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Article Summary: Quantitative and qualitative analyses of the 1940 Presidential Election suggests that German stock citizenry changed voting behavior, shifting from Democratic to Republican voting behavior directed more at Roosevelt than the Democratic party and that this resulted from concern with foreign policy issues.

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Photographs / Images: Republican campaign advertising posters of Wendell Willkie and Franklin D Roosevelt; *Taegliche Omaha Tribuene*, German language newspaper cartoon, October 10, 1940

## ISOLATIONIST VOTING IN 1940: A STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

By ROBERT W. CHERNY

THE 1940 PRESIDENTIAL election took place in an atmosphere dominated by events in Europe. In September, 1939, Nazi Germany invaded Poland; by the end of that month Poland had been partitioned between Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union. In the winter of 1939-1940 the war lapsed into a period of *Sitzkrieg*, with neither side taking bold initiatives. Then, just as the American primary elections were taking place, the war erupted into a swift-moving cataclysm. In April the Nazi war machine overran Denmark and Norway. In May Hitler's troops swept into the Low Countries, then on into France; by June 22, France had fallen.

As events in Europe gained national attention, the Republican mood swung away from Thomas Dewey, the previous front-runner for the presidential nomination, to a political newcomer, Wendell Willkie. Meeting in Philadelphia just two days after the fall of France, the Republican National Convention gave the presidential nomination to Willkie on the sixth ballot. Just as the European war had enabled Willkie to gain the nomination in a rejection of the younger, and therefore presumably more inexperienced, Dewey, so the war created a demand for proven leadership among the Democrats. As the European crisis deepened, Roosevelt slowly moved to a decision to seek a third term; by

the end of May he seemed to have made that decision. By early autumn Willkie had still not found a winning issue. But in late September he struck out in a new direction: he claimed that he could keep the United States out of the foreign conflict and that Roosevelt was a reckless warmonger. Roosevelt denied the charge, becoming more and more extreme in his replies. The last days of the campaign were fought out in a bitter atmosphere of accusation and denial, centered around the issue of American foreign policy.<sup>1</sup>

The 1940 presidential election produced changes in voting behavior labelled "isolationist" by many scholars. The earliest explanation for this behavior was produced by Samuel Lubell, who, in a series of magazine articles and in *The Future of American Politics*, questioned whether "isolationism, as generally pictured, ever really existed." Instead of associating isolationist behavior with the physical insularity of the Middle West, Lubell asserted that the "hard core of isolationism in the United States has been ethnic and emotional, not geographical." He found that the most common characteristic of isolationist-voting areas was "the residence there of ethnic groups with a pro-German or anti-British bias." Lubell theorized that the German background of these voters caused them to vote against Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1940, as a result of their fear that Roosevelt was pursuing a foreign policy which would lead to war with Germany. As a result, in "Kansas, Iowa, Nebraska, North and South Dakota this German-American defection was strong enough to swing those states Republican." Finally, Lubell stressed emphatically that "disloyalty is not involved" in the voting behavior.<sup>2</sup>

Although some other studies of isolationist behavior have accepted this Lubell thesis as to the effect of German background on voting behavior,<sup>3</sup> others have attributed isolationist behavior to Republican partisanship, to residence in rural environments, to Middle Western regionalism, or to some combination of these various factors.<sup>4</sup> Studies have denied that isolationist voting was ethnically motivated.<sup>5</sup> In order to evaluate the relationship of changes in voting patterns to these various factors, twenty-eight counties in eastern Nebraska were selected for an intensive statistical

analysis. In 1940 the Platte River divided eastern Nebraska into two economic regions: north of the river was an intensive meat producing area; south of the river was more cash grain farming, as well as livestock raising.<sup>6</sup> Accordingly, the twenty-eight counties were divided into two groups—thirteen north of the Platte and fifteen south of the river.<sup>7</sup> Thirteen ethnocultural and economic factors were derived for these counties from census publications. These factors, with their median values and ranges for the two groups of counties are given in Table 1.<sup>8</sup> Other variables showed little significant variation from county to county.<sup>9</sup>

In order to test the relationship of these variables to changes in voting behavior, indices of Democratic partisan preference were derived. For each state election from 1936 through 1944, a Democratic index was derived for each county based on the average vote cast for Democratic candidates for minor statewide offices.<sup>10</sup> (These minor offices were seldom the object of intensive campaigns; their incumbents and contestants were generally little known outside their own localities.) These indices were compared from election to election with each other and with the vote for Roosevelt in 1936, 1940, and 1944. Thus, if Roosevelt polled a higher percentage of the vote than the Democratic index, he was receiving Republican votes; if his vote was lower than the Democratic index, Democrats were not supporting him. Similarly, a decline in the Democratic index from one election to the next indicates party switching. Each Democratic index was subtracted from the index for the previous state election; each presidential vote was subtracted from the Democratic index for the same year and for the preceding state election; finally, each presidential vote was subtracted from the previous presidential vote. These operations produced a series of measurements of the *changes* in voting patterns over time.

