When a Warrior Meets a Knight: The Political Alliance between Al Smith and John Raskob and How It Affected the 1928 Presidential Elections

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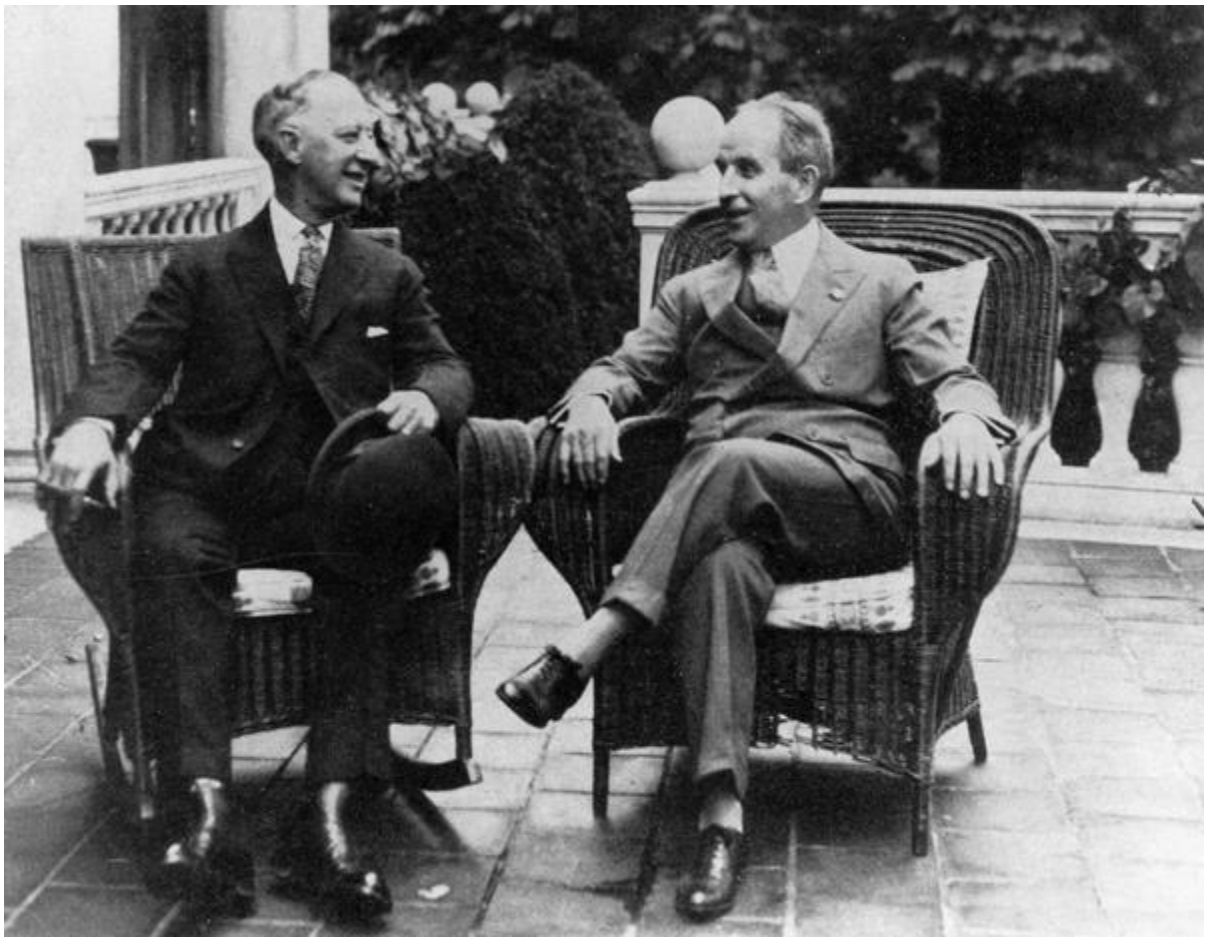

Al Smith and his National Chairman John Raskob on the porch of the Raskob home, October 28, 1928.
(Wisconsin Historical Society)

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Introduction

The "Happy Warrior" is what they began calling him. Franklin D. Roosevelt coined the nickname in 1924 during a speech, and it stuck. Al Smith did not mind that it did, in fact, he was rather glad of it. It associated him with the image of a hero of the people, a warrior of the common folk, and that was exactly what he wanted to be. During his third and fourth terms as the governor of New York, however, Smith became increasingly associated with the *nouveau riche* of New York. It was at one of these millionaire's parties, in the extravagant penthouse of William F. Kenny on Park Avenue South, where Smith first met the Knight. Al Smith was a frequent guest at this place, which was called the "Tiger Room". This penthouse was where politicians such as Smith strengthened their bonds with New York's Tammany Hall, the Democratic political machine that was able to make or break political careers.[1] When the Knight entered the Tiger Room, Smith did not recognize him, but something about him immediately caught his eye. The way the Knight walked, talked, it was all peculiar: it did not seem that he fit particularly well in the expensive suit he was wearing. Then, after the strange man had a short talk with Kenny, the Knight came up to Smith and introduced himself as John Raskob. Raskob was eager to learn more about the rapidly growing New York subway system, for he was an executive of General Motors, and Smith knew a lot about that topic.[2] Their initial introduction was casual, but they quickly took a liking to each other, mostly because of their similar life stories. Both had immigrant parents, Al was Irish and Italian, and John was Irish and German. Both were devout Catholics, John even was a Knight of the Order of Saint Gregory the Great, an honorary title given by the Pope for generous contributions to the Roman Catholic Church – and a title he liked to show off on many occasions.[3] And, lastly, both were self-made men, born in poverty, who made it far in life. Al as the governor of New York, and John as an incredibly wealthy businessman. After a marvelous dinner, as was a custom in the Tiger Room, the two men continued their pleasantries in a more private part of the penthouse. It was during this conversation that Raskob learned about Smith's intention of running for president in 1928. Perhaps it was the smell of the Tiger Room filled with cigar smoke that made him reminisce of his father who died far too young, the son of a poor immigrant that made a living by making and selling cigars. It may have been this childhood memory that made Raskob decide that the time was nigh for a Catholic immigrant to become president: Al Smith had to win, and John J. Raskob was going to be a president-maker.[4]

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[1] M. Josephson and H. Josephson, *Al Smith: Hero of the Cities: A Political Portrait Drawing on the Papers of Frances Perkins* (Boston 1969) 353-355.
[2] Ibid., 356.
[3] D. Farber, *Everybody Ought to Be Rich: The Life and Times of John J. Raskob, Capitalist* (New York 2013) 213-214.
[4] Ibid., 12, 21; Josephson, *Al Smith: Hero of the Cities,* 357.

The initial friendship soon sprouted into a political alliance. After Al Smith became the Democratic standard-bearer at the Democratic National Convention of 1928, Raskob was entrusted with the important position of chair of the Democratic National Committee (DNC). Having a Catholic presidential nominee was unprecedented in the white, Protestant politics of the 1920s United States, and Smith doubled down on this by granting the Catholic capitalist Raskob an influential position in the Democratic Party. This led to a storm of anti-Catholic and anti-immigrant bigotry that began raging in the Southern and Western states, once Democratic strongholds.[5] But their Catholicism was not the only unprecedented aspect of this political team, as Smith and Raskob were both also adamantly opposed to Prohibition. Raskob even was a board member of the Association Against the Prohibition Amendment (AAPA) in 1928 and played a crucial role in affecting Smith's views on this issue, as this thesis argues and proves. Smith and Raskob shared the belief that it was anti-Catholic bigotry and opposition to immigrant communities that had been heavily influential in creating the Eighteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution, the one that banned the manufacture, sale, and transportation of intoxicating liquors within the country.[6] Their ideas proved to be correct. In fact, when the Eighteenth Amendment was enforced through the famous Volstead Act of 1920, Catholic, immigrant, African-American, and lower-class communities in urban areas were disproportionately targeted.[7] These ethnic and religious aspects of American Prohibition helped shape and cement the alliance of Smith and Raskob and impacted both Republican and Democratic voting blocs greatly when Smith ran for president in 1928.

Historical studies concerning the presidential election of 1928 and its Democratic nominee, Alfred E. Smith, have thus far focused on a variety of different aspects, including several reasons for defeat, social reform, Prohibition, immigration, religion, and ethnicity. In his book *Prejudice and the Old Politics: The Presidential Election of 1928*, historian Allan Lichtman has explained the Democratic defeat by discussing the differences between the campaigns of Al Smith and the Republican candidate Herbert Hoover and highlighting statistically significant data. Compared data included the voters' preferences on issues such as religion and Prohibition while taking into consideration demography, immigration status, and socioeconomic class. By cross-referencing these preferences and prejudices, Lichtman concluded that the issues of religion and Prohibition were the ones that affected the election outcomes the most and eventually caused Smith to lose the presidential race against Hoover.[8] Although analyzing the significant factors that influenced voters in 1928 may provide insight into why Smith lost, historians such as David Burner and Robert Chiles analyze the effects that the election of

[5] R.A. Hohner, *Prohibition and Politics: The Life of Bishop James Cannon, Jr.* (Columbia 1999) 218; L. McGirr*, The War on Alcohol: Prohibition and the Rise of the American State* (New York 2016) 173.
[6] O. Handlin, *Al Smith and His America* (Boston 1958) 128; Farber, *Everybody Ought to Be Rich,* 33-35.
[7] McGirr*, The War on Alcohol*, 67-102.
[8] A.J. Lichtman, *Prejudice and the Old Politics: The Presidential Election of 1928* (Chapel Hill 1979).

1928 had on the Democratic Party. As Burner described in *The Politics of Provincialism: The Democratic Party in Transition, 1918-1932*, it did not matter as much that or why Smith lost in 1928. The most important takeaway of that election was the transition for the Democratic Party that Smith's politics set in motion. Burner argues that Smith's popularity among the immigrant voter base factored greatly in Franklin D. Roosevelt's victory over Hoover in 1932.[9]

As to influencing the future policies of the Roosevelt administration, Smith's presidential campaign has been examined by historian Robert Chiles. Chiles focuses primarily on Smith's progressive nature as a member of the New York State Assembly, as governor of New York, and as the Democratic presidential candidate in 1928. He argues that the shift that took place concerning voting blocs in 1928 and Smith's progressive stance on social issues, did influence Roosevelt's New Deal, but to call it a logical continuation of the policy would be an oversimplification that fails to factor in the Great Depression of 1929 adequately.[10] Whereas convincingly, this explanation has been further refined by Lisa McGirr, who has described the presidential election of 1928 as an important turning point in the political history of the United States, especially for what it meant for Prohibition. In her book *The War on Alcohol: Prohibition and the Rise of the American State*, McGirr argues that Al Smith's repeal stance on Prohibition during the presidential election of 1928, was Smith resisting against something that was part of a longer story of white Protestant America's animosity against certain specific groups such as Catholics, immigrants, African-Americans, and lower-class Americans. The hatred and bigotry of white America materialized into selective Prohibition enforcement against these minority groups (a continuation of this selective enforcement can be seen in the twentieth and twenty-first-century federal penal state).[11]

Following such lines of inquiry, many other scholars have debated the Prohibition Era and its relationship with the evolution of American democracy. They have been focusing on the enforcement of the Eighteenth Amendment, as McGirr does, or on the creation of the amendment and its eventual repeal, which came with the creation of the Twenty-first Amendment.[12] A particular strand of this literature has gone beyond the individual level of analysis and has focused on groups and organization instead. In this regard, the political scientist Peter H. Odegard showed how non-partisan organizations, such as the Anti-Saloon League (ASL), exerted a strong influence over the two-party system of the United States mostly by effectively lobbying individual politicians in Congress. The ASL, which

