group.¹⁰

⁹Paul E. Isaac, Prohibition and Politics: Turbulent Decades in Tennessee 1885-1920 (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1965), pp. 182-231, hereafter cited as Isaac, Prohibition and Politics.

¹⁰Ibid., Senate Journal of the Fifty-eighth General Assembly of the State of Tennessee (Nashville: McQuiddy Printing Co., 1913), pp. 1387-1397, hereafter cited as Senate Journal: Fifty-eighth General Assembly.

Lewis S. Pope quickly emerged a mild reformer, but definitely not a member of the Fusionist faction. In the opening days of the 1913 session, Pope voted with the Regular Democrats on most of the various Senate offices. One important relationship that was formed in the Fifty-eighth General Assembly was that between Pope and Hill McAlister, the senator from the Sixteenth District and a staunch Regular Democrat. This would be the beginning of a friendly rivalry that would finally culminate in their separate campaigns for the governorship in the years 1928-1934.¹¹

In the opening session Pope was assigned to the Committee on Rules, the Committee on Banks, the Committee on Redistricting, the Committee on Corporations, the Committee on Liquor Traffic and the Committee on Education. He helped to introduce seven bills that would bring about revisions in the state tax laws. Other reform bills Pope helped to introduce included a bill to make it illegal for a member of the General Assembly to leave a session for the purpose of breaking a quorum; a bill to expand the powers of the Railroad Commission; a bill prohibiting the shipment of liquor from one county to another; a bill for a more efficient means of hiring school teachers and a bill limiting the setting of maximum rates of interest on certain types of loans.¹²

¹¹Senate Journal: Fifty-eighth General Assembly, p. 1392; Nashville Tennessean and Nashville American, January 7, 1913, p. 1; June 22, p. 1; June 27, p. 6. The relationship of Pope and McAlister will be discussed fully later in this paper.

¹²Senate Journal: Fifty-eighth General Assembly, pp. 14, 83, 147, 164, 207, 208, 228, 484, 704, 834; Nashville Tennessean and Nashville American, January 10, 1913, p. 1; April 2, 1913, p. 6.

The major issue faced by the Fifty-eighth General Assembly was the enactment of the law-enforcement bills demanded by Hooper and the Fusionists. These bills, aimed at a stricter enforcement of Tennessee's weak temperance laws, caused the Shelby County delegation to abandon its earlier alliance with the Fusionists in organizing the General Assembly. Because of their inability to get the law-enforcement bills passed, the Fusionists began to use the tactic of walking out of the legislature and breaking the quorum. This prevented the passage of any bills, including an important refunding bill needed for the state debt. Governor Hooper attempted to compromise by having a session for the specific purpose of passing the refunding bill. After some initial opposition the special session was held and the refunding bill passed. But the Fusionists immediately broke the quorum again when the Regular Democrats refused to consider the law-enforcement bills.¹³

Although it is difficult to determine, Lewis S. Pope may have been a leader in helping to bring about the special session on the refunding bill. When the bill was passed, Pope immediately asked that news of the passage be telegraphed to the funding board in New York.¹⁴

After the passage of the refunding bill, Pope began to emerge clearly as a Regular Democrat who supported compromise with the Fusionists. Pope supported an attempt to form a quorum for the passage of bills that would be acceptable to all factions in the General

¹³ Nashville Tennessean and Nashville American, March 18, 1913, p. 1; March 19, p. 1; March 20, pp. 1, 3; March 22, p. 6; March 29, 1913, p. 6; May 6, 1913, p. 1; June 13, p. 1; June 14, p. 1; June 18, p. 1; Isaac, Prohibition and Politics, pp. 182-231.

¹⁴ Nashville Tennessean and Nashville American, June 22, 1913, p. 7.

Assembly. Within the Regular Democrats there was a division that emerged during the 1913 session that was described as a Country Regular versus City Regular factionalism. The City Regulars, including Hill McAlister of Nashville, opposed compromise with the Fusionists and wanted to keep the legislature in session until their quorum-breaking tactics were defeated. The Country Regulars, including Lewis S. Pope, wanted either to compromise with the Fusionists and pass specific laws or adjourn the General Assembly indefinitely. Attempts at compromise failed and the Fifty-eighth General Assembly adjourned at the end of its regular session on August 23, 1913.¹⁵

Governor Hooper was determined to bring about the passage of the law-enforcement bills. After the adjournment of the regular session of the Fifty-eighth General Assembly, Hooper called for a special Extraordinary Session for the consideration of specific bills. Early in this special session, Pope was again recognized as one of the leaders of the faction in the Regular Democrats willing to support the Fusionist law-enforcement bills. But Pope also took part in a movement to weaken the power of the Fusionists in the General Assembly and the Executive Branch. The Regulars now narrowly controlled the vote in the Senate and this enabled them to elect Pope to the position of Speaker Pro Tem. The Regulars then weakened the powers of the Fusionist Speaker of the Senate. Pope introduced an amendment to an appropriations bill that

¹⁵ Nashville Tennessean and Nashville American, June 27, 1913, pp. 1, 5; August 21, pp. 1, 2.

would have reduced the pay of many of the state officials of the Fusionist faction.¹⁶

On September 19, 1913, Pope re-introduced a Nuisance bill that would have provided for the strict enforcement of Tennessee's prohibition laws. He had introduced a similar bill on the last night of the General Assembly's regular session. Pope also aided in the introduction and passage of two anti-shipment bills that forbade the shipment of liquor into and within the State of Tennessee.¹⁷

Another bill Pope helped to introduce provided for the removal from office of any county or city official for failure to enforce laws enacted by the General Assembly. In a confusing series of events, this bill passed two readings and then, at the request of Pope, was tabled. Clearly, this bill, eventually passed in 1915, was aimed at city machine bosses like E.H. Crump of Memphis who had refused to enforce prohibition. Ben Hooper later stated that Pope's tabling motion and its subsequent passage was a "straight Crump-Regular line-up against the solid Fusion vote."¹⁸ But the passage of the removal bill in 1913 may have led to a walkout by the City Regulars, and Pope probably

¹⁶ Isaac, Prohibition and Politics, p. 219; Nashville Tennessean and Nashville American, September 8, 1913, p. 3; September 10, p. 1; September 13, p. 1; Senate Journal: Fifty-eighth General Assembly, p. 1148.

¹⁷ Nashville Tennessean and Nashville American, September 8, 1913, p. 2; September 20, p. 1; Senate Journal: Fifty-eighth General Assembly, pp. 1281-1283, 1367-1379.

¹⁸ Ben W. Hooper, The Unwanted Boy: The Autobiography of Governor B.W. Hooper (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1963), p. 153n.

recognized this. Hooper ignored the role Pope had played in helping to introduce the other law-enforcement bills.

The removal bill Pope helped to introduce would eventually be re-introduced and passed. Its passage led to the eventual ouster, in 1915, of E.H. Crump as Mayor of Memphis. Crump's chief biographer points out this ouster as one of the most bitter experiences that the Memphis boss underwent in his career. Crump became almost psychopathic in his bitter hatred of anyone connected with his 1915 ouster.¹⁹ This may have been the basis for Crump's extreme dislike of Pope that emerged publicly in the gubernatorial campaigns of 1932 and 1934. These events will be discussed in the main body of this paper.

The Fifty-eighth General Assembly was a violent and confusing session. Despite the great confusion, Lewis S. Pope had become well-known in Tennessee politics. Speaking at a public rally in support of the law-enforcement bills, Pope impressed the listeners with his great speaking ability, about which a Nashville newspaper attested: "Senator Pope, who has made a record for oratory second to none in the legislature, more than lived up to expectations."²⁰

This short review of Lewis Pope's early career provides a good background for the political events of the years 1927-1934. Clearly, Pope began to form friendships and political connections in 1913 that

¹⁹William D. Miller, Mr. Crump of Memphis (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1964), pp. 115-116, hereafter cited as Miller, Crump.

²⁰Nashville Tennessean and Nashville American, October 14, 1913, p. 9.

would influence his later ambition to become Governor of Tennessee. Although Pope was aligned with the Regular Democrats on many issues, he showed the independence of mind that dominated his campaigns for the governorship. He was not a staunch, hard-line prohibitionist, but he was willing to compromise with the Fusionists on this issue. Essentially a conservative man, as shown by his loyalty to the Regular Democrats, Pope was also instrumental in the passage of many reform bills in the Fifty-eighth General Assembly. The "season of moderate reform sponsored by independent Democratic and progressive Republicans in the legislature"²¹ of 1913 that one writer describes wouldn't have been possible without the aid of Country Regulars like Lewis S. Pope.

Pope did not seek re-election to the State Senate and finished his one term in 1915. But in 1913 Pope's career had taken another turn when he was appointed by the Wilson Administration to the post of Assistant U.S. Attorney for East Tennessee. He served in this position until 1917. Probably, his legal reputation, the strong political ties that he had in East Tennessee and his hardworking loyalty to the State Democratic Party, helped Pope to gain this appointment. This last reason may have been the most important. In 1914 the State Democratic Party underwent a harmony movement that aided in the election of Democrat Tom Rye to the governorship, over the incumbent, Ben Hooper. The victory of the Democrats in 1914 was the result of the creation of a Dry, or Temperance platform as the basis for the gubernatorial campaign. The

²¹George B. Tindall, The Emergence of the New South, 1913-1945 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1967), p. 19.

1912 platform, largely written by City Regulars such as Hill McAlister, had been anti-temperance. Pope was later given credit for helping to write the 1914 Dry Platform, and made his own personal claim for writing it during the 1928 gubernatorial campaign. Probably, Pope's work in 1913 in trying to bring about the harmony movement aided in his appointment as Assistant U.S. Attorney. Certainly, his loyalty in 1914 would have placed him in a favorable position with the Democratic Party, both on the state and national levels.²²

When Pope served as Assistant U.S. Attorney, he came under the influence of another judge who would later become a member of the U.S. Supreme Court. Pope served in the East Tennessee Court of Judge Ed Sanford. He later stated that Sanford influenced much of his thinking about law.²³

In April 1917, Pope's career underwent a change that was probably the most important factor in determining his future in Tennessee politics. He was called to Nashville by Governor Tom Rye to serve on the State Board of Control. By now, Pope was considered "one of the best-known men in public life in Tennessee,"²⁴ and this popularity, in addition to his earlier party work, helped him to get this appointment. Pope was one of many applicants for the position, and stated later that he had not expected the appointment.²⁵

²²Biographical Directory, No. 26, pp. 9-10; Isaac, Prohibition and Politics, p. 231; Nashville Tennessean, March 25, 1928, p. 1 and "Society Section," pp. 6 and 13; Citizen-Appeal, September 9, 1929, p. 1.

²³Tennessean Magazine, p. 6.

²⁴Nashville Tennessean, April 8, 1917, p. 7.

²⁵Tennessean Magazine, p. 6.

The Board of Control, later called the Board of Penal and Charitable Institutions, had two other members and was primarily responsible for the state's prison system. Like the other jobs he had undertaken, Pope's work with the Board was dedicated and exemplary. Soon after the Board was abolished by Governor A.H. Roberts, Pope was appointed to the new position of General Manager of Institutions. He was re-appointed to the same position when Alf Taylor became Governor in 1920. Pope helped to introduce some reforms in the state's prison system during this period.²⁶

When Austin Peay became Governor in 1923, the state institutions were included in the massive re-organization of Tennessee state government that took place. Despite Peay's earlier criticisms of the old Board of Control,²⁷ Lewis S. Pope was appointed to the position of Commissioner of Institutions. He served as Commissioner of Institutions until the death of Austin Peay in October 1927. When Pope finally left the post, he had served under four different administrations, one of them Republican, for a total of ten years.

The Commissioner of Institutions was responsible for one of the largest administrative staffs in state government. Under Austin Peay, Pope attempted to place greater emphasis on reform and rehabilitation in the prison system. Although he never actively fought for its abolishment, Pope did state publicly his doubts about the use of capital

²⁶ Tennessean Magazine, p. 6; Biographical Directory, No. 26, pp. 9-10; Nashville Tennessean, February 28, 1971, Section B, pp. 1, 3.

²⁷ Nashville Tennessean, August 1, 1918, p. 6.

punishment. He noted the great divergence of opinion over the issue and pointed out that many more people were executed in East Tennessee than any other section of the state. Because of this, he believed that capital punishment could not be fairly applied.²⁸

Pope campaigned for Austin Peay in the 1922 general election. After Peay's victory, he offered his full support to the new governor and promised to help him carry out his pledged reforms. He pointed out to Peay the fact that the state's institutions had been under one administrative head for three years and that this proved the wisdom of the re-organization plan. Peay welcomed Pope's advice and asked him for suggestions on the organization of his new administration.²⁹

Pope's relationship with Austin Peay is impossible to determine from public sources like newspapers or in the papers of Austin Peay. But the private papers of Pope provide adequate evidence that there was a close relationship between them. Besides aiding Peay in his political campaigns, Pope helped the governor in many legislative matters. Political leaders of the Peay Administration even met in Pope's office to plan campaign strategy. Tom Henderson, Peay's 1926 campaign manager, asked Pope to help plan the primary campaign of that year. Henderson hoped that all the state commissioners would be able to give as much

²⁸ Tennessean Magazine, p. 6; Clarksville Leaf-Chronicle, May 26, 1927, p. 1.

²⁹ The Daily Diary of Lewis S. Pope as Commissioner of Institutions, pp. 334-35, 338-39, hereafter cited as Pope Diary; "Lewis S. Pope to Austin Peay," November 9, 1922 and "Austin Peay to Lewis S. Pope," November 24, 1922, The Private Papers of Lewis S. Pope, hereafter cited as Pope Papers.

help as Pope.³⁰ According to one writer, Pope became "prominent in the Peay ranks" during the 1920's.³¹

Lewis S. Pope's emergence as a serious candidate for the governorship began with his relationship with the Peay Administration. It would be Pope's contention in the 1928 campaign, and in later statements, that Austin Peay would have supported him if the governor had not died in office.³²

A review of the early career of Lewis S. Pope makes it obvious that he was well-prepared for the office of governor. He was a well-educated and able lawyer, a convincing public speaker, and had long-time experience in government through his membership in the General Assembly and through his ten years of administrative experience in the state institutions. All of these factors seemed to point to the governor's chair. But unexpected events, the confusing and rapid changes of Tennessee politics, and perhaps the same arbitrary fate that prevented able men like Henry Clay and John C. Calhoun from reaching the presidency, prevented Pope from reaching his goal of the governorship. Between 1927 and 1934, Pope made five attempts, in three Democratic

³⁰Pope Diary, pp. 353-54, 370-71, 383, 443, 475, 477-78, 540, 552-53, 561, 586-87, 603, 610, 612, 620, 622-23, 630-31, 655, 660, 672; "Tom Henderson to Lewis S. Pope," May 16, 1926, Pope Papers.

³¹V.O. Key, Jr., Southern Politics in State and Nation (New York: Random House, 1949), p. 71, hereafter cited as Key, Southern Politics.

³²Documentation pertaining to Peay's possible support of Lewis S. Pope for the governorship will be presented later in this paper. For statements made by Pope many years after his campaigns, see the following: Tennessean Magazine, pp. 6-7 and Nashville Tennessean, February 28, 1971, Section B, pp. 1, 3.

primaries and two general elections, to win the governorship. All these attempts failed by vote count, but in some respects they were successful and made significant contributions to Tennessee political history.

A brief survey of the general political history of Tennessee during the 1920's and early 1930's is necessary before beginning a discussion of Pope's campaigns for the governorship. The most important elected political leader in Tennessee during the 1920's was Governor Austin Peay. Peay captured the governorship in 1922 and retained it through two full terms and into a third, which was ended by his death in 1927. Throughout his period in this office, he brought about one of the greatest eras of reform in Tennessee political history. Peay's program included a massive re-organization of state government, a large highway building program and the expansion of the state's education program. As a result of his activities in reform, and despite the fact that he signed the Monkey Law, Peay was recognized as one of the leading reform-minded governors in the South. At one point, Peay was mentioned as a possible vice-presidential candidate on the national Democratic Party ticket.³³

The fact that Austin Peay was one of the most beloved political leaders in Tennessee did not prevent him from having bitter foes within the state's Democratic Party. Centered in Crump-controlled Memphis and Shelby County, the opposition to Peay included former state

³³ Joseph T. Macpherson, "Democratic Progressivism in Tennessee: the Administrations of Governor Austin Peay, 1923-1927," East Tennessee Historical Society, No. 40, 1968, pp. 50-61, hereafter cited as Macpherson, "Austin Peay"; Clarksville Leaf-Chronicle, August 26, 1927, p. 1; September 2, p. 8.

employees ousted by the 1923 Reorganization Act, businessmen disenchanted by Peay's attempts to increase their taxes, and the urban and county political machines that disliked the governor's control of highway and education funds. The Nashville Banner provided the major newspaper support for Peay's opponents.³⁴

Providing one of the largest county and city-vote totals in Tennessee, Shelby County and Memphis were and still are important factors in any Democratic Party primary. Controlled by E.H. Crump since 1910, Shelby County and Memphis became a paradigm of the modern-city-county political machine. The Crump machine was always strong in state-wide politics, but was unable to defeat the other factions in the party until the 1932 gubernatorial election. Through his continued control of the Negro vote in Shelby County and the city employees in Memphis, Crump was able to control a sizeable portion of the Democratic Party primary vote. When the Luke Lea organization fell apart, Crump was able to combine his controlled votes with the mass of disaffected voters that believed they were voting against Lea when they voted for the Crump candidate. This combination led to victory for the Crump candidate for governor in 1932 and placed the Memphis boss in a position that was not changed until 1948. Governors would attempt to dispute Crump in this period, but their actions would only lead to their retirement.³⁵

³⁴ Macpherson, "Austin Peay," pp. 58-59.

³⁵ Key, Southern Politics, pp. 62-69; Miller, Crump, pp. 144-223; Alfred Steinberg, The Bosses (New York: Macmillan Company, 1972), pp. 72-133, hereafter cited as Steinberg, The Bosses.

The strongest state-wide political organization supporting Austin Peay was controlled by the Nashville-based publisher and businessman, Luke Lea. The Nashville Tennessean, a paper that was owned by Lea, provided Peay with his greatest urban support. Although the actual relationship of Lea and Peay remains clouded, the Nashville publisher probably aided Peay in overcoming the strong urban vote that Crump controlled. Lea was familiar with many small-town political leaders because of his relationship with Rogers Caldwell's municipal bond business. Lea combined this connection with small-town politicians, along with a strong appeal to rural Democratic votes, to create the dominant political organization in Tennessee during the 1920's.³⁶

As long as Austin Peay maintained his popularity in the rural areas through his reforms and kept the support of the Lea organization, the Shelby County-Memphis machine would not be strong enough to control the Democratic Party and the governorship. It took the death of Peay, the disaster of the Horton Administration, and the fall of Luke Lea's machine to bring E.H. Crump into the dominant position in the party. This dominant position included control of the governor's chair.

This over-simplified survey of Tennessee politics between 1922 and 1934 does not adequately explain the complex pattern of changes that were taking place. But it does help to illustrate that the Tennessee Democratic Party was undergoing an almost-complete change in political leadership in the years between 1927 and 1934. It is in this seven-year period that Lewis S. Pope emerged as an important contender for the governorship.

³⁶Key, Southern Politics, p. 64; John Berry McFerrin, Caldwell and Company: A Southern Financial Empire (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1939), pp. 99-115, hereafter cited as McFerrin, Caldwell.