Spearman's Coefficient of Rank-order Correlation was employed to test for the possibility of statistically measurable relationships among the various ethnocultural, economic, and political variables. The Spearman formula produces a measurement of the extent to which the rank orderings of one variable are related to those of another variable. This

measurement, called the coefficient of correlation, has a range from +1.00 to -1.00. A coefficient close to +1.00 means that the rank orderings of one variable correspond closely to those of the other variable tested. A coefficient close to -1.00 means that very high rankings for one variable correspond to very low rankings for the other. A coefficient of +1.00 indicates that the rank orderings of the two variables are identical; one of -1.00 indicates the rank orderings are exactly reversed for the two variables. Low coefficients indicate very little relationship between the two variables; a coefficient of 0.00 indicates the complete absence of any realtionship.<sup>11</sup>

The ethno-cultural and economic variables given in Table 1 were correlated with the measures of changes in voting behavior. Since several scholars have attributed isolationist voting to Republican party affiliation, this possible relationship was tested for by correlating the 1936 Democratic presidential vote with the measures of voting change. (The 1936 presidential election produced the highest Democratic vote during the eight year period; its reverse would indicate the bed-rock Republican vote, and thus a high negative correlation would indicate a realtionship between Republican partisanship and the changes in voting behavior.) Finally, in order to guard against spurious results due to relationships among the non-political variables, these variables were correlated with one another. (One example of such a spurious result might be the case where a nationality group, e.g., the German group, formed most of the rural population. In such a case the variables "German stock" and "rural-farm" could be expected to produce similar coefficients when correlated with changes in voting behavior.) The end result of all these computations was the production of four large tables of correlation coefficients.<sup>12</sup> An analysis of these tables reveals that the most significant, independent, consistent relationship measured by the coefficients is that between the variable "German stock" and changes in voting behavior involving the 1940 presidential election. The coefficients between the percentage of German stock over twenty-one years of age and changes in voting behavior over the entire eight year period are given in Table 2. In the southeastern group of counties no variables unrelated to the German stock variable

produced coefficients between +.70 and +1.00 or between -.70 and -1.00. In northeastern Nebraska three nonpolitical variables not obviously related to Germanness produced coefficients at these levels of significance: "rural-farm," change in size of farms, and the 1936 presidential vote. The latter two produced only one significant coefficient each, and neither coefficient was derived from 1940 voting changes. The variable "rural-farm" produced consistently high coefficients for the 1940 voting changes. However, this variable and the variable "German stock" correlated at +.59, thus creating the possibility of a spurious result. It is apparent the high proportion of German stock in the rural-farm population increased the correlations between the "rural-farm" variable and changes in voting behavior, for in every calculation involving the 1940 presidential election, the "German stock" coefficients were at higher significance levels than those for "rural-farm."

In order to test the relationship of voting changes to rural environment and to Republican partisan identification, independently of any effect from the presence of a concentrated German stock population, coefficients were derived for fourteen eastern Nebraska counties where the German stock composed less than 20% of the population over 21 years of age.<sup>13</sup> The resulting coefficients are given in Table 3; they do not in any way suggest a relationship between the variables "rural-farm" and Republicanism and changes in voting behavior related to the 1940 presidential election. A coefficient was also derived for the relationship between German stock and voting changes to test whether a dispersed German stock population reacted any less measurably than did a concentrated one.<sup>14</sup> The resulting coefficients suggest a similar reaction by German stock citizens regardless of the density of their concentration. Tables 2 and 3 indicate that the shift in German voting patterns in 1940 was directed against Roosevelt to a greater extent than against the Democratic party, due to the higher correlations involving the 1940 presidential election than those involving the 1940 Democratic index.