[9] D. Burner, *The Politics of Provincialism: The Democratic Party in Transition, 1918-1932* (New York 1970).
[10] R. Chiles, *The Revolution of '28: Al Smith, American Progressivism, and the Coming of the New Deal* (Ithaca 2018).
[11] McGirr*, The War on Alcohol.*
[12] R.F. Hamm, *Shaping the Eighteenth Amendment: Temperance Reform, Legal Culture, and the Polity, 1880-1920* (Chapel Hill 2000); N.H. Clark, *Deliver Us From Evil: An Interpretation of American Prohibition* (New York 1976); K.D. Rose, *American Women and the Repeal of Prohibition* (New York 1995).

embodied a congregation of Protestant churches, used temperance to greaten their grasp on national politics well beyond Prohibition, to criticize an imagined and socially constructed foreign attack perpetrated by immigrants toward the nation itself.[13] Historian Lisa M.F. Anderson researched the Prohibition Era not through the ASL, but by examining its partisan counterpart, the Prohibition Party, in *The Politics of Prohibition: American Governance and the Prohibition Party, 1869-1933*. Anderson shows how the Prohibition Party was able to make substantial changes to America's two-party system, which the minor party thought of as undemocratic in its nature. Furthermore, the book's view on the party's complicated relationship with Prohibition and non-partisan groups, such as the ASL and the WCTU, offers great insights into how the Eighteenth Amendment came to be and was viewed as undemocratic by different persons and organizations.[14]

This thesis draws heavily on Lisa McGirr's argument of selective enforcement during the Prohibition Era and on the idea that the enforcement and creation of the Eighteenth Amendment were ethnically, religiously, and racially motivated. Rather than focusing on the selective enforcement of Prohibition and the long-term effects it had on the creation of the American federal penal state, this thesis examines more specifically how Prohibition impacted the presidential election of 1928. It argues that the ethnic nature of the Eighteenth Amendment and the enforcement thereof favored the alignment – and alliance – between Alfred E. Smith and John J. Raskob. Furthermore, this thesis argues that the creation of such a political union of two Catholic, immigrant men opposing Prohibition was essential to creating the Democratic Party's new urban ethnic voting blocs, and with this the emergence of the conditions that will enable the success of the New Deal coalition too. Although the historians Robert Chiles, Robert Slayton, and Elisabeth Israels Perry acknowledge the influence of John Raskob on the Democratic Party as one that had a major financial impact, the authors downplay his substantive influence on the presidential election of 1928, arguing that it was not Raskob who had a hand in writing Smith's campaign but Belle Moskowitz.[15] These authors, however, have failed to recognize several important factors of the Prohibition Era on its whole, that influenced the relationship between Smith and Raskob, but also America's political climate during this era. By radicalizing and magnifying Smith's religion, immigration background, and stance on Prohibition, Raskob caused an even bigger polarization between the voting blocs that were created in 1928. The question that this thesis answers can therefore be boiled down to the following one: How did the relationship between

[13] P.H. Odegard, *Pressure Politics: The Story of the Anti-Saloon League* (New York 1928).
[14] L.M.F. Anderson, *The Politics of Prohibition: American Governance and the Prohibition Party, 1869–1933* (New York 2013).
[15] Chiles, *The Revolution of '28*, 92; R.A. Slayton, *Empire Statesman: The Rise and Redemption of Al Smith* (New York 2001) 266; E.I. Perry, *Belle Moskowitz: Feminine Politics and the Exercise of Power in the Age of Alfred E. Smith* (New York 1987) 184-213.

Al Smith and John Raskob come into being, and how did their political partnership influence the presidential election of 1928?

This question is answered through the historical analysis of primary and secondary sources. By researching the long prelude to Prohibition and going through the Prohibition Era in New York State, where Smith grew up and later became governor, this thesis shows the importance of the overlaps between politics, religion, and immigration in the United States. After explaining the linchpins of the Prohibition Era, this thesis continues to use primary accounts of Al Smith and John Raskob's life to introduce the affinity that led to the establishment of their friendship and political alliance. Unfortunately, very few written sources are available from the hand of Al Smith himself. As historians agree, although Smith was a very outspoken man, he was not a big writer, and on this issue historian Jordan A. Schwartz notes that, "Pursuing Smith and company in history must be a labor of love because historians must work with so little archival material."[16] Because of this, historians who write on the subject of Al Smith are for the most part confined to biographies based on accounts of second-hand writers, such as his trusted colleague Frances Perkins. In writing this thesis, one of these books, *Al Smith: Hero of the Cities: A Political Portrait Drawing on the Papers of Frances Perkins* by Matthew and Hannah Josephson, was of great help in understanding the upbringing and career of Al Smith and his relation to John Raskob.[17] As to analyzing the effect of the political partnership of Smith and Raskob on the presidential election of 1928, the many primary sources on voter data that are present in Lichtman's book *Prejudice and the Old Politics*, were essential to this thesis. By researching the statistical significance of these many different factors, the influence on the behavior of voting blocs during the election of Smith and Raskob's Catholicism, immigration background, and their stance on Prohibition can be proven more accurately.[18] Lastly, as for primary material used in this thesis, the archive of *The New York Times* provided useful sources on contemporary political issues during the time of Smith's governorship of New York and the presidential elections of 1924 and 1928.

To answer why Smith and Raskob became a political team and what effects this friendship had on American politics, it is necessary to understand the very nature of the Eighteenth Amendment. Therefore, the first chapter examines the long road that led America to the Prohibition Era. This chapter explains what different temperance movements originated in the nineteenth century and how each of these had another outlook on the problem of alcoholism. The main argument here is that somewhere around the 1860s and 1870s the immorality of alcoholism changed from being associated with the working class, to being associated with Catholicism, immigrants, and urban areas. Using this

[16] J.A. Schwartz, 'Review: The Woman as Liberal and the Liberal as Woman. Reviewed Work: *Belle Moskowitz: Feminine Politics and the Exercise of Power in the Age of Alfred E. Smith* by Elisabeth Israels Perry', *Reviews in American History* 17:1 (1989) 108-112; Handlin, *Al Smith and His* America, 190.
[17] Josephson, *Al Smith: Hero of the Cities.*
[18] Lichtman, *Prejudice and the Old Politics.*

changed prejudice, the Anti-Saloon League began a slander campaign by using 'The Saloon' as a materialization of these groups. Combining this sentiment with pressuring the members of Congress and the existing prohibition laws of the Great War, the Eighteenth Amendment was ratified in 1919.

Al Smith was born and bred in New York City, this means that his stance on Prohibition is heavily influenced by how the Eighteenth Amendment manifested itself in that city. The second chapter deals with the question of how New York City, and to some extent the state too, changed during the Prohibition Era. This chapter argues that, although the production, smuggling, and sale of intoxicating beverages was mainly done by gangs of immigrants, the ones that got targeted were not these biggest players. Raids by Prohibition enforcement were often targeting areas that housed predominantly low-income households, and in New York City, these citizens were most likely Jewish, or Catholics of Italian or Irish descent, but African-American neighborhoods were also often harassed. Because the Democratic stronghold of Tammany Hall relied heavily on these immigrant communities for their political power through votes, these political leaders were also opposed to Prohibition. Al Smith's stance on Prohibition, as a Catholic, immigrant, and Tammany Hall politician, was thus greatly influenced by the selective Prohibition enforcement in New York City.

The third chapter focuses on the lives of, and the relationship between, Al Smith and John Raskob, the two protagonists of this research. In many aspects, they share a similar life story. They both came from underprivileged, Catholic, immigrant upbringings and both needed to support their family after they lost their father at a young age. But Smith and Raskob made it far and they believed that something needed to be done about America's Prohibition. By comparing their lives, ideas, and ideals, this chapter argues that the two men meeting in 1926 proved to be very influential to Smith's stance on Prohibition. In fact, Smith's stance on Prohibition radicalized between the presidential election of 1924 and the presidential election of 1928 and began leaning more towards Raskob's stance on the Eighteenth Amendment, one of repeal rather than modification, as also championed by the Association Against the Prohibition Amendment whereof Raskob was a chairman.

The fourth and final chapter analyzes in what ways Smith's radicalization affected the presidential election of 1928 against Republican Herbert Hoover. The main argument of this chapter is that the appointment of Raskob as chairman of the Democratic National Committee further polarized the voting blocs in the 1928 presidential elections. Analyzing voter data shows us that, by aggressively attacking the Eighteenth Amendment, Smith gained many Jewish, Catholic, immigrant, and working-class voters in urban areas. This data also shows us that the issue of Smith's Catholicism was also incredibly important, because of which he lost many former Democratic strongholds in the South. This religious issue too was also more heavily polarized by having Raskob as a public figure of the Democratic Party, who knew the Pope personally due to his very generous gifts to the Roman Catholic Church.

As already mentioned, when researching Alfred E. Smith and his political career, historians are restricted by the little amount of primary sources written by the governor himself and must deduct his thoughts and feelings mostly through secondary accounts such as those of Frances Perkins. Therefore, this thesis was limited to the use of mostly secondary literary sources that deal with the Prohibition Era and Al Smith. Although this research does rely heavily on the book *Al Smith: Hero of the Cities: A Political Portrait Drawing on the Papers of Frances Perkins*, and this should be seen as a primary source, few other primary sources could be used apart from some relevant articles in *The New York Times* that deal with Al Smith and the Prohibition. On this note, the thesis would also have benefited greatly from correspondence between Smith and Raskob, for example written letters or conversations that were recorded in writing between the two men. Unfortunately, these sources, if they exist at all, are not digitized and could therefore not be consulted in this research.

The lesson to be drawn from the relationship between the Warrior and the Knight is twofold. On the one hand, this thesis reveals the role of prejudice, bigotry, and racism in the political system of the United States, which pressured Congress in creating the Eighteenth Amendment and also impacted voting blocs during the presidential election of 1928. On the other hand, this thesis shows how a personal friendship can change or radicalize personal beliefs, which then can influence presidential elections and even shape national politics.

1. The Road to the Eighteenth Amendment

It was on a Tuesday, December 18, 1917, that the United States Senate voted with an astounding 85 percent in favor of the Eighteenth Amendment.[19] This new amendment to the Constitution of the United States sought to ban the manufacture, sale, and transportation of intoxicating liquors within the United States, which also included importation and exportation of alcoholic beverages but had to be ratified within seven years by the states to be operative. When the amendment was ratified on January 16, 1919, by the necessary two-thirds of all states, Congress could enforce this amendment with its legislative powers. This enforcement of the Eighteenth Amendment came one year later on the 17th of January, 1920, with the enactment of the Volstead Act.[20] This chapter explores the long prelude to Prohibition. In fact, the road paved to Prohibition has deep historical roots that eventually influenced Congress to vote in favor of the Eighteenth Amendment.

A Plea for Temperance

The plea for temperance in American civil life was not a new voice in early 20th century politics when the Eighteenth Amendment came to be. Years of lobbying by the Anti-Saloon League and the Woman's Christian Temperance Union caused the issue to finally reach the Congress in 1917.[21] However, before that, organizations that focused on sobriety and temperance were emerging nearly a century earlier as a response to the growing problems resulting from the excessive consumption of hard liquor among Americans. During the 1830s, alcohol consumption among American citizens was at an all-time high with estimations of annual alcohol consumption per capita ranging from five to seven gallons a year.[22] Although the reason for America's high alcohol intake during the beginning of the 19th century is still debated by scholars, at its core lies the dysfunctionality of pre-Civil War society.[23] Combined with this overshadowing disorderly societal problem, several other factors emerged around 1820 that were reasons that Americans were prone to succumbing to alcoholism.

