

THE TRUE REFORMERS OF THE PROGRESSIVE ERA:  
POLITICAL MACHINES AND URBAN BOSSES

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Have you ever thought what would become of the country if the bosses were put out of business, and their places were taken by a lot of cart-tail orators and college graduates? *It would mean chaos.* It would be just like takin' a lot of dry-goods clerks and settin' them to run express trains on the New York Central Railroad. It makes my heart bleed to think of it.

— George Washington Plunkitt<sup>1</sup>

**I**n the Progressive Era, political reformers tried to eliminate the rampant corruption that in those days was almost synonymous with politics. They especially targeted the political machines—unofficial organizations, mostly local, that existed to win political offices. The reformers exposed instances of graft, patronage, and bribery in city politics, especially with the urban bosses, such as William Tweed and Richard Croker. Big newspapers, aiming to increase circulation, gleefully joined in the mudslinging; corruption made good headlines. History records these events as the glorious purification of politics and the triumph of reform over self-centered, dirty machine politics. Unfortunately, that history was recorded mostly by the reformers, and thus, the traditional

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story of the political machines has generally been one-sided, biased, and quite ironic.

The reformers were a bit naive and blind, seeing mostly what they wished to see. The reformers failed to realize that machines existed for a reason, that the people had deliberately voted them into office because the machines were more responsive to the public's needs than any legitimate group, even the reformers.<sup>2</sup> For the unfortunate, the poor, and the immigrants, the machines represented help, service, and opportunity—the machines were a manifestation of the American dreams of progress and freedom. Reformers, on the other hand, failed to recognize some of the problems that had called for the aid of the machines. Reformers also failed to recognize that to the people, political ethics was not a matter of moral absolutes but rather it was a matter of social contract: good politicians were the ones who fulfilled their duties to serve the people.

In fact, the machines, not the reformers, revolutionized politics, for they began a new generation of government in which the lower-class majority would exercise political power instead of the elite minority. Because they worked for the people instead of around them, machines were able to provide a stable political environment in which America could industrialize, grow, and prosper to become the dominant power of the twentieth century.

The machine existed as the force of the voters' will often because the official government could not or would not act. Thus, the first organized political machine under a "boss" came to power in New York City during the Civil War, when the city was shaken with a disaster with which the legitimate city government did not deal effectively. In the summer of 1863 Congress passed the National Conscription Law, which established a draft of males between the ages of 18 and 45. The rich had little to worry about; the law allowed them to skip the draft by paying three hundred dollars to hire a substitute, a sum equal to one year's wages for the average New York laborer. Those unable to pay—the poor—were forced to face a random lottery for the draft.<sup>3</sup> During that summer, a "Song of the Conscripts" was circulated among thousands of laborers in New York. One stanza sang:

We're coming, Father Abraham, three hundred thousand more  
We leave our homes and firesides with bleeding hearts and sore  
Since poverty has been our crime, we bow to thy decree;  
We are the poor and have no wealth to purchase liberty.<sup>4</sup>

On the blazing hot Monday morning of July thirteenth, a mob of resentful members of the lower class rioted at the draft office, burning it to the ground.<sup>5</sup> Historians Connable and Silberfarb gave a vivid account of the events that proceeded:

Thirty-two policemen were assigned to guard the 21<sup>st</sup> Street armory. As sledge hammers and tree trunks battered down the doors of the armory, the police escaped through a hole in the rear wall...Part of the mob barricaded itself in the drill room...others...set fire to the old wooden building...many, imprisoned in the drill room, died in the flames. Workmen later carted away fifty baskets and barrels of human bones...One man who tried to defend his home on Clarkson Street was dragged out, hanged, and cremated while the crowd danced around the fire...A mob attacked the Asylum for Colored Orphans...A little girl...was found shivering under a bed. They killed her and burned the building to the ground.<sup>6</sup>

The riot lasted five days, and throughout all of it, the mayor pleaded for help from the state governor and the other mayors, but he himself only made a half-hearted attempt to stop the rioters.<sup>7</sup> It was finally halted when five regiments of the Union Army were rushed in and warships dropped anchor in the Lower Bay and “trained their guns on Wall Street, Broadway, Governor’s Island, and the Brooklyn Navy Yard.”<sup>8</sup> There were more than ten thousand casualties in all—“greater than in any other incident of domestic violence in American history”<sup>9</sup>—and property damages were estimated to be more than five million dollars.<sup>10</sup>

