

HENRY CARTER STUART IN VIRGINIA POLITICS

1855-1933

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PREFACE

Henry Carter Stuart, Governor of Virginia from 1914 to 1918, has been a phantom-like figure in Virginia history. He has never been subjected to the scrutiny of close and systematic study; yet those familiar with his career, while not painting him as a weak governor, have not portrayed his administration as particularly striking either. Moreover, Stuart's relationship to the Democratic Party in the first two decades of this century is blurred. Some historians of the period place him squarely in the Martin organization ranks as early as 1909; others consider him an independent until 1920 at least.

This essay seeks to clarify Stuart's political affiliations in Virginia. Moreover, while its sights are not firmly focused on his governorship, enough work has been done to indicate his major policies as governor and to offer some evaluation of them. An in-depth study of Stuart's administration, however, must await a further study which is planned as a doctoral dissertation.

The staff of the Virginia State Library in Richmond was most helpful during the course of researching the paper, as was the staff of the University of Virginia's Alderman Library.

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interest, and patience during the course of writing the paper.

Henry Carter Stuart, Governor of Virginia from 1914 to 1918, was in some ways an unlikely candidate for Governor in the 1913 campaign. Identified at times with both the "organization" and "anti-organization" factions of Virginia's Democratic Party, he was not totally committed to either side until his retirement from public office.

Stuart's family had served actively in Virginia's political arena for decades. His paternal grandfather, Archibald Stuart, represented the southwest area in the state constitutional conventions of 1829 and 1850. He also won election to the United States House of Representatives, an achievement that would be denied his grandson. Henry Stuart's most famous relative was his uncle, J.E.B. Stuart, the Confederate cavalry commander. His father, Alexander Stuart, married Mary Taylor Carter of Russell County and moved there to make his home. Through his mother he was also related to the "King Carter" family which settled on Virginia's Northern Neck in the seventeenth century. On January 18, 1855, Henry Stuart was born in Wythe County, Virginia, into this family and its tradition of public leadership.

In the fall of 1870, just a few months before his sixteenth birthday, Stuart left home to enter Emory and Henry College, a Methodist institution about forty miles away in Emory, Virginia. Four years later he took a Bachelor of Arts Degree and moved to the University of Virginia's law school. When his father died in 1875, Stuart left law school without taking a degree and returned to

Russell County to direct his family's business affairs.

Stuart inherited a sizeable amount of land from his father and immediately turned to its development. Soon he had won recognition in southwestern Virginia for his skill in selecting seed for livestock feeds. But seed selection was a necessary chore for Stuart, since he grew most of the feed for the cattle herd which was the major concern of his farm. He gained more notice in agricultural circles for his success in breeding short-horn cattle on his farm. His livestock interests grew until he became the largest single cattleman east of the Mississippi River.¹

After establishing himself as a prominent farmer, Stuart expanded his financial interests by investing in other businesses. He continued to serve as president of the Stuart Land and Cattle Company which his father had founded, and by 1906 he had also assumed the presidencies of the Citizens National Bank and the Buckhorn Iron and Improvement Company. When his interests expanded, Stuart found it necessary to establish a residence in Richmond; and he obtained a townhouse in Richmond's fashionable fan district. Stuart travelled extensively along the East Coast and in Europe in supervising and promoting his business ventures.²

¹S.G. Dabyns to R.P. Johnson, undated but probably written in February, 1913, Henry Carter Stuart Executive Papers, Virginia State Library, Richmond, Virginia.

²Lyon G. Tyler, Men of Mark in Virginia, vol. 1 (Washington, 1906), 261-262; The Richmond and Norfolk Society Blue Book (New York, 1906), 67.

In 1887 at thirty-two Stuart accepted his first political office by filling a vacancy on the Russell County Electoral Board. He also received appointment to the Board of Trustees of the Southwestern Lunatic Asylum at Marion in 1887 and again in 1889.

Like most successful businessmen, Stuart participated in several social and civic organizations including the Sons of the Revolution and Richmond's prestigious Westmoreland and Commonwealth Clubs. Throughout his life Stuart remained active in the Methodist Church activities, and especially in the Church's educational program. By 1892, as a loyal alumnus and a successful businessman, he was a logical choice for membership on Emory and Henry College's Board of Trustees. He retained this position until his death in 1933. In 1902 Stuart was also appointed to the Board of Visitors of the University of Virginia for two years.³

During the first years of the twentieth century, Stuart and other agricultural and business leaders in Virginia combined their talents to organize the State Fair. By 1906 the Fair was well-established and successful in its ambition to promote Virginia's economic interests. Stuart, as the leading figure in the Fair's organization, was its president for the first three years. His interest in the Fair, however, centered around livestock improvement. As a result of his work with the Fair, he

³Tyler, Men of Mark, 262; Emory and Henry Bulletin, vol. 48, no. 2 (April, 1957); University of Virginia Catalogue, 1902-1903 (Charlottesville, 1902), 14.

won recognition that served him well in later years.⁴

During the last decades of the nineteenth century, Virginians were divided over economic policy. The commonwealth faced a large debt, and two courses of action offered solutions: Virginia could honor the debt in full (fund the debt) or partially repudiate it. Initially the former solution was adopted; and to obtain the necessary funds, the educational appropriations were reduced. The southwestern counties opposed sacrificing educational excellence to pay interest on the debt, and their position helped to strengthen the already powerful Republican Party in the Ninth Congressional District. Many of Stuart's neighbors actively supported the Readjuster movement in opposition to the Funders who favored honoring the debt. In 1879 the Readjusters won control of the state government, and the controversy began to weaken. Stuart, only twenty-four in 1879, was not active in the fight; but his public career would retain the political independence associated with the southwestern counties.⁵

In 1893 Stuart participated in his first major political fight when Thomas Staples Martin, a railroad attorney from Albemarle County, ran for the United States Senate. Fitzhugh Lee, the popular nephew of General Robert E. Lee, opposed Martin with the aid of several rising politicians, among whom was

⁴Henry Carter Stuart to Robert S. Barbour, July 26, 1913, Stuart Papers; Henry C. Ferrell, Jr., "Prohibition, Reform, and Politics in Virginia, 1895-1916," Studies in the History of the South, 1895-1922, in vol. 3 (1966) of the East Carolina College Publications in History (Greenville, N.C., 1966), 195.

⁵Hamilton J. Eckenrode, "Virginia Since 1865, A Political History," typescript in the University of Virginia Library (1945), 134, 139-140.