The first factor was increased poverty caused by high unemployment rates, and a reluctance of local governance to provide the population with poor relief. In the first decades of the nineteenth century, a combination of factors, such as that the British changed from American to Indian cotton, the debt that ensued after purchasing Louisiana, and banks that failed to act appropriately to these

[19] Odegard, *Pressure Politics,* 174, 269.
[20] McGirr*, The War on Alcohol,* 36.
[21] Rose, *American Women*, 32.
[22] McGirr, *The War on Alcohol*, 6; M.W. Osborn, *Rum Maniacs: Alcohol Insanity in the Early American Republic* (Chicago 2014) 90.
[23] Rose, *American Women,* 12; Clark, *Deliver Us From Evil,* 29.

changes, caused an economic crisis.[24] These events proved detrimental for the American economy, and The Panic of 1819 ensued, by which the nation became increasingly impoverished by bankruptcies and high unemployment rates.[25] During the years of economic hardship that followed, cities like Philadelphia noticed that deaths due to heavy drinking increased tremendously among the (newly) impoverished population.[26] The increasingly impoverished society has an important connection with the increased alcohol consumption of that time, as both factors positively influenced each other. On the one hand, heavy drinking often would cause the alcoholic to be unable or unwilling to continue their labor, causing poverty, on the other hand, turning to liquor in times of economic distress was a common enabler for alcoholism.[27] As unemployment skyrocketed and wages plummeted of the fortunate few with jobs, poorhouses, and soup kitchens could not keep up with the growing need for relief. This, combined with a reluctance from the government to provide adequate relief to the poor, and a renewed view on personal responsibility regarding poverty from the Second Great Awakening, meant that the poor were basically on their own.[28]

The reluctance of states to invest in poor relief became a trend during the 1820s following The Panic of 1819 and was most prevalent among states in the Mid-Atlantic region and the New England region. The poor population was increasingly seen as an inconvenience to the legislators in their strive of creating an orderly moral society. Not the economic crises were societal problems, but the resulting unemployed population. Thus, the unemployed were targeted to be dealt with. These politicians believed that to battle the growing population of poor people, it was necessary to stop investing in poorhouses and other forms of poor relief such as soup kitchens. Poor relief, they argued, discouraged the unemployed population to search for jobs.[29] Where historically, poor relief would be not only a part of the government's agenda but also of the puritan churches' agendas, this also changed during the 1820s. The Second Great Awakening offered a different perspective on poverty. Before this religious turn, poverty was usually distinguished by undeserving and deserving poor, as was popularized by the Calvinist doctrine. If able, a good puritan would help their neighbor if they were undeserving poor, thereby creating poor relief inside a community. Tragically coinciding with the disappearance of most government-run poorhouses, the Second Great Awakening doctrine emphasized the individual responsibility of the poor, terminating the distinction between the

[24] A.H. Browning, *The Panic of 1819: The First Great Depression* (Colombia 2019) 6-8.
[25] Osborn, *Rum Maniacs*, 83.
[26] Ibid., 86-87.
[27] Ibid., 79.
[28] Browning, *The Panic of 1819*, 276.
[29] Ibid., 272-273.

undeserving and deserving poor.[30] Now, just being poor remained, which was their own fault, and their own responsibility. This too was removing communal poor relief from the equation.

Another reason for the high alcohol consumption was the ready availability of hard liquor, its relatively low price, and its relative safety compared to drinking water. Due to low amounts of hard liquor being imported after the American Revolution, an alternative in the distillation of a surplus of corn was found by farmers in Kentucky and Ohio. In fact, little more incentive was needed when farmers realized that they would get four times as much profit from corn when they would convert it into whiskey.[31] This continuous stream of liquor flowing in from the West made that hard liquor distilled from corn became cheaper than other alcoholic beverages and even cheaper than tea, coffee, and milk. Apart from the fact that the hard liquor from these states was plain cheaper, the alternative, drinking water, was known to spread diseases because it was often contaminated.[32] Although medical studies about the harmful side effects of alcohol were already ongoing during the 1810s and the 1820s, it would not be until 1830 that courses were given and doctors would try to spread the dangers of alcoholism throughout the public.[33] The cheap cost of hard liquor, and, if that mattered at all, the ignorance of the American population on the health risks of alcohol, also contributed to the widespread alcoholism during this first period of the nineteenth century.[34]

Rampant alcoholism due to poverty and availability were reasons for the high intake of hard liquor among the more impoverished layers of society, but by no means alcoholism was confined to these milieus. It was not until the 1830s and 1840s that ideals of sobriety influenced the middle class to lead a life of temperance.[35] One of these societies that pledged sobriety was the Washingtonian Temperance Society. The men that called themselves Washingtonians became of age during the Second Great Awakening, and from an eclectic standpoint, this new generation tried to enlighten the lower classes on the evils of drink to rid them of this yoke.[36] During this time, the alcoholism that engulfed the nation was increasingly associated with poverty and the working class. It was therefore no coincidence that the first societies that pledged abstinence were rooted in the Mid-Atlantic region and New England. It was in these same areas that became increasingly hostile towards the working class by cutting down on poor relief, that societies originated that focused on abstaining from alcohol. Abstinence became the division between the middle class and the working class, and temperance was thus a question of moral superiority.[37] These earliest societies in favor of temperance were focused on

[30] Browning, *The Panic of 1819*, 276.
[31] E. Burns, *The Spirits of America: A Social History of Alcohol* (Philadelphia 2004) 42.
[32] W.J. Rorabaugh, 'Alcohol in America', *OAH Magazine of History* 6:2 (1991) 17-19, 17.
[33] Osborn, *Rum Maniacs*, 145.
[34] Clark, *Deliver Us From Evil*, 19, 23.
[35] McGirr, *The War on Alcohol*, 6.
[36] W.J. Rorabaugh, *The Alcohol Republic: An American Tradition* (New York 1981) 182.
[37] Rose, *American Women,* 13;

distinguishing their members from the working class and abstinence was a pledge among these middle-class men to show their moral superiority. Admittedly, they did try to transfer their ideas to the lower classes, but they did this by targeting individuals instead of the causes of the widespread alcoholism and could therefore not make sufficient progress countering the societal problem.[38]

From the second half of the nineteenth century onwards, the temperance movement started to realize that, to make meaningful progress, legislative measures were necessary. With Neal Dow as a key figure, the temperance movement succeeded in implementing America's first prohibition law in the state of Maine in 1851.[39] This change in tactic toward legislature was different from earlier temperance movements and was the first step in building toward the Eighteenth Amendment. But this change in tactic was not the only change that occurred. Earlier movements like the Washingtonians tried to rid the drunkards of their yoke; alcohol was the great evil, whereas Dow saw evil in the disorderly drunkard, the man that indulges himself in alcohol proved a threat to his own family and thus to an orderly and safe society.[40] After a period of slumber during the American Civil War, this same sentiment was shared with the woman-led temperance movement that emerged from 1873 onwards. They believed that drunkenness was a danger to the very fabric of society, endangering women and children. These organizations sought to attack the root of the problem, by banning alcohol and the saloons where it was served. Eclectic, moral sentiments made room for problems such as domestic violence and lenient legal measures against domestic violence.[41]

Not only the perspective on the dangers of alcohol and the measures to defeat those problems changed during the 1870s but also the nature of consumption drastically changed. No more was hard liquor such as whiskey America's first choice of drink, but beer. The production of beer used to be too costly and beer would become easily spoiled. The knowledge of German brewers during the 1840s and 1850s, however, brought a new production of beer that would be more cost efficient, this lager would take the nation by storm.[42] Following the Civil War, the popularity of beer continued to grow and so did the number of saloons in America. These number of saloons where the working class would spend their wages rose from 100.000 in 1873 to almost 300.000 in 1900. This meant that the growing number of saloons and the resulting societal disruption was increasingly becoming a social question that was often debated in national politics, which then led to movements in favor of temperance to gain more traction.[43] That these immigrant groups, such as Germans, were now providing alcohol to the citizens

[38] McGirr, *The War on Alcohol*, 8.
[39] Clark, *Deliver Us From Evil,* 36.
[40] Ibid., 40.
[41] Rose, *American Women,* 17.
[42] Rorabaugh, *The Alcohol Republic,* 109.
[43] C. Postel, *Equality: An American Dilemma, 1866-1896* (New York 2019) e-book chapter 4.4; Clark, *Deliver Us From Evil,* 50-51.

of the United States would prove to be very important. The growing number of saloons coincided with a rapid increase of European immigrants that came to America and made for an ethnic component to enter the question of temperance.[44]

Growing Concerns of White Protestant America

A new wave of temperance supporters responded to the many saloons and immigrants that now existed in the United States. And temperance became a way for the native white Protestant groups to suppress the immigrants' culture that was a perceived threat to their moral society. White Protestant legislators would attack the immigrants' culture with dry laws in order to counter this threat. Counties that implemented laws such as an imposed dry Sunday, had a significantly larger population of Irish, Italians, or German immigrants.[45] These regulations were a direct response of the white Protestant to the 'German Sunday of pleasure', when they would celebrate the end of the working week with picnics and such, during the Protestant day of Sabbath. As the Protestant doctrine commands, Sabbath should be a day of temperance and rest, and this conflicted inherently with the German Sunday celebrations.[46] White Protestant America's problem with the Irish was, however, a different story. Deep-rooted Catholic bigotry and their portrayal as a socially inferior class caused the many Irish immigrants that came to the United States during the Great Famine to become isolated from American society.[47] The cities where these isolated immigrant groups then continued to settle were seen as a hotbed of immorality. Saloons were plentiful, criminal activity rose, poverty rose, and public health was terrible. The newly industrialized cities where immigrants provided a much-needed workforce, were seen by the rural white Protestant communities as immoral and thus they organized themselves to counterattack this threat.[48]

Two of these organizations that emerged because of the increased consumption of beer and the resulting disturbance of saloons were the Anti-Saloon League (ASL) and the Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU). A third organization that would emerge after the Civil War was the Prohibition Party (PP), a partisan organization whose main goal was nationwide prohibition. However, a combined effort of the ASL and the WCTU to lobby with Congress would eventually prove more fruitful than decades of trying to infiltrate America's politics by the partisan PP.[49] These three parties would continue Dow's tactic of battling America's intemperance by trying to implement legislative

[44] W.J. Phalen, *American Evangelical Protestantism and European Immigrants, 1800-1924* (Jefferson 2011) 114.
[45] K.T. Andrews and C. Seguin, 'Group Threat and Policy Change: The Spatial Dynamics of Prohibition Politics, 1890-1919', *American Journal of Sociology* 121:2 (2015) 475-510, 484.
[46] Phalen, *American Evangelical Protestantism*, 90.
[47] Ibid.; L. Dumenil, 'The Tribal Twenties: "Assimilated" Catholics' Response to Anti-Catholicism in the 1920s', *Journal of American Ethnic History* 11:1 (1991) 21-49.
[48] Ibid., 115-116.
[49] Clark, *Deliver Us From Evil,* 95.

measures, such as nationwide prohibition, the protection of women and children, and measures that targeted saloons. The ASL, WCTU, and the PP were all mostly white, Protestant organizations that targeted the perceived immorality from the industrialized city that came with the increased amount of immigrants that entered America.