CHAPTER II

THE 1928 CAMPAIGN: EARLY START AND STUBBED TOE

Lewis S. Pope received some indications of possible support for running for the Democratic gubernatorial primary of 1926. At one point, Austin Peay indicated to Pope that he would support him for the nomination in 1926. But this support depended on Austin Peay's not seeking a third term in office, and when the governor decided to run again Pope remained loyal to the administration. At one point, Peay was critical of Pope for not encouraging him to run in 1926. But Pope remained important in the Peay Administration, and after the 1926 general election he helped the governor organize the new general assembly that convened in January 1927.¹

Tennessee's constitution would have prevented Peay from seeking a fourth term in office. Because of this, the 1928 Democratic primary would have been open to a new field of candidates eager to start their campaigns early. As in most primary elections, new candidates can be helped by the endorsement of a popular incumbent of the office being sought. Peay was still popular despite his narrow victory over Hill McAlister in the 1926 primary,² and some indication of what candidate he supported would have aided any man's campaign. But Peay died before making any public statements about the emerging 1928 campaign.

¹Pope Diary, pp. 552-53, 561-62.

²Macpherson, "Austin Peay," pp. 57-60.

Peay did have some private interest in the new gubernatorial campaign. At one point, Peay received a letter from a political observer in Madisonville, Tennessee that described Lewis S. Pope as one of the leading candidates for the Democratic nomination in that area. This letter, with a note at the top sending it to Pope, is in the private papers of Lewis S. Pope. This is one indication that Peay may privately have been favoring Pope.³

Soon after Peay's victory in the November 1926 general election, Pope began to receive private statements of support for a possible candidacy in the 1928 Democratic primary.⁴ By March 1927 Pope was being mentioned as one of the leading possible candidates, along with Hill McAlister and Ernest Haston. In May 1927 Andrew L. Todd of Murfreesboro began an informal campaign. Other possible candidates included Alexander Chambliss, a member of the State Supreme Court, and Congressman E.E. Eslick.⁵

Pope began an informal campaign with a speech in Paris, Tennessee on July 4, 1927. He described himself as an "ardent advocate of state's rights," and stated his mistrust of legislative attempts to solve, through laws, "all evils, imaginary and real."⁶ "We need," he went on, "a renewal of the old faith and a baptism of regard and respect for government and authority."⁷

³"W. Ghormally to Austin Peay," July 9, 1927, Pope Papers.

⁴Pope Diary, pp. 650, 675, 791, 805, 818.

⁵Nashville Tennessean, March 17, 1927, p. 1; May 2, p. 2; May 29, p. 7.

⁶Ibid., July 5, 1927, pp. 1, 2.

⁷Ibid.

As an example of his belief in the old faith and state's rights, Pope advocated the use of private capital to develop the water-power potential in Tennessee.⁸ He also stated his personal bias toward the farming interests in Tennessee:

Agriculture is the basis of all prosperity. We may have spasmodic and temporary industrial success, without extending the same, in equal proportions to the farmer, but for a well-balanced and continuing prosperity, the owner and tiller of the soil must have reasonable returns for his products. Little legislation, either by the nation or the state, has ever been enacted for the benefit of the farmer. The convenient rule against class legislation has often been invoked and almost literally adhered to when effecting the farmer, while utterly ignored as to many other groups.⁹

Pope praised the career of Woodrow Wilson as a high point in the history of the Democratic Party and placed the late President in the political pantheon of Washington and Jefferson. In praising Wilson, Pope was given an opportunity to show his skill in oratory:

A dog may sit in the backyard and bark at the blazing sun, while it shines in its magnificent noonday splendor, and while the sound of the noise may attract attention of a few, yet the sun is not robbed of a single ray of light, nor degree of heat, and it continues to spread its glory and warmth on the whole earth, unaware of what has happened. So it is with President Wilson's critics.¹⁰

Soon after Pope's Paris speech, two other men--W.H. Hannah and Andrew L. Todd--officially entered the Democratic primary. Both men

⁸Nashville Tennessean, July 5, 1927, pp. 1, 2.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Ibid.

made short statements about their intentions to seek the nomination for governor.¹¹ But when Pope issued his official announcement on July 25, 1927, he decided to make a full statement on the major principles of his projected campaign.¹²

Pope opened his published statement by reviewing his ten years of experience in state government. He believed he had enough knowledge of the duties of the governor to hold that office. Pope also advocated a broader role for government in meeting the social needs of its citizens than he had indicated in the Paris speech: "This is a progressive age and our state government must be made to function in a manner as to keep abreast with our sister states."¹³

Pope promised to support Austin Peay's 1923 Reorganization Act, but wanted to limit the growing number of subdivisions that were developing in the different state departments. On other issues, Pope advocated the further reduction of the land tax and retention of the excise, tobacco and gasoline taxes. In the area of highway construction, he believed that the program started by Peay could be completed, but without the use of a large bond issue. He also favored the use of state funds in the construction of county road systems.¹⁴

Pope favored state aid and encouragement for the growing farmer's organizations, retention of the workmen's compensation laws and maintaining the right of labor to organize. Although he was critical

¹¹Nashville Tennessean, July 7, 1927, p. 1; July 24, p. 1.

¹²Ibid., July 25, 1927, pp. 1, 6.

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Ibid.

of the Wiggs' legislative bonus bill, Pope did favor increasing compensation for members of the general assembly. He also favored the use of the Tennessee Industrial School to do all the state's printing. Emphasizing the growing role of state government in the lives of its citizens, Pope favored having the state take over the entire cost for indigent patients in state hospitals.¹⁵

In the area of business, Pope wanted to limit the preference given to private bonding companies when a bank became insolvent. While promising a more active role by government, he also believed he could maintain strict economy in all the financial operations of the state.¹⁶

Pope repeated his support for using private capital to develop the state's water-power potential. He believed there was a definite limit to the role government can play in certain areas: "I do not believe that this country is ready to accept government ownership of those things left to the field of activity on the part of its citizens."¹⁷

This means of financing the water-power system would not be, according to Pope, state favoritism toward business: "This is not a selfish view but one to preserve and conserve our natural rights."¹⁸ He also restated his belief that government should help to maintain the agrarian way of life in Tennessee:

¹⁵Nashville Tennessean, July 25, 1927, pp. 1, 6.

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Ibid.

It is an unfortunate trend of the people to leave the farms and go to the cities. We must popularize and make attractive the farm. Educate the boys and girls with this in view; give them good roads and good schools at home, and if possible divert the direction of travel from the city to the country.¹⁹

Finally, Pope promised to resign from the office of Commissioner of Institutions when the campaign speaking tours began in 1928.²⁰

By August 1, 1927, the field of announced candidates again widened when Hill McAlister, in a letter sent from Europe to his brother-in-law in Tennessee, made known his intentions to seek the Democratic gubernatorial nomination. The candidates now included Pope, W.H. Hannah, Andrew L. Todd, and Hill McAlister.²¹

Another potential candidate was Judge Chambliss of the State Supreme Court. In September 1927 Pope and Chambliss were mentioned in a possible political trade whereby Pope would withdraw from the governor's race and take a position on the State Supreme Court, while Chambliss would resign from the Court and enter the gubernatorial primary. Chambliss immediately denied the rumor. Pope's daily diary shows that as early as June 17, 1927, Austin Peay had asked him if he would accept an appointment to the State Supreme Court. But, according to the diary, Pope stated he would not accept the appointment and expected to have Peay's support in the 1928 primary campaign.²²

¹⁹Nashville Tennessean, July 25, 1927, pp. 1, 6.

²⁰Ibid.

²¹Ibid., July 31, 1927, p. 1; Clarksville Leaf-Chronicle, August 1, 1927, p. 2.

²²Nashville Tennessean, September 12, 1927, p. 1; Pope Diary, pp. 826-827.

Peay's offer in June 1927 does create some doubt about his support of Lewis S. Pope for the 1928 primary. But other fragmentary evidence already cited shows that Pope had good reason to expect Peay's support. Before the July 1927 announcement, Pope discussed with Peay the nature of the statement he would make. He also received some help in the writing of the statement from A.B. Broadbent, one of Peay's chief political advisors.²³

But whether Peay would have supported Pope fully in 1928 became a moot point on October 2, 1927. On that day, Governor Austin Peay died of a massive cerebral hemorrhage. This brought the Speaker of the State Senate, Henry H. Horton, into the governor's chair and completely changed the complexion of the approaching Democratic primary campaign. Instead of Austin Peay in his last term in office, the governor's chair was now held by a healthy new incumbent with his own political ambitions.

Henry Hollis Horton, son of a Baptist preacher, had a varied career before entering the governorship. Horton had started out as a school teacher in Texas and Alabama before finally finding a position on the faculty of a college in Winchester, Tennessee. While teaching, Horton studied law under various private firms and was admitted to the Tennessee Bar in 1895. He retired from legal practice in 1911 and began to manage a farm in Marshall County, Tennessee. He entered state-wide politics in 1907, when he was elected to the lower house of the General Assembly of Tennessee. After leaving the General Assembly, Horton

²³"Lewis S. Pope to Austin Peay," July 22, 1927, Pope Papers.

served as a school commissioner and a city alderman. He re-entered state politics in 1926 when he was elected to the state senate, representing Marshall and Lincoln Counties.²⁴

Horton was elected to the post of Speaker of the Senate when the General Assembly was organized in January 1927. His election to the speakership was viewed as a clear victory for the supporters of Austin Peay in the General Assembly. As early as November 1926, Lewis S. Pope had discussed the speakership post with Horton. Pope also met with Horton and A.B. Broadbent in the opening days of the 1927 General Assembly to discuss the election for the speakership.²⁵ The relationship between the two men during this period and the agreements reached on the speakership post became an issue during the final days of the 1928 primary.

Prior to the death of Austin Peay, Henry Horton was never mentioned publicly as a leading candidate for the 1928 primary. One friend of Austin Peay's stated, after the death of the governor, that Peay believed Horton would make a strong successor.²⁶ But no public evidence indicates that Horton was ever a serious candidate until the death of Peay.

²⁴The National Cyclopedia of American Biography, Vol. 25 (James T. Whitehead and Company, 1936), pp. 286-87, hereafter cited as American Biography; Biographical Directory, Preliminary No. 3, pp. 13-14.

²⁵Nashville Tennessean, January 2, 1927, p. 1; January 3, p. 1; January 4, p. 1; Clarksville Leaf-Chronicle, January 4, 1927, p. 4; Pope Diary, pp. 655, 660, 671-72.

²⁶Clarksville Leaf-Chronicle, October 2, 1927, p. 1.

In October 1927 Pope did receive a warning that Horton had been considering seeking the nomination. In a letter from Sam McReynolds, a member of the U.S. Congress from Tennessee, Pope was told that Horton had been trying to find out what amount of support he could expect in 1928 if he ran for governor. Pope answered McReynolds by stating that he would not change his own political plan despite the growing rumors of a Horton candidacy.²⁷

Horton stated soon after entering the governor's office that he wanted to carry on Austin Peay's program and intended to make no changes in the cabinet. But when all of the state commissioners offered their resignations in deference to the new governor, Lewis S. Pope was the only one whose resignation was accepted. Soon after this acceptance, Hill McAlister stated his belief that this showed Horton's intentions to seek the nomination for a full term in 1928.²⁸

When Horton accepted Pope's resignation he made note of Pope's earlier announcement that he would be running for governor. Horton believed that Pope would resign in 1928 to campaign actively but the governor wanted a man as Commissioner of Institutions who would be able to serve throughout the remainder of his administration. The day after McAlister's statement on Horton's motives, Pope charged, in an open letter to the governor, that his resignation was forced by the politics of the new gubernatorial campaign. Pope stated that he had attempted

²⁷"Sam D. McReynolds to Lewis S. Pope," October 4, 1927; "Lewis S. Pope to Sam D. McReynolds," October 15, 1927, Pope Papers.

²⁸Nashville Tennessean, October 13, 1927, p. 1; October 24, p. 1; October 26, p. 5; Clarksville Leaf-Chronicle, October 24, 1927, p. 1.

to meet with the new governor to discuss how they would carry out the plans of Austin Peay, but Horton avoided contact with him. Pope stated that he, like the other commissioners, had not expected the governor to accept any of their resignations. He further stated that while he intended to resign when the campaign started in 1928 he wanted to finish some programs that he had started as Commissioner of Institutions. Horton immediately denied that Pope's resignation was forced as a result of politics and after the denial he refused to discuss the subject in public.²⁹

Governor Horton, as the incumbent, was in the best position to win the nomination in 1928. Without the difficulties that would later destroy his administration, Horton was able to take advantage of the sympathy for the governor's office after the death of Peay. In addition, he could take advantage of the great popularity of many of the reforms brought about by the late governor.

Horton quickly began to gain support for a possible candidacy in 1928. The attitude of the Nashville Tennessean, a leading Peay paper, best symbolized this growing support. A laudatory article written by T.H. Alexander of the Tennessean praised Horton for carrying on the work of Peay. The Tennessean also published an account of a public meeting, held in Horton's home town, that demanded the nomination of Horton in 1928. This support continued and increased after Horton made his official announcement. Emphasis was placed on describing Horton as the one leader who could carry on the work of Austin Peay. When the

²⁹"Henry Horton to Lewis S. Pope," October 24, 1927; "Lewis S. Pope to Henry Horton," October 25, 1927, Container 5, Folder 2, Horton Papers (Tennessee Library and Archives); Nashville Tennessean, October 27, 1927, pp. 1, 3; October 28, p. 1; November 4, p. 1.

Commissioner of Highways, Neil Bass, was dismissed by Horton, the Tennessean claimed that this action coincided with the feelings of Austin Peay.³⁰

Horton issued his official announcement on January 29, 1928. He promised to continue the program of Austin Peay. Part of the program included, according to Horton, the abolishment of the state land tax and the creation of a more equitable tax system throughout Tennessee.³¹ Pope immediately attacked Horton's proposal on the land tax. Stating his belief that the land tax should eventually be abolished, Pope pointed out that Horton implied it could be done by the end of 1928. But Pope stated that the constitutional changes necessary for abolishing the land tax would take much longer.³²

Pope and Horton were on the same speaker's platform soon after the governor's announcement. They both avoided any mention of the approaching campaign. In what was probably a big disappointment to the audience, Pope and Horton joined together in advocating state aid to county fairs.³³

The campaign, however, became much more interesting in time. On March 22, 1928, Hill McAlister issued his official announcement that

³⁰Nashville Tennessean, January 3, 1928, p. 1; January 29, p. 7; February 24, p. 1; March 15, p. 1; March 17, p. 1; March 22, p. 1; April 9, p. 1; April 10, p. 1; June 3, pp. 1, 4; July 1, p. 4; July 13, p. 1; July 21, p. 1.

³¹Ibid., January 30, 1928, p. 1; Clarksville Leaf-Chronicle, January 30, 1928, p. 2.

³²Nashville Tennessean, January 31, 1928, p. 5; Clarksville Leaf-Chronicle, February 2, 1928, p. 4.

³³Nashville Tennessean, February 8, 1928, pp. 1, 5.

he would seek the nomination for governor.³⁴ Because of Hill McAlister's importance in Pope's career, a brief biographical sketch is necessary:

Hill McAlister was born in Nashville, Tennessee in 1875. His father was a prominent judge and lawyer in Tennessee and the McAlisters were one of the leading families in the Nashville area. He received his law degree from Vanderbilt in 1897 and had a successful legal practice in Nashville. He served as City Attorney from 1905 to 1909. In 1910 he was elected to the state senate, representing the Nashville area. After leaving the General Assembly, McAlister served as a Tennessee presidential elector and as Chairman of the Democratic Executive Committee on the state level. He was elected to the position of State Treasurer in 1919 and made his first bid for the governorship in 1926. In the primary campaign of that year, McAlister was narrowly defeated by Austin Peay. McAlister was supported by E.H. Crump of Memphis in the 1926 primary campaign. McAlister won the governorship in 1932 and 1934, but these campaigns will be discussed later in this paper. When McAlister made his announcement for the 1928 primary race, the chief issues surrounding his campaign were his vague stand on the water-power issue and the support he received from E.H. Crump. Although Crump publicly supported McAlister late in the 1928 campaign, it was always assumed that the Memphis boss was supporting him.³⁵

³⁴Nashville Tennessean, March 23, 1928, p. 1.

³⁵American Biography, Vol. 47, p. 696; Miller, Crump, p. 151; Macpherson, "Austin Peay," pp. 57-60; Nashville Tennessean, February 23, 1928, p. 1; March 21, p. 1.

In April and May of 1928, the field of candidates narrowed when Todd and Hannah withdrew.³⁶ The Democratic Primary now included three principal candidates: Henry Horton, Hill McAlister and Lewis S. Pope. A fourth candidate, D.W. Dodson, remained in the race but was not seriously considered.

As stated above, Henry Horton had the early support of the Nashville Tennessean. The Tennessean also started an active campaign against Lewis S. Pope. On February 24, 1928 the paper accused Pope of wanting to abolish Austin Peay's 1923 Reorganization Act. The Tennessean described one speech by Pope in which he favored making the position of Commissioner of Highways a six-year tenure of office, and compared it with the attacks on Peay by McAlister in 1926. Pope's speeches, according to the Tennessean, "gave heart to those who have been fighting it [the Reorganization Act] since the legislature of 1923."³⁷

T.H. Alexander, the chief political writer for the Nashville Tennessean during the 1920's and early 1930's, called Horton "a pioneer supporter of Governor Austin Peay,"³⁸ and described Pope as an early opponent of the late governor. Alexander accused Pope of being part of the political machine that ruled Tennessee before the election of Peay. Pope, according to Alexander, was part of the "Big Three" that included

³⁶ Nashville Tennessean, April 3, 1928, p. 1; Clarksville Leaf-Chronicle, April 20, 1928, p. 1; May 21, p. 7.

³⁷ Nashville Tennessean, February 24, 1928, p. 1.

³⁸ Ibid., April 9, 1928, p. 1.

Ernest Haston and Hill McAlister. "In practical politics they were then perhaps the most powerful men in the state."³⁹

Although Pope, as head of the state's institutions, Haston as Secretary of State, and McAlister as State Treasurer were in a position to create a political organization in the state, this writer found no evidence of the existence of an organization of the scope described by Alexander. Pope's diary shows that he had a close personal relationship with Hill McAlister in the 1920's, but not a relationship that reached the dimensions of a powerful political machine. A bitter exchange of letters between Pope and Haston in 1926, when Pope helped in the removal of Haston as Chairman of the state Democratic Executive Committee, gives no indication of a previous political alliance of the scope suggested by Alexander.⁴⁰

The Nashville Tennessean attempted to show Hill McAlister as an inept candidate running a listless and dull campaign.⁴¹ But McAlister, with the support of the Crump machine, was in a good position to make a strong showing in the 1928 primary. Lewis S. Pope was considered the weakest of the two major candidates facing Horton. By concentrating its printed attacks against Pope, the Tennessean may have hoped that many

³⁹Nashville Tennessean, April 9, 1928, p. 1.

⁴⁰Pope Diary, passim.; "Ernest N. Haston to Lewis S. Pope," August 30, 1926; "Lewis S. Pope to Ernest N. Haston," August 31, 1926, Pope Papers.