The preceding analysis has clearly suggested a relationship between (a) a shift from support for Roosevelt in 1936 to

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for President

*Republican campaign advertising in 1940 stressed the "peace" issue, and the candidacy of Wendell Willkie benefited from it by drawing most of the German-American vote. Willkie won the state, but President Franklin D. Roosevelt nevertheless won a third term in the White House.*

**CARRY ON WITH**



**FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT**



support for Willkie in 1940 and (b) German background; and between (a) support for Willkie by a Democrat in 1940 and (b) German background.<sup>15</sup> It remains to place this distinctive German stock voting behavior into historical perspective and to examine the causes for this change in voting patterns.

Between 1900 and 1916 the counties in Nebraska with large proportions of German stock voters showed a greater propensity for the Democratic party than did the state as a whole.<sup>16</sup> This preference for the Democratic party has been linked to the question of prohibition and the related issue of woman suffrage by several writers.<sup>17</sup> From 1915 to 1920 the nature of these issues shifted as constitutional amendments enacted both prohibition and woman suffrage.<sup>18</sup> In 1918 citizens of German stock were alienated from the Democratic party by the foreign policy of Democratic president Woodrow Wilson, who asked for a declaration of war on their cousins still in Germany, and by the loyalty policies of Nebraska's Democratic governor Keith Neville, whose State Council of Defense embarked upon a program of persecution of German stock citizens.<sup>19</sup> The German stock citizens turned to the Republican party and helped to elect Samuel McKelvie governor in 1918; the Republicans, however, continued the loyalty policies of Neville and transformed them into a policy of nativism at the war's end. Antagonism toward the German language continued into the 1920's.<sup>20</sup> Alienated from both major parties, the areas with large proportions of German stock citizens showed a vacillatory attitude toward politics in the 1920's. These areas showed strong tendencies toward ticket-splitting and gave strong support to third parties in the 1920 gubernatorial election and the 1924 presidential election.<sup>21</sup> By the late 1920's and certainly by the early 1930's, most of these areas returned to the Democratic party.<sup>22</sup> This Democratic allegiance did not have the same strength as it had had before World War I, however, and by the late 1930's some of the German stock areas in northeastern Nebraska had begun to drift into the Republican column.<sup>23</sup>

In the months preceding the 1940 elections,<sup>24</sup> there was a great deal of concern in Democratic quarters, and rejoicing in Republican quarters, over the apparent direction which the

German stock citizens' vote was taking. Citizens wrote to the leaders of the Roosevelt organization that this so-called "German vote" would go against Roosevelt.<sup>25</sup> Two of the most articulate analyses of this situation came from Frederick M. Deutsch, an attorney in northeastern Nebraska, and from Christian A. Sorensen, one of thirteen national vice-presidents of the Independent Voters for Roosevelt and Wallace. Writing to James Lawrence, editor of the *Lincoln Star* and a Roosevelt supporter, Deutsch explained:

The German population, in the rural communities, at least, is very bitter toward the President because it feels that he is trying to lead this country into war against the ancestral country, and because he shows too great favoritism toward England . . . . Secretary [of Agriculture and Democratic vice-presidential nominee Henry A.] Wallace preached that Mr. Willkie's ancestors on both sides were of German descent, and inferentially, that he was not thereby qualified to become the President of this country . . . . Many Germans make the distinction between Germany as they knew it, and Hitler, but Secretary Wallace was including Americans of German descent in his classification of incompetents or un-American people . . . . As the matter now stands, the German communities appear to be overwhelmingly against the President . . . ."

Sorensen wrote to David K. Niles, the secretary of the Independent Voters organization, on October 18:

The German-American voter situation gives us the utmost concern. They make up almost a third of the voters in the state. Not all of them of course but entirely too many have been led to believe that President Roosevelt is overly friendly to England and that if re-elected the German-American youth will again be called upon to fight their cousins. Tons of pro-Hitler literature is being distributed and of course the Republican leaders are spreading the word that Willkie was really against [the Burke-Wadsworth]conscription [Act of 1940].<sup>27</sup>

The same day Sorensen voiced his concern in a letter to Senator George W. Norris:

The so-called German vote in the Middle West is being organized against Roosevelt. Wherever I go I find Willkie buttons on many German-American farmers. Propaganda has made them nationality conscious and to believe that Roosevelt if elected will get this country into war with their mother country . . . . I have before me a copy of 'American Views,' No. 15, July, 1940 which is being sent to several hundred German leaders in the state. It is printed in English but mailed from Germany . . . . The theme of all the articles is that Hitler is the world's greatest leader, that the truth is being kept from the Americans, and that Roosevelt has a personal enmity to Germany.<sup>28</sup>