Henry Carter Stuart. Martin won the election; and in office he developed successful yet flexible political control in Virginia through a reputation for keeping his word and by paying close attention to local needs. One writer has explained Martin's strength accurately: "Knowing what the people wished was precisely the attitude which made Martin's organization viable."⁶

Stuart's brief encounter with Martin's organization did not end his political involvement. Sentiment was growing in Virginia for the popular election of United States Senators, a move often opposed by the organization leaders. In 1899 Stuart joined fifty-one persons, including Andrew J. Montague, John Good, and William A. Jones--all anti-organization leaders--in signing a petition published in the Richmond Dispatch calling for the popular election of senators.⁷

In his successful race for governor in 1901 Montague, the leading independent Democrat in Virginia, had called for popular election of senators, supported major reforms in the approaching state constitutional convention, and pushed hard for radical improvement in public education. Stuart supported him in the campaign, which was consciously directed against the organization. Later, in 1904, Stuart and several other reform-minded politicians

⁶James Adam Bear, Jr., "Thomas Staples Martin: A Study in Virginia Politics, 1883-1896," unpublished master's thesis (1952), University of Virginia, 147; Jack Temple Kirby, "Westmoreland Davis: Antagonist of the Organization," unpublished manuscript in the files of Edward Younger, University of Virginia, 3.

⁷William Larsen, Montague of Virginia: The Making of a Southern Progressive (Baton Rouge, 1965), 75.

met in Washington to unite the state's progressives behind Governor Montague in his attempt to unseat Martin. Although Montague failed, Stuart's actions confirmed his anti-organization credentials.⁸

Virginia's first constitutional convention since the Reconstruction era met in Richmond in 1902. By 1900 the independent Democrats had concluded that political corruption could be abolished and the organization's power broken only by a new constitution. This convention, then, represented for them a major step forward. When Russell County chose Stuart in 1901 to represent her interests at the Convention, he entered his first elective position.

One of the major objectives of the convention was to disfranchise the Negro voters, a group of voters that the independents credited with contributing to political corruption by selling their votes to the highest bidder. In several areas, especially in the Tidewater counties, politicians were suspected of buying the Negro votes necessary to decide almost every election. But the state's leaders had also pledged not to restrict white voters in the process of stripping away the black vote, certainly a difficult if not impossible promise to fulfill. Stuart worked actively to accomplish this goal, and he never retreated from

⁸Ibid., 204.

this position.

The suffrage committee of the convention had seven members, two Republicans and five Democrats. Of the Democratic members, including Stuart, only Henry D. Flood was identified with the organization. Although the committee tried to accomplish its task without affecting the white voters, its work resulted in a fifty per cent reduction in the total electorate. Of the white voters who lost their votes, most were Republicans and poor whites. The voting procedure was to be supervised by three election judges per county, three new local officials. Stuart proposed a measure adopted by the convention providing for both Democratic and Republican representation on these boards wherever possible. The strength of Martin's organization was the widespread loyalty of local officials. Now the appointment of the new election judges enabled the organization to exert its influence again, and in practice this provision entrenched the organization even more. Herman Horn writing in 1949 referred to the irony of this situation:

Unfortunately for the Independents, the constitution which they framed did not eliminate fraud and corruption in politics, and instead of breaking the control of the machine, it has served as the chief instrument in perpetuating the machine in power.⁹

⁹For a detailed study of the Constitutional Convention of 1902, see Ralph C. McDanel, The Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1901-1902 (Baltimore, 1928).

A good examination of the internal Democratic Party positions at the convention is given in Herman Horn, "The Growth and Development of the Democratic Party in Virginia Since 1890," unpublished doctoral dissertation, Duke University, 1949, 69-116, 368-369.

Stuart entered the convention with an enviable reputation in the Southwest, but he left it with statewide popularity. Many Virginians credited him in later years with "dehorning the ignorant Negro" in 1902. In his gubernatorial campaign, he would remind the voters constantly of his role in the Convention.¹⁰

One important progressive reform written into the new constitution by the Convention provided for regulation of corporate interests doing business in the state. The State Corporation Commission, a powerful agency empowered at times with legislative, judicial, and executive powers to provide effective regulation of corporations, was composed of three members appointed by the Governor: a lawyer, a businessman, and a person familiar with railroad operation. Governor Montague, pledging to give Virginia the "best, fairest, and brainiest Commission possible," offered Stuart the businessman's seat in 1902. After hesitating to consider his business obligations, he accepted the office and took his first political position of state-wide prominence.¹¹

While on the Commission, Stuart championed such progressive measures as strict regulation of railroad and telegraph rates, and he authored several measures resulting in decreases in these rates. Professor George Mowry has observed, "A major item in the

¹⁰J.E. Owens to Henry Carter Stuart, April 2, 1913, Stuart Papers.

¹¹Larsen, Montague, 128-131.

program of almost every progressive governor was a demand for either the institution of state railroad or utility commissions, or their reinvigoration where they already existed." Stuart as a member of the first State Corporation Commission cooperated closely with the progressive Montague to establish the new agency securely, and throughout his public life Stuart remained a strong advocate of the Commission's role in state government.¹²

Claude Augustus Swanson with machine support won election in 1905 to succeed Montague in the governorship. By adopting the major independent Democrats' issues, especially the call for better schools, the organization won with Swanson. This tactic well illustrates the major characteristic of dominant political organizations in Virginia: flexibility. One student of the Martin machine has explained that

...the machine could not be counted on to lay down policy and lead. Indeed Virginia would always follow, often grievously behind her sister states. But always before the clamor of Virginia's citizenry reached political revolt, the organization would respond, encompass the change, and live on until public sentiment was once more aroused.¹³

¹²Undated, unsigned press release, probably written by Alexander Forward for the Richmond Times-Dispatch in December, 1913, or January, 1914, Stuart Papers; Henry Carter Stuart to C.W. Layman, January 9, 1913, Stuart Papers; George E. Mowry, The Era of Theodore Roosevelt and the Birth of Modern America, 1900-1912 (New York, 1958), 82; Larsen, Montague, 235-236.

¹³Jack Temple Kirby, "The Democratic Organization and Its Challenges, 1899-1922," paper read before the Virginia Social Science Association at Mary Washington College, April 24, 1965, 3-5.