Made up of mostly Republican-affiliated members that were fed up with the Republican Party's apathy regarding intemperance, the PP was founded in 1869 as a partisan organization. Taking a strong stance on intemperance, the PP gave a platform to voters that demanded political action regarding the liquor problem. These voters were once forced to choose between the extremely wet Democratic Party, or the Republican Party, which was marginally dry but refused to take a stance on the issue. Dry voters were underrepresented in these two parties, and the PP sought to fill that political void.[50] Although the Republican Party's stance on temperance was mostly agreeable to the PP, this ideological similarity meant that politically, the two parties were competing for voters. The Republicans argued that, because of this, voting for the PP was indirectly a vote for the wet Democratic Party.[51] In reality, however, results for the PP were unsatisfactory during the 1870s, and continued to do so in the elections that followed.[52] The PP also had momentary connections with the WCTU, as the PP was the only partisan party to allow women as members. By allowing the women of the WCTU to organize campaigns for the PP, both organizations would benefit from this collaboration. The WCTU could spread more awareness for temperance, and the PP had party members who were skilled in organizing campaigns and mobilizing new voters.[53] When the PP eventually controversially opposed the Eighteenth Amendment when the WCTU and the ASL began lobbying this measure with Congress, ties were cut between the two nonpartisan organizations and the PP, because political speaking, the PP opposed the way the amendment came into being; through lobbying and pressure politics, instead of a democratic decision.[54]

When the Woman's Christian Temperance Union was founded in 1874, its main goal was in the name: focusing on the evil of alcohol by promoting temperance and eventually national prohibition. From 1879 onwards, under the presidency of Frances E. Willard, this one-issue rhetoric changed to a broader set of ideals, including, but not limited to, suffrage, age of consent, and home protection.[55] The wider array of problems the WCTU addressed in their campaign, show that they are continuing the ideology of Neil Dow, as it focuses on protecting groups that are historically less

[50] Anderson, *The Politics of Prohibition,* 26.
[51] Ibid., 51-52.
[52] Ibid., 222.
[53] A. Chamberlain et al., 'The Connection Between the Woman's Christian Temperance Union and the Prohibition Party', *Sage Open* 6:4 (2016) 1-8, 3.
[54] Anderson, *The Politics of Prohibition,* 227-228.
[55] A. Chamberlain and A.B. Yanus, 'Membership, Mobilization, and Policy Adoption in the Gilded Age: The Case of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union', *Journal of Policy History* 33:4 (2021) 345-372, 349.

protected by legislatures such as women and children. This means that, even though the WCTU was, in essence, a puritan-centered organization, its main driving force is not so much eclectic as it is pragmatic, in the sense that it focused on the victims of intemperance, instead of on the immorality of intemperance itself. Although the WCTU was not officially associated with the Puritan churches, the organization did, however, rely heavily on the support of the religious community by using the churches as a speaking platform, but also as a network to gain more supporters for national prohibition.[56]

One way that the WCTU contributed to the war against intemperance during the 1890s, was by spreading knowledge among the public about the health risks of alcohol. The organization successfully lobbied for state education laws that ordered public schools to teach children about the dangers of overindulgence in alcohol and thus spread awareness among the generation that came of age in the 1910s and 1920s.[57] While the WCTU continued the 'do everything' approach, as Willard coined it, at the beginning of the twentieth century, its main goal became temperance and institutionalizing prohibition, sidelining other issues to a certain extent.[58] Because most women of the WCTU were connected with Puritan churches and were upper class, this renewed attack on intemperance was also strongly influenced by the anti-Catholic and nativist ideologies that emerged in response to the many immigrants that entered the United States.[59] But by pursuing national prohibition, the WCTU also had other goals than those that were influenced by bigotry. By joining the PP which allowed women as party members, under the guise of a prohibition agenda, the women of the WCTU could politicize their other goals such as women's suffrage.[60] Following this approach, the WCTU now had nationwide prohibition as its main goal and with that, a powerful ally to be able to succeed; the Anti-Saloon League.

Comprised of several church congregations from Ohio, the then local Anti-Saloon League (ASL) decided to take its mission to the national level in 1893. Seeing a great evil in the many saloons that were opening after the Civil War and the increase of unruly, immoral behavior that followed, their mission was to abolish these institutions gradually through legislation and restrictions, with total prohibition as their eventual goal.[61] Primarily operating at state level initially, the ASL tried to change national sentiment by increasing the number of states with dry legislature. This tactic was executed by opening league chapters in many states which could lobby with state politics and propose referendums

[56] Postel, *Equality,* ch. 4.1.
[57] Clark, *Deliver Us From Evil,* 86.
[58] McGirr, *The War on Alcohol*, 126; Postel, *Equality,* ch. 4.3.
[59] Postel, *Equality,* ch. 4.1.
[60] Ibid., ch. 5.3.
[61] Clark, *Deliver Us From Evil,* 94.

to push their agenda.[62] The ASL was more focused on the urban phenomenon of the saloon than on alcohol itself. For the ASL, saloons were the source of the unruly, immoral behavior that happened in these industrialized urban centers, and this was very much connected with the immigrant working class. During its speeches, the ASL highlighted that these industrialized cities, dense with working-class immigrants, were a threat to rural white Protestant life.[63] By attacking the saloon instead of alcohol itself, the ASL succeeded in creating a national resentment of the urban immigrant drinking culture, which they could lever to argue for prohibition laws. The saloon had now become a symbol of something that stood against Anglo-Saxon values; an perceived attack of immigrants on the United States.[64]

These fear mongering campaigns of the ASL proved to be very efficient in swaying local politics, because by 1913, the number of states with anti-saloon laws had increased to 31.[65] Because the ASL did not yet proclaim to pursue total prohibition during the 1890s, their stance on closing saloons to suppress immigrant immorality, was agreeable to most moderate drinkers that did not want prohibition laws, but also concluded that saloons became a societal problem that had to be controlled. This seemingly more moderate stance on temperance made the ASL seem less radical than the WCTU and therefore more popular with these moderate drinkers.[66] The local success of implementing anti-saloon laws took storm when reverent Purley Baker took the seat of the ASL's president from 1903 onwards. By increasing the number of states with dry laws drastically, the organization succeeded in making intemperance a highly debated topic in national politics and made the Prohibition negotiable in congress.[67] Part of the reason for the ASL to change to a national pressure group were developments in federal legislation during the Progressive Era. These developments showed the ASL that the government was increasingly willing to implement laws in order to safeguard the health of its citizens.[68]

Alcohol, Reforms, and the Great War

The Progressive Era proved to be the perfect time for the ASL and their new and radical stance on temperance to pounce on Congress, as already many changes were implemented to safeguard certain rights to citizens, such as women's suffrage, measures to protect workers, and customer protection acts. In the years that the ASL was fighting for prohibition enforcement, pressure groups like the National American Woman Suffrage Association were lobbying tirelessly for woman's suffrage with

[62] Clark, *Deliver Us From Evil*, 107.
[63] Andrews, 'Group Threat and Policy Change', 187.
[64] Phalen, *American Evangelical Protestantism*, 90.
[65] J.H. Timberlake, *Prohibition and the Progressive Movement, 1900-1920* (Cambridge, MA 1963) 146.
[66] Odegard, *Pressure Politics,* 38.
[67] Timberlake, *Prohibition and the Progressive Movement*, 131.
[68] Hamm, *Shaping the Eighteenth Amendment,* 175-176; McGirr, *The War on Alcohol*, 22.

Carrie Chapman Catt as their relentless leader. With Catt's 'winning plan', designed to pressure Congress immensely with many adept suffragettes, the 19th amendment was eventually secured in 1920.[69] Other laws were instituted to counter the appalling working conditions that were created by deranged capitalism stemming from the Gilded Age. For example, after a New York City factory fire claimed the lives of over 140 employees, Democrats Alfred E. Smith and Robert F. Wagner adopted over 50 laws that ensured improved working conditions.[70] The prohibition of alcohol as a way of safeguarding the health of United States citizens also can be explained from the perspective of this era. Food and drug regulation acts, such as the Meat Inspection Act of 1906, or the Harrison Narcotics Act of 1914 sought to better protect America's citizens from harmful substances by federal legislature.[71] By lobbying for total prohibition during the Progressive Era, the temperance parties gave themselves the best chance to succeed.

Even though the Progressive Era paved the way for a new legislature, to make the years of tireless lobbying of the WCTU and the ASL effective, some other developments brought about by the Great War were essential for even the possibility of implementing the Eighteenth Amendment. While on the eve of the Great War many states were already swayed by the ASL in implementing anti-liquor legislation, wartime proved to be the nail in the coffin for wet America. Firstly, in the decades following the Civil War beer became increasingly popular with the working class after a new process in producing lager was brought from overseas by German brewers. Although some of these German brewers would already be second or third-generation immigrants when America entered the war in 1917, their German roots proved an excellent propaganda opportunity for prohibition advocates to demonize these breweries, and slander campaigns were set up that equated supporting breweries as supporting Germany's war effort.[72] Not only public opinion's stance through anti-German patriotism paved the way for the Eighteenth Amendment during in wartime, but also wartime laws that forbade the selling of liquor to soldiers, forebode the distilling of alcohol with rationed food such as corn, and forebode the shipment of alcohol to states with dry laws.[73] Like many European countries during the Great War, America dried up, and these new wartime laws regarding alcohol, combined with the already 31 states with dry legislature, meant that America was already in a state of prohibition when Congress voted on the Eighteenth Amendment in 1917.[74] This state of wartime prohibition, paired with successful

[69] R.B. Fowler and S. Jones, 'Carrie Chapman Catt and the Last Years of the Struggle for Woman Suffrage: The Winning Plan' in: J.H. Baker ed., *Votes for Women: The Struggle for Suffrage Revisited* (Oxford 2002) 130-142, 137.
[70] L.L. Gould and C.Q. Shah, *America in the Progressive Era, 1890-1917* (Abingdon 2021) 56.
[71] McGirr, *The War on Alcohol*, 22.
[72] Rose, *American Women,* 32-33.
[73] Clark, *Deliver Us From Evil,* 129-130.
[74] M.L. Schrad, 'Constitutional Blemishes: American Alcohol Prohibition and Repeal as Policy Punctuation', *Policy Studies Journal* 35:3 (2007) 437-463, 445-446.

lobbying that already had swayed many of the members of Congress, was a recipe for success, and when more than eighty percent of the states also agreed with the new amendment, on January 16, 1918, the ratification was complete and the Eighteenth Amendment was born.[75]

The Politicization of Drinking

The overwhelming support for the Eighteenth Amendment stood in stark contrast to earlier stances of the Republican Party and the Democratic Party during the 19th century. When the PP entered the political stage, the Democratic Party was extremely wet, and the mostly dry Republican Party refused to take a stance on Prohibition. Had two decades of lobbying for Prohibition changed the stance of these parties, or were they pressured by circumstances during the war to adopt the amendment? Although the bill passed by the necessary amount of votes in the House of Representatives, it was not an overwhelming victory. The lobbying swayed just about two-thirds of the politicians, which shows that it was calculated by the prohibition advocates to be the perfect time for the amendment to go to the House of Representatives. Moreover, the voting had to be done before reapportionment would come in 1920 because that would bring many new wet Congressmen from areas that grew in population, who then could tip the scales in favor of the wets.[76] Precisely these tactics made the PP part ways with the temperance pressure groups such as the ASL and the WCTU. The Congressmen that were voting on the Eighteenth Amendment were chosen before the public knew that the amendment would be created and this struck the PP as highly undemocratic. Furthermore, if the amendment would eventually be ratified, enforcing it via an act would be done by newly chosen politicians and would not get enough votes after 1920, this would render the amendment fruitless.[77] In reality, the amendment was ratified rather quickly after passing the Senate, and the same men that voted in favor of the amendment now voted, nine months later, on the National Prohibition Act or as it is more commonly known, the Volstead Act. This act would implement the Eighteenth Amendment via legislature by prohibiting intoxicating beverages, regulating manufacture for other purposes, and promoting the use of alcohol only for lawful industries, where intoxicating is defined at more than 0.5% alcohol.[78]

The representatives who voted for the amendment and the Volstead Act were mostly under the control of the aggressive lobbying tactics of the ASL, during a time of wartime regulations on alcohol.[79] Therefore, the way that the amendment, and the Volstead Act, came to be did not seem democratic to factions like the PP, but it still persevered. Questions also arose, however, about the regulations themselves that the amendment and the act imposed. Not so much on the ground of *what*

[75] Clark, *Deliver Us From Evil*, 129.
[76] Odegard, *Pressure Politics,* 173.
[77] Anderson, *The Politics of Prohibition,* 228-229.
[78] Clark, *Deliver Us From Evil,* 132.
[79] Odegard, *Pressure Politics,* 165-166.