To Connable and Silberfarb, these riots were the end result of years of inadequate municipal government policy:

The riots of July 1863...were the symptom of a city...bursting with new forces that cried to be governed. New York was a city growing without direction, without a centralization of powers and services, with poor communications, inadequate protection of health and safety, and little evidence of concern or compassion. It was, in other words, a city that demanded a Boss.<sup>11</sup>

The lower class wanted a government willing and able to answer their cries for aid, service, and a safer, cleaner, city, but the non-machine politicians were inadequate for the role. So, in the 1865 mayoral election, the voters elected John Hoffman, a politician from Tammany Hall—New York City’s first real political machine.<sup>12</sup> Hoffman was a member of a small ring of Tammany politicians controlled by William M. Tweed,<sup>13</sup> the first “urban boss.” With Hoffman’s election, “Boss” Tweed became the main political power within the city, thus beginning an era in which for almost a century, political machines controlled the politics of many large cities such as New York and Chicago.<sup>14</sup>

Tweed quickly responded to the people’s distress calls. He reduced the corruption in the police force and cleaned up much of the crime that had helped cause the riots.<sup>15</sup> He also pursued the building of city infrastructure; these projects were political goldmines, for they enabled him to provide thousands of jobs for the lower classes, improve city living conditions, expand local business, and, of course, obtain many opportunities for graft.<sup>16</sup> Still, Tweed was what one historian called an “incomplete politician”—he was after money more than he was after the political power gained from helping those in need.<sup>17</sup> Thus, his reign was short. His mortal wound came in 1870, when the voters finally became so frustrated with Tweed’s neglect of his duties that they resoundingly defeated him at the election for the state supreme court, with many previously loyal voting districts casting votes as low as 20% for him.<sup>18</sup> Still, he had done much more for the poor than any other group in the city, and when he died, his last words were: “I have tried to do some good, even if I have not had good luck.”<sup>19</sup>

An organization like Tammany Hall that was grounded in the people would not be killed so easily, however, and it soon fielded another boss named “Honest John” Kelly.<sup>20</sup> In the years that followed, bosses and machines became more organized, more effective, and ever more loyal and responsive to the voters, concentrating more on gaining political power than on gaining money. It is said that Boss Kelly found Tammany a horde and left

it an army,<sup>21</sup> but this saying could be applied to any one of the various bosses and their respective machines that appeared after Tweed. All of them, learning from Tweed's mistakes, refined their machines as political organizations rather than as graft-getters. By the turn of the century and the Progressive Era, the political machine had become a honed system, well oiled and smooth in their control of local, state, and even national politics,<sup>22</sup> able to respond to the voters' demands almost within the minute.

In addition to providing political action where there was none, machines also provided a political stability for the huge cities that had begun to develop in the late 1800s. From the end of the Civil War up until the turn of the century, the cities of the United States expanded to almost gargantuan sizes. By 1900, New York City and its outskirts had tripled in size to three million people, and Chicago had become ten times as large as it had been at the beginning of the Civil War.<sup>23</sup> Much of this population increase was due to massive immigration from Europe. From 1860 to 1900, a total of over 10 million immigrants poured into the United States, and many of these immigrants settled in the cities to become laborers and factory workers, swelling the numbers of the lower classes tremendously.<sup>24</sup> In 1890, 87% of the residents of Chicago were either foreign-born immigrants or their children; in New York, the figure was 80%, and in Milwaukee and Detroit, 84%.<sup>25</sup> One historian noted, "New York had more Irish than Dublin and more Germans than Hamburg. Chicago eventually had more Poles than Warsaw."<sup>26</sup>

The rampant population growth and the development of distinct ethnic groups within the cities caused many problems for the municipal governments, whose outdated internal structures hampered the effective management of the numerous wards and districts.<sup>27</sup> In many city governments, powers were thinly distributed among numerous committees and agencies, and there was little in the way of executive power, a result of early American dislike of centralization and tyranny.<sup>28</sup> Thus, coordinating city policy and decision-making was difficult. In addition, because the wards differed widely in ethnic and class composition, the interests

of the wards varied as well, and stalemates were frequent in those city-wide legislative bodies.<sup>29</sup> The inability of the city governments to act and the huge influx of immigrants caused the conditions of the cities to become outrageously bad. One account of the conditions in New York in 1863 reads:

In [the notorious Five Points] and other immigrant ghettos, a family with ten dollars a month could afford a dark attic without windows or chimney to let out coal fumes. In the cellars, bunks of rotting straw and old rags were available for a nickel a night. An army of perhaps fifteen thousand vagabond children roamed from river to river, from the Battery to Central Park, sleeping on basement coal piles in the winter and on the docks in the summer. Two orphans were discovered living in a burned-out safe on Wall Street.<sup>30</sup>

Into these horrid conditions stepped the political machines, who acted where no one else could because they were unofficial structures, and thus not subject to the strict limitations built into the legally devised structures.<sup>31</sup> George Washington Plunkitt, a New York ward leader alive around the beginning of the twentieth century, said, “See how beautiful a Tammany city government runs with a so-called boss directin’ the whole shootin’ match!...If there’s any differences of opinion, the Tammany leader settles them quietly, and his orders go every time.”<sup>32</sup> Thus, the ward leaders and the aldermen of the machines were able to act decisively in answering the demands of the people for reform, assistance, and welfare when no one else had the positive authority or willingness to act.<sup>33</sup>

With their effective decision-making powers, bosses and machines frequently turned their attentions to the building of city infrastructure. In the 1870s, Washington, DC was essentially a “swampy mudhole covered with flimsy wooden buildings,” and there was talk of moving the capital to another location.<sup>34</sup> As a native Washingtonian who genuinely cared about his city, Boss Alexander Shepherd pushed—against much protest from the wealthy, who usually lived outside the city—for a multi-million-dollar public improvements bill that utilized state-of-the-art engineering materials to pave the city’s streets.<sup>35</sup> Although he was ousted a few years later, the project he began continued, and

within twenty years, the Nation's capital had become one of the two best-paved cities in the country.<sup>36</sup> In similar fashion around the country, bosses and machines worked to help the urban centers flourish and blossom into the industrial megalopolises that would be key to America's prosperity in the twentieth century.

The machines were also able to provide a variety of services to the people. The machines formed what was essentially a symbiotic relationship with the people, in which the machines provided services to the people that they needed in exchange for the votes that the machine needed. Both sides benefited from the trade. Without the people's support, the machines would collapse, and thus the politicians worked around the clock to earn favor with the people by providing jobs, houses, citizenship, political patronage, and city improvements, especially in times of crisis. When New York was hit by a severe economic recession in the fall of 1857, early Tammany politician Fernando Wood proposed, in classic machine style, a vast work-relief program for the unemployed.<sup>37</sup>

The machines not only provided aid, but they also provided it in a personal, informal manner so as to befriend the voters. A few other agencies for providing aid to the poor did exist, but they provided less aid, and, in the eyes of the poor, they were cold and bureaucratic, unsympathetic to the actual needs of the people.<sup>38</sup> One district leader from Boston declared to Lincoln Steffens, a famous muckraking reformer and author of *The Shame of the Cities*, "I think...that there's got to be in every ward somebody that any bloke can come to—no matter what he's done—and get help. Help, you understand; none of your law and your justice, but help."<sup>39</sup> Steffens later conceded in his autobiography, "I saw that if we [reformers] were to...replace the political machine...we must provide for that service [the machine provided]."<sup>40</sup>

The machine services were especially helpful to the immigrants, who were often penniless, hungry, homeless, and lacking citizenship. The machines, of course, were always eager to gather more voters, so the machines provided immigrants with shelter, food, rent, coal, jobs, and citizenship. The reformers, on the other hand, were often anti-immigrant in their policies. In fact, many

reformers were members of the American-Republican Party, a nativist organization that tried to enact many outrageously discriminatory policies such as a twenty-one-year naturalization waiting period for those immigrants seeking citizenship.<sup>41</sup> In addition, labor unions frequently excluded immigrants from joining.<sup>42</sup> Faced with such opposition, the immigrants had little choice but to look to organized, benevolent powers such as the political machines for protection, support, and aid. In return, the machines received many of their votes. Richard Croker, a Tammany Hall boss, put it best:

Think what New York is and what the people of New York are. One half, more than one half, are of foreign birth...They do not speak our language, they do not know our laws, they are the raw material with which we have to build up the state...There is no denying the service which Tammany has rendered to the Republic. There is no such organization for taking hold of the untrained, friendless man and converting him into a citizen. Who else would do it if we did not?... Although you may not like our motives or our methods, what other agency is there by which so long a row could have been hoed so quickly or so well?<sup>43</sup>