A Republican organizer wrote that "the Germans and Catholics are going to support Willkie."<sup>29</sup>

The reaction of the voters of German stock background did not go unnoticed by the press. Arthur Sears Henning, a



*The Taegliche Omaha Tribuene*, a German-language newspaper, which supported the candidacy of Wendell Willkie for president, published this editorial cartoon on October 10, 1940.

political analysis writing in the *Omaha World-Herald* in early October, noted:

The Germans ordinarily vote the democratic ticket and have ever since they settled this part of the country. Now, however, something akin to a political upheaval has taken place in their communities. In the northeastern part of the state, which is overwhelmingly German, recent polls have been 2 to 1 republican.

The German-Americans hotly resent efforts to ascribe their opposition to Mr. Roosevelt to a fondness for Hitler or naziism. . . . Their attitude appears to be animated chiefly by a native prejudice against Great Britain and the suspicion that the Roosevelt war policies are being dictated from London.<sup>30</sup>

TABLE 1

VARIABLE	Northeast counties			Southeast counties		
	Median	High	Low	Median	High	Low
Percentage of population over 21 years of age of German stock	27.6	49.4	6.9	17.8	35.1	9.1
Same, of Czech stock	4.2	49.1	0.2	2.0	39.2	0.1
Same, of Scandinavian stock	6.4	31.6	1.2	1.8	37.3	0.6
Same, of combined German and Scandinavian stock	35.5	59.4	19.3	27.7	46.4	12.0
Same, of native stock	45.0	63.3	25.3	54.3	72.1	34.5
Percentage of total population Catholic	10.1	36.0	2.4	8.7	33.4	3.6
Percentage of population over 14 years of age Lutheran	32.8	64.6	16.1	21.6	69.8	4.4
Percentage of population over 14 years of age native Protestant	19.2	27.5	0.5	26.1	34.8	13.9
Percentage of total population "rural-farm"	54.0	70.9	29.6	52.0	63.2	37.4
Change in size of farms, 1930-1940, in acres	+ 7.5	+13.2	+ 0.3	+ 8.8	+16.7	- 0.7
Change in value of farms, 1930-1940, in hundreds of dollars	-132	-195	- 52	-105	-160	- 86
Percentage of farms mortgaged, 1940	62.0	70.5	54.6	59.0	67.7	52.4
Percentage of farms reporting crop failure, 1939	21.6	33.1	8.3	25.8	48.4	14.8

The two most prominent German-language newspapers in Nebraska were opposed to Roosevelt, although neither specifically alluded to the growing American involvement in the war in a context which suggested that their interest was motivated by their ethnic background. The *Omaha Taegliche Tribune* attacked both the New Deal and the foreign policies of Roosevelt. The *Lincoln Welt-Post* had little direct political commentary; it defended the German people and attacked the

TABLE 2

Changes in voting behavior:	Coefficients of correlation	
	Northeastern	Southeastern
Between 1936 Democratic index and 1938 Democratic index	-.58	-.77
Between 1938 Democratic index and 1940 Democratic index	+.72	-.30
Between 1940 Democratic index and 1942 Democratic index	-.49	+.12
Between 1942 Democratic index and 1944 Democratic index	+.70	+.09
Between 1936 Democratic index and 1936 Democratic presidential vote	+.47	-.55
Between 1938 Democratic index and 1940 Democratic presidential vote	+.91	+.58
Between 1940 Democratic index and 1942 Democratic presidential vote	+.92	+.69
Between 1942 Democratic index and 1944 Democratic presidential vote	+.84	+.48
Between 1944 Democratic index and 1944 Democratic presidential vote	+.81	+.48
Between 1936 Democratic presidential vote and 1940 Democratic presidential vote	+.93	+.75
Between 1940 Democratic presidential vote and 1944 Democratic presidential vote	+.37	+.43

British in terms common to fascist newspapers.<sup>31</sup> English-language newspaper editorials in eastern Nebraska nearly all stressed the foreign policy issue as of prime importance. In this part of the state the foreign stock accounted for 49.47% of the population over twenty-one; the German stock for roughly 20% of the population over twenty-one. In central and western Nebraska (west of about 98°) the foreign stock accounted for 38.86% of the population of voting age;

German stock citizens for only about 7.5%. In the central and western area newspaper editorials seemed to be in agreement that there was little difference between the two candidates' foreign policy pronouncements.<sup>32</sup> It would appear that these Republican editors based their editorial policy on the issue which they expected to find the greatest response among their readers; an exception is noteworthy: the usually Democratic *Beatrice Sun* (in southeastern Nebraska) based its opposition to Roosevelt primarily on the third term issue.