⁴¹Nashville Tennessean, June 17, 1928, p. 1; June 20, p. 1; June 22, p. 1; June 23, p. 1; June 24, p. 1; June 27, p. 1; July 3, p. 1; July 4, p. 4; July 14, p. 1.

voters opposed to Horton would be drawn away from the stronger McAlister, and vote for Pope. Thus the strongest opposition could be weakened by encouraging the weakest. Articles were published warning McAlister to be wary of the growing popularity of Pope.⁴²

All in all, Mr. Pope has begun to get on the nerves of some of the boys, especially the Old Guard who rally around the flag of the Honorable Hill McAlister.⁴³

The Tennessean also published rumors that Pope and McAlister were attempting to negotiate a trade whereby one would withdraw in order to unify the anti-Horton faction in the Democratic Party. The Tennessean was always attempting to place Pope and McAlister in the same anti-Horton faction in the party.⁴⁴

Hill McAlister was supported by the Nashville Banner and Horton was supported by the Nashville Tennessean. Pope used the political position of these two newspapers as an issue in his campaign. In a speech in Maury County, Tennessee, Pope stated with pride that he was not supported by any of the state's major newspapers.⁴⁵

One daily newspaper that gave Pope some support was the Clarksville Leaf-Chronicle. But the mild support offered by the Leaf-Chronicle did not emerge as an endorsement. In a confusing editorial on July 19, 1928 the paper stated that while it wanted to endorse Pope,

⁴² Nashville Tennessean, April 24, 1928, p. 1; May 17, p. 2.

⁴³ Ibid., April 13, 1928, p. 1.

⁴⁴ Ibid., May 10, 1928, p. 5; May 19, p. 5; June 22, p. 1; July 2, p. 1; July 3, p. 1.

⁴⁵ Ibid., February 23, 1928, p. 1; May 8, p. 1.

it could not because he had only a small chance of winning. The Leaf-Chronicle then went on to endorse Horton. The belief that he was the best and most qualified candidate but the one least likely to win haunted Pope throughout the campaign.⁴⁶

Pope was endorsed by one weekly Nashville paper: the Citizen-Appeal. This newspaper, "published in the interests of Truth, Honesty, Ability and Economy in Government," viewed the 1928 Democratic primary as a fight between the two major newspaper publishers in Tennessee: Scripps-Howard and Luke Lea. Pope was offered as an alternative to the two men backed by these publishers.⁴⁷

The Citizen-Appeal was founded for the purpose of supporting the candidacy of Lewis S. Pope in 1928. One rival-newspaper account listed the publisher as a C.J. Greth of Nashville; however, a statement of ownership, published in October 1929, listed the major stockholders in the Citizen-Appeal Publishing Company as Thomas H. Shriver, Jr., G.Q. Milwee, and Lurton Goodpasture. Shriver was the editor-in-chief and Milwee the managing editor. Edward Webb acted as the business manager. One article in that paper stated that Webb and Goodpasture did most of the editorial work on the paper. Sam Carmack, Pope's 1932 campaign manager, replaced Shriver as Editor-in-Chief after 1929. Attempts were made by his opponents to present Pope as the owner of the Citizen-Appeal. Pope denied this and there is no evidence that he had a controlling financial interest in the paper. Pope continued to deny ownership

⁴⁶Clarksville Leaf-Chronicle, July 19, 1928, p. 1; Citizen-Appeal (Nashville), July 25, 1928, p. 2; Nashville Tennessean, July 13, 1928, p. 13.

⁴⁷Citizen-Appeal, July 25, 1928, p. 13.

of the Citizen-Appeal when he was campaigning for the governorship in 1932.⁴⁸

The Citizen-Appeal used the theme of machine bossism in attacking the Horton Administration. The figure of Luke Lea was used as the evil controlling influence behind Horton:

Hardly had the beloved Austin Peay been wrapped in his shroud and before he was put in his final resting place, the new governor was closeted with Lea and one of his well-known business associates in a room at the Andrew Jackson Hotel and it appears he was then persuaded to break his pledge of honor to his former chief . . . under the tutelage and direction of Lea and associates.⁴⁹

The Citizen-Appeal also directed its attacks against the newspapers that supported Hill McAlister. It accused the factions supporting either Horton or McAlister of trying to use Pope to cut into the votes of their major rival. In one article, the Citizen-Appeal asked, "Shall feudal newspapers dominate Tennessee in choosing our Governor?" Clearly, the paper was trying to present Pope as the only candidate who could prevent the feudal domination by either Crump or Lea.⁵⁰

Despite the small amount of newspaper support given him, Lewis S. Pope still carried on an active speaking campaign. He appointed Roy Hardison of Maury County, Tennessee as his state campaign manager, and started his speaking tour on March 24, 1928, in Sparta, Tennessee.⁵¹

⁴⁸ Nashville Tennessean, September 6, 1928, p. 6; Citizen-Appeal, July 3, 1928, p. 2; October 29, 1929, p. 3; March 7, 1932, p. 2; "Lewis S. Pope to Ed Bass," July 28, 1932, Pope Papers.

⁴⁹ Citizen-Appeal, July 25, 1928, p. 1.

⁵⁰ Ibid., July 25, 1928, p. 2; July 31, p. 1.

⁵¹ Nashville Tennessean, March 25, 1928, p. 1, and "Society Section," pp. 6, 13. On Hardison, see Ibid., May 3, p. 3; May 5, pp. 1, 5.

Pope was introduced in Sparta by the former senator, James B. Frazier. Described by one writer covering the Sparta rally as an "East Tennessee mountaineer," Pope opened his speech by evoking images of the Confederacy. He pointed out that his father had served under the Confederate general George Dibrell of Sparta. He then discussed his personal qualifications and the program he would attempt to enact as governor. After describing his experience as Commissioner of Institutions, Pope went on to praise the works of Austin Peay. Pope believed that Peay's 1923 Reorganization Act was the greatest achievement of his administration.⁵² But Pope did propose one change in the Reorganization Act; he wanted to give all the state commissioners a fixed tenure of office. This was a broader proposal than the one he had made earlier about the highway commission. Pope pointed out that the commissioner of education had a fixed term of office under the 1925 Education Act and that this proved his broader proposal would work. One reason Pope favored the fixed term of office for commissioners was the arbitrary firing of State Highway Commissioner Neil Bass. He believed Bass was fired because he wouldn't use the highway department for Horton's political needs. Pope also advocated the creation of a non-partizan advisory council to select a commissioner of highways.⁵³

Much of Pope's Sparta speech contained proposals he had made in the July 1927 announcement. This included revision of the state tax system, opposition to a large bond issue for completing the highway

⁵²Nashville Tennessean, March 25, 1928, p. 1, and "Society Section," pp. 6, 13.

⁵³Ibid.

program, support for expanded farm legislation, retention of workmen's compensation and the de-politicalization of the state's education system. On the issue of water-power, Pope remained consistent in his support of encouraging private capital to develop the state's water resources. Power-development, according to Pope, should be left "to the endeavor of a progressive citizenship." He also stated his support for continuing prohibition on the national level.⁵⁴

This speech provided the pattern for the rest of Pope's speaking campaign. But it is an obvious fact that he fought an uphill battle in 1928. The ambition of Henry Horton to win a term of office on his own, along with the help he received from Luke Lea, would make it difficult for any other candidate to win the nomination. In addition to this problem, the power of Hill McAlister, supported by E.H. Crump, made Pope the third man in a two-man race. The campaign to present Pope as the alternative to the machine-controlled Horton and McAlister may have been effective, but a real issue was needed to create a three-man race. Pope found this issue in the relationship of Horton and Austin Peay.

As described above, the Horton campaign was centered around presenting the new governor as the only man capable of carrying on the work of Austin Peay. Pope concentrated on attacking this claim by the Horton supporters. In a press interview and a subsequent speech in Lebanon, Tennessee, Pope stated that Horton had promised Austin Peay that he would not seek the governorship in 1928 if he became the

⁵⁴Nashville Tennessean, March 25, 1928, p. 1, and "Society Section," pp. 6, 13.

incumbent as a result of Peay's death. In exchange for this promise, Peay would support Horton for the speakership of the senate in 1927.⁵⁵

Horton, of course, had no legal obligation to carry out any promise he had made to Peay. Pope was attempting to attack Horton's claim to be the only heir-apparant to the Peay Administration. Horton immediately denied Pope's accusation and stated that it was an attempt by Pope to aid the McAlister campaign. Soon after his denial of the accusation, Horton refused to discuss the subject in public.⁵⁶

In an attempt to support his accusation, Pope presented affidavits and signed statements from men who had direct knowledge of Horton's promise to Peay. He also presented a statement by the late governor's wife that supported part of the affidavits.⁵⁷

The major statements were from men who had helped Austin Peay in his decision about whom to support for the speakership of the state senate in 1927. One of the men, C.C. Woods, supported Horton for the post and the other, W.F. Fessey, supported W.A. Hensley for the position. In substance, both men stated that Austin Peay had wanted assurances from both Horton and Hensley that neither would seek the governorship in 1928 if they held that office as a result of Peay's death. Also, both Horton and Hensley were to tell Pope that they had no desire for the governorship. In presenting the evidence, Pope stated that while Peay wanted Pope to become the next governor, he did not wish to

⁵⁵ Nashville Tennessean, June 10, 1928, p. 1.

⁵⁶ Ibid.; Maryville Times, June 21, 1928, p. 1.

⁵⁷ Copies of the affidavits are in the Pope Papers; see also Nashville Tennessean, June 10, 1928, p. 1.

be in a position of naming his successor or creating any new candidates. In other words, Peay would not publicly support Pope in the primary of 1928 but he also would not promote any other candidates.⁵⁸

The statement by Woods was supported by the affidavit of G.Q. Milwee. Milwee, a major stockholder in the Citizen-Appeal newspaper, stated that he was present when Horton promised to follow Peay's wishes. But the most important statement supporting Pope's accusation came from Mrs. Austin Peay. In a short, handwritten statement on black-bordered mourning paper, Mrs. Peay confirmed that Governor Peay had asked Woods and Fessey to get the promises from Horton and Hensley. No support was given to the evidence presented that Horton did make the promise. But Pope had raised the issue. Some doubt could now be raised about Horton's claim of loyalty to Peay.⁵⁹

But the tactic failed. The fact that Pope had very little newspaper support helped to turn the accusation against him. Clearly, it would be easy to show Pope as a man who would actually accuse the sainted Austin Peay of making a political trade. Pope attempted to clarify his accusation when one newspaper accused him of misusing the name of Austin Peay. So it was that Pope's accusation probably harmed him more than it did Horton. The Nashville Tennessean characterized Pope's accusation as a political "stubbed toe" that slowed him down in the three-way political race. The Tennessean stated that Austin Peay was incapable of dealing in political trades. By June 20, 1928, Pope

⁵⁸ Affidavits; Nashville Tennessean, June 10, 1928, p. 1.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

had stopped mentioning the Horton promise. He probably recognized the error he had made. Strong newspaper support is needed to make any political accusation a viable issue in an election.⁶⁰

The Nashville Tennessean spent the last month of the primary race attacking McAlister and Pope for their attacks on the Horton administration: "The opposition is seemingly moved alone by a desire for power and the gratification of personal revenge."⁶¹

In one article, the Tennessean accused both Pope and McAlister of having tried to gain the support of Luke Lea. The paper stated that Pope had met with Lea and asked him to read his July 1927 announcement and that Lea had suggested he remove some attacks on Austin Peay. Pope's diary confirms this meeting but one source, already cited in this paper, shows that Pope had discussed his statement with Peay several days before the meeting with Lea. It seems unlikely that Pope would discuss a statement critical of the Peay Administration with the governor and then expect his support in the primary. In the Tennessean article, Lea was quoted as saying he thought Pope's announcement in July 1927 had been premature and unfair to Peay. But Pope's diary and a letter to Peay shows that Lea had complimented the statement and urged its quick release and publication.⁶²

⁶⁰ "Lewis S. Pope to Lapsley G. Walker," June 11, 1928, Pope Papers; Nashville Tennessean, June 13, 1928, p. 1; June 20, pp. 1, 2.

⁶¹ Nashville Tennessean, July 3, 1928, p. 4.

⁶² Ibid., July 1, 1928, p. 1; Pope Diary, p. 834; "Lewis S. Pope to Austin Peay," July 22, 1928, Pope Papers.

A discussion of the accusations and counter-accusations made during the 1928 Democratic Primary could go on for hundreds of pages. But it is clear that Pope was not considered a strong candidate in 1928. He faced two powerful opponents, both of whom were backed by strong political machines. Horton was winning in his attempts to be the heir-apparent to Peay. McAlister was strong, but he was still running against Austin Peay without the issue of a third term. The lack of urban newspaper support and the candidacy of Henry Horton as the new incumbent-by-accident were the major factors in weakening Pope's chances in 1928.

The 1928 Democratic Primary ended with a victory for Horton based on a strong rural vote. The vote-count listed below best illustrates Pope's poor showing in the primary:

Horton	97,333
McAlister	92,017
Pope	27,779

Pope's greatest strength came from Middle Tennessee, with West Tennessee second and East Tennessee last in the vote count.⁶³

Soon after the August primary, Pope stated his full support of Horton in the November General Election. Pope believed the Democratic Party was more important than any individual or factional ambition: "I believe in party organization and our differences should be worked out inside the party."⁶⁴ Pope also went on to support the National

⁶³ Nashville Tennessean, August 3, 1928, p. 1; August 5, p. 1; Alexander Heard and Donald S. Strong, Southern Primaries and Elections (Freeport: Books for Libraries Press, 1970), p. 166, hereafter cited as Heard, Southern Primaries.

⁶⁴ Nashville Tennessean, August 5, 1928, p. 7.

Democratic Party Presidential Ticket. In one speech in Clarksville, Pope compared Al Smith to Austin Peay and stated that he could support both Smith and Prohibition.⁶⁵

As usual with the General Election for Governor in Tennessee during the period 1922 to 1970, the Republicans had little chance of defeating the Democratic candidate. One illustration of the Republican ineptitude in the state-wide governor's race came during the meeting of the State Republican Executive Committee. During that meeting, the Republican nominee for governor was stabbed during a scuffle.⁶⁶

Horton defeated the Republican candidate by nearly 76,000 votes.⁶⁷ But the name of Lewis S. Pope was now connected with the office of Governor. The political changes of the next four years would greatly enhance his chances for the nomination and election in 1932.

⁶⁵Clarksville Leaf-Chronicle, October 1, 1928, p. 1.

⁶⁶Nashville Tennessean, August 23, 1928, p. 1.

⁶⁷Heard, Southern Primaries, p. 116.

CHAPTER III

THE 1932 CAMPAIGN: CONTESTED PRIMARY AND INDEPENDENT CANDIDATE

Henry Horton, with the help of the Lea Organization and a surprise endorsement by E.H. Crump of Memphis, was easily re-nominated and re-elected in 1930. Pope started an informal campaign in that year but it was cancelled because of the candidacy of L.E. Gwinn of Memphis. Supporters of Pope failed in attempts to get Gwinn to withdraw. Pope probably recognized the futility of again entering a three-man race that included an incumbent backed by Lea. Pope supported Gwinn late in the campaign but Horton's political power was unbeatable in 1930. Events soon caused a reversal of fortunes for the Lea-Horton alliance.¹

Soon after the 1930 general election a devastating political and economic disaster struck the Horton Administration. Within days of Horton's re-election an inexplicable maze of illegal financial dealings, brought about by Luke Lea and Rogers Caldwell, began to be revealed. The banks controlled by Caldwell and Company, including some in states outside Tennessee, began to go into receivership, with the loss of large amounts of state funds. These funds had been deposited in the Caldwell

¹ Nashville Tennessean, March 15, 1930, p. 1; March 26, p. 1; March 27, p. 1; April 4, p. 1; April 5, p. 1; April 11, p. 1; April 12, p. 1; April 27, p. 4; August 1, p. 1; August 2, p. 1; Citizen-Appeal, April 4, 1930, pp. 1, 3; April 11, p. 1; April 18, p. 3; April 25, p. 1; May 30, p. 1; August 1, p. 1; Miller, Crump, p. 155; McFerrin, Caldwell, p. 162.

banks as a result of policies directed by the Horton Administration. Lea's publishing company was also facing bankruptcy.²

Because of the close political ties of Lea, Horton and Caldwell, the governor's office was given much of the blame for the loss of state funds. Organized efforts were started throughout Tennessee to force a full investigation of the Horton Administration. The most important of these efforts came in the formation of the Committee of One Hundred or Committee of Public Safety, headed by Lewis S. Pope and Hill McAlister. The committee held a series of public meetings throughout the state, demanding a full legislative investigation of the Horton Administration. Besides Pope and McAlister, other notable members of the committee included A.H. Roberts, K.T. McConnico, Andrew L. Todd, Sam Carmack, Neil Bass, Roy Hardison, J.B. Frazier and Nathan Bachman. L.E. Gwinn, Horton's opponent in the 1930 primary, refused to join the committee.³

The series of meetings held by the Committee of One Hundred ended in a large rally at the Ryman Auditorium in Nashville. A number of speakers attacked the Horton Administration but one former member of the General Assembly traced the problems of 1930 back to the early days of the Peay Administration. He believed that the "foundation of Tennessee's downfall was the Reorganization bill of Governor Austin Peay."⁴

² Nashville Tennessean, November 5, 1930, p. 1; November 8, p. 1; November 12, p. 1; November 13, p. 1; November 14, p. 1; November 15, p. 1; November 16, p. 1; December 5, p. 1; New York Times, November 13, 1930, p. 1; November 15, p. 19; McFerrin, Caldwell, pp. 162, 176-188.

³ Nashville Tennessean, December 11, 1930, p. 1; December 13, p. 1; December 31, p. 1; Citizen-Appeal, December 4, 1930, p. 1; New York Times, December 9, 1930, p. 47.

⁴ Nashville Tennessean, December 31, 1930, p. 1.

Although this speaker did not elaborate on what he meant, the implication was clear; the power of the governor's office, greatly enhanced by the Reorganization Act of 1923, was being questioned. Without a strong, independent man in the office, the governorship could easily be manipulated by powerful men such as Luke Lea.

The public outrage represented by the Committee of One Hundred was soon joined by E.H. Crump's demand for the impeachment of Henry Horton. The public protest led to a legislative investigation when the General Assembly convened in January 1931. The subsequent investigation resulted in the presentation and narrow defeat of Articles of Impeachment against Horton. More important, these events destroyed the political viability of the Lea-Horton-Caldwell organization. Horton was allowed to finish his term in office but he was a broken man and would be dead within three years. Lea and Caldwell became involved in a complicated legal battle that may never be fully explained. One clearly understandable result of this legal battle was a jail term in North Carolina for Luke Lea and his son.⁵ Lea's name would be used as a political weapon in subsequent campaigns for the governorship, but it is obvious that the Lea organization was, as one writer described it, a "velocipede on a toy fire engine."⁶

Despite his earlier support of Horton in the 1930 gubernatorial primary, E.H. Crump was a leader in the movement that demanded the

⁵Miller, Crump, p. 160; McFerrin, Caldwell, pp. 189-204. For a short summary of the impeachment proceedings against Horton, see Nashville Tennessean, November 4, 1973, Section B, p. 2.

⁶Nashville Tennessean, August 23, 1930, p. 4.

governor's impeachment. Lewis S. Pope, along with Hill McAlister, headed the Committee of One Hundred that demanded a full legislative investigation of the Horton Administration. The Citizen-Appeal, an early supporter of Pope in 1928, demanded the impeachment of Horton, and even gave some praise to E.H. Crump as the lesser of two evils when compared with Luke Lea.⁷ Pope, McAlister and Crump were joined together on the one issue of corruption in the Horton Administration. But this alliance was short-lived and soon dissolved into a bitter primary election in 1932.