When Chairman B.T. Crump of the State Corporation Commission resigned in April, 1907, political observers saw Governor Swanson's hand in the Chairman's decision. Soon after the Commission rejected an increase in railroad rates which Swanson supported, Stuart submitted his resignation too. Stuart's move was explained as part of his preparation for a gubernatorial try in 1909; but some speculators, remembering Swanson's supposed intervention to force Crump's decision, recognized the Stuart announcement as a successful effort of the Governor's to rid himself of a major anti-organization personality. When William H. Rhea, a well-known organization figure, was tapped to replace Stuart, the speculation seemed to gain some foundation. Although Stuart probably did resign to prepare for the 1909 race, the speculation sparked by his resignation demonstrated his independent reputation in 1907.¹⁴

Stuart did canvass for the Democratic gubernatorial nomination in 1909, the year in which Virginia's first Democratic primary was held. In 1909 the independents decided to make a major contest of the primary fight for governor; and, true to form, the anti-organization forces lacked the unity necessary for success. Since the progressive-oriented independents had advocated the primary system for several years,

¹⁴Henry Clifton Ferrell, Jr., "Claude A. Swanson of Virginia," unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Virginia, 1964, 210.

though, their enthusiasm for this election was not strange; and for a time victory even seemed near. Stuart, Carter Glass, and Henry St. George Tucker represented the independents in the primary campaign; but Stuart withdrew in February, supposedly because of his wife's illness. William Hodges Mann, from Nottoway County, claimed the organization's support after having nursed his gubernatorial aspirations for several years.¹⁵

Of the three independent candidates, Stuart's strength caused the greatest concern within the machine ranks. In 1905 a four-thousand vote majority in the Southwest had assured Swanson's election, and party regulars considered a similar vote for Mann a necessity in 1909. But Stuart's great appeal in the area as a local candidate would have surely cornered these votes. The stage, then, was set for some sort of accommodation. One historian of Virginia politics in the period described the logical, and probably the actual situation:

As Mann needed votes in the Southwest, Martin schemed to remove Stuart from the primary. He pledged the southwestern landowner major support against incumbent Congressman C. Bascom Slemp of the ninth district. If Stuart failed to unseat Virginia's lone Republican representative in 1910, he would be assured Martin's endorsement for governor in 1913.

The wisdom of such an arrangement for the organization is obvious:

¹⁵Ibid., 219.

a successful accommodation of this sort with Stuart in 1909 would not only assure Mann's election but it would also indebt one of the major anti-machine leaders to the organization in the future.¹⁶

As early as 1909 the Republican Party charged that this arrangement was indeed being made. W.C. Pendleton, the admitted Republican historian of the period, gives a not-too-surprising comment on the candidates: "At that time Stuart, Glass, and Tucker were pronounced anti-machine men." He accepted the charge that Stuart had not run against Mann in 1909 in return for organization support against Slemp in 1910 and, if he lost to Slemp, support for governor in 1913. Even with his Republican bias, Pendleton was probably correct in his analysis.¹⁷

Stuart's correspondence during his gubernatorial campaign in 1913 contains many references to his strong appeal four years earlier, but these letters must be judged in light of his unbeatable position in 1913: those hoping for his future favor would have been reluctant to suggest any earlier weaknesses. Local organization leaders were in trouble in some areas in 1909 because of Stuart's candidacy. Suggestions for making a

¹⁶Ferrell, "Prohibition, Reform, and Politics," 195-203. Robert A. Hohner's well-known "Prohibition and Virginia Politics: William Hodges Mann Versus Henry St. George Tucker, 1909," The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, vol. 74, no. 1 (Jan., 1966), 88-107, does not refer to the Stuart threat except to mention him in a footnote as a potential contender for the nomination.

¹⁷W.C. Pendleton, Political History of Appalachian Virginia, 1776-1927 (Dayton, Virginia, 1927), 539ff.

"deal" with Stuart multiplied, and some local figures were most explicit in their recommendations. The following letter to Congressman James Hay, an organization leader, leaves little doubt of the seriousness with which these officials regarded Stuart's threat:

Most of the leaders in the County are pledged to Stewart /sic/ or Tucker, & to make a fight for Man /sic/ will probably alienate a good many of our friends.

How would it do for your friends /i.e. the organization/ to either be quick on the gubernatorial fight, or insist Stewart who seems to be strongest in the County...get the pledges of the leaders to your support in the future?

Although more professional politicians would certainly have avoided responding to such suggestions in writing--even suggesting them in writing--succeeding events tend to indicate that a "deal" was in fact reached between the two camps.¹⁸

Congressman C. Bascom Slep faced the most formidable opponent of his career when Stuart ran against him in 1910. Organization and independent Democrats alike poured into the "fighting ninth" to help Stuart "redeem the district," and Slep in return attracted such notables as former President Theodore Roosevelt to participate in his campaign. In addition, campaign funds flowed freely to both sides, even though both candidates were wealthy men.¹⁹

¹⁸J. Jas. Miller to James Hay, January 17, 1909, James Hay Papers, University of Virginia Library.

¹⁹A.A. Campbell to Henry Carter Stuart, August 5, 1912, Stuart Papers.

In his first speech on August 20, 1910, in Gate City, Stuart attacked the Payne Aldrich Tariff Bill and "Cannonism" as issues of national importance. The tariff bill, passed in 1909, offered only a slight reduction of the high Dingley Tariff which had sparked widespread opposition in the Midwest and South. Joseph G. Cannon, Republican Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, had opposed any drastic revision of the tariff. Stuart, however, by attacking the tariff was also placing himself in conflict with the traditional Democratic policy of imposing tariffs for revenue only. Slemp was quick to seize this inconsistency in Stuart's position, and Stuart then turned more and more to the race question. In championing white supremacy, he advocated the use of almost any method to reserve the franchise for whites alone. In a very favorable editorial the Richmond Times-Dispatch supported Stuart's stand:

If it was wrong to give the negro the right of suffrage, it was right to use every means known to the superior race to take it from him.²⁰

As the campaign progressed, personality attacks and emotionalism dominated more and more. Slemp emphasized his humble origins in contrast to Stuart's more aristocratic heritage.

²⁰ Guy B. Hathorn, "Congressional Campaign in the Fighting Ninth: The Contest Between C. Bascom Slemp and Henry C. Stuart," The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, vol. 66, no. 3 (July, 1958), 338; Richmond Times-Dispatch, August 21, 1910.

In Lee County, the Republican hopeful made that point eloquently: "The ashes of my ancestors for one hundred years repose beneath the soil of this county. For generations they lived here as tillers of the soil, not landlords, but plain farmers." Stuart met such attacks by turning again and again to the race issue.²¹

Both parties competed in buying votes as well as in winning them. Reports varied, but the usual estimate of the average price per vote was fifteen dollars. Some votes reportedly brought as much as one hundred dollars. Neither side was excepted from these charges, and such actions were commonplace for Southwest Virginia's elections. The Richmond Times-Dispatch remarked shortly before the election,

The contest has been remarkable in many respects, and whoever shall bear away the coveted honor, the battle will ever be remembered by those who have borne any part, however humble in its conduct, as the most fiery and sulphuric in the recent history of the State.²²

Although Stuart lost by 217 votes--Slemp's usual majority was nearly 2,000 votes--the race had a major impact on the state Democratic Party. J. Taylor Ellyson, Virginia's Democratic Party Chairman, observed that "party leaders in the state, irrespective of former differences have united in giving their means, time, and influence to further the election of Mr. Stuart."

²¹Hathorn, "Campaign in the Fighting Ninth," 340; Andrew Buni, The Negro in Virginia Politics, 1902-1965 (Charlottesville, 1967), 59.