In addition to material services, the machines aided the lower classes in climbing the social and political ladders, for the immigrants and laborers generally lacked the resources of the upper and middle classes.<sup>44</sup> Before the advent of machines, politics was mostly an upper-class privilege; this can be especially noted in the fact that many important political offices lacked a salary—“a holdover from the days when public services was considered a proper duty for the well-to-do, who theoretically had no need for extra compensation and who considered pay corrupting.”<sup>45</sup> The lack of a salary virtually prohibited those not wealthy from any possibility of holding office, and for most of the nineteenth century, the most important offices in local governments were exclusive to the local economic elites.<sup>46</sup> The political machines, which relied upon the lower classes for power, quickly moved to change the structures of city governments to allow opportunities for everyone. Many political offices began to carry a salary, which allowed both lower- and middle-class politicians to devote their attention to the voters instead of to obtaining an income.

Machines also advanced the political influence of the lower classes by supporting wide enfranchisement. In 1821, Martin Van Buren and Tammany Hall both supported a movement to enfranchise virtually all white males over the age of 21 (the number of exceptions to the restrictions on voting were so numerous that the restrictions were virtually non-existent). The movement even allowed for black male property owners to vote, something almost unheard of in the early 1800s.<sup>47</sup>

The machines' political policies helped the poor enormously, but the machine itself was also a great boon to the poor, for through it, the poor were able to have the same types of connections for social advancement that the sons of privileged families had.<sup>48</sup> The hierarchy of the machine allowed the poor to work their way out of the slums,<sup>49</sup> and allowed the sufficiently ambitious politician to work his way up the chain of command, much as in the military. Many of Tammany Hall's most famous bosses were laborers who climbed that hierarchy: Tweed was a chairmaker's apprentice, "Honest John" Kelly was a soap-stone cutter, Richard Croker was an unskilled laborer, and Charles F. Murphy was a horse-car driver.<sup>50</sup>

Since the foundation of the machines was in the lower class, the foundations of the political reform movements were almost solely in the middle and upper classes—those groups who least needed and least benefited from the political machines.<sup>51</sup> These "reformers" were not so much advocates of ethical politics as they were the politically displaced who were attempting to seize the political power they felt had been unjustly withheld from them by the machine. The wealthy upper class, especially the businessmen, hoped that reform would increase their political power, and it usually did.<sup>52</sup>

Many wealthy businessmen were often frustrated at the fact that machine governments were very pro-labor (they refused to break strikes with the city police),<sup>53</sup> which they felt constricted the actions of their corporations.<sup>54</sup> Thus, at first they used bribes and other forms of persuasion to convince politicians to concede on certain issues,<sup>55</sup> but eventually they felt that they needed even

more freedom to act. In the Municipal Research Bureau movement, bureaus were established to “conduct research in municipal affairs”<sup>56</sup>—that is, to find the evidence the businessmen would need to defame the machines and thereby gather the votes necessary to seize political power in the cities. The bureaus were mostly established and financed by big businessmen such as Andrew Carnegie of the Carnegie Steel Corporation, John D. Rockefeller of the Standard Oil Company, John H. Patterson of the National Cash Register Company, and George Eastman of the Eastman Kodak Company.<sup>57</sup>

Most reformers were afraid that the machine, because it gave political power to “the most untrustworthy and disreputable elements in the urban society,”<sup>58</sup> posed a threat to the common social structures of the day.<sup>59</sup> They were very suspicious of structures benefiting the lower class such as labor unions and universal male suffrage.<sup>60</sup> Charles Francis Adams, Jr., a leader of the Liberal Republicans, a party dedicated to ending corruption in post-Civil War America, said:

Universal suffrage can only mean in plain English the government of ignorance and vice. It means a European, and especially Celtic proletariat on the Atlantic coast, an African proletariat on the shores of the Gulf, and a Chinese proletariat on the Pacific.<sup>61</sup>

In other words, the reformers feared that the lower classes, backed by the machines, would seize those powers that the upper class had enjoyed exclusively for centuries. By killing the political machine and “reforming” the city governments, the members of the upper class believed they could diminish the dangerous influences of the lower class and the immigrants, or—as one leading reformer described them—the “low persons, who, coming from foreign lands, were of course without our own high ethical standards.”<sup>62</sup>