The Democratic Party nomination for governor was open to a new collection of candidates in 1932. Because of Tennessee's constitution, Henry Horton could not have sought re-election even if it had been politically feasible. In January 1932 one northern political writer believed that the old Lea-versus-Crump factionalism would again dominate the Democratic primary in Tennessee. But Joe Hatcher of the Nashville Tennessean had a different view. Hatcher believed that the old factional lines had been broken and that new, more independent candidates would emerge. Hatcher did write for a newspaper that had been controlled by one of the old political factions, but his prediction was essentially correct. New candidates would emerge despite the eventual dominance by older names. But more importantly, an independent-minded candidate would challenge the party machinery after the August 1932 primary. Lewis S. Pope was that candidate.⁸

⁷ Citizen-Appeal, March 20, 1931, p. 1; March 27, p. 2.

⁸ New York Times, January 17, 1932, Section III, p. 5; Nashville Tennessean, January 5, 1932, p. 1.

By January 10, 1932, A.B. Broadbent of Clarksville and Judge Chambliss of the State Supreme Court were being mentioned as leading possible candidates for the Democratic Party nomination. Pope, at that time, was considered just an outside possibility as a candidate. One writer believed that Pope's decision about whether to run depended on the possible candidacy of Broadbent. Broadbent was closely connected with the faction that had supported Austin Peay and Pope may have wanted to avoid opposing him in the primary.⁹

Albert Williams entered the primary in late January of 1932. Williams, a Memphis attorney and a former member of the Horton Administration, was considered a surprise candidate. His announcement may have encouraged Pope quickly to enter the primary. One newspaper noted the fact that Pope's announcement soon followed that of Williams. Pope evidently saw that it was futile to wait on Broadbent's decision. He was correct because Broadbent never entered the race. By the end of March 1932, there were seven announced candidates, including Rufus Campbell, Albert Williams, Collier Goodlett, Pat Quinn, H.C. O'Kain, Hill McAlister and Lewis S. Pope. Four of the candidates, excluding Pope and McAlister, eventually withdrew. Rufus Campbell remained on the ballot but failed to generate an effective campaign.¹⁰

Another candidate who entered and remained in the 1932 Democratic Primary was ex-Governor Malcolm Patterson. Patterson was Governor of Tennessee at the time of the 1908 Carmack murder and his name had been

⁹Nashville Tennessean, January 5, 1932, p. 1; January 11, pp. 1, 2.

¹⁰Ibid., January 10, p. 1; January 11, pp. 1, 2.

closely related to the anti-Prohibitionists in the state. Patterson later embraced the temperance movement. As a judge in Memphis, he had a good chance to receive a large amount of the Shelby County votes, or so it was believed by one newspaper that endorsed him. Although Patterson denied seeking the support of the Horton Administration, he was endorsed by the Nashville Tennessean. Despite an earlier split within the editorial staff, Patterson also had the support of the Memphis Commercial-Appeal.¹¹

Pope did not announce his full platform until May 7, 1932 but he did issue a short statement of the basic principles of his campaign on April 3, 1932. He hoped that his campaign could concentrate on the need for economy in state government. He believed that the growing number of subdivisions in the eight state departments had caused the rise in government costs. He believed that the cost from these growing subdivisions could be lowered by three basic reforms. These included 1) the abolition of a commissioner's power to create subdivisions in a department, 2) making all major appointments subject to approval by the state senate, and 3) giving all major state officials a fixed term in office.¹²

Pope issued his full platform on May 7, 1932, in Lebanon. Sam Carmack, L.E. Gwinn's 1930 campaign manager, was appointed to manage

¹¹Isaac, Prohibition and Politics, pp. 142-152, 257; Nashville Tennessean, April 10, 1932, p. 1; April 16, p. 1; April 23, p. 1; Thomas H. Baker, The Memphis Commercial-Appeal (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1971), p. 289.

¹²Nashville Tennessean, April 3, 1932, p. 1.

Pope's campaign in 1932. Pope announced a fifteen-point program, later expanded to sixteen, that provided the pattern for most of his speeches in 1932.

Promising "a new deal in Tennessee," Pope presented a program that called for drastic retrenchment in state government. He proposed to stop the use of large bond issues and short-term notes by the state, and to cut payroll expenses by fifty percent and operating costs by twenty-five percent in the state's government. He expanded his earlier proposals for further reform in government organization. The broader proposals included abolishment of the Department of Finance and Taxation, with tax collection being handled by the State Comptroller, the abolishment of all subdivisions in the tax department with a stricter budget for the comptroller, placement of all auditing under the comptroller and the reorganizing of the purchasing procedure in state government with one agent, appointed by the governor and confirmed by the senate, approving the purchases for each department. As in his earlier proposal, Pope favored restricting the power of commissioners to create departmental subdivisions, requiring senate confirmation of all major appointments by the governor and a fixed term in office for the appointees.¹³

Other areas of reform proposed by Pope included the creation and strict enforcement of budgets for each state department. He also proposed that new road construction be postponed and that only those

¹³Clarksville Leaf-Chronicle, May 7, 1932, p. 1; Nashville Tennessean, May 8, 1932, p. 1; Memphis Press-Scimitar, May 7, 1932, p. 1; Citizen-Appeal, May 9, 1932, pp. 1, 4. The Citizen-Appeal was the only newspaper that published a major portion of Pope's announcement. All others published general summaries.

roads that were started be finished. In the Highway Department, Pope proposed the abolishment of the State Patrol and the reduction of the automobile registration cost by fifty percent. He also wanted to return to the counties a portion of the state gasoline tax for use on local road construction.¹⁴

Although he was opposed to a sales tax, Pope did favor the creation of a state income tax as the "most equitable tax and the easiest paid." As part of his plan for revising the state tax system, he proposed the creation of a non-partizan tax commissioner, the repeal of the automobile identification tag tax and repeal of the law which exempted state, county and municipal bonds from taxation. As part of the gradual decrease in the cost of government, Pope believed there could be a reduction in taxes by all levels of government in the state. On education, he favored retention of the eight-month school year. He also wanted to strengthen the state banking laws to protect depositors. In the area of corruption in government, he proposed making it a felony for any government official to be employed by a public utility.¹⁵

Referring to McAlister and Patterson, Pope demanded that both should resign from their public offices. McAlister was serving as State Treasurer and Patterson was a judge in Memphis. Pope stated that both men should resign their offices as he did in 1927. He failed to mention his claim of that year that he had not resigned willingly. Albert Williams was the only candidate who criticized Pope on this point.¹⁶

¹⁴Citizen-Appeal, May 9, 1932, pp. 1, 4.

¹⁵Ibid.

¹⁶Nashville Tennessean, May 8, 1932, pp. 1, 2; May 19, pp. 1, 2.

A political reporter who covered Pope's Lebanon speech for the Nashville Tennessean described it as having less of the "personalities and bitterness that characterized Mr. Pope's campaign four years ago." The same writer gave a similar description of Pope's second campaign speech in Gallatin. This generally characterized the attitude of the Tennessean during the primary of 1932. While the paper endorsed Patterson for the nomination, it did not attack Pope as it had in 1928.¹⁷

Pope had much broader newspaper support in the 1932 primary. Papers that supported him included the Memphis Press-Scimitar, the Knoxville News-Sentinel and the Chattanooga News. The Citizen-Appeal of Nashville remained loyal to Pope. A cursory reading of editorials quoted in these newspapers, originally published in many small-town newspapers, indicates that Pope's major support was in the rural areas. This increased newspaper support helped to make Pope's 1932 campaign much more effective.¹⁸

One minor issue that emerged in the early days of the 1932 Democratic Primary involved the party convention that was to be held on May 20, 1932. A movement was started to have that convention write a platform to be used by the candidates nominated in the August primary. Judge Chambliss, in withdrawing his name from consideration for the primary, was the first major political figure to endorse the idea of a platform, created in convention, to be followed by the Democratic nominee.

¹⁷Nashville Tennessean, May 8, 1932, pp. 1, 2.

¹⁸Extensive citations are unnecessary. See Memphis Press-Scimitar, May-August 1932; Knoxville News-Sentinel, May-August 1932; Chattanooga News, July-August 1932; Citizen-Appeal, May-August 1932.

One newspaper writer believed that the movement for a platform created in convention may have caused some of the possible gubernatorial candidates to hold back on making their official announcements.¹⁹

The three major candidates--Pope, McAlister and Patterson--at first stated their intentions to wait until after the May 20 convention before issuing their announcements. Pope, of course, did not wait.²⁰ In private, Pope favored a state platform written by convention, but he believed that it should be created after the primary in August and not before. He believed it would cause more trouble than good if the platform were written in the May convention:

Our party is in no condition to have a controversy arise in the state convention about a state platform. There are those who entertain prejudiced views either for or against conditions existing in Tennessee; and an extreme position in either direction in a platform or commendatory or denunciatory resolution, could be very destructive to the nominee of the party in the November election.²¹

Pope also rejected one suggestion that the May convention should endorse a specific candidate for the primary in August:

It is not a matter of whether one favors the primary or not; we have the primary law and any effort upon the part of the convention to name or endorse candidates would be regarded as an effort to forstall or destroy the people's right to select their candidates by their vote.

I am very positive in my conviction that nothing should be done in this convention to arouse any just criticism. We are so anxious to hold the state in

¹⁹Nashville Tennessean, January 17, 1932, p. 1; February 16, p. 1; April 3, p. 1.

²⁰Ibid.

²¹"Lewis S. Pope to Mitchell Long," February 16, 1932, Pope Papers.

the democratic column, both in national and state elections, that we do not want to allow anything to be done that would give a just reason to any democrat not to vote for the democratic nominees [sic].²²

The movement for a platform being written by the May 20 convention was also opposed by A.B. Broadbent. But Tom Henderson, the chairman of the Democratic State Executive Committee, favored the platform movement and stated that the Executive Committee would allow it to be considered in the convention. Despite Henderson's support, the convention failed to enact a platform. When the convention convened, there was growing fear that E.H. Crump would attempt to control the proceedings and hence the writing of the platform. The fact that Pope announced his full platform on May 7, 1932, despite an April 2 statement that he would wait until after the May 20 convention, is evidence that the platform proposal had very little support among the major candidates. This, combined with the fear of a Crump-dominated convention, may have caused the defeat of the platform movement.²³

The major political issue in the 1932 Democratic Primary was, as in earlier elections, the question of machine rule in politics. Each candidate would accuse the others of a sinister connection with a manipulating political force. However vague and inconclusive this issue may have been, one aspect of it, Negro voting in the Democratic primary, emerged as the central cause of division in the party. Negroes had

²²"Lewis S. Pope to Mitchell Long," February 16, 1932, Pope Papers.

²³Nashville Tennessean, February 19, 1932, p. 1; February 28, p. 1; March 29, p. 1; May 15, p. 1; May 19, p. 1; May 22, p. 1.

traditionally been linked with the Republican Party in Tennessee. Since the 1880's, attempts were made to restrict the Negroes' role in the election process through the use of the poll tax. But in the 1920's and 1930's, the question of Negroes voting in the Democratic primary, under the direction and control of E.H. Crump, became an important political weapon used by the opponents of the Memphis-Shelby County machine. Where earlier the question of Negro voting involved a Democrat-versus-Republican fight for political dominance, it was now a question of who would control the Democratic Party machinery. Unfortunately, an already oppressed people were used as a political football by each faction in the party. Crump never recognized the Negro as his social equal but he definitely saw his equality in the ballot. The factions opposing Crump were aware of the power of Negro votes in the Memphis-Shelby County area. Racial overtones were involved, but the question of power politics was at the core of the factional fighting over Negro voting in the Democratic Party.²⁴

In early June of 1932, Collier Goodlett of Clarksville, then still a candidate in the Democratic primary, demanded that the State Executive Committee make sure that the August primary be restricted to the white voters in the state. Goodlett sent a petition to the committee demanding a "white democracy" resolution and requesting that all of the other candidates endorse it. All of the Democratic candidates supported the Goodlett proposal but the Executive Committee dropped it as a result

²⁴Key, Southern Politics, pp. 58-81; Steinberg, Bosses, pp. 72-133; Stanley J. Folmsbee, Robert E. Corlew, Enoch L. Mitchell, Tennessee: A Short History (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1967), pp. 392-411, 488-507.

of the work of Mitchell Long of Knoxville. Long used the position of Tennessee's Attorney General that the resolution would be illegal because of decisions by the U.S. Supreme Court. Long pointed out that the only way Negroes could be excluded from voting in a Democratic primary would be through a radical change in the party's nominating procedure.²⁵

The Goodlett Resolution was defeated but the state executive committee of the Democratic party did pass one resolution aimed at punishing massive Negro voting in the primary. One proposal, introduced by Patterson, would have involved a broad recognition that Negroes were largely considered members of the Republican Party. The large-scale voting by Negroes in the Democratic primary in any precinct would be considered grounds for the refusal of votes from that precinct. No particular precinct was named in the Patterson proposal, quoted below in full:

Whereas, it is provided by law that "no voter shall be eligible to vote in any primary election of any party unless he be a bona fide member of such political party and affiliated therewith or unless at the time he shall offer to vote he shall declare his allegiance to the political party in whose primary he offers to vote and states upon, if challenged, that he expects to affiliate with such party whose primary he is offering to vote," and

Whereas, there has been in the recent past an increasing tendency to relax the enforcement of this salutary provision of the law, so as to permit known Republicans to participate in Democratic primaries, a policy obviously

²⁵Nashville Tennessean, June 3, 1932, p. 1; June 4, p. 1; June 6, p. 1; June 7, p. 1. It is vague what changes Long believed were necessary. The Supreme Court decision referred to was Nixon vs. Herndon. This decision in March 1927 held that primary elections were subject to federal laws and couldn't bar negroes from voting for racial reasons. See the New York Times, March 8, 1927, pp. 1, 24; Clarksville Leaf-Chronicle (same date).

subversive of the purpose of the law, and manifestly detrimental to the interest of the Democratic Party; and

Whereas, all of the present Democratic candidates for governor have publicly proclaimed their opposition to this pernicious practice.

Now, therefore, the state executive committee of the Democratic party, the members of which committee are designated by law as the Democratic primary board, hereby declares its belief in and adherence to the policy of the statute above quoted as well as its provision thereof, and calls upon all election officers participating in the coming primary jealously to regard both the letter and spirit of this statute to the end that the results of the primary may accurately reflect the choice of the qualified electors, and may be in no degree affected by the influence of those who do not intend to support the Democratic nominees.

In the furtherance of this policy the executive committee of the Democratic party hereby declares its recognition of the fact that in no voting precincts of the state does any considerable number of negro votes affiliate with the Democratic party or purpose to support its nominee, and this committee therefore announces that it will regard the voting of any considerable number of negroes in any precinct as a badge of fraud so indicative of illegality in the conduct of the primary election that upon a canvass of the vote the returns not be allowed to affect the result of the election unless it shall be affirmatively shown that the returns from such precinct actually represent the choice of the voters legally qualified to participate in a Democratic primary and are otherwise free from fraud.²⁶

But the final resolution, passed 18-10 on July 23, was much more specific than the Patterson proposal:

Whereas, it is proved by law that no voter shall be eligible to vote in any primary election of any party unless he is a bona fide member of such political party and affiliated therewith, or unless at the time he shall offer to vote he shall declare his allegiance to the political party in whose primary he offers to vote, and states upon oath, if challenged, that he expects to affiliate with such party in whose primary he has offered to vote; and,

²⁶ Memphis Commercial-Appeal, July 23, 1932, pp. 1, 2.

Whereas, according to repeated charges which have been denied in the past several elections, negro voters have been herded in droves in Shelby County, which primary vote has never been reflected in the general elections; and,

Whereas, It is now openly boasted by word of mouth and into the papers that there are 31,000 negro registrants in Shelby County who expect to be again herded and voted in the Democratic primary of August 4; and

Whereas, It is common and universal knowledge throughout the state of Tennessee that negroes, as a class, belong to and are willingly subservients of the Republican party; and

Whereas, All of the present Democratic candidates for governor have publicly proclaimed their opposition to the pernicious practice of herding and voting vast numbers of negroes in Shelby County, now therefore, be it

Resolved by the state executive committee of the Democratic party, the members of which committee are designated by law as the state Democratic party board, having under law the power to declare the nominee for governor in the primary election of August 4 next; if the local officers of the Democratic primary election in Shelby or any other county of the state permit the negroes to be herded and voted by the thousands in said Democratic primary election in face of the common and universal knowledge that they belong to, and compose a part and parcel of the Republican party, that we, the state Democratic primary board, on contest being made, will deem this prima facie evidence of fraud, and will authorize the committee to disregard and cast out this vote and not consider the same in deforming the results of said Democratic primary election for governor.²⁷

This final resolution was influenced by Pope supporters on the committee. Attempts were made by McAlister supporters to weaken the resolution, but they failed. The July 23 Resolution was much more specific in that it named an actual area where voting frauds were allegedly taking place. Despite the opposition by his supporters on the

²⁷Memphis Commercial-Appeal, July 24, 1932, p. 1.

committee, Hill McAlister eventually joined with the other candidates in endorsing this final resolution.²⁸

The July 23 Resolution, passed amid fistfights and brawling, would be the basis of Pope's contest of the August 4 voting results. Outside the debate over the wording of the Resolution, there was little of substance in the primary campaign. Each candidate proclaimed himself free of political-machine rule. McAlister accused Pope and Patterson of being part of the Lea machine, while they, in turn, said McAlister was a willing tool of E.H. Crump. Patterson and McAlister both attacked Pope for his proposal to reduce the state payroll by fifty percent. Neither believed Pope was being realistic in making this promise. All three of the candidates supported Roosevelt for the presidency. McAlister, like Pope, campaigned for retrenchment in state government. In reality, the primary was to be determined not on real issues but on the results of the fight over who controlled party machinery. As pointed out above, the Negro voter was the axle upon which this wheel of party factionalism turned.²⁹

In describing Pope's 1932 primary campaign, one out-of-state newspaper stated that he was running "a foxy race as the 'champion of

²⁸ Memphis Commercial-Appeal, July 24, 1932, pp. 1, 2; Nashville Tennessean, July 24, 1932, pp. 1, 10; New York Times, July 24, 1932, p. 4.

²⁹ Nashville Tennessean, June 11, 1932, p. 10; June 16, p. 3; June 19, p. 2; June 24, p. 1; June 25, p. 2; July 11, p. 1; July 14, p. 1; July 15, p. 1; July 20, p. 1; July 23, p. 1; July 24, pp. 1, 5; July 27, p. 1; July 29, p. 1; July 30, p. 1; July 31, p. 1; August 1, p. 1; Clarksville Leaf-Chronicle, July 28, 1932, p. 4; July 29, p. 1; Memphis Press-Scimitar, July 2, 1932, p. 4; July 5, p. 4; July 15, p. 6. On McAlister's campaign for retrenchment, see Lee S. Greene and Robert Avery, Government in Tennessee (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1966), p. 100, hereafter cited as Greene, Tennessee.

the people' against 'two machines': the old Horton-Lea Machine . . . and the Crump-Howse Machine." Pope, according to the same writer, was attempting to create the image of a country-versus-city campaign, with him as the protector of agrarian interests:

Pope is also playing the old Luke Lea trick of lining the country up against the city. . . . It has been twenty years since a city man was elected Governor of Tennessee, Patterson being the last.³⁰

Although Pope placed great emphasis in the 1932 campaign on the need for retrenchment in government and on the problems of the taxpayer, earning him the title of "Lewis Pope, the taxpayer's hope,"³¹ the major emphasis of his campaign involved attacking machine rule and political bossism.