The convergence of quantitative and qualitative analyses suggests (a) the German stock citizenry was unique in the degree of correlation between ethnicity and changes in voting behavior relating to the 1940 presidential election, (b) a significant shift from Democratic to Republican voting behavior took place among the German stock citizenry in 1940, (c) this shift was directed more at Roosevelt than at the Democratic party, and (d) this anti-Roosevelt voting resulted from concern with foreign policy issues. This study must not be interpreted as suggesting that present-day Republican strength in the counties with the largest proportions of German background citizens is due solely to an ethnic response to the foreign policy issues of the 1940 presidential campaign and the events which followed it. On the contrary there are indications that the German stock counties had begun a slow drift into Republican voting patterns before 1940. This drift, attributable in part to the absence of ethnic issues from 1930 to 1940 and to the beginning of the structural assimilation of German stock areas into the traditionally Republican political system of the state as a whole, was greatly sharpened and accelerated by the events of 1940, to the point where these areas today—after nearly a generation without ethnic politics or issues—are noticeably more Republican than the remainder of the state. As may be seen from Table 4, Czech stock counties have experienced the same drift to the Republican party, but have nonetheless remained more Democratic in their voting patterns than has the state as a whole.

TABLE 3

Changes in voting behavior:	Percentage "rural-farm" 1940	1936 Democratic Presidential vote	Percentage of German stock in pop. over 21
Between 1936 Democratic index and 1938 Democratic index	-.20	+.20	-.21
Between 1938 Democratic index and 1940 Democratic index	+.43	-.28	+.41
Between 1940 Democratic index and 1942 Democratic index	-.32	+.39	-.54
Between 1942 Democratic index and 1944 Democratic index	+.11	-.40	+.22
Between 1936 Democratic index and 1936 Democratic presidential vote	-.25	-.03	+.09
Between 1938 Democratic index and 1940 Democratic presidential vote	+.43	-.26	+.60
Between 1940 Democratic index and 1940 Democratic presidential vote	+.19	-.12	+.37
Between 1942 Democratic index and 1944 Democratic presidential vote	+.18	-.51	+.46
Between 1944 Democratic index and 1944 Democratic presidential vote	+.05	-.63	+.35
Between 1936 Democratic presidential vote and 1940 Democratic presidential vote	+.46	-.34	+.37
Between 1940 Democratic presidential vote and 1944 Democratic presidential vote	-.07	-.46	+.12

TABLE 4

County	Largest ethnic group	% of that group*	Democratic Indices					
			1910	1914	1938	1942	1962	1966
Cuming	German	49.4	55.1	56.7	49.4	32.2	27.1	27.0
Pierce	German	41.1	48.8	53.5	45.4	31.2	30.6	28.0
Stanton	German	35.2	49.2	53.0	56.3	35.0	32.8	29.5
Thayer	German	35.1	41.9	46.2	44.9	30.7	37.3	31.0
Wayne	German	34.9	45.6	43.1	43.1	31.3	27.1	23.5
Otoe	German	31.6	45.8	46.9	42.0	31.1	33.3	29.3
Colfax	Czech	49.1	62.3	54.8	55.4	46.4	42.4	36.2
Saline	Czech	39.2	44.3	52.6	51.4	44.9	51.8	49.0
Butler	Czech	36.2	50.5	56.7	55.3	44.4	53.6	50.0
Polk	Scandinavian	37.3	44.3	45.7	43.2	35.1	35.8	32.1
Burt	Scandinavian	31.6	37.5	39.0	44.8	34.6	32.5	27.6
Nemaha	native	72.1	47.5	46.9	45.0	34.7	36.9	32.3
Richardson	native	69.6	49.9	46.8	49.4	40.9	41.0	35.7
Thurston	native	63.3	48.4	47.6	57.9	40.5	43.5	39.4
Pawnee	native	62.4	43.4	41.2	41.1	30.5	37.3	33.7
<b>NEBRASKA</b>			36.1	45.4	43.9	35.3	38.5	33.0

\*This column was derived as outlined in footnote 8.