²²Allen W. Moger, Virginia: Bourbonism to Byrd, 1870-1925 (Charlottesville, 1968), 196; Richmond Times-Dispatch, November 6, 1910.

The race was certainly not the "campaign between gentlemen" that some Democratic leaders later described, and it did not make the Ninth District more Democratic in later years. Stuart did emerge from the contest a more influential state-wide personality. He had also indebted the Democratic Party to him, and in 1913 he would collect payment on that debt.²³

Soon after the Slemp race, Stuart publically tossed his hat in the ring for the Democratic gubernatorial nomination of 1913. W.C. Pendleton quotes Stuart as saying in February, 1910, months before the congressional campaign, "I am, and will continue to be in the race for the governorship in 1913."²⁴

By 1911 Stuart was again a matter of concern for the organization's rank and file. J.M. Bauserman, Commissioner of Accounts in Woodstock, wrote his mentor Hay in January asking,

...what the prospects are of our friends supporting the Hon. H.C. Stuart? I would like for you to keep me posted along this line, the reason is that I would support a "Yellow Dog," before...Tucker, and besides I have friends who are pressuring me in behalf of Stuart, but I shall not take a stand against my friends higher up in the ranks in the state. ...

By January, 1912, Richard E. Byrd had declared for Stuart.

But the organization's amenability was also creating worries

²³Moger, Bourbonism to Byrd, 196; J. Taylor Ellyson quoted in Richmond Times-Dispatch, November 20, 1910; W.H.T. Squires, Through Centuries Three (Portsmouth, 1929), 569.

²⁴Pendleton, History of Appalachian Virginia, 545.

in the anti-machine camp which often viewed the organization as a powerful, dictatorial political association.²⁵

Late in 1912 uneasiness about Stuart's machine support became noticeable in his campaign mail. Some local workers urged him to repudiate machine support in their districts; others pledged opposition to anyone even remotely connected with the organization. Stuart's reply to a series of questions put to him by a group of West Point (Virginia) Democrats in December, 1912, offers a clear statement of his position vis-à-vis the organization:

If elected I shall feel myself under no obligation to the "Machine" or "Organization," or any other subdivision of the Democratic Party, under any name or style whatsoever, but under obligation alone to the sovereign people of Virginia. While I have no present ambition in the direction of the United States Senate, (in fact, never have had) yet I am free from any obligation to Senator Martin either to support him or refrain from opposing him, nor will I be under such obligation at any time /italics supplied/.²⁶

A month later Stuart re-emphasized his position within the party: "My whole record from start to finish has been that of an anti-organization man. ..."²⁷

More serious problems, however, arose when Henry St. George

²⁵J.M. Bauserman to James Hay, January 17, 1911, Hay Papers; Ferrell, "Prohibition, Reform, and Politics," 231.

²⁶Charles U. Gravatt to Henry C. Stuart, September 3, 1912, and Henry C. Stuart to B.B. Bagby, December 7, 1912, Stuart Papers.

²⁷Henry C. Stuart to John R. Duncan, January 11, 1913, Stuart Papers.

Tucker, a leading anti-machine figure, filed for the Democratic nomination for governor. Many independent Democrats had championed both Tucker and Stuart during their political careers; and with both men running for the same office, these Virginians at times found it difficult to choose one over the other. Not a few would disagree with the following letter to Stuart:

I hope that...Mr. Tucker will reconsider his recently expressed determination to be a gubernatorial candidate. I am one of his admirers and should he and you both be candidates I would be placed in an embarrassing situation, as while I will be glad to do everything in my power for either one of you against any other candidate, I would be loath to actively support either of you and thereby apparently oppose the other.

Tucker withdrew in March, leaving Stuart a clear field.²⁸

The Richmond Times-Dispatch thought Stuart was "occupying neutral ground between the two factions." To be sure, Stuart had the support of major machine figures; but the evidence tends to indicate that it was less than enthusiastic. Senator Martin waited until April 5, 1913,--too late for serious opposition to develop--before endorsing Stuart in a short, impersonal letter. At the same time Martin apparently passed the word to local leaders to join Stuart's bandwagon. Congressman Hay supported him, but later Stuart seems to have considered removing

²⁸James Cannon, Jr., Bishop Cannon's Own Story (Durham, 1955), 126; John T. Delaney to Henry Carter Stuart, February 15, 1913, Stuart Papers.

from office one of Hay's most loyal leaders.²⁹

During this campaign Stuart successfully united the Virginia Democracy behind his candidacy, but other interest groups also demanded his attention. By 1913 support of the Anti-Saloon League had become a virtual necessity for any major political candidate; and although Stuart never approached Governor Mann's zeal in prohibiting alcoholic beverages, he did agree to sign an enabling act for a state-wide referendum "if it should pass the Legislature." Stuart, however, never committed himself to support the prohibitionists' position. There can be little doubt that support from the League was most valuable indeed to the Stuart effort.³⁰

With such a strong base of support the political winds were obviously behind Stuart. Senator Martin, "the Bismarck of modern Virginia politics," directed a machine that did not dictate policy but rather responded to popular demands by encompassing its proposals. Since Stuart appeared to be unbeatable, the organization had to support him or sustain a major setback by supporting a loser. Then, too, the agreement Martin and Stuart had made in 1909 served to discourage Democratic opposition in 1913. When no opponent filed for the nomination, Stuart was

²⁹Richmond Times-Dispatch, January 14, 1913; Thomas S. Martin to Henry C. Stuart, April 5, 1913, S.R. Gault to Henry C. Stuart, April 7, 1913, Stuart Papers; Henry C. Stuart to James Hay, late 1913, and J.M. Bauserman to James Hay, November 10, 1913, Hay Papers.

³⁰Eckenrode, "Virginia Since 1865," 349; Henry Carter Stuart to C.E. Jones, April 9, 1913.

declared the nominee; and in November he won election without Republican opposition either.³¹

In his inaugural address, Governor Stuart reasserted his independence of any "clique or faction" of the Democratic Party. His proposals for the 1914 session of the General Assembly were clearly progressive: tax reform, strict regulation of utilities, statutory regulation of primaries, better education for women and children, food inspection laws, conservation measures, and a workmen's compensation law. Newspapers praised his "progressive" speech, and the Progressive Party of Virginia endorsed his program. On February 27, 1914, the Virginia Progressive Democratic League was formed; and Stuart entered its first convention session "amidst a storm of handclapping." He returned on March 1 to hear Secretary of State William Jennings Bryan speak, and while there he received the League's endorsement of the program he had outlined in his inaugural address. The session was also noted for its spirited attack on the Martin organization. Richard E. Byrd, a machine affiliate, agreed with Stuart's recommendations, labelling them "truly sound and progressive."³²

Stuart's immediate concern on entering office was tax reform. Inequalities in tax assessments and lack of uniformity

³¹Kirby, "Democratic Organization and Challenges," 3.