Pope's campaign began to gain in strength in the last days of the primary. The Nashville Tennessean described Pope as the "fastest 'darkhorse' that has entered a Tennessee derby since 1916." The paper recognized that Pope's strength had greatly increased in West Tennessee since 1928 and that without the opposition from Memphis and Shelby County he could easily win the nomination.³²

An indication of Pope's growing strength in the last days of the primary campaign can be found in the increasing attacks on him by McAlister and Crump. McAlister called Pope a demagogue controlled by Luke Lea and a leader of the political machine that ruled Tennessee in 1926.³³ Crump attacked Pope's record in the general assembly of 1913:

³⁰New York Times, July 24, 1936, Section II, p. 6.

³¹Citizen-Appeal, November 7, 1932, p. 2.

³²Nashville Tennessean, August 4, 1932, pp. 1, 3, 11.

³³Memphis Commercial-Appeal, July 31, 1932, pp. 1, 2; August 2,

I knew him [Pope] and heard him vote when he was a member of the Tennessee State Senate from Bledsoe County. He always voted with the big corporations and against the interests of the people.³⁴

Crump may also have remembered the proposal Pope introduced in 1913 for the removal of city officials who failed to obey state laws. One writer suggests that Crump's fury against Pope resulted from McAlister's narrow defeat in the 1928 primary. The number of votes won by Pope that year would have given McAlister the nomination.³⁵

But Pope's growing strength could not be measured with validity until the actual primary race took place. The results of the August 4 primary gave impetus to Pope's determination to win the governorship and marked the beginning of the major phase of his 1932 campaign. The headlines of the Nashville Tennessean on the morning after the primary proclaimed Pope the winner despite the "orgy of election frauds by the Crump Machine." The Tennessean believed that Pope's victory was the result of last-minute switches by supporters of Patterson. But the paper also recognized that the results of the election were still incomplete. The Memphis vote had not been completely reported.³⁶

When the results were completely tabulated, Hill McAlister was victorious in actual vote count. Pope won pluralities in seven of the state's nine congressional districts and sixty of the state's ninety-five counties. The overall vote count is as follows:

³⁴Memphis Commercial-Appeal, July 31, 1932, pp. 1, 2; August 2, p. 7.

³⁵See above Chapter I, pp. 9-10; Steinberg, The Bosses, pp. 94-95.

³⁶Nashville Tennessean, August 5, 1932, p. 1.

McAlister	116,020
Patterson	58,195
Pope	106,450 ³⁷

In West Tennessee, Pope and Patterson divided the counties that Horton won in the 1928 primary. As in 1928, Pope made a strong showing in Middle Tennessee, losing only six counties, including Davidson. The vote count by county was evenly divided in East Tennessee. But measuring the vote count according to the number of counties won is irrelevant when the actual nominee is chosen. The essential determining factor leading to McAlister's victory was the vote total he received in the counties with large urban centers, especially Shelby County and Davidson County. If the total vote count from those two counties had been excluded for both Pope and McAlister, Pope would have won by 26,557 votes.

The simple fact of McAlister's vote count in urban areas, especially Memphis, combined with the campaign accusations of bossism directed against McAlister, provided the impetus for Pope's next move. Specifically basing his action on the July 23 Resolution, Pope decided to contest the primary election results before the Democratic State Executive Committee when it met to certify the results of the August 4 primary.

Pope began to receive support for a contest of the election results soon after the August primary. He also gained the public

³⁷ Heard, Southern Primaries, p. 117.

support of Malcolm Patterson and the major newspapers that endorsed the Patterson campaign.³⁸

The voting in Memphis and Shelby County was the central issue of Pope's contest of the August 4 primary. Pope received the support of Rembert Moon, a member of the Shelby County election commission. Moon warned Pope that the Crump machine would probably try to persuade the national Democratic executive committee to step in and aid McAlister "for the sake of harmony." Moon promised to give Pope his full support when the Democratic executive committee convened on August 24.³⁹

Two anonymous letters received by Pope and by one of his supporters in Memphis gives a good picture of the nature of the support behind Pope in 1932. One letter attempted to explain the basis for E.H. Crump's power in Memphis:

If the government would send a man here Memphis who could not be "bought," these are a few of the facts he could ascertain.

Every government-aided job, from the least clerical position, to the building projects, are absolutely controlled by the Machine politicians. Young women and girls, from prominent families who have a pull, are holding positions in the Seed Loan office, and using the money thus obtained for luxuries, while others who need it for the bare necessities of life are left out.

The S & W Construction Company got the two big building contracts, Shelby County Hospital and John Gaston Hospital, because Mr. Crump makes eight or ten thousand dollars a year out of the insurance they give him.

³⁸"Charles S. Stephens to Lewis S. Pope," August 5, 1932; "T.H. Alexander to Lewis S. Pope," August 7; "Charles Trabue to Lewis S. Pope," August 8; "Jordon Stokes to Lewis S. Pope," August 8; "Jordon Stokes to Lewis S. Pope, August 18; "William Burns to Lewis S. Pope," August 8; "Bolling Madison to T. Pope Shepherd," August 8; "G.T. Brandon to T. Pope Shepherd," August 10, Pope Papers; Nashville Tennessean, August 5, 1932, p. 1; August 9, p. 4; August 10, p. 1; Memphis Commercial-Appeal, August 8, 1932, p. 4; August 10, p. 4.

³⁹"Rembert Moon to Lewis S. Pope," August 6, 10, 1932, Pope Papers.

On the Shelby County Hospital they were not the low bidders, until they were tipped off, from the architect's office, and cut seven thousand dollars from their original bid, bringing them four thousand under the bid submitted by the General Contractors of Detroit. . . .

This job was three-fourths fixed by Mr. Hanker, the architect, and Mr. E.H. Hale, the County Commissioner, before any bids were opened. Mr. Hanker would go out to Mr. Hale's home, and all arrangements were made there. Because of too much unfavorable publicity, the plumbing and electrical contracts did not go as arranged, but just about everything did.

The two big lime and cement companys [sic], Fischer and Denie (both of whom contributed generously to the campaign fund) were told to submit duplicate prices for their wares including brick, and the business would be decided between them. To keep it from being too obvious, a small amount of brick was purchased from the Central Lime and Cement Company. At least one sub-contractor, whose figure S & W used in compiling their estimate, was double crossed, and S & W did the work themselves, using cheap labor, thereby adding to their own profit, and the "split" with the inner circle. And they did not hesitate to say that Mr. Crump would take no decided stand against these little irregularities, because of the business they gave him.

As this job went, so will the John Gaston Hospital job go.

They did let another contractor have the Juvenile Court job, which is a comparatively small one, but all material, . . . will be furnished by the "right" ones.

When the E.H. Crump Stadium was being built, the specifications called for new, first class brick, and . . . the Fischer Lime and Cement Company was paid well for first class brick. What he furnished was second class, used brick, and they were ok'ed and passed, by . . . the City Engineer.

Mr. Fischer had entered into a partnership with one Frank Perlman, to buy the brick of demolished old buildings, but when he found out what a profitable enterprise it could be, he summarily dissolved the partnership. . . .

These are just samples of what is going on in Machine Controlled Memphis. Government aid is aiding only the politicians and their friends.

It is general knowledge, but the people are afraid to talk, or act.⁴⁰

⁴⁰"Anonymous to Judge Butler," undated, Pope Papers.

The other letter, written by a Negro, gives a good view of one aspect of the voting procedure in Memphis. It also helps to show how many Negro voters may have felt about the political process and their reluctance to act on those feelings. The letter had a poll tax receipt and a voter registration ticket attached:

Just a few lines to let you know how corrupt this election was. I am a negro man, and have not registered nor ever paid any poll tax. Yet when I approached the polling place, I was given these enclosed papers, so I would be qualified to vote. Knowing this was wrong, I carried the papers home, and did not vote, yet there were hundreds voting under these same conditions. There was plenty of whiskey and homebrew to be had and some places were paying as much as two dollars for voters.

We were instructed to mark the ballot for McAllister [sic] for Governor, Crump for Congress, also Hill and Brown if I remember rightly.

I think it is a disgrace to allow votes of this kind to be polled, and a contestation of these votes would be the proper proceeding, and then everybody would see Pope ahead of all opponents.

Now I will not give my name, because the Memphis Police would be on me, with both feet, if this should be published, but in conclusion I say, the negro vote was in the thousands and it was all as crooked as the proverbial corkscrew.⁴¹

The support Pope received emphasized that the contest would be a protest against Negro voting in the Democratic primary and the control of the primary process by the voters of one county. The typed copy of an editorial sent to Pope, published by the Scott County News, helps further to illustrate this protest:

⁴¹ "Anonymous to State Headquarters of Lewis S. Pope," undated, Pope Papers.

Mr. Pope waged an honest fearless campaign before the people of this state and, barring the negro vote of Memphis and Shelby County, secured the nomination at the hands of the Democracy of Tennessee for the highest office of this Commonwealth.

Considering the fact that Lewis S. Pope carried the large majority of the counties in all sections of the state and polled enough of the votes of Tennessee's white Democracy to nominate him for Governor of Tennessee, I feel that he should be given the nomination as the Standard Bearer in the coming November election.

I do not think it fair or wise for the entire state of Tennessee to be placed in jeopardy by the votes of a single city or county and it is my honest opinion that Honorable Lewis S. Pope is the choice of the Democrats of this state in the recent primary election.⁴²

One Pope supporter believed that the nomination of Hill McAlister meant a return to the days of Reconstruction: "I believe that we as democrats should not turn our primary over to the Negroes of this state. This would return us to the condition that existed just following the Civil War."⁴³ Emphasis was always placed on describing the election process as the white man's chief means of maintaining control. The Democratic party was viewed as the best vehicle for this control:

. . . we commend Mr. Pope's action in claiming the nomination for Governor at the hands of the White Democrats of Tennessee, for the reason that we believe that the principles of Democracy as advocated by Thomas Jefferson and Woodrow Wilson should be preserved and that the methods used in the election of August 4th were undemocratic, and that such practices, if ignored, will utterly destroy the Democratic party. . . .⁴⁴

Tom Collier, a Memphis attorney described by Crump's biographer as an "eccentric member of an old Memphis family" and a self-proclaimed

⁴²A copy of the editorial, dated August 13, 1932, is available in Pope Papers.

⁴³"Lee A. Bruding to Luis S. Pope" [sic], August 13, 1932, Pope Papers.

⁴⁴"Frank Turner to Sam Carmack," Pope Papers.

leader of "Crump's major political opposition in Memphis" also offered his support to Pope. Collier promised Pope "cotton baskets full" of affidavits from Memphis to support the contest of election results in that city. Collier was also defeated in the August 4 primary when he sought to unseat Crump in the U.S. Congress. Collier filed a contest on that race but failed to have it overturned.⁴⁵

One attorney in Dover, Tennessee attempted to raise an issue similar to the Horton promise of 1928. This Pope-supporter claimed that McAlister had promised members of the Tennessee General Assembly that he would not seek the governorship in 1932 in exchange for election as State Treasurer in 1931. Pope probably wanted to avoid an issue like this because it might have taken some of the attention away from the August 24 contest.⁴⁶

Claims of fraud were also reported from small counties that were won by McAlister. An attorney in Carter County reported to Sam Carmack that all five members of that county's Primary Board were supporters of McAlister. A written protest to the county chairman was ignored. Carter County was one of the East Tennessee counties in which McAlister received a plurality of the votes.⁴⁷

There was also a fear that if McAlister were allowed to remain the nominee then the Republican candidate would be elected in the general election. The only way Pope would have a chance of winning the

⁴⁵Miller, Crump, pp. 61-62; "Tom Collier to Lewis S. Pope," August 15, 1932, Pope Papers.

⁴⁶"G.T. Brandon to Sam Carmack," August 15, 1932, Pope Papers.

⁴⁷"E.M. Johnson to Sam Carmack," August 16, 1932, Pope Papers; Heard, Southern Primaries, p. 117.

governorship would be, it was believed, through an independent candidacy.⁴⁸

Soon after the decision was made to contest the election results of August 4, Pope publicly demanded that McAlister disavow the votes he had received in Shelby County and Davidson County. Pope stated that McAlister had won as a result of a large number of Negro votes. Then he reminded McAlister of the July 23 Resolution which condemned large-scale Negro voting as obvious fraud. Pope also reminded McAlister that he had endorsed the resolution soon after its passage. He promised McAlister that a contest of the election results would be carried out if he refused to give up the nomination:

I believe that I owe it to the Democratic Party to attempt to establish a precedent that the Democratic Party must be ruled by white democratic voters, and must not be controlled and dominated and corrupted by a vote of a balance of power by negro votes.⁴⁹

McAlister didn't answer Pope's demand immediately and this led to another public accusation by Pope:

In my former letter I stated that until I heard from you to the contrary, I would not impugn your good faith in the pledge that you had repeatedly made during the campaign but that, if you failed to keep it, you would stand convicted of having violated a solemn pledge to the people, and would cast suspicion on the other campaign pledges you had made them, and would stand responsible for any resulting injury to the Democratic Party.⁵⁰

⁴⁸"I.W. Loy to Sam Carmack," August 15, 1932; "G.A. Baily to Sam Carmack," August 17; "L.M. England, et al. to Sam Carmack," August 17; "A.B. Cole to Sam Carmack," August 17, Pope Papers.

⁴⁹"Lewis S. Pope to Hill McAlister," August 9, 1932, Pope Papers; Nashville Tennessean, August 11, p. 1.

⁵⁰"Lewis S. Pope to Hill McAlister," August 13, 1932, Pope Papers.

When McAlister finally answered Pope, he disavowed the claim that his nomination was the result of large-scale Negro voting.

McAlister accused Pope of being a tool of Luke Lea in contesting the election results:

You have correctly quoted my early statement declaring that I was one of the first candidates to join a movement inaugurated in the beginning of this campaign to make the democratic party a white man's party, and that I would not accept the nomination as a result of illegal or corrupt voting of any class, black or white, in any city or any county. You have the effrontery to ask me now, because of these statements, to surrender my nomination for Governor to you.

I made these statements and stand by them. In making them I did not intend . . . to let you, a defeated and disgruntled candidate, be the judge, nor did I intend to become the victim of the machination of Luke Lea. If you do not know, the people of Tennessee do, what Luke Lea will expect and demand of you, should you be elected Governor of Tennessee.⁵¹

McAlister pointed out that he had been defeated by narrow margins in 1926 and 1928 but did not protest the vote results. McAlister believed that harmony in the state party was important and necessary because of the presidential election of 1932. In other words, McAlister refused to give up the Democratic nomination.⁵²

Pope had decided by August 8 to contest the election and filed a petition with the State Executive Committee, acting as the Primary Board, on August 10. T. Pope Shepherd, one of the lawyers who would aid Pope, stated that Shelby County and Davidson County would be the

⁵¹"Hill McAlister to Lewis S. Pope," August 13, 1932, Pope Papers; Nashville Tennessean, August 14, 1932, p. 1.

⁵²Ibid.

two major areas where voting results would be contested.⁵³ These, of course, were the areas in which alleged election frauds were most flagrant.

Soon after filing his petition with the Executive Committee, Pope announced that he would begin a speaking tour prior to the meeting on August 24 which would hear the petition. He hoped to gain wider public support for the contest. The speaking tour began in Paris on August 17 and was concentrated in West and Middle Tennessee. Pope concentrated on attacking the alleged conspiracies by city machines to control state government in Tennessee. He promised that if the results of the primary were overturned he would be willing to have a run-off primary against McAlister.⁵⁴

One speaker who introduced Pope during the post-primary speaking tour believed that the chief issue of the contest would not be "whether Hill McAlister or Mr. Pope was the gubernatorial nominee, but whether the Jacksonian and Jeffersonian policies shall be supplanted by those of Grump and Howse."⁵⁵ Pope believed that he was upholding the virtues of white democracy and the Jeffersonian-Jacksonian tradition that supposedly provided the basis for those virtues. The August 24 meeting of the Executive Committee would involve "the white men and women of Tennessee" against the "city bosses of Memphis and Nashville with the aid of 30,000 negroes who never pretended to be Democratic."⁵⁶

⁵³Nashville Tennessean, August 9, 1932, p. 1; August 10, p. 1.

⁵⁴Ibid., August 14, p. 1; August 18, p. 1; August 19, p. 1; August 21, p. 1.

⁵⁵Ibid., August 21, p. 1.

⁵⁶Ibid., August 19, p. 1.

Joe Hatcher of the Nashville Tennessean summarized the nature of the party's factional fight in 1932:

Whether the stronger wing of the state's white Democrats, which cast more than 105,000 votes against Hill McAlister of the Crump-Howse city machine wing shall be preserved is the major question to come before the state Democratic executive committee on August 24. . . .⁵⁷

The Memphis Press-Scimitar, in declaring Pope the real nominee of the Democratic Party, published a cartoon showing McAlister eating from the "Republican Blackberry Pie."⁵⁸

There were national ramifications of Pope's contest of the primary results. Thomas Fauntleroy of the New York Times believed that if the Democratic Executive Committee in Tennessee, supposedly controlled by the Horton Administration, overturned the results of the primary then the state's party would suffer a split like 1910. Fauntleroy felt that the stand of the Democratic Party on the national level would be important. Any action by the national executive committee would probably lead to disaster and hence the committee would withhold any public statements until after the August 24 proceedings were concluded. This belief proved to be largely correct.⁵⁹

The events, accusations and counter-accusations that occurred between August 4 and August 24 were bound to increase the tension that would be in evidence in the meeting of the executive committee. Prior

⁵⁷Nashville Tennessean, August 15, 1932, p. 1.

⁵⁸Memphis Press-Scimitar, August 9, 1932, p. 4.

⁵⁹New York Times, August 14, 1932, Section II, p. 7.

to the August 24 meeting, T.H. Alexander attempted to describe the gravity of the issues involved in Pope's contest. Alexander summarized by stating that there "hasn't been anything funny about Tennessee politics since August 4."⁶⁰

One article written by Alexander on the eve of the August 24 meeting in Nashville provides a good description of Lewis S. Pope's style and his political following. Alexander believed that Pope was a symbol of the general anger of rural and small-town voters in Tennessee over the political and economic situation in the state since 1930. In the year 1932, party regularity would have been ridiculous.

. . . you couldn't tell whether Mr. Pope was campaigning for office or conducting a protracted meeting. There is something evangelic in his nature undoubtedly and his speaking resembled more an old time Methodist camp meeting than a political rally. He talked like a "called" man and undoubtedly he thought himself annointed by the people of the commonwealth to lead them against Crump.

It is all very well to talk of party regularity but party regularity has a hollow sound when it comes from a political machine that regularly bolted the ticket everytime a governor like Austin Peay was nominated. The "Taylor Democrats" of the Crump machine of 1922 are yet fresh in memory. If the Democratic Party in Tennessee is dead it has been done to death by city bosses, whose political views are sad misfits in a state yet predominately agrarian.

The only political organization in the state today which is on the upgrade is that of Lewis S. Pope. It is apparently held together by no organized effort but by the deep indignation of a people betrayed.⁶¹

⁶⁰Nashville Tennessean, August 23, 1932, p. 4.

⁶¹Ibid.