Because the primary goal of their reform movement was seizing power and not in fixing politics, the reformers simply tried to “replace the machine with a government responsive to other groups in the society—not to try to deal with the problems of those groups which had turned to the machine for support.”<sup>63</sup> That is, they did not actually try to reform the government. Although some

of the reformers truly believed in the virtuous principles of democracy, those idealists were few. In fact, the majority of reformers agreed with the inclinations of Charles Russell, one of the leading reform advocates at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century:

The sophisticated had long given up any notion that reform was anything but a handy word with which to win the mild applause and comfortable checks of the silk-stocking brigade. Only schoolboys and the half-witted believed that politics could ever be purified.<sup>64</sup>

Even Lincoln Steffens admits, “There was no reform...It was a change in personnel...to good, respectable, educated gentlemen who did not know how bad they were or how to govern a town.”<sup>65</sup>

Still, reformers, however self-serving they may be, were mostly educated folk, and thus they were able to recognize that a distinct relationship existed between the machine and the lower classes.<sup>66</sup> They knew that without the support of the public, the reformers would never be able to undermine the machine and replace it as the dominant political power. Thus, the reform movement was inherently a paradox: the reformers wanted a concentration of power in their hands, but needed to appeal to the lower classes in order to win their votes.<sup>67</sup> In order to win over the people, the reformers had to campaign for votes. Lincoln Steffens writes, “Political propaganda can accomplish something if...it reached for the imagination of ‘bad men.’”<sup>68</sup>

Although machines were corrupt, the image the reformers presented to the people was almost completely one-sided, ignoring the functions the machines served.<sup>69</sup> The reformers presented the machines to be havens of absolute evil constructed purely for the material gains of the politicians. Newspapers, owned by upper-class businessmen, naturally assisted in circulating these views. In 1870, the *New York Times* began its attacks upon Boss Tweed without any factual evidence; instead, the paper’s partisanship was the main driving force for the attack. Only when other papers failed to join the “crusade” did the *New York Times* actually begin publishing evidence against Tweed in the summer of 1871.<sup>70</sup> In 1924, Republican Senators Arthur R. Robinson of Indiana and Gerald P. Nye of North Dakota tried to link Tammany politician

Al Smith with the Teapot Dome Scandal. Without evidence, they tried to allege that Harry Sinclair, one of the chief perpetrators in the scandal, had donated money to Smith's gubernatorial campaign fund. The prosecutor of the Teapot Dome Scandal, recognizing their claim as an under-handed political maneuver, dismissed it.<sup>71</sup> Although duplicitous and insincere, these tactics were often quite effective. Of course, the reformers were the most successful at appealing to the lower classes during peaceful, prosperous times, when the need for the machines was not as apparent.<sup>72</sup>

About once a generation, the reform movement gained enough momentum to win a significant number of offices. They then tried hard to change the governmental system to increase the likelihood that they would remain in power. One of these efforts was the commission government movement, which appeared in cities such as Des Moines and Pittsburgh.<sup>73</sup> The commission form of government would replace the traditional city council, whose members each represented a single district, with a new council whose members—the commissioners—were all either elected by the entire city or, more often than not, they were appointed by the state legislature.<sup>74</sup> In the old system, the councilman would represent the concerns and interests of his own unique election ward, but in the new system, the commissioners would be heavily influenced by the local businessmen, and less answerable to the individual wards.

J. W. Hill, the president of the committees in Des Moines responsible for formulating this system, declared, "the professional politicians must be ousted and in his place capable business men chosen to conduct the affairs of the city."<sup>75</sup> Even when the reformers were persuading the people of Des Moines to accept the commission system, elitist sentiment still seeped out. One reformer told the voters that the reform candidates for commissioner, collectively known as the "businessman's ticket," represented labor "better than you do yourself."<sup>76</sup> Obviously, the voters were not convinced, and throughout the movement, the lower classes vigorously opposed the new system.<sup>77</sup> Thus it comes at no

surprise that, although the commission system passed the Des Moines popular vote by a bare margin, the first commissioners that were elected were distinctly anti-commission.<sup>78</sup> In Des Moines, at least, the lower class had won.