³²Richmond Times-Dispatch, February 3, 12, 14, and March 1, 1914; Norfolk Virginian-Pilot, March 1, 1914; and R.E. Byrd to Henry C. Stuart, February 14, 1914, Stuart Papers.

in collection throughout the commonwealth had transformed the issue into an emotion-laden political football. In 1910 the General Assembly had created a special commission to recommend reforms in the tax structure, but no new laws resulted from the commission's work. In his final address to the General Assembly, Governor Mann had also tried to tackle the problem.³³

Two tax reform schemes commanded the state's attention in 1914. The 1910 commission had recommended a plan of equalization of tax assessments throughout the commonwealth. Under the plan a permanent tax commission of existing state officers sitting ex officio would equalize assessments among localities, remove negligent tax officials, and hear appeals from local assessments. The commission specifically recommended against the alternate segregation plan being discussed in some quarters.³⁴

In 1912 the General Assembly had two tax reform plans before it. In addition to the 1910 commission's report, State Auditor of Public Accounts C. Lee Moore proposed a more drastic program: segregate certain items of taxation to the state alone and others to localities. In this way, he argued, the rate of taxation for state purposes would be uniform and equal statewide. Governor Mann favored the commission's plan for equalization.³⁵

³³Marvin E. Winters, "Benjamin Franklin Buchanan: Tax Reformer and Legislative Giant, 1859-1932," unpublished manuscript in the files of Edward Younger, University of Virginia, 1968, 31-33.

³⁴Ibid.

³⁵Ibid.

The segregation plan in a manner of speaking left more local autonomy than the equalization scheme; and local autonomy was a major force in Virginia at the time, since primary responsibility for tax assessments and collection as well as law enforcement rested with local governmental units. Tax assessors in 1914 were locally elected officials who tended to pacify the influential businessmen and property owners in their constituencies by keeping assessments low. Having little training except that gained through experience, these officials generally saw their duty in simple terms: make sure that their localities paid no more state taxes than their neighbors. There was ample justification for the dissatisfaction with Virginia's tax structure, and by 1913 it was obvious that the state's leaders could no longer ignore the issue.³⁶

In his inaugural address Stuart bluntly labelled the tax system as his first target: "No equality is incident to our present system of taxation," he said. "Discriminations are flagrant and should be removed with as little delay as possible." The Governor then went on to demand state-wide criteria for assessing property values, local and state boards of equalization, and vigorous enforcement of tax laws. He advised his listeners

³⁶Robert Clinton Burton, "The History of Taxation in Virginia: 1870-1901," unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Virginia, 1962, 236.

that segregation was the only alternative to his plan and promised a special message on taxation for the legislature.³⁷

Rather than draw up his own tax reform program, Stuart turned to the more efficient--and politically wise--method of creating a study commission. His message on taxation delivered to the legislature on February 7 contained two major proposals: creation of a commission to study the problem and to recommend legislation and the calling of a special legislative session in January, 1915, to consider tax reform measures submitted by the commission.³⁸ Stuart's suggestions were adopted in March, and the special tax commission was to consist of ten members with four appointed by the Speaker of the House of Delegates, three by the Lieutenant-Governor, and three by the Governor. Stuart's first tax proposal as governor, then, had been approved intact.³⁹

Nevertheless, the General Assembly refused to leave Richmond in 1914 without some definite changes in tax laws. Stuart allowed a bill segregating rolling stock of railroads to the state and another exempting physicians from a licensing tax to become law without his signature. Since the entire tax structure was being examined anyway, these laws were not of great importance. By refusing to sign or veto the bills, Stuart

³⁷Richmond Times-Dispatch, February 3, 1914.

³⁸Ibid., February 8, 1914.

³⁹Ibid., March 7, 1914.

avoided taking a position on them; and taking a stand of any sort on the rolling stock bill would, of course, have committed him to some extent on the question of segregation. But the Governor was not trying to hide from the issues. He kept a close watch on all tax matters, and especially on the process of appointing the special tax commission.⁴⁰

In making his appointments to the study group, Stuart broke a long-standing tradition in Virginia that important governmental and political bodies be geographically balanced. Evidently this departure was intentional, for in response to criticism of the imbalance Stuart replied squarely, "Under my appointing power I selected three men without regard to geographical situation, and with special reference to training and adaptability to the work before them." He also took a special interest in Lieutenant-Governor Ellyson's offer of appointment to his old friend from the Southwest, State Senator B.F. Buchanan, later Virginia's lieutenant-governor. When Buchanan hesitated in accepting the position, the Governor promptly wrote him to urge acceptance. Buchanan, a strong Stuart supporter, would be of value to the Governor's program throughout the commission's work and in the legislative maneuverings that were to follow.⁴¹

⁴⁰Ibid., March 20, 1914.

⁴¹Henry Carter Stuart to J.N. Stubbs, April 17, 1914, and Henry Carter Stuart to B.F. Buchanan, March 24, 1914, Stuart Papers.

As instructed by the legislature, the commission offered two plans of tax reform--equalization, the majority report, and segregation, the minority plan. The majority recommended a permanent, three-man Tax Commission appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate to administer the state's tax laws. Each county would have one Commissioner of Revenue in lieu of the many local assessors. In essence, the majority report contained the same basic recommendations made by the 1910 commission.⁴²

But the three-man minority led by Senator Buchanan offered the alternative suggested by Auditor Moore in 1912. They urged segregation of railroad rolling stock, intangible personal property, corporate franchise, and insurance companies to the state for purposes of taxation. They also recommended that the state set the rate of taxation for these subjects, thereby making the methods of assessment and collection uniform throughout the state. A permanent Tax Commission consisting of the Governor, the Chairman of the State Corporation Commission, and the Auditor of Public Accounts would oversee the new structure proposed by the minority. Although this proposal was not original, it was the most forceful presentation of the segregated tax system yet presented to the General Assembly.⁴³

⁴²Report of the Special Tax Commission to the Governor, October 31, 1914, Stuart Papers; Winters, "Buchanan," 37-40.

⁴³Ibid., 37-41.

On November 13, Governor Stuart called an extra-ordinary session of the General Assembly to convene on January 13, 1915; but he gave no indication of which tax reform plan he would recommend. Speculation in the capital indicated that he now favored segregation; and after a discussion of the special commission's report among the legislative leaders and the Governor, the speculation seemed to have substance. Indeed, Stuart had decided to support the plan of partial segregation by the end of November, but it seemed certain that adoption of this plan by the legislature would be difficult at best. Hugh A. White, a member of the House of Delegates from Lexington and a personal friend of the Governor's, wrote Stuart in December to suggest a course of action:

...I think if you will assume a conservative and quiet leadership in the matter it will be about the only means of getting the Assembly together and accomplishing good results. I feel that you can do this with that amount of tact that will make it successful. There is no leadership whatever in the House, as you know, and I think a good, strong clear message from you would crystallize matters.