The tense nature of the meeting was increased when rumors began to spread in Nashville that two members of the Executive Committee had been offered bribes by McAlister supporters. Both members claimed that they were offered state jobs in exchange for voting against Pope's contest petition. Despite these rumors, and a warning from a Bolivar, Tennessee supporter that another member had been approached, Pope did not make use of the bribery charge during the meeting.⁶²

As stated before, Pope received the support of Patterson in contesting the primary results. "Kit" Williams, a Memphis attorney and the son of the Mississippi Senator John Sharp Williams, had been one of Patterson's leading supporters in Shelby County. Soon after the August 4 primary, Williams openly supported Pope and began to gather evidence in Memphis to help in the contest of the election results. T. Pope Shepherd would act as Pope's chief counsel during the meeting. The stage was now set for Pope's attempt to overturn the results of the Democratic primary.⁶³

Pope based his contest of the election results on the July 23 Resolution of the Democratic Executive Committee. That resolution stated that the votes in any voting precinct would be voided if proof of fraud could be provided. Specifically, the large-scale voting of Negroes in the Democratic party primary would be viewed as prima facie evidence of fraud because of the Negroes' traditional connection with the Republican Party in Tennessee.

⁶²Nashville Tennessean, August 23, 1932, p. 1; August 24, p. 1; "E.G. Dorris to Lewis S. Pope," August 14, 1932, Pope Papers.

⁶³Memphis Commercial-Appeal, July 30, 1932, p. 7; August 25, p. 1; Nashville Tennessean, August 9, 1932, p. 1.

The Democratic State Executive Committee, acting as the State Primary Board, was the legal authority for certifying the results of the party's primary and ruling on any contested elections. The rules adopted by the Primary Board placed the Pope contest petition as the first order of business at its meeting on August 24. But the attorneys representing Pope attempted to test the voting mood of the committee by challenging the right of two members of the committee legally to hold their positions, based on the dubious nature of their legal residency. That this would be an early test of the committee's mood is clearly shown by the fact that both of the members were defended by McAlister supporters.⁶⁴

The challenge of the two members--Flora Gillentine and Malcolm McDermott--was presented in the form of a motion to refuse their seating on the committee because they were no longer residents of Tennessee and not legally qualified to serve on the state's Democratic Primary Board. The photostatic copy of an absentee voters certificate and a copy of a voting list from North Carolina showed that McDermott, a law professor at Duke University, had voted in that state in 1932. Evidence was also presented which showed that Gillentine had paid a poll tax in Arkansas in January 1932 and was listed as a taxpayer in that state.⁶⁵

⁶⁴ Nashville Tennessean, August 25, 1932, p. 3.

⁶⁵ Before the State Democratic Primary Board: Transcript of Proceedings on Contest of Lewis S. Pope, August 24, 1932 (copy available in Pope Papers), pp. 1-3, hereafter cited as Proceedings; Nashville Tennessean, August 25, 1932, p. 3.

Both McDermott and Gillentine admitted they both voted in states outside Tennessee in 1932; yet they believed that legal precedent allowed them to vote in one state and be members of the political party leadership of another. Both members gave short speeches on their loyalty to the Democratic Party and Tennessee. Both believed that this loyalty was enough to allow them to remain members of the Primary Board. Ed Seay, a McAlister supporter, presented the precedents that Gillentine and McDermott claimed would support their arguments.⁶⁶

During the presentations of evidence by Seay, E.H. Crump, the real target of Pope's contest petition, walked into the committee meeting room and, with the sound of applause filling the room, talked to several members of the committee. Although this was a seemingly innocent incident at the time, in retrospect it was an ominous indication of what decisions would be reached by the committee.⁶⁷

Seay presented the evidence for Gillentine and McDermott in the form of legal precedents contending that the intent of an individual was the most important factor in determining legal residency and hence membership in a state's political party. T. Pope Shepherd attempted to counter Seay's argument by presenting statutes from Tennessee law that he believed supported the motion to have McDermott and Gillentine removed.⁶⁸

⁶⁶Proceedings, pp. 4, 7-10.

⁶⁷Ibid., p. 9.

⁶⁸Ibid., pp. 11-13.

After the presentation of evidence by Shepherd, the committee quickly acted on a motion by Dancy Fort to dismiss the removal motion against McDermott and Gillentine. The Fort motion was passed 28 to 8 and both members were allowed to remain on the committee.⁶⁹

This part of the August 24 meeting was an important preliminary to the presentation of Pope's contest petition. One newspaper that supported Pope after the August 4 primary stated that the decision on Gillentine and McDermott indicated that most of the committee had already decided to vote against the contest. As stated above, the fact that McDermott and Gillentine were represented by McAlister supporters such as Dancy Fort and Mitchell Long is significant proof of the importance of the vote on this preliminary issue.⁷⁰

The drama of Pope's contest petition was weakened by the vote on the seating of Gillentine and McDermott, but the determination of Pope to present the evidence was not. Pope would be able to use the contest as the basis for an independent campaign. Before Pope's petition was taken up by the committee, one member, Henry Colton, recommended that both candidates in the contest should agree to support the decisions of the committee. No action was taken on this suggestion. It was obvious that Pope's contest of the August 4 primary would go beyond the committee proceedings of August 24.⁷¹

The committee proceedings, held in the House of Representatives in Nashville before an overflowing crowd, now turned its full attention

⁶⁹Proceedings, pp. 11-13.

⁷⁰Nashville Tennessean, August 25, 1932, p. 3.

⁷¹Ibid.; Proceedings, p. 14.

to the Pope petition. T. Pope Shepherd opened the contest by reading a general petition which stated the basic outline of the evidence to be presented for the contest. The petition opened by stating that Pope had gained a "substantial plurality of the valid and legal votes" and that McAlister, second in legally cast vote, had received a large number of illegal Negro votes that gave him a plurality in the primary. The petition stated that Pope had a 20,000-vote lead in the counties outside Shelby County and that the "alleged primary election" held in that county was a complete fraud.⁷²

The votes from Shelby County, according to the petition, should not be accepted, based on the July 23 Resolution of the Democratic Executive Committee:

The undoubted import of such resolution was a forword of warning to all interested parties that only Democratic voters would be accepted by this board as controlling the result of the primary. This resolution was a distinct and definite declaration of the policy of this board, not only denouncing the alleged practice in certain places of voting large numbers of ignorant and irresponsible negroes in the Democratic primary, but proclaiming in advance that such a course would not be countenanced nor accepted in computing the results.⁷³

Since Negroes were "notoriously known" as members of the Republican Party, their voting in a Democratic Primary was, according to the petition, "destructive and subversive of the principle of intra-party control."⁷⁴

⁷²Clarksville Leaf-Chronicle, August 24, 1932, pp. 1, 2; Proceedings, p. 13; To the Democratic Primary Election Board of Tennessee: The Petition of Lewis S. Pope, A Citizen and Resident of the State of Tennessee (copy available in Pope Papers), pp. 3-4, hereafter cited as Petition.

⁷³Petition, pp. 4-5.

⁷⁴Ibid., p. 5.

As McAlister sat silently on one side of the aisle in the committee meeting room and Pope paced in the hall outside, Shepherd read on, describing other frauds in Memphis. One fraud involved the selection of election officials in the county. The local election board had earlier appointed a list of officials evenly divided between the major candidates, but three days before the primary the county board changed the election officials. The change made gave McAlister supporters clear control of most of the polling areas in the county. This action, according to the petition, took place after the expiration of time for an appeal to the state primary board. Attempts by Pope and Patterson-supporters to place inspectors at the polls were blocked by the "strong arm of the conspiracy."⁷⁵

The petition also covered frauds in vote counting and certification. The Shelby County voting officials, according to the petition, accepted many votes from people who were not members of the Democratic party, especially a large number of Negroes. Many votes were miscalled and falsely counted for McAlister. Many ballots out of voting areas were marked for McAlister and then delivered to the polls by voters. All of these frauds were "part of the unholy scheme and lawless plot to build up a fictitious vote and were known to and connived at by the members of the primary board of Shelby County . . . and the leading spirits of the dominating political organization in such county."⁷⁶

⁷⁵Clarksville Leaf-Chronicle, August 24, 1932, pp. 1, 2; Petition, pp. 6-7.

⁷⁶Petition, pp. 7-8.

Naming E.H. Crump as the "generalissimo of the political organization in Shelby County," the petition stated that the election frauds in Shelby County were part of a pre-conceived plan that involved bloc registration and voting, misuse of the poll tax and the expenditure of an estimated fifty-thousand dollars in carrying out the conspiracy. In the summary of the frauds in Shelby County, the Pope petition cited twenty-one different violations of both the law and Democratic party rules.⁷⁷

Although the petition placed emphasis on the election frauds in Shelby County, it also attempted to describe similar violations in other counties. The other counties involved were Davidson, Union, Rutherford, McNairy, Lake and Obion.⁷⁸

The opening petition of Pope was highly polemical in nature and lacked definite specificity in its charges of fraud and conspiracy in the August 4 primary. But this document does provide a good summary of the major issues of the August 24 meeting of the Executive Committee. Many of the accusations in this petition are usually repeated in any study of the Crump organization, but Lewis S. Pope is never given credit for having presented them in one unified political indictment.⁷⁹

When T. Pope Shepherd finished reading the petition, J.J. Bean, an attorney representing McAlister, read the answer to the accusations made. The McAlister answer, much longer than Pope's petition, acted

⁷⁷Petition, p. 9.

⁷⁸Ibid., pp. 9-17.

⁷⁹Steinberg, The Bosses, pp. 72-133; Miller, Crump, p. 176. Miller dismisses Pope's contest in one paragraph. This is the only extensive biography of E.H. Crump available and is of dubious value in that it is the only study of Crump that this writer could find which did not mention the name Bob Church.

both as a motion to dismiss and an answer to the charges made in the petition.⁸⁰

The McAlister answer opened by attacking the petition for its vagueness and lack of specificity. The Pope petition, according to Bean, provided no real proof of the actual number of illegally cast votes. Bean pointed out that the Executive Committee would have no valid way of determining the facts of the alleged frauds and the actual number of illegal votes.⁸¹

The contest petition presented by Pope would, according to Bean, void the "whole primary election held in the State of Tennessee" if voted on favorably by the committee. None of the three candidates could claim a valid vote count if the votes in certain counties were voided.⁸²

While relying on the motion to dismiss the contest petition for its "inherent insufficiency," the McAlister answer attempted to answer the general charges of fraud. The answer pointed out that McAlister had lost by smaller margins in 1926 and 1928, yet did not contest the results. The McAlister answer also accused Pope of receiving a large number of illegally cast votes. But the essential theme of the McAlister answer was an attack on the lack of specificity in the contest petition. The remainder of the answer provided an outline of the evidence that would

⁸⁰ Proceedings, pp. 15-16.

⁸¹ Before the State Board of Primary Election Commission of the State of Tennessee--Election Contest, Motion to Dismiss and Answer of Hill McAlister (copy available in Pope Papers), pp. 1-2.

⁸² Ibid., p. 5.

he presented to refute the charges made in the contest petition.⁸³ When Bean completed the reading of the McAlister answer, both sides agreed to limit the time for presentation of evidence to three hours. Both sides also agreed to present the evidence in substance rather than reading all of the affidavits collected.⁸⁴

Before beginning the presentation of proof there was a short, confusing debate over the nature of the McAlister answer acting as a motion to dismiss the Pope petition. T. Pope Shepherd attempted to quash the motion to dismiss by stating that McAlister was not relying on the motion to dismiss "if we hear the case on its merits." In other words, Shepherd was attempting to gain a vote on the facts of the petition rather than on a motion to dismiss it. As the failure of the committee to accept the petition would be an issue used by Pope in the November General Election, a vote on the petition itself would have been more valuable as a political weapon. The chairman of the committee, Tom Henderson, ruled in favor of McAlister and allowed his supporters to rely on the motion to dismiss.⁸⁵

"Kit" Williams opened the presentation of evidence by reading affidavits pertaining to the frauds in Shelby County. He began by again reminding the committee of the July 23 resolution they had passed which declared large-scale Negro voting to be prima facie evidence of fraud. The first group of affidavits dealt with ballot-box stuffing in Memphis. The second group involved the alleged conspiracy that the opening

⁸³ McAlister Answer, pp. 6-100.

⁸⁴ Proceedings, pp. 16-17.

⁸⁵ Ibid., pp. 18-20.

petition had described. Facts supporting the conspiracy theory included "proof of ghost registration and mass Negro registration from vacant houses, from vacant lots, from garages that don't exist and various and sundry other fraudulent registrations."⁸⁶

Will Manier, Jr. presented the evidence supporting the accusation of fraud in Davidson County. He described Davidson County as an "apt pupil of the county of Shelby." Manier opened by showing proof that Pope was not allowed an equal representation on the primary board in Davidson County. He then went on to present examples of affidavits describing ballot-box stuffing, dual voting, misuse of poll receipts and interference with authorized poll watchers. After the presentation of proof on frauds in Davidson County, the Pope attorneys withdrew the contest on the voting results in other counties because of lack of proof. The Pope attorneys then reserved the rest of their time for rebuttal against McAlister's presentation of proof.⁸⁷

The McAlister attorneys opened the night session of the meeting by stating that they would disprove the claims of fraud by the use of affidavits and the "census of the United States." An attorney for McAlister named Bryant opened the affidavit-readings by claiming that he had 7,490 sworn statements supporting McAlister. The wide support for McAlister in the audience viewing the proceedings became much more noticeable at this point.⁸⁸

⁸⁶Proceedings, pp. 20-37.

⁸⁷Ibid., pp. 39-44.

⁸⁸Ibid., pp. 45, 48.

Bryant attacked Pope's claim that 30,000 Negroes had voted in Shelby County. Using a certified list of the poll tax collected in Shelby County, Bryant claimed that there were only 7,956 Negroes actually registered. "Kit" Williams immediately attacked this claim by Bryant:

Mr. Williams: Does that also show the number of negroes who were registered as being over fifty and under twenty-one?

Mr. Bryant: If you had been willing to pay \$500 you could have found that out (applause).

Mr. Williams: I renew the question: does the list show the negroes under twenty-one and over fifty who were exempt from poll tax?

Mr. Bryant: I will conduct my case. Mr. Williams has had plenty of time to show everything he had.

Mr. Williams: He hasn't answered that question.

Bryant never answered the question and Henderson allowed him to continue.⁸⁹

Using the U.S. Census for 1930, Bryant showed that Memphis had 172,177 eligible voters. Then, by comparing that number with the percentage of voters who voted in Pope's home county of Bledsoe, Bryant claimed that Memphis had a much lower voter turnout: "They say we herded voters. If we had herded one fourth of our population in Memphis alone, we would have 77,845 votes."⁹⁰

Bryant also claimed that many former Patterson supporters were giving affidavits for McAlister. This was an attempt to counter the belief that Pope had gained all of the Patterson support after the

⁸⁹ Proceedings, pp. 48-49.

⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 50.

August 4 primary. Bryant then continued to present examples of affidavits that he believed countered each charge made by Pope.⁹¹

A new dimension was added to the proceedings when a McAlister attorney, presenting evidence against the claims of fraud in Davidson County, read the affidavits of several Negroes who claimed they had voted for Patterson and Pope "indiscriminately." This same attorney also claimed that the Pope petition had more Negroes voting in the primary than were registered. The dubious nature of making this claim was not noted by Pope's attorneys.⁹²

One attorney for McAlister presented evidence that purported to prove that there were voting irregularities in counties where Pope received a majority of the votes. These counties included Bledsoe, Lauderdale and Haywood. Again, this aspect of the McAlister presentation of proof seems inconsistent with the earlier claim that any voting irregularities should lead to the entire primary being voided. But the Pope attorneys again failed to take advantage of this obvious contradiction.⁹³

Thomas Shriver presented the rebuttal for Pope and attempted to refute the charges of fraud made against Pope supporters. "Kit" Williams closed the presentation of evidence by attempting to contradict the McAlister affidavits from Shelby County. T. Pope Shepherd tried to have the proceedings extended by asking for a final summary by both sides and a postponement of the vote until the next day. But the committee

⁹¹Proceedings, pp. 51-65.

⁹²Ibid., pp. 47-73.

⁹³Ibid., pp. 74-80.

refused further delay and decided to vote. The final confusing moments ended with a vote on a motion, made by Dancy Fort, to dismiss the Pope petition. The Fort motion was passed 31 to 7, and McAlister was declared the nominee.⁹⁴

The proceedings of the Democratic Executive Committee on August 24, 1932 are easily traced but the motives behind their decision are not. This writer attempted to find some of the members, but succeeded only in determining that most, if not all, are dead by now. The chairman of the committee, Tom Henderson, stated in an interview many years later that Pope did not make a proper presentation of evidence to warrant a favorable vote on his petition.⁹⁵ Clearly, Crump had an overwhelming amount of evidence to counter the Pope petition, but this doesn't help to explain the lopsided nature of the final vote. The vote of the committee on the July 23 resolution is an indication that Pope's petition should have received more support, if not enough for a favorable vote. Supporters of Pope later believed that the pressure applied by Crump, including physical threats, may have persuaded many of the committee members.⁹⁶ Yet this explanation lacks any validity when compared with the proceedings of the July 23 meeting. Threats could just as easily have determined the outcome of that meeting.

⁹⁴Proceedings, pp. 81-92.

⁹⁵Tennessean Magazine, p. 7.

⁹⁶Ibid.

This writer believes that the motives behind the final decision of the committee will never be determined fully. The only valid explanation can be found in the nature of the election year 1932. On the national level, the Democratic party was in its best position since 1916 to capture the White House. The political tide in Tennessee was favoring the candidacy of Franklin Roosevelt as a result of the work of Cordell Hull.⁹⁷ A severe split in the state Democratic party in Tennessee would have been inevitable had Hill McAlister been deprived of the nomination. Pope would run as an independent in the November General Election, but his candidacy was not as divisive as McAlister's would have been. In other words, the State Democratic Executive Committee would have more to lose if it had supported Pope. More important, if the party had been shattered by the independent candidacy of Hill McAlister, then the Republicans could possibly have won the governorship as in 1910 and 1920, and carried the votes for president along with it.

Whatever the reasons for the committee's action, Pope was still not defeated. Within a day of his defeat before the Executive Committee, Pope announced that he would support the Roosevelt ticket on the national level but would continue his bid for the governorship against McAlister in the November General Election: "I am the nominee for Governor of the white Democrats of Tennessee. I am not an independent candidate but the real nominee of the freethinking Democrats of the state."⁹⁸

⁹⁷ John D. Minton, "The New Deal in Tennessee, 1932-1938" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Vanderbilt University, 1959), p. 2, hereafter cited as Minton, "New Deal."

⁹⁸ Nashville Tennessean, August 25, 1932, p. 1.

Pope still had the support of Patterson in seeking election to the governorship. Supporters of Pope, calling themselves Straight Democrats, immediately called for a state-wide meeting for September 7 in Nashville to plan campaign strategy.⁹⁹

When the Straight Democrats gathered in Nashville, they endorsed Roosevelt for the presidency but announced a declaration of independence within Tennessee's party machinery against the conspiracy of Crumpism.

The conspirators were representative of certain power interests and certain public utilities, certain big banking interests, a big newspaper organ, certain office holders and office seekers, and the political bosses of our cities.¹⁰⁰

Pope believed that the August 24 meeting marked the "formation of a contest before the voters of the state in November." The seating of Gillentine and McDermott was proof that the meeting was the "rankest farce and purely a moot court fiasco." Pope promised to follow his sixteen-point program and maintain all the principles of his primary campaign.¹⁰¹

Pope opened his campaign for the general election on September 10, 1932, in Lebanon, amidst difficulties with the loudspeakers which one writer implied were the result of work by E.H. Crump. Pope presented his sixteen-point program, but placed emphasis on the fact that his campaign was aimed at the people and not just party members: "My appeal

⁹⁹ Nashville Tennessean, August 26, 1932, p. 1; August 29, p. 1; September 7, p. 1; September 8, p. 1.

¹⁰⁰ Citizen-Appeal, September 12, 1932, pp. 1, 4.