The reform politicians were rarely in office for long before the people realized the incompetence and hypocrisy of the movement. The reformers, too, were scandal-ridden, just as the machines were,<sup>79</sup> but without the redeeming quality of empathy for the poor. Because they lacked the underlying unity that a machine had, they were often torn with indecision and gridlock. Russell described in his memoirs the failure of the Brooklyn reform administration after 1897:

None of the new commissioners had any practical knowledge of the great and complex business of policing a large city...They...gave over the chieftaincy to one incompetent after another, while the commissioners chiefly quarreled.<sup>80</sup>

Thus, within one term or so of the reformers' glorious entrance, they were thrown out of office at the next election, as the members of the lower class, "repeated with cheers and jeers the famous battle cry of Asa Bird Gardiner, 'To hell with reform.'"<sup>81</sup>

Ultimately, many of the actual reforms of the Progressive Era were achieved not by reformers but by the machines themselves. Historian Alan Brinkley writes:

In fact, political organizations were responsible not just for corruption, but also for modernizing city infrastructures, for expanding the roles of government and for creating stability in a political and social climate that otherwise would have lacked a center...their achievements were often greater than those of the more scrupulous reformers who challenged them.<sup>82</sup>

Machines provided the drive for reform that the "reformers" did not. When in 1911 a horrifying fire swept through the Triangle Shirtwaist Company and killed 143 women and children (and a few men), two Tammany Democrats—Senator Robert F. Wagner and Assemblyman Alfred E. Smith—were the strongest leaders in an investigation which produced a code of 56 state laws regulating factory working conditions.<sup>83</sup> When the Civil Service examinations were established at the beginning of the twentieth century, it was

the intent of the reformers to restrict government participation to the upper class.<sup>84</sup> Fortunately for the lower class, Tammany Boss Charles F. Murphy sponsored classes so that they could pass the examinations,<sup>85</sup> turning the original intent of the reformers into true reform. Historian Charles LaCerra writes:

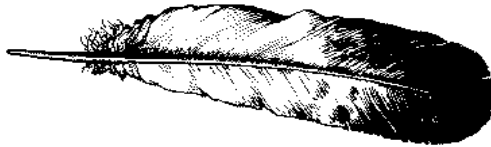
Tammany advocated the abolition of slavery, freedom of debtors, and the removal of property qualifications to vote. In addition, they impacted on city planning by humanizing conditions. They promoted the building of sewers, mass transit, water ducts, paved streets, home construction, school systems, and acted as relief agencies—all for the vote.<sup>86</sup>

Machines were also able to push for nationwide social reform, especially through Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal, much of which was brought about by Senator Robert Wagner, Sr., the Tammany politician responsible for the labor reforms.<sup>87</sup> Indeed, much of the New Deal could be looked upon as the policy of one vast Democratic machine: the Democratic federal government supplied jobs and services to the voters, who in turn elected the Democratic Party to more offices, allowing the party to distribute more services. This system of "self-perpetuation" was almost identical to the urban political machines.<sup>88</sup> In the end, the structures of not only the Democratic Party but of almost all national political parties became modeled after the machines.<sup>89</sup>

Machines, however, did die eventually. The decline of the Age of the Political Machine began in 1924 with the death of Charles F. Murphy, the boss of Tammany Hall for 20 years. At Murphy's death, although during his lifetime he held only the title of Dock Commissioner,<sup>90</sup> 50,000 New Yorkers lined the streets to mourn and 6,000 attended his funeral.<sup>91</sup> Franklin Roosevelt declared:

In Mr. Murphy's death, the New York City Democratic organization has lost probably the strongest and wisest Leader it has had in generations....He was a genius who kept harmony, and at the same time recognized that the world moves on. It is well to remember that he had helped to accomplish much in the way of progressive legislation and social welfare in [the state of New York].<sup>92</sup>

Later on, in the 1930s, Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal policies altered the national government in such a way as to replace many of the services that the machines had provided, such as welfare and naturalization services.<sup>93</sup> Machines finally came to an end in the 1970s, when Richard Daley, the last Boss of Chicago, died.<sup>94</sup> Nevertheless, the effects of machines are still around today. To replace these machines the legitimate governments had to, in a way, become the machines. The governments became more personal, more open, and more responsible to the people, and the mainstream political parties began to resemble the machine in the ways they represented the people. Machines did not die in the sense that they no longer existed. Instead, they faded away slowly as they were gradually absorbed into the very fabric of the American nation.