## NOTES

1. For more extended surveys of the 1940 presidential election, see William E. Leuchtenburg, *Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal: 1932-1940* (New York, 1963), 299-323; and James MacGregor Burns, *Roosevelt: The Lion and the Fox* (New York, 1956), 397-455.
2. Samuel Lubell, *The Future of American Politics*, 2nd edn., rev. (New York, 1955), 139-142.
3. Leuchtenburg, 321; Burns, 455.
4. William G. Carleton ascribes Middle Western isolationism, 1939-1941, to partisan opposition to Roosevelt's foreign policy; "Isolationism and the Middle West," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, v. 33 (Dec., 1946), 385. Jeanette P. Nichols, while not contradicting Lubell, seems to lean to the explanation of Republican partisanship to explain Middle Western isolationism; "The Middle West and the Coming of World War II," *Ohio State Archeological and Historical Quarterly*,

v. 62 (1953), 122-145. LeRoy N. Rieselbach, after examining Congressional voting patterns, rejects explanations based on rural environment, Midwestern regionalism, or ethnic-emotionalism, and maintains that isolationist behavior derives from Republican partisanship and conservative ideology; "The Basis of Isolationist Behavior," *Public Opinion Quarterly*, v. 24 (Winter, 1960), 645-657. Ray A Billington describes Middle Western isolationism as stemming from the regional conflict of the 1890's, augmented by ethnic backgrounds; "The Origins of Middle Western Isolationism," *Political Science Quarterly*, v. 60 (March, 1945), 63, 64. Finally, Ralph H. Smuckler, basing his analysis on Congressional voting patterns, associated isolationism with a number of factors: ruralness, Republican party affiliation, German background, and a high educational level; "The Region of Isolationism," *The American Political Science Review*, v. 47 (June, 1953), 401.

5. Robert P. Wilkins, "The Non-Ethnic Roots of North Dakota Isolationism," *Nebraska History*, v. 44 (Sept., 1963), 205-222.

6. Adapted from Joseph C. Knibbs, "The Political Map of Nebraska" (unpublished M.A. thesis, Department of History, University of Nebraska, 1935), 4.

7. The northeastern counties: Burt, Cedar, Colfax, Cuming, Dakota, Dixon, Dodge, Madison, Pierce, Platte, Stanton, Thurston, Wayne. The southeastern counties: Butler, Fillmore, Gage, Jefferson, Johnson, Nemaha, Otoe, Pawnee, Polk, Richardson, Saline, Saunders, Seward, Thayer, York.

8. The percentages of the population over twenty-one years of age of given national stock ("stock" is a census term to refer to those foreign born or with at least one parent so born) backgrounds are derived from Tables 13, 18, 19, U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930: Population*, v. III, *Composition and Characteristics of the Population*, part 2: 83, 88, 89. The 1930 census was used because the 1940 census did not list the native born children of the foreign born. Because this second generation composed a large and important part of the foreign stock, the 1930 figures were used. There was some outward migration in these areas during the intervening decade, but, after a comparison of the 1930 and 1940 censuses, the author concluded that the effect of this outward migration was, if anything, to intensify the proportion of the foreign stock in the population remaining in these areas, i.e., the outward migration was more concentrated among the native born of native parentage than among the foreign stock. The percentage of a given national stock group in the population over twenty-one years of age was derived by taking the percentage of the total foreign stock over twenty-one years of age, of the total number of members of each national stock group. The resulting figure, the approximate number of members of a national stock group over twenty-one, was used to derive a percentage for that group of the total population over twenty-one. Religious percentages were derived from Table 32, U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Religious Bodies: 1936*, v. I, 783-786; and Tables 21 and 23, *Sixteenth Census: 1940*, v. II, *Characteristics of the Population*, part 2: 608-613, 633-644. The percentage classified by the census as "rural-farm" is based on Tables 21 and 26, *ibid.*, 608-613, 649-654. Change in size of farms and change in value of farms, both indices of the effect of the depression upon agriculture, and the proportion of farms reporting crop failure in 1939 are from County Table I, *Sixteenth Census: 1940: Agriculture*, v. I, part 1, 576-584. The percentage of farms mortgaged is from County Table VIII, *ibid.*, vol. I, part 2, 632-639.

9. These factors include unemployment and educational level; see Table 23, *Sixteenth Census: 1940*, vol. II, *Characteristics of the Population*, part 3, 633-644, and Table 21, *ibid.*, 608-613.