the amendment and the Volstead Act prohibited, but *that* it prohibited United States citizens at all. One of the Volstead Act opponents was Woodrow Wilson, the serving Democratic president during the Great War and the first years of Prohibition. It is difficult to deduct Woodrow's stance on the Eighteenth Amendment, as the procedure for an amendment of the Constitution does not concern ratification by the president. However, during Wilson's presidential campaign in 1912, he did proclaim to be in favor of local prohibition, should the people be inclined to enact such laws by popular vote, but personally he was an opponent of nationwide prohibition.[80] Constitutionally, Wilson could not oppose the Eighteenth Amendment, he could, however, refuse to sign the Volstead Act, practically vetoing it, and he did just that. Wilson not signing the act is believed to have two reasons. For one, the act was largely a continuation of the wartime acts, and although by 1919 the Great War was already decided, the United States did not yet sign the Treaty of Versailles, and thus, in the eyes of Wilson, the Congress falsely prolonged these extended wartime measures. Secondly, Wilson believed that enforcing the amendment would be in conflict with "the personal habits and customs of large numbers of our people." He believed strongly in personal freedom and thought therefore that such an act that would restrict those freedoms should not lightly be adopted during an era of conflicting interests and wartime measures.[81] However, after Wilson's veto, the Senate quickly overruled this, allowing the Volstead Act to come into effect on January 17, 1920.[82]

In short, opposition to the Eighteenth Amendment can be divided into two camps. Some politicians, such as those of the PP, believed that the prelude towards the adoption of the amendment was undesirable. The process was flawed, democratically speaking, for three reasons. Firstly, members of Congress were chosen before the amendment was even discussed as a possibility, which means that their votes did not necessarily represent the public's opinion. Secondly, many members of Congress stood under continuous pressure from the ASL, which meant that these members could not freely speak in public debates, as opponents of the amendment suggested. These opponents even went as far as claiming the ASL would not have succeeded if the voting for the amendment was anonymous.[83] Lastly, as president Wilson also pointed out, the sentiment was that it was unlikely that the amendment would have been approved if the early groundwork of wartime prohibition measures had not excited. This, however, fails to take into consideration the years of state-level politics that already had swayed many states into implementing prohibition laws, even before America's involvement in the Great War. Instead of attacking the democratic processes of the amendment, other opponents attacked the constitutional restraints that the amendment put on Americans. Something that had yet

[80] Odegard, *Pressure Politics*, 119.
[81] W. Wilson, 1856-1924, 'Veto of Prohibition Bill', 1919 October 27, WWP20678, Woodrow Wilson Press Statements, *Woodrow Wilson Presidential Library & Museum, Staunton, Virginia*.
[82] Clark, *Deliver Us From Evil,* 130.
[83] Odegard, *Pressure Politics,* 173.

to be implemented into the Constitution and did not happen again after the Twenty-first Amendment repealed the Eighteenth in 1933. This argument was also raised by organizations that opposed the amendment on a matter of principle, in fear that it would lead to more government control.[84] One of the organizations with this perspective, the Association Against the Prohibition Amendment, is further examined in the third chapter of this thesis.

As for the stance of the Republican and the Democratic Parties on the Eighteenth Amendment and the Volstead Act after January 1920, sentiments did change when the dry Congressmen, which were swayed by lobbying and wartime necessities, made way for new politicians. The Democratic Party became again more divided on the stance of Prohibition throughout the 1920s. This ambiguous stance on the subject was shown by having Democrats in favor of the modification of the amendment such as Alfred E. Smith, Democrats in favor of Prohibition such as William Jennings Bryan, and Democrats who remained evasive on the subject, such as James M. Cox.[85] The Democratic Party's increasing division on the subject was in stark contrast to the Republican Party that, however remaining a dry party, decided to take the same evasive stance as Cox on the subject. In the 1920 and 1924 elections, Republican candidates Warren G. Harding and Calvin Coolidge respectively managed landslide victories over their Democratic and Progressive counterparts, continuing to capitulate on the Democratic indecisiveness on Prohibition.[86] Some Republicans like Harding were even known to indulge in drink in private, even after 1920, but voted in favor of the amendment and the Volstead Act because their political career dictated this.[87] This evasiveness of the Republican Party was strongly influenced by the fact that speaking in favor of the Volstead Act during the 1920s became increasingly dangerous because of the social turmoil that evolved mainly in urban areas during the Prohibition.

To the members of Congress and states that agreed on the regulations on alcoholic beverages, and certainly to the members of the ASL and the WCTU that lobbied for these regulations, the social side effects of Prohibition came as a great shock. The disruption of social life that happened throughout the Prohibition Era, from 1920 to 1933, was much worse than the social disorder the ASL and the WCTU fought against. In short, this happened because the demand for alcoholic beverages remained, but now the supply side was not run and regulated by the government but by criminals, and this business proved to be extraordinarily lucrative as former small-time organizations now became powerful syndicates.[88] The social disorder that came with the rise of powerful syndicates and the enforcement of Prohibition that followed, which is discussed in the next chapter, brought up the question of the

[84] McGirr, *The War on Alcohol,* 160.
[85] Clark, *Deliver Us From Evil*, 183; 'Gov. Cox Declares Prohibition is Not a Campaign Issue', *The New York Times* (12 September, 1920).
[86] McGirr, *The War on Alcohol*, 162, 168.
[87] R.K. Murray, *The Harding Era: Warren G. Harding and His Administration* (Minneapolis 1969) 119.
[88] M. Mappen, *Prohibition Gangsters: The Rise and Fall of a Bad Generation* (New Brunswick 2013) 5.

effectiveness of the amendment and the Volstead Act in creating a moral orderly society. This caused some candidates like Al Smith to speak out on Prohibition instead of evading the topic and thus creating new voters for the Democratic Party in these urban crime-ridden areas, such as New York and Chicago.[89]

These developments set the scene for turbulent presidential elections in 1928. Unlike during previous elections, the Democratic Party candidate Alfred (Al) E. Smith, who was also the governor of New York until 1928, distinguished himself from the Republican Party by publicly denouncing Prohibition. This change in tactic, however, coincided with a co-operation between Al Smith and John J. Raskob, chair of the Association Against the Prohibition Amendment. During the run-up to the 1928 presidential elections, Raskob heavily funded the Democratic Party, in order to break the party's dry streak in winning national elections.[90] The friendship and partnership between Al Smith and John Raskob drastically changed how loyalties lay in political America to this day. To gain a better understanding of how Smith's stance on Prohibition was shaped, the state and city of New York during Prohibition will be examined in the next chapter, as it showed Smith that Prohibition enforcement in urban areas was targeting some groups more heavily than others, especially immigrants and the working class.[91]

[89] McGirr, *The War on Alcohol,* 164.
[90] Josephson, *Al Smith: Hero of the Cities,* 371.
[91] McGirr, *The War on Alcohol,* 93.

2. New York During the Prohibition Era

To explain Smith's radical anti-Prohibition stance during an era where most politicians remained evasive on that subject, this chapter will explore the city and state of New York during the Prohibition Era until 1928. The role of ethnic gangs in liquor trafficking and manufacture, and the Prohibition enforcement that was disproportionately targeting the ethnic working-class civilians during this era will be discussed in this chapter. This ethnic component of prohibition will give an insight into how and why Smith would preach to make changes to the Volstead Act, and why Smith eventually wanted to repeal the Eighteenth Amendment when he ran for president in 1928.

Drying New York City, or Not?

When the Volstead Act came into effect on January 17, 1920, New Yorkers were already subjugated to some form of prohibition legislation for two years because of the wartime measures during the Great War. By banning intoxicating liquids over 2.50 percent during the war, people were forced to drink beer and diluted wine, however, these new laws did not seem to have a great impact on New Yorkers' alcoholism as many continued their old drinking habits.[92] This was possible because throughout the wartime measures and the Prohibition Era, in New York, (hard) liquor was widely available in clubs and dining establishments. This wide availability of liquor was possible because of the ambiguous wording of the Eighteenth Amendment. The manufacture, sale, or transportation was prohibited from 1920 onward, the possession or use, however, was still technically allowed. By using loopholes such as overpricing food items to accommodate customers with alcohol, some establishments continued to keep serving drinks.[93] Another loophole came with article seven of the Volstead Act, which allowed for the sale of alcohol for religious purposes, such as sacramental wines.[94] Although places kept serving alcohol under semi-legal conditions, many other businesses became bankrupt. Apart from breweries and traders that specialized in alcohol, which were professions that were now unquestionably illegal, many restaurants, hotels, and especially saloons not wishing to participate in semi-legal practices were forced outright break the law or close their doors, and many choose the latter.[95] The closing of these conventional places that served alcohol meant that alcohol consumption was now diverted to the use of loopholes or to visiting secretive illegal accommodations, the so-called speakeasies.

These speakeasies did not rely on loopholes such as overpricing food and serving 'complimentary' drinks, but chose to illegally sell alcohol. The establishments, that derived from the

[92] E.N. Lawson, *Smugglers, Bootleggers, and Scofflaws: Prohibition and New York City* (Albany 2013) 76.
[93] M.A. Lerner, *Dry Manhattan: Prohibition in New York City* (Cambridge, MA, 2007) 45, 48.
[94] J.W. Joselit, *Our Gang: Jewish Crime and the New York Jewish Community, 1900-1940* (New York 1983) 89.
[95] Lerner, *Dry Manhattan*, 54.

act of speaking softly, or quietly, were hidden bars that provided social encounters with the pleasures of alcoholic beverages.[96] All over the United States, these speakeasy clubs were opening to provide some much-needed entertainment coupled with an illegal beverage, and New York City was no exception. Speakeasies like the Stork Club, the 21 Club, the Red Head, and Texan Guinan's 300 Club were popular among high society, intellectual crowds, and, unwanted but essential, mobsters that ran the liquor trade.[97] Other places that still served alcohol were private instances such as the Harvard and Yale clubs that had stockpiled many bottles of alcohol pre-Prohibition and served those to elite guests on social occasions. Membership was the cost and stocked alcohol was complimentary, conveniently bypassing Prohibition laws.[98] The elitist status of the customers was no coincidence, as the costs of alcohol in these clubs were far from cheap. As alcohol became more difficult to get hold of because of its illegal status, but its demand continued, the price of most alcoholic beverages rose sevenfold. Capitalizing on this inflation, speakeasies made immense profits, and were able to bribe law enforcement, or simply use these huge profits to pay the relatively low fines.[99]

Because of the exclusivity of these clubs and their high prices, they were only accessible to the mid to upper classes of society. For the working class that also yearned for a drink, other, cheaper options were readily available. Some saloons stayed open serving 'near beer', which was diluted beer that had the allowed 0.5 percent alcohol. Supplying this beer to speakeasies and bars alike via trucks, Jewish and Italian immigrants brewed and sold this beverage on a large scale throughout the East Coast.[100] Apart from the fact that the beer, before it was diluted, was technically illegal to brew, these ventures were legal. However, to get their hands on hard, illegal liquor, the lower class could also wager their lives on moonshine products, sold in the off-brand speakeasy establishments called blind pigs or tigers. Usually located in someone's house, these establishments charged customers for viewing an extraordinary item, providing a drink to spend the time. Especially dangerous were the products made from industrial alcohol that left many blind or killed, causing a health crisis in poorer neighborhoods.[101] Homebrewed moonshine was, for instance, the most cost-efficient way for the working class to procure alcohol of higher percentages and it was therefore done a lot. Small-time businesses like blind pigs were usually of no concern to the bigger smuggling organizations that were

[96] T.S. Atmanagara and E. Nuraeny, 'A Speakeasy Bar in an Urban Settlement As a Heterotopia Space', *IOP Conference Series: Earth and Environmental Science* 673 (2021) 1.
[97] C. Sismondo, *America Walks into a Bar: A Spirited History of Taverns and Saloons, Speakeasies and Grog Shops* (New York 2011) 221.
[98] Lawson, *Smugglers, Bootleggers, and Scofflaws*, 76.
[99] Sismondo, *America Walks into a Bar,* 224-226.
[100] Joselit, *Our Gang*, 96-97.
[101] Sismondo, *America Walks into a Bar,* 226-227.

run by mobsters, but when those households expanded their market, 'protection' was provided for a fifty-fifty share of the profits.[102]