Stuart accepted the advice and asked White to confer with him in Richmond the next week on the tax reform program in general.⁴⁴

⁴⁴Richmond Times-Dispatch, November 13, 1914; Charlottesville Daily Progress, December 2, 1914; Hugh A. White to Henry Carter Stuart, December 5, 1914, and Henry Carter Stuart to Hugh A. White, December 11, 1914, Stuart Papers.

After reviewing the issue before the General Assembly in his opening address to the members on January 13, 1915, the Governor bluntly announced that he had changed his mind on the tax problem: "...my own views have undergone a change as a result of one year's incumbancy of the executive office and of the close study I have given the subject." He now strongly supported the system of segregation recommended by the special commission's minority. "It is not enough that a method of assessing taxes be fair and just," he warned. "In a government by the people it is essential that the public be convinced that it is fair and just." Stuart viewed segregation as a means of assuring the state and local governments enough revenue without being too burdensome on any economic or geographical group in Virginia. In essence, he was convinced that with state-wide rates on taxable subjects like rolling stock and insurance companies equalization would be a natural result. And segregation would end the practice of under-assessing locally to avoid paying the fair share of state taxes, a practice that Stuart's own section of the state had allegedly "reduced...to a science."⁴⁵

The General Assembly adopted Stuart's proposals with little hesitation. Governor Stuart was so closely identified with the

⁴⁵Message of Hon. H.C. Stuart, Governor of Virginia, to the General Assembly, January 13, 1915, Extra Session, 1915; Norfolk Virginian-Pilot, March 15, 1915.

segregation plan that the basic bill of the new system was labelled "the Governor's Bill" in popular opinion. The segregation plan of 1915 remains the basic tax policy in Virginia today, although modifications, of course, have been made. Almost twenty years after Stuart's program was enacted, Governor John Garland Pollard, Stuart's Attorney-General, reflected that the Stuart administration "was marked by an earnest effort to improve the tax system of the State and under his leadership Virginia abandoned a system of taxation which was retarding her progress."⁴⁶

Stuart's success in guiding a major tax reform through the General Assembly demonstrated his ability to unite opposing factions, or a majority of each, behind his recommendations. In 1916, however, the public tended to see a definite break between Stuart and the organization leaders over the election of a new National Democratic Committeeman.

Carter Glass, a leading independent, was rumored to be planning a race for the United States Senate against Swanson in 1916; and in an effort to bring him into the "tribe," organization leaders quietly urged him to run for National Committeeman. Rorer James, a machine stalwart, complicated matters by seeking the position himself with Swanson's active support. Most organization leaders were totally committed to

⁴⁶Richmond Times-Dispatch, July 25-26, 1933.

Glass's candidacy; but Martin, though seemingly favoring Glass, would support James in a contest.⁴⁷

In a Washington meeting, Lieutenant-Governor J. Taylor Ellyson, the State Democratic Chairman, Martin, Swanson, and Flood decided to support Glass for the national committee and James for state party chairman, thus avoiding a nasty convention fight. The "Peace of Washington," as the Richmond Times-Dispatch dubbed it, does not necessarily indicate that Stuart was an organization man, for he remarked afterward, "The information /about the Washington decision/ comes as a surprise to me, as I was not consulted."⁴⁸

In public life Stuart seldom, if ever, indulged in burning attacks on any political faction, except the Republican Party, and as governor his tendency was to steer a middle course between the two Democratic camps. In October, 1916, R.H. Cardwell resigned from the Supreme Court of Appeals, leaving Stuart the responsibility of filling the vacancy. R.R. Prentis, a member of the State Corporation Commission, won Stuart's appointment, thus creating an empty seat on the Corporation Commission. Judge Prentis was considered an organization man by most observers. Stuart chose Christopher Garnett for the Corporation Commission. Garnett had earlier managed the Jones-Glass opposition to

⁴⁷Leo Stanley Willis, "E. Lee Trinkle and the Virginia Democracy, 1876-1939," doctoral dissertation, University of Virginia, 1968, 46-47.

⁴⁸Richmond Times-Dispatch, May 13 and 28, 1916.

Senators Martin and Swanson, and doing so was reported to have "earned the lasting political enmity of the organization leaders." In evaluating the two appointments, the Richmond Times-Dispatch commented: "While neither office is looked upon as significant politically, there were many who drew comfort from the fact that the Governor played 'fifty-fifty' as between the machine and the antis."⁴⁹

Martin and Stuart once more came into conflict in 1916 when a vacancy occurred on the United States Supreme Court. Stuart, who seconded President Wilson's nomination for President in June and campaigned for him through New Jersey, New York, and Virginia in October, recommended that his old ally Andrew J. Montague be appointed. Although several machine leaders joined in the recommendation, Martin opposed him and ended whatever consideration the President may have been giving Montague.⁵⁰

Throughout his administration Stuart gave strict enforcement to the state law. In some situations, like the open gambling at the Jamestown Jockey Club race track, local politicians had ignored illegalities for several years. Stuart moved quickly and efficiently in such situations; and even though he met opposition to his law enforcement policy from some local officials,

⁴⁹Ibid., October 25, 1916; Edwin F. Suber to Henry C. Stuart, October 25, 1916, Stuart Papers.

⁵⁰Larsen, Montague, 267-268; Richmond Times-Dispatch, June 16 and October 27, 1916.

he made no lasting political enemies of importance. In Jamestown, for example, Stuart used special investigators and special magistrates to by-pass established local officials. The result of his actions at Jamestown was the closing of the race track to gambling and other illegal activities.⁵¹

In 1915 frequent complaints of organized criminal activity in Hopewell, an industrial city on the James River in Prince George County, prompted Stuart to initiate an investigation of the alleged crime there. He appointed several special investigators--the same tactic he used earlier in Jamestown--who gathered the evidence which resulted in over one hundred-fifty convictions. Hopewell was a unique city in Virginia. It had grown rapidly from a small country town into a city of over 20,000 within a period of six months when a duPont munitions factory opened there. The usual local governmental machinery in Prince George County was simply incapable of coping with this situation.