## Notes

<sup>1</sup> William L. Riordon, Plunkitt of Tammany Hall (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1963) p. 81 (Italics supplied)

<sup>2</sup> John M. Allswang, Bosses, Machines, and Urban Voters revised ed. (Baltimore, Maryland: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986) p. 6

<sup>3</sup> Alfred Connable and Edward Silberfarb, Tigers of Tammany: Nine Men who Ran New York (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1967) p. 139

<sup>4</sup> Howard Zinn, A People's History of the United States: 1492 to Present Revised and Updated ed. (New York: Harper Perennial, 1995) p. 230

<sup>5</sup> Connable and Silberfarb, p. 140

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 140-141

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 142

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 142

<sup>9</sup> Zinn, p. 231

<sup>10</sup> Connable and Silberfarb, pp. 141-142

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 141-142

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 149

<sup>13</sup> Popular myth—very popular, in fact—states that Tweed's middle name is Marcy. In actuality, however, Tweed's middle name is most likely Magear, his mother's maiden name; Tweed himself never signed his middle name as "Marcy." (Allen, p. 83) A smart-aleck reformer probably began this rumor as a snide reference to William L. Marcy, an Albany Regency politician who "uttered the classic defense of patronage: 'To the victors belong the spoils,'" thus coining the phrase "spoils system." (Connable and Silberfarb, p. 143) As historian Leo Hershkowitz wrote, "Marcy was surely tacked on by newspapermen as a clever thought, a nickname befitting a 'corrupt' politician." (Allen, p. 83)

<sup>14</sup> Connable and Silberfarb, p. 149

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 152

<sup>16</sup> Allswang, p. 50

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 55, 58

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 46-47

<sup>19</sup> Connable and Silberfarb, pp. 171-172

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 171

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 175

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 19

- <sup>23</sup> Alan Brinkley, American History: A Survey Tenth ed. (Boston: McGraw-Hill College, 1999) pp. 625-628
- <sup>24</sup> Ibid., pp. 625-628
- <sup>25</sup> Ibid., pp. 622-628
- <sup>26</sup> Ibid., pp. 622-628
- <sup>27</sup> Ibid., p. 640
- <sup>28</sup> Robert K. Merton, Social Theory and Social Structure 1968 enlarged ed. (New York: The Free Press, 1968) p. 127
- <sup>29</sup> Charles E. Russell, Bare Hands and Stone Walls (New York: Charles Scribners Sons, 1933) p. 127
- <sup>30</sup> Connable and Silberfarb, p. 139
- <sup>31</sup> Merton, pp. 126-127
- <sup>32</sup> Riordon, p. 82
- <sup>33</sup> Merton, pp. 126-127
- <sup>34</sup> Monte A. Calvert, "The Manifest Functions of the Machine," Urban Bosses, Machines, and Progressive Reformers eds. Bruce M. Stave and Sondra Astor Stave, 2<sup>nd</sup> revised ed. (Malabar, Florida: Robert E. Krieger Publishing Company, 1969) p. 49
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- <sup>37</sup> Oliver E. Allen, The Tiger: The Rise and Fall of Tammany Hall (Reading, Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1993) p. 75
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- <sup>50</sup> Ibid., p. xviii
- <sup>51</sup> Allswang, p. 7
- <sup>52</sup> Samuel P. Hays, "The Politics of Reform in Municipal Government in the Progressive Era," Pacific Northwest Quarterly vol. 55, no. 4, pp. 157-169 (October 1964) p. 167
- <sup>53</sup> Ibid., p. 166
- <sup>54</sup> Ibid., p. 166
- <sup>55</sup> Ibid., pp. 166-167
- <sup>56</sup> Ibid., p. 159
- <sup>57</sup> Ibid., p. 159
- <sup>58</sup> Allswang, pp. 7-8
- <sup>59</sup> Hays, p. 164
- <sup>60</sup> Hofstadter, p. 143
- <sup>61</sup> Brinkley, p. 524
- <sup>62</sup> Russell, p. 125
- <sup>63</sup> Allswang, p. 7
- <sup>64</sup> Russell, p. 121
- <sup>65</sup> Steffens, p. 597
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- <sup>71</sup> Paul A. Carter, "The Other Catholic Candidate: The 1928 Presidential Bid of Thomas J. Walsh," Pacific Northwest Quarterly vol. 55, no. 1 (January 1964) p. 3 (footnote)
- <sup>72</sup> Hofstadter, pp. 134-135
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<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 175

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