Another way to distribute alcoholic beverages with an alcoholic percentage of more than 0.5 percent alcohol, was by using the religious purpose clause of the Volstead Act. Thousands of gallons of wine were imported during the Prohibition Era under the pretenses that it was used as sacramental wine, although it was actually sold on the open market once it had made its way into America. To import this wine, a rabbi's approval was needed to prove it was for Jewish users within the synagogue. Lacking supervision on this trade, however, caused nonexistent synagogues to be enlisted with long-dead or fake members. Even a written authorization by a rabbi was known to be sold for one thousand dollars, just to be able to import and redistribute this sacramental wine by non-Jewish bootleggers. This lucrative trade caused many gallons of wine to be shipped into New York City, surpassing the Jewish population's legal limit by hundreds of thousands.[103] However, these ventures were not without their risks, as it is estimated that about 12% of the people that were arrested during the Prohibition Era in New York City for alcohol-related crimes were Jewish and that most of these came from ethnic, lower-class neighborhoods.[104]

People used many of the Volstead Act's loopholes to continue procuring and selling alcohol, but many bottles were smuggled into the country illegally as well. Depending on which part of America the contraband was destined to, alcohol was smuggled from different regions such as Europa, Canada, or the Caribbean. For example, during the Prohibition, sea routes between Havana and America's Southern ports, from New Orleans to Miami, were full of schooners carrying rum.[105] To apprehend these ships on the sea for carrying illegal contraband proved to be useless, the captain could simply claim it was sailing for other ports than American ones, such as Mexico or Canada, where no prohibition laws were in effect, and ships carrying rum often had documents on board stating such a false destination.[106] The same could not be done when smuggling alcohol over land from Mexico or Canada, as the destination of the alcohol could not be somewhere other than America and so the Prohibition enforcers had probable cause to arrest the smugglers. Upper New York State was one of the border crossings from Canada to the United States and home to the infamous 'Rum Trail' which ran from Montreal to Albany.[107] Another way to bring more bulky loads of alcohol into New York State was through New York's 'Rum Row'. Ships carrying many bottles of liquor made the journey from Europe

[102] McGirr, *The War on Alcohol*, 52-53.
[103] Joselit, *Our Gang*, 97-99.
[104] M. Davis, *Jews and Booze: Becoming American in the Age of Prohibition* (New York 2012) 146-147.
[105] L.L. Dorr, *A Thousand Thirsty Beaches: Smuggling Alcohol From Cuba to the South during Prohibition* (Chapel Hill 2018) 20.
[106] Ibid., 87.
[107] A.S. Everest, *Rum Across the Border: The Prohibition Era in Northern New York* (Syracuse 1978) 64.

and the Caribbean to eventually harbor somewhere along the shore of Massachusetts, New Jersey, or New York. Legal issues regarding the jurisdictional coastal area made it difficult for the coast guard to apprehend smuggling ships that stay further than twelve miles, but once inside this range, the ships could be searched and possibly impounded.[108]

Crime and Selective Enforcement

Throughout the first years of Prohibition, the international component of the smuggling business was foreign ships that sporadically would bring in loads of alcohol, and this was profitable because of the poor state of the U.S. coast guard. During the mid-twenties, however, the funds and resources of the coast guard increased substantially to be able to counter the activity on Rum Row. These new developments in coastal security meant that smugglers also needed to become more organized to keep using Rum Row as a nautical highway for large amounts of liquor. Because of this, from 1924 onward, New York's Rum Row fell under the control of Manhattan gangs and became a course for smaller ships to transport booze from Canada's cities on the pacific and ports on French Newfoundland into New York. To trick the newly armed coast guard, decay speedboats would also be used, but more often than not, a bribe would suffice.[109] After successfully dodging or paying officers, the liquor would then be distributed among establishments such as speakeasies and persons of interest. This New York bootlegging and distribution venture was under strict control of three main immigrant groups; the Jewish, Italian, and Irish communities in New York.[110]

The three different ethnical backgrounds of gangs affiliated with the liquor trade during the Prohibition should not, however, be confused as strictly rival gangs. Illustrated by the following examples, many Jews, Italians, and Irishman worked together and opposed each other, mostly indiscriminately. Perhaps the biggest mastermind behind this New York bootlegging and distributing criminal circuit was Arnold Rothstein. Born into a Jewish, well-to-do family, Rothstein quickly made a name in the New York gambling scene, even owning some establishments. Making money through schemes and gambling in his earlier years, when Prohibition came around, Rothstein had enough capital to invest in a new business model that presented itself to him through his connections in the underworld; capitalizing off of Prohibition.[111] By creating an immense empire of bootlegging, protection schemes, and racketeering, Rothstein and his multi-ethical employees became filthy rich, and therefore could easily buy out police and politics, being practically above the law.[112] Closely connected to Rothstein's empire as one of his employees was the Italian 'Lucky' Salvatore Luciano.

[108] Lawson, *Smugglers, Bootleggers, and Scofflaws*, 1.
[109] Ibid., 5-6
[110] Mappen, *Prohibition Gangsters*, 33-34.
[111] Ibid.; Lawson, *Smugglers, Bootleggers, and Scofflaws*, 60.
[112] Lerner, *Dry Manhattan*, 54.

Born in Sicily, Luciano emigrated with his parents to New York at the age of ten, where they lived in the Lower East Side. Luciano was unique in the sense that, as he grew up on the Jewish Lower East Side he had connections with Jewish gangsters such as Rothstein, but since he was born in Sicily and both his parents were also born there, he was able to join New York mafia and had connections there as well. Knowing many people in the criminal circuit with this double role turned out quite well for Luciano, as the young man was associated with bootlegging, narcotics, and brothel schemes during the Prohibition, when he was still in his twenties.[113] Another employee of Rothstein was Jack "Legs" Diamond, a son of Irish immigrants. A hotheaded gangster that owned bootlegging operations and a speakeasy, he got in many altercations with Jewish, Italian, and other Irish gangsters, all the same, some of whom were also affiliated with Rothstein. These interracial connections highlight the fact that bootlegging was not a Jewish, Italian, or Irish venture in New York, but an immigrant business.[114]

Most New York Prohibition gangsters were first or second-generation immigrants, but the three biggest immigrant groups were not exclusively working together with 'their own'. This phenomenon of exclusively immigrant gangs that ventured into the liquor business during Prohibition can be explained by the following factors. One reason for this connection is the relative ease for small-scale, family-run operations to produce liquor and profit from it. Without large capitalist businesses that were able to push smaller competitors out, poorer communities now began to make and sell alcohol to make a living, and these communities consisted mostly of immigrants.[115] In these ethnic, working-class neighborhoods, enough liquor was created to spark the interest for organized crime to reap their profits. Consequently, most gangs that formed during Prohibition also originated from these Jewish, Italian, and Irish neighborhoods.[116]

A second reason was the 'religious purpose' clause of the Volstead Act, which allowed some religious leaders to distribute alcohol amongst their followers. Culturally speaking, as acknowledged by the clause, in religions like Catholicism and Judaism, wine can have ritualistic functionality. This meant that, as seen with the creation of fake synagogues, some liquor trafficking became partly legal within these boundaries and was connected with the immigrant communities.[117] Existing generalizing ideas surrounding alcohol consumption among immigrants can also be another reason for the overrepresentation of immigrants. Historically speaking, many white Americans had prejudices that connected alcohol with immigrants. German breweries were demonized by pressure groups to implement prohibition laws on the grounds of a generalization that all Germans are connected with beer, and thus were the enemy during the Great War, and Italians and Irishman were associated with

[113] Mappen, *Prohibition Gangsters*, 49.
[114] Ibid., 59-60.
[115] Dorr, *A Thousand Thirsty Beaches*, 129.
[116] McGirr, *The War on Alcohol*, 53-54.
[117] Joselit, *Our Gang*, 89.

wine and whiskey.[118] These ethnic prejudices can also be a reason for the perceived immigrant connection with Prohibition crimes by Prohibition enforcement. In Chicago and New York, most of this enforcement by Prohibition agents was selectively targeting the ethnic working class. This unfair treatment was not unknown to the immigrant population, as they noticed that white upper-class speakeasies were not raided, and even their white neighbor was allowed to continue moonshining, while immigrant households were targeted by police. Because of this selective enforcement, these ethnic communities were opposed to Prohibition, if it meant that only they were targeted, even though it provided a steady form of income for some.[119]

Navigating Prohibition Laws

Not only did New York City's ethnic population become opposed to Prohibition due to this selective enforcement, but they were also backed in this conviction by Tammany Hall, New York's powerful Democratic political machine.[120] The influence of Tammany Hall over New York City's politics was incredible. If a young man, such as Al Smith, wanted to become anything political in the city, he needed to have the blessing of one or more bosses of Tammany Hall. One of these bosses, named Thomas Foley, took Smith under his wing and gave him a seat on one of New York City's state assemblies.[121] Smith remained a Democrat, and loyal to Tammany Hall, and Tammany Hall remained loyal to Smith and supported him when he ran to be the Democratic nominee in 1924, which he lost to John W. Davis.[122] Tammany Hall was comprised of bosses that looked after a district of New York City and were responsible for collecting votes from the New Yorkers that lived in their respective districts. For this reason, Tammany Hall was very much connected to the new immigrants that came flocking to New York City. The bosses made sure the immigrants got citizen papers, homes, and social aid to help them start up their new life in America, and in return, Tammany Hall asked for their political loyalty by voting for the Democratic Party, something the poor immigrants were happy to do.[123]

Tammany Hall's influence on New York's politics meant that Democratic politicians affiliated with Tammany could count on numerous immigrant votes from New York City's district bosses. And being affiliated with Tammany Hall meant that you must have a wet stance on Prohibition. The argument of the temperance organizations, such as the ASL, that alcoholism, saloons, and immigrants were all connected, was also used by Republican politicians in New York. Dry Republican forces in New York would use Tammany Hall as a reason for promoting Prohibition, as saloons were seen as Tammany

[118] Dorr, *A Thousand Thirsty Beaches*, 129.
[119] McGirr, *The War on Alcohol*, 94.
[120] Lerner, *Dry Manhattan*, 9.
[121] Chiles, *The Revolution of '28*, 14.
[122] Handlin, *Al Smith and His America*, 116.
[123] L. Eisenstein and E. Rosenberg, *A Stripe of Tammany's Tiger* (Ithaca 2013) 12.