Hopewell's problems remained a concern for Stuart throughout his administration to some degree, but by 1917 the city's law enforcement machinery had become efficient and successful in comparison to the anarchic conditions prevailing there when he took office. Race relations, however, were poor and grew

⁵¹Ibid., April 8, 1914.

worse as thousands of immigrant laborers poured into Hopewell, pushing the Negro community, once comprising a majority of the area's population, into slum districts. In October, 1918, a few months after Stuart left office, racial turmoil erupted; and the militia had to restore order. Liquor law violations had traditionally complicated the problems of law enforcement in the city, and during the state's prohibition campaign, Hopewell offered vivid examples to support the "dry" position.⁵²

Prohibition arrived in Virginia during Stuart's term as Governor. He had promised to sign an enabling act to call a state-wide referendum on the question if the legislature passed it. In February, 1914, he signed the Williams Enabling Act, and a special election was set for September 22, 1914. But Stuart, after considering a protest about the enabling act's legality, refused to be drawn into a public commitment on the issue.⁵³

On September 3, the Lynchburg Advance asked Stuart how he would vote on September 22. Alexander Forward, secretary to the Governor, replied, "Governor Stuart has refused to give any newspaper interviews with respect to his attitude on this question." Stuart was reported to have told friends that he was

⁵²Ibid., August 4, 10, 14, 22, 1915; Jack Temple Kirby, Westmoreland Davis: Virginia Planter-Politician, 1859-1942 (Charlottesville, 1968), 114-115.

⁵³Richmond Times-Dispatch, February 14, 15, 19, 1914.

for local option and would vote against state-wide prohibition. The Richmond Times-Dispatch reported that Stuart was not participating in the campaign because he wished to avoid involving his office in the controversy.⁵⁴

But, try as he might, Stuart could not continue to hold himself aloof from the discussion then enveloping Virginia. In early September a circular claiming that he favored state-wide prohibition appeared; and on September 14, Stuart felt forced to reply to the circular's claims:

My position on this question has been quite widely known throughout the State ever since prohibition has been a live issue, and it has been particularly well-known from the beginning by some of the officers and other prominent members of the Anti-Saloon League of Virginia. I have made no effort to conceal my personal views in favor of local option, but I have made earnest and constant efforts to prevent the influence of the high office I hold being made a factor in this campaign. ...My position is unchanged, and is just as it has always been.

Stuart's statement sparked strong attacks on him by "drys;" but such leading prohibitionists as Carter Glass defended the Governor for having demonstrated the courage of his conviction, thus muting the criticism before it became serious.⁵⁵

Perhaps Stuart made no effort to hide his opinion as he stated, but he obviously made no effort to let it be known

⁵⁴Ibid., September 4, 1914.

⁵⁵Ibid., September 15 and 21, 1914.

either. In fact, this action was typical of Stuart who at times made a fetish of his privacy. It is almost incredible, however, that even Stuart believed he could withhold himself from such a major discussion as the one concerning prohibition. But Stuart was a consensus governor, to use a contemporary term; and he was apparently trying to steer a neutral course in the fight. When the hand was called and he had to express himself, Stuart had succeeded in alienating no major leader of either the "wet" or "dry" faction. His strategy may have worked after all.

The people voted for state-wide prohibition, and Stuart proclaimed its adoption on October 17, 1914. Efficient political organizing by the Anti-Saloon League and the cooperation of religious leaders who succeeded in making the use of alcoholic beverages a sign of moral decay were responsible for that vote. Effective on November 1, 1916, Virginia would join the eighteen other states of the nation that had united in the fight against "demon rum" by adopting prohibition.⁵⁶

For Stuart, the prohibition movement showed his great influence in the state. In a time when prohibitionists could virtually dictate reform measures to political leaders, Stuart opposed state-wide prohibition and avoided condemnation by the Anti-Saloon League's leadership. Again he avoided censure by

⁵⁶Charlottesville Daily Progress, October 18, 1914.

bridging the gap between factions engaged in serious contest with each other. Prohibition was one of the most idealistic and at the same time one of the most **unrealistic** experiments in United States history. Yet as he left office Stuart would praise the success of the experiment in Virginia and urge adoption of national prohibition.

By 1917, however, the conflict in Europe that would eventually draw the United States into war with the Anglo-French allies against the Central Powers overshadowed other issues in Virginia. Always a loyal supporter of President Woodrow Wilson, Stuart agreed with the foreign policy Wilson was pursuing in 1917: "I have always been an advocate of a reasonable measure of preparedness about such as the President has advocated."⁵⁷ As late as March 10, however, Governor Stuart doubted that war with Germany was likely. He wrote a constituent on that date:

I am hoping that no large number of troops will be called from Virginia, in any event. In fact, I can scarcely see how the present trouble with Germany could enlarge itself sufficiently to make it a serious matter to the country. The aftermath of the war may bring some unpleasant relations which we should be prepared to meet. I have no apprehension of any immediate trouble of a general nature.

But within the next two weeks German submarines sank four American vessels without warning, and the immediate situation

⁵⁷Henry C. Stuart to Robert W. Wooley, May 24, 1916, Stuart Papers.

changed. On March 19, Stuart stated that war with Germany was now inevitable. Stuart's analysis of the international situation was really quite similar to that of most other leaders of the country at the time.⁵⁸

In setting Virginia on a war footing, Stuart did an admirable job of organizing the Selective Service machinery and in mobilizing the National Guard. These efforts, however, involved no major confrontation for him in state politics. The war effort involved patriotism pure and simple, and Virginians of all political persuasions could hardly avoid agreeing on such an issue.

During his four years as Governor, Stuart did begin a noticeable shift toward the organization's ranks. Perhaps this accommodation was not a one-way street, for the machine had adopted many, if not all, of the causes espoused by the progressive independent Democrats before 1910. It is more accurate to say that Stuart and the organization, as a result of the changing political scene, began to find themselves in agreement on more and more issues. Virginia's dominant political organization did not have strict membership. There were certain men like Martin who were always identified with the machine, to be sure; but this organization was constantly moving to absorb

⁵⁸Henry C. Stuart to H. Bedinger Baylor, May 10, 1917, Stuart Papers; and Richmond Times-Dispatch, March 20, 1917.

maverick or independent politicians.

In 1917, though, Stuart supported John Garland Pollard, his attorney-general and the major anti-organization leader, for the governorship. After leaving the governor's office, Stuart accepted President Wilson's appointment to the War Industries Board and served as chairman of its Agricultural Advisory Committee; but in 1920 he declined Wilson's offer of a seat on the Interstate Commerce Commission to return to his business responsibilities. Stuart had apparently reached the summit of his political ambitions when he became Governor, and he never again ran for public office, though there was constant speculation that he was eying a seat in the United States Senate. He did, however, maintain his political contacts and served as an adviser at times to the state's leaders.⁵⁹

Several Virginia historians of the period tend to disagree on Stuart's political alignment. Horn assumes that he became a part of the organization in 1909 when he withdrew from the race against Mann and that he had become a "stalwart in the machine" by 1914. Surely this view placed the change too early, for Stuart did not act as an organization confidant while governor. In fact, he steered a middle road between the two factions. He assuredly ended up within the organization's inner