10. In 1936 these minor positions were: Secretary of State, Auditor, Treasurer, Commissioner of Public Lands and Buildings, Attorney General, and Railway Commissioner. The Commissioner of Public Lands and Buildings was not elected after 1936, due to a constitutional amendment. The election statistics may be found in State of Nebraska, Nebraska Legislative Reference Bureau, *Nebraska Blue Book* 1936, 459-464; *ibid.*, 1962, 642-646; *ibid.*, 1966, 721-724; and State of Nebraska, State Canvassing Board, Report, 1938, 17; *ibid.*, 1940, 29; *ibid.*, 1942, 17; *ibid.*, 1944, 29.

11. For further description, see Hubert M. Blalock, *Social Statistics* (New York, 1960), 317-319. There is a good discussion of the rationale behind the use of the Spearman formulae for historical research in Frederick C. Luebke, *Immigrants and Politics: The Germans of Nebraska, 1880-1900* (Lincoln, 1969), 194-196. There is recently also published a section dealing with spearman correlations in the textbook by Richard Jensen and Charles Dollar.

12. These tables, as well as the tables of all the variables, were too extensive for inclusion in this article. Copies of them have been filed with the Archivist, Nebraska State Historical Society.

13. The counties: Burt, Butler, Colfax, Dakota, Dixon, Fillmore, Nemaha, Pawnee, Polk, Richardson, Saline, Saunders, Thurston, York.

14. Luebke and Dorpalen both suggest that one would find a less distinctive ethnic voting response among a dispersed population than among a concentrated one. See Luebke, 35; Andreas Dorpalen, "The German Element and the Issues of the Civil War," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, v. 29 (June, 1942), 55-76.

15. It is also of interest that the 1938 election, seen by several historians as the beginning of the break-up of the 1936 Roosevelt coalition in the Middle West, emerges as relatively insignificant for northeastern Nebraska (where foreign stock voters predominated) and as much more significant in the southeastern part of the state, with its more dispersed foreign stock population. See e.g., Leuchtenburg, 271; Burns, 364, 365.

The Nebraska figures also deny Lubell's hypothesis of a voting behavior common to both German and Scandinavian stock voters; for all computations involving the 1940 presidential election, correlations between German stock and voting changes were consistently higher than those between combined German and Scandinavian stock and voting changes. See Lubell, 82, 143-144.

16. For a thorough treatment of the period 1880-1900, see Luebke, *Immigrants and Politics*. For the adherence of the German stock Americans to the Democratic party, 1900-1916, see, e.g., John A. Hawgood, *The Tragedy of German-America: The Germans in the United States of America during the Nineteenth Century—and After* (New York, 1940), 45, 49, 50; Carl Wittke, "German Immigrants and their Children," *Annals of the American Academy*, v. 203 (Sept., 1942), 87.

17. See Luebke, *Immigrants and Politics*; Luebke, "The German-American Alliance in Nebraska, 1910-1917," *Nebraska History*, v. 49 (Summer, 1968), 165-187; Samuel P. Hays, "History as Human Behavior," *Iowa Journal of History*, v. 58 (July, 1960), 196, 197; Hays, "The Social Analysis of American Political History, 1880-1920," *Political Science Quarterly*, v. 80 (Sept., 1965), 387; Wittke, "German Immigrants and their Children," 87, 88; Wittke, *The German-Language Press in*

*America* (Lexington, 1957), 163; Louis L. Gerson, *The Hyphenate in Recent American Politics and Diplomacy* (Lawrence, 1964), 48; Clifton James Childs, *The German-American in Politics: 1914-1917* (Madison, 1939), 10.

18. Nebraska passed a state prohibition amendment in the election of 1916. The 18th Amendment (prohibition) and the 19th Amendment (woman suffrage) to the national constitution became effective in 1920.

19. For the German-American reaction to Wilson's foreign policy, see, e.g., V.O. Key, Jr., *Politics, Parties, and Pressure Groups* (New York, 1945), 151, 152; Gerson, 65; Wittke, *German-Language Press*, 254-257; Hawgood, 292. For the effect of Neville's loyalty policies, see Robert Neal Manley, "The Nebraska State Council of Defense: Loyalty Programs and Policies during World War I" (unpublished M.A. thesis, Department of History, University of Nebraska, 1958), 144, 281-290.