Hall's main epicenter of political power and provided for a large Democratic voting base.[124] Even though these arguments were used by the ASL as a way to demonize immigrants, it was true that Tammany Hall politicians were fiercely opposed to Prohibition. When the Irish, Tammany Hall politician, Jimmy Walker was elected as New York City's mayor in 1925, he made sure that New York City's police force left the Prohibition gangsters alone for the most part. Walker's influence on New York City's Prohibition enforcement remained until 1932, when he was forced to resign after charges of corruption.[125] But even during this precarious time in which Walker was attacked for corruption, his popularity remained as Walker's wet stance on Prohibition was popular among the citizens of New York City.[126]

The popularity of Walker as an extreme wet mayor coincided with the growing unpopularity of New York City's branch of the Anti-Saloon League. The dry leader of the ASL in New York, William H. Anderson, made many enemies in the city when he also began spreading the ASL's anti-Catholic bigotry in New York City. By blaming the failure of the Volstead Act in New York on immoral cultural aspects of the city's many Catholics, immigrants, and African-Americans, Anderson showed the racist tendencies of the ASL. By adding this racial clause to Prohibition, Anderson deepened New York City's hatred of Prohibition and fueled their conviction that federal enforcement was racially motivated.[127] Anderson alienated urban voters of New York, but could also tap into the state's rural voting base with his racially motivated, anti-Catholic slander. When Alfred E. Smith would implement similar measures as Walker during his time as governor of New York, Anderson started a state-wide propaganda campaign against the Catholic governor. He denounced Smith by portraying him as a puppet of Tammany Hall and the Catholic church and Anderson even went as far as siding with the Ku Klux Klan (KKK).[128]

The reason that Anderson was so fiercely attacking Smith, was the leniency that Smith showed towards Prohibition.[129] Just like Walker did when he became mayor in 1925, Smith implemented changes to the state enforcement of Prohibition by making it a sole responsibility of federal Prohibition agents.[130] Smith did this mere five months after he was reelected governor of New York in 1923, when the state assembly and Senate agreed to appeal the Mullan-Gage law, the legislation that was tasked to enforce Prohibition in the State of New York. After long consideration, Smith did not veto the proposal, which he eventually signed on June 1, 1923, stating that "This repeal will not make legal a

[124] Lawson, *Smugglers, Bootleggers, and Scofflaws*, XVI.
[125] Mappen, *Prohibition Gangsters*, 56, 127.
[126] Lerner, *Dry Manhattan*, 167-168.
[127] Ibid., 204; Odegard, *Pressure Politics,* 233.
[128] Josephson, *Al Smith: Hero of the* Cities, 239; Lerner, *Dry Manhattan*, 169.
[129] 'Wets Are Jubilant, Drys Disappointed; But Both Agree That the Dry Law Repeal Means a "Very Wet" City', *The New York Times* (June 2, 1923).
[130] Lawson, *Smugglers, Bootleggers, and Scofflaws*, 95.

single act which was illegal during the period of the existence of this statute (the Mullan-Gage law)."[131] Although the Volstead Act was still in effect in New York State, repealing the Mullan-Gage law meant that Prohibition was now solely enforced by federal officers, reducing Prohibition enforcement effectiveness immensely. This opposition against federal enforcement by a Democratic ran state legislature was of course not uncharacteristic of regular politics, given the Democratic politician's tendency to strengthen state rights. But it also made sense for a Tammany Hall politician, such as Smith, to oppose Prohibition to safeguard Tammany's support.[132]

Prohibition was strongly connected to immigration in New York City, and Al Smith was very aware of this fact. Smith's wet stance on Prohibition was strongly influenced by his connection with Tammany Hall and its immigration working-class voter base. But Smith wanted to go beyond city and state politics by taking a shot at the presidency of the United States in the elections of 1924 and 1928. The next chapter will reveal how Smith's stance on Prohibition radicalized when he met John Raskob in 1926, a fellow Catholic with an immigrant background, who also fiercely opposed the Eighteenth Amendment.

[131] 'Expect Dry Repeal To Make City Wet', *The New York Times* (May 6, 1923); 'Wets Are Jubilant, Drys Disappointed'.
[132] 'Smith's Veto Hint On Liquor Repealer Startles Tammany', *The New York Times* (May 21, 1923).

3. The Politics and Friendship Between Al Smith and John Raskob

When Alfred E. Smith became governor of New York State, New York City had changed a lot compared to the city where Smith grew up. A son of Irish and Italian parents, he had lived the hardships that came with being an immigrant from a poor neighborhood in New York City. Despite having to labor during his teenage years to support his family, "Al", as he was called, worked hard and made it far. In his last six years as governor, from 1923 to 1928, he did not try to hide his wet stance on the issue. But to make meaningful changes on dry land, Smith had to look further. The next step was to become the Democratic candidate for the presidential race, and this meant finding like-minded individuals that could support his campaign. By siding with the wealthy John Raskob, Governor Smith would gain a financial edge over the Republican Party.[133] This adequate funding, Smith's humble upbringing, and anti-Prohibition sentiment, increased his popularity among urban, immigrant voting blocs and caused a much-needed spark in the Democratic Party.[134] This chapter examines how the co-operation between Smith and Raskob was possible, by researching both Smith's background and years as governor of New York State during the period 1923-1928, and Raskob's background and ties with the Association Against the Prohibition Amendment.

Al Smith: An American Story

Al Smith was born in 1873, in New York City, to Catherine Mulvehill, a second-generation Irish Catholic, and Alfred Emmanuel Smith, a second-generation Catholic with an Italian father and a German mother. Smith grew up in the Lower East Side of New York City, a populous community of Irish immigrants, and a village of its own. There, under the Brooklyn Bridge, the Smiths lived a happy life, with a giving father and a loving mother.[135] Al Smith's childhood seemed careless, he did well in Catholic school, and he was a devout altar boy, of which the tasks he took very seriously. While balancing school and church, he also took on a newsboy's stand to help his family with extra earnings, as his father could not work long hours due to sickness.[136] But then, when the boy was only twelve years old, disaster struck for the Smith family. His father died a few days after he cast his last ballot for the Tammany Hall's elect, after a fight against what might have been cancer. A supporter of Tammany Hall his whole life, Al's father stated: "I guess this is the last ballot I'll ever cast". Al Smith would continue his father's allegiance to Tammany his whole life as well, as did many immigrants of New York City. [137]

[133] Lerner, *Dry Manhattan,* 243.
[134] McGirr, *The War on Alcohol*, 171.
[135] Josephson, *Al Smith: Hero of the* Cities, 12-13, 22-23.
[136] Handlin, *Al Smith and His* America, 12.
[137] Josephson, *Al Smith: Hero of the* Cities, 42.

His father dying at such an early age meant that Al had to quit school to provide for his family, and he did just that. Working grueling hours on the Fulton fish market, and later at a Brooklyn Pump Company, Al could, along with his sister Mamie who also found a job, provide for the family easily.[138] Al's passion lay not, however, in the Fulton fish market, nor was it in the pump company, his real passion lay in acting and politics. Finding true joy in amateur theater, Al used every moment that he could spare to go to nightly rehearsals and performances. It was here that he found that he was made for the stage, either a theatrical or a political one. He had to perform in front of an audience.[139] On the theatrical stage, Al found joy, but on the political stage, he found meaning. That political stage was given to him by Tammany boss Tom Foley, who owned a saloon on the Lower East Side, and practically owned the area as well.[140]

Al Smith was a regular at Foley's saloon and quickly befriended the saloon owner. Smith knew, just like his mother and father did before him, how important it was to have a good relationship with Tammany Hall. Catharine and Alfred relied on Tammany Hall, just as Tammany relied on them. As immigrants in New York City, they would benefit greatly from Tammany's generosity, and Al Smith grew up to respect the institution. Befriending Tom Foley would be his way out of the slums, and becoming a police chief or assemblyman was only possible through Tammany Hall.[141] Becoming close to Foley proved to be even more beneficial than Smith imagined when the Irish district began housing many new Jewish and Italian immigrants. Because of these new immigrants that flocked to New York, Foley's influence grew heavily. Many new votes meant more power over who would become Tammany's voice in the New York State Assembly representing the Lower East Side, and this voice was Al's.[142]

Smith remained in this post as a state assemblyman from 1904 until 1915. Even though the other assemblyman did not think much of Smith at first, him being a Tammany Hall elected legislator, progressives began noticing him when he was appointed as head of a commission investigating a devastating fire in the Lower East side. Smith and his colleague, a Jewish immigrant assemblyman from Upper East side New York, Robert F. Wagner, were chair and vice-chair of the Committee of Safety that would eventually implement numerous safety regulations with the help of Frances Perkins.[143] The fire that the committee investigated claimed the lives of 140 Jewish immigrants, the majority of being young girls. Inadequate fire safety regulations, too many workers in the building, and an

[138] Josephson, *Al Smith: Hero of the* Cities, 42
[139] Ibid., 50.
[140] Handlin, *Al Smith and His* America, 12.
[141] Josephson, *Al Smith: Hero of the* Cities, 56.
[142] Handlin, *Al Smith and His* America, 26-27.
[143] Chiles, *The Revolution of '28*, 15.

underequipped fire department caused the major loss of life that day in the factory.[144] A political partnership that started because of this tragedy, the team of Smith, Wagner, and Perkins would succeed in implementing many new safety acts, among them fire safety, worker safety, maximum working hours, and acts for special conditions for women and children.[145]

Smith first became governor in 1919, after being the Sheriff of New York County for two years, a boring, but necessary job for a career in higher politics.[146] During his first term as governor, from January 1919 until December 1920, Smith and Perkins continued their partnership of social reform. He appointed her as the only woman member of the Industrial Commission, a department that mediates between employers and employees and ensures that labor laws are lived up to by companies. But in the meanwhile, Perkins continued to be a part of this commission in Smith's other terms as governor as well.[147] Another important figure in Smith's progressive plans as governor of New York that appeared during his first term was Belle Moskowitz. She was Smith's advisor on social issues during all his terms as governor, and later also during his presidential campaign in 1928.[148] Social legislations that were implemented during Smith's first term because of the influence of these advisors, included the lowering of workers hours and the increase of wages, improvements to the public health through the availability of milk, and improvements to different child welfare services.[149]

During Al Smith's last six years as governor, from January 1923 to December 1928, he continued to focus on many social issues that would better the lives of the working-class man. For him, however, this did not mean that he was a socialist. By bettering the living conditions of the working class, Al Smith tried to fight the unchecked commercialization of basic necessities such as education, healthcare, housing, foodstuff, and public parks, with state-level intervention.[150] This stance as governor was, of course, a logical continuation of the earlier laws that Smith, Wagner, and Perkins adopted in 1911, after the New York City factory fire.[151] One of Smith's important accomplishments while being governor were meaningful improvements to New York State's educational system. By raising educational funds on a state level instead of burdening local funds which were stressed due to many other budgetary reasons, he could increase the budget of, especially rural, schools. Tapping into state funds, instead of local funds, Smith targeted the low salaries of teachers, equalized these salaries

[144] Josephson, *Al Smith: Hero of the* Cities, 118-120.
[145] Chiles, *The Revolution of '28*, 16.
[146] Handlin, *Al Smith and His* America, 69.
[147] Josephson, *Al Smith: Hero of the* Cities, XII, 226
[148] Chiles, *The Revolution of '28*, 23; Perry, *Belle Moskowitz*, 184-213.
[149] Chiles, *The Revolution of '28*, 26-27.
[150] R. Chiles, 'Working-Class Conservationism in New York: Governor Alfred E. Smith and "The Property of the People of the State"', *Environmental History* 18:1 (2013) 157-183, 169.
[151] Gould, *America in the Progressive Era,* 56.

for female and male teachers alike, and fought adult illiteracy.[152] Smith targeted public healthcare next, as it was in a terrible state; New York State's hospitals were understaffed and overcrowded. After securing approval for unprecedented public funding of a long-term plan to improve healthcare in 1923, many hospitals were built during Smith's terms as governor, as well as housing for staff, resulting in adding more than 3000 hospital beds each year during this period.[153]

As a governor, Smith was first and foremost progressive, committing himself to improving the lives of the working class with state funds. His views on social issues continued when Smith sought to become the Democratic presidential candidate for the 1924 presidential elections, views that were seen as 'socialist' by some members of the Democratic Party. Indeed, Smith's campaigning for labor and housing laws that he had implemented in New York State was unprecedented in East Coast states, but similar laws were already present in states like Washington and Wisconsin. Moreover, Smith had no intention of restricting business owners financially as he was in favor of a free-market economy, he merely opposed human suffering and exploitation. Apart from these social views, Prohibition also remained a part of Smith's campaign as he vowed to implement an act to legalize beer and light wines.[154] Consequently, Smith's campaigns for the 1924 presidential election were funded by rich New York merchants on the one hand, but also endorsed by growing groups of urban working-class citizens on the other, because Smith vowed to improve living conditions in rapidly urbanizing America and to limit the power of the Eighteenth Amendment. This does not mean, however, that Smith's 1924 campaign was supported by all capitalists. Some, like Henry Ford, feared that adjusting the amendment in favor of beer and light wine would make their business ventures less efficient because of the return of drunken employees. These capitalists, who were opposed to a modification of Prohibition, joined forces with the Anti-Saloon League and the Woman's Christian Temperance Union in joining or supporting the Republican Party.[155]

In the end, Smith would not succeed in becoming the presidential candidate for the Democratic Party in 1924. Although Smith had become one of the two front runners, he encountered fierce competition from the other Democratic candidate William Gibbs McAdoo, who enjoyed support from Southern Democrats. During this National Democratic convention that preceded the 1924 presidential election and where the candidate was chosen, the Southern Democrats and the Northeastern Democrats clashed on racial issues. Smith and his Northeastern support pressured the Western McAdoo and the Southern Democrats into denouncing the KKK by name, something they were