⁵⁹John Garland Pollard to Henry C. Stuart, August 24, 1917, Stuart Papers; Richmond Times-Dispatch, July 25, 1933; Robert C. Glass and Carter Glass, Jr., Virginia Democracy: A History of the Achievements of the Party and Its Leaders in the Mother of Commonwealths, the Old Dominion (Springfield, 1937), 311.

circle, but it is most difficult to pin-point the precise date of the change. In his study of Montague, Larsen places Stuart squarely in the anti-machine camp. By his own admission and in the eyes of the public, Stuart went into office as an independent Democrat. He seems to have emerged from office as a non-aligned Democrat.⁶⁰

That Stuart had joined the "tribe" by 1920 was obvious as the highway construction debate developed. In an address to the Virginia Road Builders' Association in January, 1916, Governor Stuart suggested that local officials exercise closer supervision over road construction in Virginia. To give overall direction to state road construction, however, plans for the projects should be drawn and the actual work supervised by the State Highway Commission.⁶¹

State Highway Commissioner George P. Coleman, who had been appointed by Governor Mann, disagreed with Stuart's almost obsolete idea of local control. As Highway Commissioner, Coleman had a major voice in deciding where new roads would be built in the state; and while in office he succeeded in having an average of 418 miles of new roads constructed per year. Naturally, he favored the centralized system with responsibility centered in his office. The Road Builders' Association urged

⁶⁰Horn, "Virginia Democratic Party," 453; Larsen, Montague, 266-268.

⁶¹Richmond Times-Dispatch, January 19, 1916.

the General Assembly to adopt Coleman's plan for centralization.⁶²

Stuart found support for his highway program in a rising young politician named Harry Flood Byrd, a state senator from Berryville and a relative of traditional machine stalwarts Harry Flood and Richard Byrd. By 1913, however, Richard Byrd had begun to steer a more independent course within the Democratic Party. Harry Byrd felt that under Coleman's direction the state highway system had unfairly by-passed his section of Virginia, and he saw more local control of the highway system as the remedy for the situation. Soon Byrd had assumed the major role in the highway construction battle--a role that would lead him to the governorship--and in the 1916 session of the General Assembly he introduced a bill calling for adoption of the Governor's plan of decentralization. But no solution was found to the debate. This episode, however, marked the first major alliance of a lasting political friendship between Stuart and Byrd.⁶³

By 1921 pressure had grown in Virginia for the sale of state bonds to finance highway construction. Governor E. Lee Trinkle, though originally favoring the bonds, moved to advocacy of the pay-as-you-go solution after State Senator Byrd successfully

⁶²Ibid., January 20, 1916; Eckenrode, "Virginia Since 1865," 359; Robert Thomas Hawkes, Jr., "The Political Apprenticeship and Gubernatorial Term of Harry Flood Byrd," unpublished master's thesis, University of Virginia, 1967, 20.

⁶³Richmond Times-Dispatch, January 19, 1916; Hawkes, "Harry Flood Byrd," 20.

destroyed the bond proposal's chances in the General Assembly. Stuart also favored the bond proposal at first; but in the end he, Trinkle, and Byrd united in support of the pay-as-you-go plan. Stuart helped organize the Pay-As-You-Go Association which was to spearhead the anti-bond drive, and he served as the organization's president. Stuart made speeches for the Association throughout the road building dispute, but his major role was to lend the Association his name and prestige. The anti-bond faction decried the idea of borrowing money to finance road construction, saying that this was a poor business practice. They used a superb organization engineered by Byrd to support local candidates friendly to their position in the August, 1923, Democratic primary. Virginia did not adopt the bond sale proposal, and Harry Byrd in his political career became identified from then on with the "pay-as-you-go" policy.⁶⁴

By 1921, certainly, Stuart had become a strong influence within the organization. His association with Byrd grew closer, and in 1925 he whole-heartedly supported Byrd for governor. Stuart urged Carter Glass, still an independent Democrat, to help Byrd in the race; but Glass seemed to hesitate. To the public it appeared that Glass believed Byrd's opponent, R. Walton Moore, to be more in accord with his own and Stuart's views. But Glass did finally join Stuart in openly endorsing Byrd's candidacy.⁶⁵

Moore charged during the campaign that Stuart had con-

⁶⁴Willis, "Trinkle," 101-117; Eckenrode, "Virginia Since 1865," 387.

⁶⁵Horn, "Virginia Democratic Party," 413.

vinced Byrd to enter the race in the first place. Probably Moore's opinion gives Stuart too much credit, but it does indicate the influence that Stuart still exercised in Virginia's political world. Once in office, Byrd strengthened the pay-as-you-go policy and expanded the segregated tax system that Stuart had initiated earlier. The ex-Governor certainly had little reason for dissatisfaction with Governor Byrd's programs.⁶⁶

Throughout his life Stuart jealously guarded his privacy. As a result his life is not so easily studied since publicity about him was kept at a minimum, even during his public life. His administration instituted no radical governmental innovations or philosophies, and he did little himself to fire the imagination. Yet Stuart emerges as a more important figure in Virginia history than once believed. His success in remodeling the state's tax structure to give Virginia a more equitable system with increased efficiency must be considered a major accomplishment. It is the segregated tax system which he pushed through the General Assembly in 1915 that serves today as the foundation of Virginia's revenue system. And Governor Stuart's firm hand in law enforcement lent the executive branch a new respect and a greater

⁶⁶Ibid.

influence throughout the commonwealth.

A Virginia aristocrat in every sense, Stuart is perhaps typical of the patrician reformer on the state level. He ceaselessly called for progressive reforms to better the lot of Virginia's farmers and workers and to protect women and children from unfair employment practices. In true progressive form, he had a streak of racism, although he was kind if paternalistic in his dealings with individual Negro citizens. He was an unfailing Wilsonian throughout his official life; and had not the preoccupation of World War I obscured local matters to such an extent, Stuart might very easily have had more success in winning legislative approval of his entire program.

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The Hay collection is small yet it is rich in political correspondence of the period. One wishes that the collection might be much larger.

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Stuart's Executive Papers provided the major source for this paper. Since no other Stuart papers have been located, this collection has been used more extensively than it might have been otherwise. The papers contain some useful campaign correspondence and major problems Stuart encountered in office are fairly well-documented. The collection is generally well-catalogued.

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Newspapers provided a major source for this paper. Larger newspapers with wide circulation were used, but local papers would probably give a more personal view on some issues and personalities.

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Richmond News-Leader, an afternoon daily, was of little value for the years 1912-1918. During these years the paper was more of a local tabloid for Richmond.

Richmond Times-Dispatch, a morning daily, gave a most comprehensive record of daily political events in Virginia. It was closely consulted for the years 1912-1920 and spot-checked thereafter. It was a fairly progressive, independent Democratic journal very favorable to Stuart. Stuart's secretary, Alexander Forward, was a reporter for this paper before joining Stuart; and through him the paper often gained information not readily available to other reporters.

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