¹⁰¹ Nashville Tennessean, August 24, 1932, p. 3; September 6, p. 1.

is to the Supreme Court--a Supreme Court of which every man and woman in Tennessee is a member--the great tribunal of the people."¹⁰²

An important question that emerged in the early days of Pope's second campaign of 1932 was the position the national Democratic party leaders would take. Joe Hatcher of the Tennessean believed that the split in the party had delayed the opening of the Roosevelt campaign headquarters in Tennessee. Both candidates continued to support the Roosevelt-Garner ticket and seemed to fight over who supported it the most. At the end of September 1932 the local executive committee of the Madison County Democratic Party appealed to James Farley finally to settle who would be recognized by the national party leaders. But Farley seemed to be reluctant to become involved in the factional dispute. When Roosevelt visited Knoxville in late October, it was noted that he did not mention the dispute. But soon after Roosevelt's visit, Farley finally announced that the only Democratic candidate recognized by the national party leaders was Hill McAlister.¹⁰³

Pope's campaign concentrated on attacking the voting by Negroes in the Democratic Primary. Two newspapers that supported Pope quoted the Chicago Defender, a leading Negro newspaper which had endorsed McAlister's nomination, in attempts to use the Negro voting issue. Pope also received the early support of Joel B. Fort of Robertson County. Fort had been instrumental in the passage of election laws in 1889 that were designed to limit Negro voting in Tennessee. When attempts were

¹⁰² Nashville Tennessean, September 11, 1932, pp. 1, 2.

¹⁰³ Ibid., September 15, 1932, p. 1; September 30, p. 1; October 23, p. 1; Memphis Commercial-Appeal, October 25, 1932, p. 1; Clarksville Leaf-Chronicle, October 24, 1932, p. 1; Minton, "New Deal," pp. 332-333.

made to persuade Pope to withdraw from the race he answered with a clear statement of his purpose:

I'm out to get that crooked Crump machine in Shelby County, body, soul and breeches. Folks tell me that in supporting me they are not bolting the party. They are merely bleaching it. It needs bleaching in West Tennessee.¹⁰⁴

Late in October 1932, McAlister and Crump began to react to Pope's campaign with the one weapon that probably harmed him the most. The name of Luke Lea could still be used to evoke images of the disaster that struck Tennessee in 1930. During 1932, Lea and his son were involved in a desperate court fight against extradition to North Carolina. That state had convicted both men for violating its banking laws. One northern newspaper noted that the extradition of Lea had become an issue in the campaign and pointed out that Pope had failed to mention Lea or the support of the Nashville Tennessean he was receiving. E.H. Crump, calling Pope the "whining baby of Bledsoe," and "Luke Lea's bolting candidate for governor," stated that Lea was working for Pope's election in the hope of staying out of jail. Pope as governor could have prevented Lea's extradition.¹⁰⁵

This was the most bitter accusation made against Pope in 1932. But it was merely an accusation. This writer is convinced that if Pope had been elected governor in 1932 he would not have prevented the

¹⁰⁴Citizen-Appeal, October 3, 1932, p. 1; Nashville Tennessean, September 30, 1932, p. 3; September 15, pp. 1, 10; Memphis Commercial-Appeal, September 23, 1932, p. 13.

¹⁰⁵New York Times, October 30, 1932, Section II, p. 5; Memphis Commercial-Appeal, September 11, 1932, Section I, p. 3; November 1, p. 9.

extradition of Lea. Although Pope was a politician, he was also a dedicated lawyer. An action like prevention of the extradition of Lea would have been completely foreign to Pope's nature. From a practical standpoint, any such action might have led to Pope's impeachment and removal from office. The experience of Henry Horton in 1931 would have been enough to convince any candidate that an alliance with Luke Lea was to be avoided.

Pope began to lose significant support after beginning his independent campaign. The Memphis Commercial-Appeal and the Clarksville Leaf-Chronicle, both supporters of Pope in the contest, editorially endorsed McAlister. Both believed that Pope's candidacy would only lead to a Republican victory in November. The Commercial-Appeal believed that Pope's contest would prevent widespread abuses in the future, but party regularity was the most important concern after August 24, 1932.¹⁰⁶

The new Democratic Executive Committee, selected after August 24, endorsed the action of the earlier committee in turning down Pope's petition. W.D. Hudson of Clarksville, a member of the committee who had opposed McAlister in the primary, best summarized this position. He stated that party regularity was his major concern and that he had "the proud distinction that nobody can call me a Hoovercrat and nobody in the future will call me a Popecrat." Hudson believed that Pope was

¹⁰⁶ Memphis Commercial-Appeal, August 26, 1932, p. 6; Clarksville Leaf-Chronicle, August 26, 1932, p. 4.

merely trying to "accomplish a selfish ambition" by attempting to "disrupt our Party."¹⁰⁷

After September 20, 1932, Pope intensified his speaking campaign. Over a three-week period, he visited five counties per day and, despite heavy rains that fell through much of the campaign, covered all three sections of the state. In the final two weeks of the campaign, Pope concentrated on the larger cities such as Chattanooga, Nashville, and Memphis. He also attempted to place greater emphasis on the problems of tax relief and de-emphasized his attack on Negro votes. But one Pope newspaper could not help itself and made a reference to E.H. Crump, stating that his first two initials stood for Ethiopian Herder. At one point, Pope attempted to gain the endorsement of some of the staunch supporters of the late Austin Peay. In a visit to Clarksville, Pope did receive the support of John T. Cunningham and Jack Miller, both strong Peay men in the 1920's. Despite the opposition of the Leaf-Chronicle, Pope was able to win a plurality in Peay's Montgomery County when the general election was held.¹⁰⁸

But Pope again fell short of his goal. He received 576 more votes than he did in the primary but placed third in overall vote count. The Republican candidate, John E. McCall, considered a leader of that party's "lily-white" faction, carried out an excellent campaign and won

¹⁰⁷Clarksville Leaf-Chronicle, September 1, 1932, p. 1.

¹⁰⁸Nashville Tennessean, September 20, 1932, pp. 1, 3; September 23, p. 1; September 24, p. 1; September 26, p. 1; September 28, p. 1; October 3, p. 1; October 6, p. 1; October 7, p. 1; October 8, p. 1; October 18, p. 1; October 20, p. 1; October 21, p. 1; October 25, p. 1; October 26, p. 1; October 28, p. 1; November 1, p. 1; November 3, p. 1; November 5, p. 1; November 6, p. 1; November 1, p. 1; November 3, p. 1; November 6, p. 1; Heard, Southern Primaries, p. 117.

121,397 votes. McAlister had 168,075 votes, a total of 52,055 more than he had received in the primary. McAlister made significant gains in East Tennessee and won in vote count in several of the counties Pope had controlled in the primary. McAlister also increased his vote count in West Tennessee counties outside Shelby County. McCall had a plurality of votes in several West Tennessee counties that either Patterson or Pope had won in the August primary. Concentration of Pope votes was found in four West Tennessee counties and in the area that he had represented in the 1913 Fifty-eighth General Assembly. The votes won by the Republican candidate in counties that Pope captured in the primary made a significant contribution to the defeat of the Straight Democrat's gubernatorial candidate.¹⁰⁹

Pope had now failed three times to win the governorship. Two more attempts would be made in 1934. His campaign for retrenchment in government was paralleled by that of McAlister and some of his proposals were adopted by the new governor.¹¹⁰ But more important, Pope had made the tactics of the Crump Machine a matter of public record. Perhaps no other candidate between 1932 and 1948 was able to campaign against Crump as effectively as Pope did. It is true that he was narrowly defeated, but he was able to create a symbol that acted as a confluence for the widespread political discontent in Tennessee. This discontent, kept

¹⁰⁹ Heard, Southern Primaries, p. 117. Documentation pertaining to John McCall will be cited in the final chapter of this paper. McCall's career and influence became much more important for Pope in 1934, and it is unnecessary to repeat references.

¹¹⁰ Greene, Tennessee, p. 100.

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alive, and perhaps even created by Pope, finally surfaced in full in 1948 when Crump was finally defeated on the state level. The 1934 election would be Pope's last bid to win the governorship.

CHAPTER IV

THE 1934 CAMPAIGN: FAILURE AND FUSION

Pope faced Hill McAlister again in the 1934 Democratic primary and the following general election. As one newspaper stated in 1934, "a contest against Hill McAlister with Pope left out would be like the play of MacBeth with Banquo's ghost omitted."¹ Despite the aura of finality surrounding McAlister's victory in the general election of 1932, the bitter wraith of Lewis S. Pope still had a vast amount of corporeal strength remaining. Pope failed again in 1934, but not before he had completely rejected the Democratic Party as organized in that year and joined with Ben W. Hooper in one last excursion into Fusionism.

Some of the bitterness that Pope may have felt can of course be traced back to his disappointments in 1928 and 1932 and to the desertion of his cause by the party to which he had dedicated his life. But between November 1932 and September 1933 there was a series of events that may have revived and increased Pope's determination to win the governorship. Beginning in December 1932, Pope attempted to gain an appointment with the newly elected Roosevelt Administration. He sought the aid of several members of the Tennessee delegation in Washington, including Cordell Hull, Kenneth McKellar, Sam McReynolds and Nathan Bachman, in his attempts to receive an appointment. The private papers of Pope contain a collection of letters, including carbon copies of

¹Tennessee Republican (Huntington), August 17, 1934, p. 1.

letters sent by Pope and originals received by him, that help to trace his efforts in 1933.²

While on a vacation trip to West Virginia in December 1932, Pope stopped in Washington D.C. and discussed the possibility of an appointment with several members of the Congress from Tennessee. In written communications after December 1932, he stated that he would not re-enter private legal practice or business until he knew if an appointment was possible. The letters he received from Hull, McReynolds and McKellar indicated that a serious effort would be made on his behalf. In March 1933 Pope wrote McKellar and pointed out his full support of the aims and policies of the Roosevelt Administration. He hoped that the political events of the previous year would not hinder his chances for an appointment.

Although Pope did not originally have any particular position in mind, by April 12, 1933, he began to show a definite interest in being appointed to a position in the proposed Tennessee Valley project. He believed that his administrative experience as Commissioner of Institutions provided him with the qualifications to be a member of the

²The letters pertaining to Pope's attempts to receive an appointment include the following: "Cordell Hull to Lewis S. Pope," December 15, 1932; January 15, 1933; May 11; August 16; September 5; "Lewis S. Pope to Cordell Hull," January 24; May 2; August 8; August 14; "Kenneth McKellar to Lewis S. Pope," January 28; March 27; April 15; May 9; May 16; May 28; June 3 (copy of Western Union telegram); June 24; July 19; "Kenneth McKellar and Nathan Bachman to Lewis S. Pope" (copies of Western Union telegrams); June 2; July 8; August 18; "Lewis S. Pope to Kenneth McKellar," January 24; March 25; April 12; April 24; May 12; May 26; July 15; "Sam D. McReynolds to Lewis S. Pope," January 28; April 22; May 3; May 13; May 26, Pope Papers. Any references to Pope's attempts to gain an appointment in 1933 can be documented by the above citations.

three-man commission that would head the project. He pointed out his extensive experience in handling large sums of money, as well as in construction planning and land acquisition.

The letters between Pope and members of the Tennessee delegation continued to flow throughout the spring and summer of 1933. Pope soon realized that an appointment to the commission heading the TVA would be impossible. After learning that men from outside the state would probably receive the major appointments, he began to seek an appointment as an attorney for the TVA. He also received one hint that E.H. Crump would attempt to gain an appointment in the TVA, but nothing resulted from the rumor.

In late May 1933 Pope began to show an uneasiness about the promises of support he had received from McKellar. He wrote McKellar and made known his uneasiness. Soon afterwards, McKellar gave his assurances to Pope that President Roosevelt had been made aware of Pope and the Tennessee delegation's interest in gaining an appointment for him.

Pope never received an appointment. One minor position in the Attorney General's office was offered him, but Pope declined to accept it. After reviewing the events of Pope's 1932 campaign and reading the collection of letters in his private papers, this writer has the impression that a subtle form of punishment was taking place in 1933. According to one of Roosevelt's biographers, the president was deliberately slow in distributing patronage during the early months of his first term in office.³ This may have contributed to the difficulty

³Frank Freidel, FDR and the South (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1965), p. 47.

Pope had in gaining an appointment. But Pope's private papers give this reader the impression that none of the members of Tennessee's congressional delegation was serious in his attempts to help Pope. Also, the fact that E.H. Crump was a member of the U.S. Congress may have been the controlling factor in the events of 1933. Several years later, Crump directed a bitter attack against Governor Gordon Browning when he appointed Pope to a position in his new administration.⁴ It is reasonable to suppose that Crump would have been just as vehement in opposing an appointment for Pope in 1933, so soon after the governor's race in Tennessee.

Whatever the reasons may have been for Pope's failure to gain an appointment in 1933, he certainly had reason to believe that he was considered taboo by the controlling leaders of the Democratic Party. In late August of that year one Pope-supporter in Lebanon, Tennessee wrote him making known his fear that Pope would accept an appointment with the Federal Government. Pope answered by stating that he did not wish to be a candidate in 1934 but that he was not "going to allow myself to be placed in any position where I am not free to act as I feel my duty demands."⁵

It is possible that Pope, in seeking an appointment with the Roosevelt Administration, may at first have decided not to seek the governorship in 1934. But the cavalier way he was treated in the spring

⁴ Miller, Crump, pp. 242-243.

⁵ "Courtney C. Hamilton to Lewis S. Pope," August 22, 1933; "Lewis S. Pope to Courtney C. Hamilton," August 25, 1933, Pope Papers.

and summer of 1933 probably, as stated above, rekindled his desire to run again. In October 1933 he received an invitation from the newly organized Voter's League of Shelby County to speak at one of its monthly luncheons in Memphis on November 11. The Voter's League of Shelby County considered itself "distinctly an anti-Crump and pro-Pope organization." Its major goal was to "blot out the evils which you [Pope] so strongly and so justly denounced in your late campaign." Pope promised to attend the luncheon and at the November 11 meeting he made his first public political speech since the November 1932 general election. Although he was vague about whether he would run in 1934, he did sound like a candidate. He attacked power interests, "political banks" and bossism as the major source of Tennessee's problems. This November 11 speech was a turning point. Pope had now re-entered public politics and it is reasonable to assume that he had decided to run by the end of 1933.⁶

In January 1934 Pope received the direct endorsement of T.H. Alexander, though this did not include an editorial endorsement by the Nashville Tennessean. Alexander believed that Pope was in a position to win the Democratic nomination and the general election by 100,000 votes. He thought that Tennessee was on the verge of a political revolution "comparable to 1910." The victory by McAlister had made the people realize, according to Alexander, "that while they drove the money

⁶"Robert S. Keebler to Lewis S. Pope," October 25, 1933; "Lewis S. Pope to Robert S. Keebler," November 8, 1933, Pope Papers; Memphis Commercial-Appeal, November 11, 1933, p. 8; November 12, Section I, p. 12.

changers out of the temple, they merely admitted another set of money changers quite as greedy and lawless as the old ones." Alexander suggested that Pope begin an informal campaign by erecting billboards on major highways with demands for his election to the governorship. "The power of suggestion," stated Alexander, "is very great."⁷

Although it is not shown in his "Politics" and "I Reckin So" articles in the Nashville Tennessean, T.H. Alexander had supported Pope throughout most of his campaigns. During the 1928 primary, a series of articles published in the Citizen-Appeal under the title "Politics" and by a writer called Alexander P. Munchausen were obviously written by T.H. Alexander. The style of these articles was characteristic of Alexander, and a photograph of the author Munchausen was omitted "for obvious reasons" by the Citizen-Appeal. As shown above, the Nashville Tennessean was supporting Horton in the primary. Alexander also wrote a series of articles in 1934 in the Murfreesboro Daily News-Journal, under the pseudonym "The Old Timer." The publisher of the Daily News-Journal, Edward Ward Carmack, Jr., editorially endorsed Pope's campaign, and the "Old Timer" articles enforced this endorsement. A series of articles was also published in the Citizen-Appeal in 1932 under the authorship of the "Old Timer." Again, the style of the author was vintage Alexander.⁸

⁷"T.H. Alexander to Lewis S. Pope," January 29, 1934, Pope Papers.

⁸Citizen-Appeal, July 31, 1928, p. 1; September 19, 1932, p. 1; "T.H. Alexander to Lewis S. Pope," July 7, 1934; "E.W. Carmack, Jr. to Will R. Manier, Jr.," April 3, 1934, Pope Papers.

Pope was silent during the first three months of 1934, but in early March the Nashville Tennessean quoted reports from Knoxville newspapers that he was about to make his official announcement. Pope issued his official announcement on April 4, 1934 and presented another sixteen-point program which would act as the basis of his campaign. He pledged to support fully the TVA, an organization he believed was not receiving the cooperation of McAlister. Key proposals by Pope included a tax cut, completion of the state road system, re-establishment of the State Welfare Department, an amendment to the state constitution to enable taxation of personal and invisible property, and the extension of all two-year elective offices into four-year terms, with an incumbent being allowed to serve only eight years in any twelve-year period. Two of the sixteen points concentrated on attacking machine bossism and campaign-financing corruption.⁹

Pope began his speaking tour on May 12 in Trenton. He described his basic sixteen-point program and added an endorsement of the state's bone-dry prohibition laws. Prior to his April 4 announcement, Pope had sent copies of the statement to various newspapers, including the Chattanooga News. The editor of the News, George Milton, made note of the fact that Pope had not referred to the prohibition laws in his announcement. Milton also stated his own personal support of the bone-dry laws. Soon after the letter from Milton was received, Pope gave his assurances to the editor that he also supported prohibition but

⁹ Nashville Tennessean, March 11, 1934, p. 2; March 18, p. 1; April 5, p. 1; Clarksville Leaf-Chronicle, April 4, 1934, p. 1.

that his advisors thought it best not to mention the subject in the announcement. The News had supported Pope in 1932, and this fact may have given impetus to his decision to add the bone-dry endorsement in his Trenton speech.¹⁰

In the Trenton speech, Pope made no apologies for his 1932 campaign and believed that he was fully "vindicated by the subsequent happenings." In other words, if he was mistreated again in 1934, he would be willing to challenge the party machinery again. Bain Stewart of Shelbyville was appointed Pope's 1934 campaign manager.¹¹

Hill McAlister announced his platform on May 11. McAlister also favored retention of the state's bone-dry laws and in his subsequent opening speech in Fayetteville he denied Pope's accusation that the governor had refused to cooperate fully with the TVA.¹² Although several other men were mentioned as candidates, Pope and McAlister were the only two who remained on the ballot through the August primary. This would be the first time that McAlister and Pope faced one another in a two-man race. But McAlister still had the advantage because he was now the incumbent. He just needed to maintain the support of E.H. Crump and make sure that the party machinery, including the State Executive Committee and the County Primary Boards, provided a strong foundation for his campaign.

¹⁰ Nashville Tennessean, May 13, 1934, pp. 1, 5; Clarksville Leaf-Chronicle, May 12, 1934, p. 1; "George Milton to Lewis S. Pope," April 3, 1934; "Lewis S. Pope to George Milton," April 2 and 11, 1934, Pope Papers.

¹¹ Nashville Tennessean, May 13, 1934, p. 5.

¹² Ibid., May 11, 1934, p. 1; June 16, p. 1.