20. Jack W. Rodgers, "The Foreign Language Issue in Nebraska, 1918-1923," *Nebraska History*, v. 39 (March, 1958), 1-22.

21. This is discussed in detail in Robert W. Cherny, "The 1940 Election in Nebraska, with special attention to isolationist voting among the non-urban German stock voters of the state" (unpublished M.A. essay, Department of History, Columbia University, 1967), chapter II. For a contrasting view of the causes of this voting behavior, see James A. Stone, "Agrarian ideology and the farm problem in Nebraska state politics with special reference to northeast Nebraska, 1920-1932" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Department of History, University of Nebraska, 1960); Stone attributes this voting behavior to what he terms a "neo-Populistic" response to the farm problem.

22. The Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod, opposed Al Smith due to his Catholicism; Edmund A. Moore, *A Catholic Runs for President: The Campaign of 1928* (New York, 1956), 173. Despite this opposition, the return of the German stock areas to the Democratic party was most obvious in 1928. See State of Nebraska, State Canvassing Board, *Official Report of the General Election*, 1928, 2; and Cherny, M.A. essay, chapter II.

23. The most likely explanation for this drift to the Republicans is that, without the unifying element of issues appealing to a sense of German stock ethnic identification, the German stock may have been susceptible to pressures leading to assimilation into the traditionally Republican political system of the state as a whole. A similar Republican drift was noticeable among the Czech stock in northeastern Nebraska. For comparisons, see Luebke, *Immigrants and Politics*, 156-165; and Dorpalen.

24. General background information on the 1930's in Nebraska may be found in James C. Olson, *History of Nebraska* (Lincoln, 1955), 304-320. Information on the 1940 elections may be found in Harl Adams Dalstrom, "Kenneth S. Wherry" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Department of History, University of Nebraska, 1965); Justus F. Paul, "The Political Career of Senator Hugh Butler: 1940-1954" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Department of History, University of Nebraska, 1966); and Cherny, M.A. essay, chapters III and IV.

25. Examples may be found in the George W. Norris Manuscript Collection, Library of Congress, tray 96, especially I. W. Jacoby to Norris, August 26, 1940, in box 2; and Thomas W. Lanigan to Norris, October 17, 1940; Harold Kramer to John P. Robertson, October 30, 1940; and F. A. Good to Norris, September 21, 1940; all in box 4.

26. Frederick M. Deutsch to Lawrence, October 15, 1940, Robert LeRoy Cochran Manuscript Collection, Nebraska State Historical Society, box 128.
27. Sorensen to Niles, October 18, 1940, C. A. Sorensen Manuscript Collection, Nebraska State Historical Society, box 2.
28. Sorensen to Norris, October 18, 1940, Sorensen MSS, box 2. The presence of Nazi propaganda in the state is also noted by James Lawrence in the *Lincoln Star*, November 1, 1940. It is possible that the Sorensen and Lawrence reports came from the same original source, for the two men were both closely connected with the Roosevelt campaign. Gerson, 131, documents the attempts of Nazi and fascist elements here and abroad to influence the outcome of the 1940 election. A report prepared by Louis Bean for Franklin D. Roosevelt in early February, 1941, now in the Franklin D. Roosevelt Manuscript Collection, OF 4351, Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, provides further evidence of Nazi efforts to distribute propaganda literature by sending it to mayors of some two hundred Middle Western communities where a large part of the population was of German descent. There is no reason to doubt that at least some of these two hundred communities were in Nebraska and that Sorensen and Lawrence were correct in their reports.
29. Donald Mapes to Karl Stefan, October 1, 1940, quoted in Paul, 111.
30. *Omaha World-Herald*, October 6, 1940, 1-A.
31. See, e.g., *Omaha Taegliche Tribuene* October 8, 1940; October 21, 1940; November 3, 1940; November 4, 1940; *Lincoln Welt-Post*, April 4, 1940; May 16, 1940; May 30, 1940; October 24, 1940. The *Welt-Post* referred to Churchill as "W.C." and as "the English dictator," both usages common to the avowedly fascist press in the United States. This is not to suggest that the *Welt-Post* was fascist, only that it was influenced by the German-language fascist press. The *Welt-Post* also defended Hitler's conquests as being "nur einen Zustand . . . der auf unleugbaren Tatsachen beruht und der historischen Tradition von Jahrhunderten entspricht."
32. Editorials of the following newspapers were examined: *Beatrice Sun*, *Columbus Telegram*, *Fremont Tribune*, *Grand Island Independent*, *Hastings Tribune*, *Kearney Hub*, *Lincoln Star*, *Norfolk News*, *Omaha World-Herald*, and *Scottsbluff Star-Herald*.