Again, as in 1932, the actions of the Democratic Executive Committee provided the basis for Pope's action after the August primary. When the committee met in June 1934 to select members for each of the ninety-five county primary boards, Pope filed contests on the membership of many of them. At one point, he made a personal appearance on behalf of some of the contests and had an almost-violent dispute with Ernest Haston over the nature of Tennessee's primary law. All the contests failed, and Pope later claimed that the membership of most of the primary boards was weighted in McAlister's favor and perpetuated and extended the Shelby County election frauds throughout the state.¹³

In late May and early June, Pope concentrated on presenting his sixteen-point program to the voters. At the end of June, Joe Hatcher of the Nashville Tennessean believed that the Democratic primary would be close, despite significant vote gains by McAlister. The key to the race, Hatcher believed, was the amount of votes that would be cast. Hatcher thought that a large voter turnout would help Pope. This was one of the few predictions that Joe Hatcher missed.¹⁴

After July 15, Pope began to change the tone of his speeches. In a rally at the Ryman Auditorium in Nashville on July 17, he concentrated on making personal attacks against McAlister and his connection with E.H. Crump and Bob Church of Memphis. He barely mentioned his

¹³Nashville Tennessean, June 5, 1934, pp. 1, 5; August 8, pp. 1, 2; Chattanooga Daily Times, June 5, 1934, p. 1.

¹⁴Ibid., May 20, 1934, p. 1; June 3, p. 1; June 12, p. 2; July 1, p. 5; July 13, p. 3; July 15, p. 2.

sixteen-point program. "Mr. Pope," stated one observer of the Nashville speech, "leaves the impression of a man thoroughly mad and vengeful."¹⁵

Pope also began to receive the endorsements of some of Tennessee's leading citizens after July 15. A.H. Roberts was on the speaker's platform during the July 17 speech. During a visit to Clarksville, Pope received the endorsement of Mrs. Austin Peay, wife of the late governor. Several days later he also received the support of Frank Hall of Dickson, Commissioner of Finance and Taxation under Austin Peay.¹⁶

Despite the last-minute endorsements he was receiving after July 15, the change in the tone of Pope's speeches indicated that he knew the primary election was lost. If an incumbent does no wrong and creates no controversy during his first term in office and makes wise use of the patronage available, there is no reason why his nomination should be blocked. After July 15, the steadily growing strength of McAlister was recognized by the Tennessean. By July 22, the Tennessean openly predicted that the governor would be re-nominated on August 2 by an even greater margin than the 1932 primary. The earlier prediction by Joe Hatcher was proven wrong. The large vote count in the Democratic primary helped McAlister more than it did Pope.¹⁷

¹⁵Nashville Tennessean, July 17, 1934, p. 1; July 18, p. 1; July 19, p. 2.

¹⁶Ibid., July 17, 1934, p. 1; July 21, p. 2; July 25, p. 1; Clarksville Leaf-Chronicle, July 30, 1934, p. 1.

¹⁷Nashville Tennessean, July 19, 1934, p. 2; July 20, p. 3; July 22, p. 5; August 4, p. 1.

The August 2, 1934 Democratic Primary was one of the highest in vote count in Tennessee history. McAlister's winning vote count in the primary was almost as large as that of Henry Horton's in the general election of 1928. The final results are listed below:

McAlister	191,460
Pope	137,253 ¹⁸

Pope's greatest strength was again in Middle Tennessee, excluding Davidson County. But the gains that McAlister made in those West Tennessee counties outside Shelby County contributed greatly to the wide margin of his victory. McAlister was able to gain pluralities in those counties won by Patterson in the 1932 Democratic Primary. Most significant, McAlister had the majority of the votes in the Middle Tennessee county of Montgomery. But, as in 1932, the voting strength of McAlister in Davidson County and Shelby County determined the outcome of the primary.¹⁹

Within a few days after the primary, Pope charged that there had been massive frauds throughout the state resulting from the June actions of the state executive committee. He believed that the selection of county primary boards paved the way for his defeat on August 2. Clearly, he believed that the fight was not over. "The political bosses," stated Pope, "must be destroyed. This is not my problem alone; it's the problem of the people."²⁰

¹⁸Heard, Southern Primaries, p. 117.

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Nashville Tennessean, August 8, 1934, pp. 1, 2; Chattanooga News, August 8, 1934, p. 1; Chattanooga Daily Times, August 8, 1934, p. 1.

Several days before the August 2 primary, Hill McAlister stated his belief that Pope would run as an independent if defeated. The day after Pope's post-primary statement on election frauds, E.H. Crump also predicted that he would run in the November general election. "Pope," according to Crump, "is simply spewing in his own grease. He would like to bolt again because he loves to throw dead cats and snakes in the spring on Democratic picnic days."²¹

By August 10, rumors began to emerge that Pope would run with the aid of the Republicans. Most Pope supporters probably recognized the futility of contesting the primary results. The one possibility that began to be discussed would be for the Republican noninee, John McCall, to withdraw in favor of Pope. On August 12, leaders of the Pope faction announced that there would be a mass meeting in Nashville on August 21 to decide their next step. At this point, Pope and some Republican leaders were publicly denying that they planned to form a fusion. The Republicans announced their intentions to meet in Nashville on August 14 to plan their campaign strategy.²²

The events that took place within the Republican Party before the August 2 primary must be understood before the events after August 14 can be discussed. Those events helped to determine the nature of Pope's last bid to win the governorship.

²¹ Nashville Tennessean, July 31, 1934, p. 5; August 9, p. 1.

²² Ibid., August 9, 1934, p. 2; August 10, p. 3; August 12, p. 3; August 14, p. 2.

The Republican Party in Tennessee, not unlike the Democrats, faced a division over the position of the Negro voter in the party. John McCall, the Republican nominee in 1932, was the leader of the "lily white" faction of the Republican Party, which wanted to purge their party of Negro voters. McCall, from Memphis, wanted the party to disavow the role the Negro Republican leader, Bob Church, played in trading votes to Crump in exchange for patronage. The "Black and Tan" or "Old Guard" faction of the party, led by B. Carroll Reese and J. Will Taylor, wanted to maintain the status quo of the party membership. The "Old Guard" maintained a loose alliance with more powerful Democratic Party leaders in which they would be allowed to dominate most of East Tennessee and the patronage in that area in exchange for significant black votes in Shelby County and other urban areas in the state.

McCall was able to win the nomination in 1932 and made a strong showing in the general election. In May 1934, he stated that he would not seek the nomination if the Republican Party refused to seat the Church-dominated Shelby County delegation to the party's May convention. McCall wanted his own delegation to the convention to be recognized as the valid representatives of Shelby County. When the Republican state convention met in Chattanooga in the middle of May, McCall's delegation was defeated in the preliminary meetings of the credentials committee. But McCall appealed to the entire convention and his delegation was able to replace that of Bob Church. The convention ended without endorsing a candidate but it did write and pass a platform. The key proposal in the platform was a condemnation of the poll tax as a prerequisite for voting. In June, McCall had a setback when the Republican Executive

Committee, controlled by Taylor, allowed the Memphis primary board to be controlled by Church. After his victory in the May convention, McCall did not make a statement about whether he would seek the nomination. But the actions of the Republican Executive Committee in June persuaded him to run. He entered the Republican primary and won it. He endorsed the party's May platform, especially the part advocating the end of the poll tax as a prerequisite for voting.²³

When the Republican State Executive Committee met in Nashville on August 14, the pace of events began to accelerate almost beyond comprehension. Despite an earlier statement that he would not do so, John McCall withdrew from the governor's race at the urging of the "Old Guard" leaders. McCall also offered his support to any independent, or anti-McAlister candidate, who entered the race. The Republican Executive Committee also urged the formation of a fusion ticket with those Democrats opposed to McAlister.²⁴

The motives behind McCall's decision to withdraw are clouded but the explanation offered by the Chattanooga Daily Times seems the most valid. The Daily Times believed that McCall may have been promised greater control of the Shelby County Republican Party, plus a larger role in the control of other West Tennessee counties. As pointed out earlier, McCall had fought in May and June of 1934 to have Bob Church

²³Chattanooga Daily Times, May 8, 1934, p. 1; May 14, p. 2; May 15, pp. 1 and 2; May 16, pp. 1 and 2; May 17, p. 5; June 5, pp. 1 and 2; Nashville Tennessean, May 17, 1934, p. 1; June 1, p. 5; June 5, p. 1; August 8, p. 3.

²⁴Clarksville Leaf-Chronicle, August 14, 1934, p. 1; August 15, p. 1; Nashville Tennessean, August 15, 1934, pp. 1, 2.

removed as a factor in the Republican Party. McCall may have thought he had very little chance of actually winning the November election and a trade at an opportune moment could strengthen his power base in the Republican Party.²⁵

Whatever the initial motives may have been behind the 1934 Fusion movement, Pope Democrats approached the ticket with a sense of purpose. Two days after the withdrawal of McCall, the supporters of Pope, again calling themselves "Straight Democrats," restated their call for a mass meeting on August 21 in Nashville. They now stated that the intention of the meeting was the selection of a candidate to oppose Hill McAlister as the first step in a creation of a Fusion ticket. Some Fusion leaders had doubts about whether Pope could defeat McAlister and believed that a new candidate might generate a stronger campaign. Two of the leading candidates mentioned were Albert Williams, supported by A.H. Roberts, and Edward Ward Carmack, Jr., son of the murdered and martyred prohibition leader. One hope was that the Fusion movement could be presented as an idea rather than a tool for one man's ambition. But Pope was in clear command of the August 21 convention. Carmack and Williams withdrew their names from contention, and the convention of "Straight Democrats" nominated Pope as their candidate. In order to seal the Fusion ticket, the convention also endorsed Ben W. Hooper for the U.S. Senate against Kenneth McKellar. Hooper had been endorsed by the Republican convention in May and was nominated in August in the

²⁵ Chattanooga Daily Times, August 22, 1934, p. 1.

Republican primary. The second Fusion ticket in Tennessee during the twentieth century was now formed.²⁶

Soon after the withdrawal of John McCall and the beginning of the Fusion movement, the national Democratic party quickly moved to the support of the McAlister Democrats. Speaking in Nashville and Memphis soon after the McCall resignation, James Farley urged the re-election of Hill McAlister. Farley, Chairman of the Democratic National Committee, stated his belief that the Fusion movement could do great harm to the Roosevelt Administration. Ben W. Hooper was highly critical in his opposition to the New Deal program of the president, and Farley believed this was an indication that the Fusion movement was merely an attempt to defeat Kenneth McKellar, a supporter of Roosevelt's programs. In one letter to a Sneedville, Tennessee Democrat, Farley urged party regularity in one paragraph, but in another he endorsed the re-election of the Republican B. Carroll Reese. This is another indication of the subtle connection between "Old Guard" Republicans and the leading Democrats in Tennessee.²⁷

²⁶ Nashville Tennessean, August 16, 1934, pp. 1, 2; August 19, p. 1; August 21, pp. 1, 3; August 22, p. 1; Clarksville Leaf-Chronicle, August 16, 1934, p. 1; August 20, p. 1; August 21, pp. 1, 2; Chattanooga Daily Times, August 16, 1934, p. 1; August 17, p. 5. A note of irony can be found in the fact that M.R. Patterson supported the Fusion ticket along with Edward Ward Carmack, Jr. Patterson had pardoned one of the killers of Carmack's father and helped to create the first Fusion movement in 1910. See Nashville Tennessean, August 16, 1934, p. 1; October 23, p. 1; Tennessee Republican (Huntington), August 17, 1934, p. 1; Isaac, Prohibition and Politics, pp. 157-159.

²⁷ Nashville Tennessean, August 17, 1934, p. 1; August 18, p. 1; Chattanooga News, August 17, 1934, p. 1; Minton, "New Deal," p. 388; "James Farley to H.D. Carroll," October 15, 1934 (This letter was found in the Pope Papers); J. Will Taylor disavowed the Fusionist movement in October 1934. See Nashville Tennessean, October 10, 1934, p. 3.

Farley's speeches probably harmed Pope's campaign. But the most damaging blow to Pope's Fusionist campaign came when his campaign manager during the primary, Bain Stewart, made known his intentions to support McAlister. Stewart withdrew his support soon after the Fusionists started their speaking tour. Pope also lost the support of his cousins, T. Pope Shepherd and Will Shepherd, both important political leaders in East Tennessee. T.C. Thompson, the former mayor of Chattanooga who had supported Pope's earlier independent campaign, also withdrew his support. Pope also lost significant newspaper support, including the Knoxville News-Sentinel and Memphis Press-Scimitar.²⁸

The most obvious problem faced by the Fusionist ticket was the fact that Hooper and Pope were divided in their opinions about President Roosevelt. In the May 1934 State Republican Convention, Hooper had severely blasted the Roosevelt Administration and its programs. Not unlike 1932, Pope and McAlister fought over who supported Roosevelt the most. The major question was how Hooper and Pope could discuss Roosevelt without making known their differences. Hooper did attempt to weaken his attacks on Roosevelt but the difficult problem remained. Rumors of a rift and the pending split of the Fusion ticket continued throughout Pope's last attempt to win the governorship.²⁹

²⁸ Nashville Tennessean, September 19, 1934, p. 1; September 20, p. 2; Chattanooga Daily Times, August 17, 1934, p. 5; August 23, p. 2; September 15, p. 1; Chattanooga News, August 17, 1934, p. 4.

²⁹ Jeanne Graham, "Kenneth McKellar's 1934 Campaign: Issues and Events," The West Tennessee Historical Society, No. 18, 1964, p. 121, hereafter cited as Graham, "1934 Campaign"; Chattanooga Daily Times, May 15-May 17, 1934, p. 1; August 17, p. 1; Nashville Tennessean, August 22, 1934, p. 1; September 16, p. 1; September 20, p. 2; September 23, p. 3; September 25, p. 8; September 27, p. 1; September 30, p. 1; October 11, p. 2.

In early October, Pope made a desperate plea to Cordell Hull for support and attempted to explain why he had joined the Fusion ticket. He stated that he was a "thorough Democrat" and believed in party unity in working out differences of opinion on issues. Party unity, Pope believed, was important except when the issue involved "the administration of the party itself." Pope wrote that it was "impossible to work out issues inside the party when the issue is that of the administration of the affairs of the party." In other words, party loyalty is foolish when certain leaders attempt to dictate how candidates will be selected, according to their own personal needs. Pope believed he did not have to prove to Hull that frauds had been perpetrated in Shelby County, "but it was worse than ever before in our history." Most of these frauds, Pope wrote, had also been applied in many of the rural counties as a result of the action of the June meeting of the State Democratic Executive Committee, where county primary board membership had been weighted in McAlister's favor. Appeal to the Executive Committee was futile because it "would be like asking a man to sit as Judge to try his own case. Therefore we must either submit to the perpetuation of these conditions or we must appeal to the people of the state to correct same in a general election /sic/"³⁰

Pope also told Hull that President Roosevelt would not want to be involved in the corruption perpetuated by the Crump machine. If the Fusion ticket won, Pope related to Hull, that would not mean a repudiation of Roosevelt's New Deal Program in Tennessee "unless the administration does interfere. In that event, then, there would be some

³⁰ "Lewis S. Pope to Cordell Hull," October 8, 1934, Pope Papers.

justification for the charge by our political enemies." Hull answered Pope with a terse rejection of his request for help.³¹

Pope's speaking tour began on September 15 in Lawrenceburg. He continued his attacks on the state executive committee and the Crump machine. One significant development was Pope's adoption of one section of the Republican platform: he openly advocated the abolition of the poll tax as a prerequisite for voting. One writer has pointed out that Pope was one of the first Democrats in Tennessee to urge an end to the poll tax. But his advocacy of this position came as a result of the Fusion movement and the merger with the Republican party.³²

But Pope's campaign--his final--faced nothing but problems. The loss of support alluded to earlier was joined by a condemnation from the state executive committee and the Young Democrats Club of Tennessee. Another cousin, Sam McReynolds, added his opposition to the Fusion ticket.³³

But the extent of the unpopularity of the Fusion ticket is best shown by the final election results on November 6:

McAlister	198,743
Pope	122,965 ³⁴

Where McAlister increased his vote count, Pope lost significant strength. The major factor was the losses Pope suffered in Middle Tennessee. A

³¹"Cordell Hull to Lewis S. Pope," October 12, 1934, Pope Papers.

³²Nashville Tennessean, September 16, 1934, p. 5; Tennessean Magazine, pp. 6-7.

³³Clarksville Leaf-Chronicle, September 1, 1934, p. 1; Graham, 1934 Campaign, p. 121; Chattanooga Daily Times, August 18, 1934, p. 2.

³⁴Heard, Southern Primaries, p. 117.

comparison of the county-by-county vote strength between the 1932 and 1934 general elections shows that Pope was able to carry many of those counties won by McCall in the earlier election. He remained strong in the area around his home county of Bledsoe. He was not able to win enough of the disaffected Democratic vote.³⁵

Attempting to give reasons for Pope's final defeat would be futile. Both he and Hooper believed that the Republican "Old Guard" leaders, Taylor and Reece, were the chief cause of their defeat. But the simple fact is that the McAlister Democrats, including the support of Crump and McKellar, were strongly organized and dedicated to unity. They received ample help from the national party machinery. McAlister, McKellar and Bachman traveled and spoke together throughout much of the campaign. Pope again was running at the wrong time without the right type of backing.³⁶

Pope was defeated for a fifth and final time. He returned to his private legal practice in Nashville and maintained a home in Hendersonville. Although he remained in touch with his political contacts throughout the rest of his life, he never again would actively seek an elected position in government. But he did have some influence on the government and politics in government.

In 1937, Gordon Browning, newly elected governor with the short-lived support of E.H. Crump, appointed Pope to a position as a back-tax collector. This appointment helped to start the split between

³⁵ Heard, Southern Primaries, p. 117.

³⁶ "Ben W. Hooper to Lewis S. Pope," November 14, 1934; "Lewis S. Pope to Ben W. Hooper," December 3, 1934, Pope Papers; Graham, 1934 Campaign, pp. 107-129.

the new governor and Crump that would lead to a ten-year political retirement for Browning.³⁷

After leaving the Browning Administration, Pope concentrated on building his legal practice. In June 1942 an attempt was made to persuade him to enter the Democratic primary for the U.S. Senate against Tom Stewart, E.W. Carmack, Jr., Gordon Stokes and John Neal. But he withdrew his name "due to private affairs and disinclination to interrupt a somewhat peaceful existence in the pursuit of my profession."³⁸

Pope again re-entered the public domain in 1953 when he became a delegate to the Limited Constitutional Convention of that year. He was very active in that convention and was influential in the writing of the Home Rule Amendment.³⁹

Even in the pursuit of his private legal practice, Lewis S. Pope influenced the public sector. In 1957, he won a civil suit against the United Mine Workers that had been in the courts since 1948. This suit was one of the largest ever won against the UMW up to that time, and greatly influenced many similar suits. Pope's legal specialty became land condemnation suits and he helped to set important precedents in this area of jurisprudence.⁴⁰

³⁷Miller, Crump, 242-243.

³⁸Nashville Tennessean, June 20, 1942, p. 3.

³⁹Constitutional Convention of 1953: Journal of Debates of the Constitutional Convention (Published by the State of Tennessee, 1953), p. 1228; Raymond Denney, "The Tennessee Constitutional Convention," Tennessee Law Review, Vol. 23, 1953-1955, pp. 21-23.

⁴⁰Tennessean Magazine, pp. 6-7.

Pope remained active in the practice of law until the year of his death. At the age of eighty-five, he still had fifty cases in the courts.⁴¹ His daughter told this writer that at the time of Mr. Pope's death on May 16, 1972, he still had twelve cases in the courts. He tried one case only three weeks before his death.

⁴¹Tennessean Magazine, pp. 6-7.

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