[152] R. Chiles, 'School Reform as Progressive Statecraft: Education Policy In New York Under Governor Alfred E. Smith, 1919-1928', *The Journal of the Gilded* Age *and Progressive Era*, 15:4 (2016) 379-398, 383-384.
[153] Chiles, *The Revolution of '28*, 40.
[154] Josephson, *Al Smith: Hero of the Cities,* 287-288.
[155] Ibid., 288-289.

seemingly not willing to do after a vote failed by one out of many.[156] The anti-Klan sentiments of the Northeastern Democrats were in part a political strategy in dividing the Southern Democrats, but it was also because Smith's largest opponents in the Democratic Party were Klan-affiliated politicians. Fearing the growth of these urban, immigrant-populated cities like New York and Chicago, part of the Klan's hatred had focused on Catholics and Jews. Smith, as a Catholic candidate and governor of New York State, which housed the largest immigrant population because of New York City, was seen by the KKK as an undesirable representation of the Democratic Party.[157] Because of the firm division in the Democratic Party, after an unprecedented long week of balloting, both frontrunners, Smith and McAdoo, were set aside for the dark horse candidate John W. Davis after 102 undecided ballots. Eventually, Davis would then suffer an enormous defeat to the already seated president Calvin Coolidge, and Smith would be reelected for a third term as governor of New York State.[158]

After consolidating his rule in Albany as governor of New York for two more terms, Smith would again be a presidential candidate for the Democratic Party during the 1928 presidential election. This time, however, he would come out victorious in the 1928 National Democratic Convention after one ballot, receiving more than the necessary two-thirds of votes.[159] With the support of the Democratic Party, Smith was now the Democratic presidential candidate for the 1928 elections, facing the Republican candidate Herbert Hoover. Once again, the Republican Party remained evasive on the subject of Prohibition during the campaigns leading up to the elections. Hoover, seemingly neither openly wet nor dry, battled against the now extremely wet Smith, who vouched to make substantial modifications to Prohibition.[160] This wet stance of the Democratic Party during the 1928 elections was a big change from Democratic Party politics in 1924. Although one of Smith's stances was indeed to implement an act that would allow light wines and beers, this certainly was not his main objective, in fact, it was explicitly mentioned that Smith did not seek to repeal the amendment in 1924.[161] As such when he was governor of New York State, Smith focused on social reform during the 1924 presidential campaign. His main objective was securing progressive laws to protect citizens, such as improvements to education, labor laws, and affordable housing. When the party's schism in the 1924 National Democratic Convention proved to become insurmountable, Smith indeed dropped Prohibition and Klan issues to secure the two-thirds majority during the last ballots, before Davis won as a dark horse

[156] Chiles, *The Revolution of '28*, 74.
[157] Josephson, *Al Smith: Hero of the Cities*, 310.
[158] Chiles, *The Revolution of '28*, 76.
[159] Josephson, *Al Smith: Hero of the Cities*, 369.
[160] McGirr, *The War on Alcohol*, 170; Josephson, *Al Smith: Hero of the Cities*, 395; Handlin, *Al Smith and His America,* 130.
[161] 'Smith Not To Ask For A Wet Plank; Roosevelt Says New York Delegation Will Not Attack the Volstead Act', *The New York Times* (June 4, 1924).

candidate. During the presidential elections of 1924, Smith was willing to drop the Prohibition issue in order to win in this convention, which means Prohibition was not yet his main concern.[162]

This shift in Smith's campaign to now focus on Prohibition as his main concern during the 1928 presidential election perhaps seems like a logical continuation of his previous stance on the issue, however, two factors prove otherwise. For one, during Smith's second term as governor of New York State, when he repealed the Mullan-Gage Act, this was partly because of a Democrat states-rights standpoint and his connections to Tammany Hall. Smith, as a Democratic politician, did not believe that states should enforce federal legislation such as the Volstead Act, simply because states should be able to have the right to choose to enforce Prohibition locally. By repealing the Mullan-Gage act, Smith did not actively oppose the Eighteenth Amendment, but did make sure that Prohibition enforcement was now solely done by federal funding.[163] Here it is important to note that Smith only opposed enforcement at the state level during his governorship, but did not try to amend federal laws so aggressively until 1928. Furthermore, Prohibition enforcement was seen as an attack on immigrant culture by selectively targeting the increasingly larger urban immigrant groups present in cities like New York. By condemning this approach of federal agents and opposing the amendment publically as a governor, Smith continued to gain support from these immigrant working-class voters and Tammany Hall. All the while being in no position to actually change the amendment or the Volstead Act, he continued to vow for the legalization of beer and light wine during campaigns for governorship.[164] This means that Smith's stance on Prohibition during his governorship was purely ideological and strategical, as he could not change national Prohibition.

The radicalization of Smith's stance towards Prohibition during the 1928 presidential election did indeed have other reasons. For the Democratic Party to effectively counter the Republican dominance in the White House, an effective presidential campaign was needed to regain support from the American population, and for this funding was essential. Like the New York City business owners that supported Smith financially during his 1924's campaign of becoming the Democratic presidential candidate, in 1928, he had found other financial backers. During his third and fourth terms as governor, Smith made new, well-to-do, acquaintances that he would meet with regularly. This inner circle of Smith consisted of numerous extremely wealthy businessmen, among those was William F. Kenny, a construction magnate and a childhood friend of Smith. Kenny was known to throw large extravagant parties in his penthouse for his elite associates, many of whom were leaders of Tammany Hall. It was

[162] Chiles, *The Revolution of '28*, 76.
[163] S. Beienburg, 'Neither Nullification nor Nationalism: The Battle for the States' Rights Middle Ground during Prohibition', *American Political Thought* 7:2 (2018) 271-303, 288-289.
[164] McGirr, *The War on Alcohol*, 101-102; 'Smith, Angry, Meets Prohibition Attack In Elmira Speech; Declares He Stands Firmly on the Democratic Wine and Beer Plank. Denies He Favors Saloons', *The New York Times* (October, 26, 1922).

here, in 1926, that Smith met John J. Raskob, the man that later would become the chairman of the Democratic National Committee (DNC) and who would manage Smith's presidential campaign's administration.[165] It was during this partnership with Raskob, prior to and during the 1928 presidential elections that Smith's stance towards the Eighteenth Amendment radicalized.

John Raskob and Al Smith: An Even More American Story

John Jakob Raskob was born in Lockport, New York in 1879. Both of Raskob's parents were born in America but had Irish and German immigrant parents and were Catholic. His German father and grandfather made a living by making cigars, and this fairly successful venture led to the family being middle-class citizens.[166] But when his father died at a young age, Raskob needed to support his mother by taking on a low wage job as a typist.[167] After working for the Canadian steel manufactory Dominion to get a feeling for the corporate world when he was 21 years old, Raskob tried for a job at DuPont, in Ohio, which was much closer to his family in Lockport. At DuPont, a gunpowder producer, Raskob became the secretary of Pierre du Pont, and within weeks, the two men became not only a splendid business team but also close friends.[168] In the following years, the two men made the DuPont company a force to be reckoned with by changing to the production of dynamite and buying several other chemical companies.[169]

Using his knowledge of investments and corporations that he gathered during his time at Dominion and DuPont, Raskob also ventured into other companies such as General Motors and made sound investments during the first two decades of the twentieth century, which would eventually lead him to become very wealthy.[170] Becoming rich in the world of buying out other companies and raking profits off monopolies was, however, a risky business. Federal regulation such as the Sherman Antitrust Act of 1890 interfered with these ventures of capitalists such as Raskob by ensuring the competitive nature of the free market and restricting monopolization by companies, or the abuse of an already established monopoly position, for example, as DuPont did when it bought out the other chemical companies.[171] Capitalists such as Raskob and Du Pont feared that intrusion by the federal government with regulations such as antitrust acts or, god forbid, amendments to the Constitution, would prove to be a slippery slope to a totalitarian government. For this reason, the Association Against the Prohibition

[165] Josephson, *Al Smith: Hero of the Cities*, 356-357.
[166] Farber, *Everybody Ought to Be Rich,* 11-12.
[167] Josephson, *Al Smith: Hero of the Cities*, 357.
[168] Farber, *Everybody Ought to Be Rich,* 33-35.
[169] Ibid., 56, 68.
[170] Ibid., 124.
[171] M.P. Schinkel and P. LaRocuhe, 'Continental Drift in the Treatment of Dominant Firms: Article 102 TFEU in Contrast to Section 2 Sherman Act' in: R.D. Blair and D. Sokol eds., *The Oxford Handbook of International Antitrust Economics, Volume 2* (New York 2015) 154-187, 155.

Amendment (AAPA) was founded in 1918 by a group of rich influential people including Pierre Du Pont and his brother, Irénée Du Pont, when the ratification process of the Eighteenth Amendment by the states was still in progress.[172] It was not until 1920 after the enactment of the Volstead Act, however, that the AAPA changed into an official organization, and because of this it gained many more members and more funding.[173]

The men of the AAPA disagreed fundamentally with the fact that the Eighteenth Amendment was designed to restrict American citizens, instead of granting them more rights. This was a new development in amendments to the United States Constitution. Previous amendments were included to protect citizens from external threats that would try to make an infringement on their freedoms. And as president Wilson said in his plea to the Congress, this enactment of the Eighteenth Amendment will conflict with personal habits many Americans have, in this case, of course, being able to drink alcohol.[174] Although the men of the AAPA did acknowledge the dangers of alcohol to society, they simply did not agree with the fact that this was more important than the protection of America's citizens from an intrusive federal government.[175] Moreover, like the PP, the AAPA also stated that the Eighteenth Amendment was undemocratic in nature, condemning the political process, and stating that, if the majority of states are in favor of Prohibition, the other states should still be able to decline it as a federal law.[176] Although Raskob was a member of the AAPA from early on, he was not active in the organization until 1926, and by joining the campaign of his new friend Al Smith, Raskob had a political platform to advocate for the repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment.[177] During the period between Raskob and Smith meeting in 1926 and the presidential election it was not only that Smith radicalized on the issue of Prohibition, Raskob did as well. This is shown by the fact that in 1928, Raskob served on the board of the AAPA, in the same year as he became chairman of the DNC.[178]

The fact that the time that Raskob became a leading force in the AAPA coincided with him meeting Al Smith at one of Perry's extravagant parties in New York City did not mean, however, that Raskob was actively searching for a way into national politics and that he used Smith to achieve those goals. This is shown by the fact that the two men actually became good friends even before they engaged in their political bond. Surely, their friendship was quickened and strengthened by the fact that they had similar life stories. Both men had immigrant backgrounds, needed to support their poor families from a young age, but eventually made it far in life. They were self-made men and respected

[172] McGirr, *The War on Alcohol*, 170.
[173] Anderson, *The Politics of Prohibition,* 266.
[174] McGirr, *The War on Alcohol,* 160.
[175] Farber, *Everybody Ought to Be Rich,* 230.
[176] D.E. Kyvig, *Repealing National Prohibition* (Chicago 1979) 81.
[177] Ibid., 229-230.
[178] McGirr, *The War on Alcohol,* 170.

each other for this.[179] They also had in common their religious upbringing and had both remained devout Catholics, Raskob also being a generous supporter of the church, having donated more than a million dollars.[180] And just like Smith was attacked for being a Catholic governor by the KKK, Raskob as well had noticed the emergence of anti-Catholic and anti-immigrant sympathies coming from the racist organization. Even more important, both men felt that the Eighteenth Amendment was a blatant attack on Catholics and Irish and German immigrants in America.[181] The two men had three important factors in common by which their friendship and political alliance were strengthened, they were Catholic, had an immigrant background, and were fiercely opposed to Prohibition.

The Political Friendship

In the two years following their meeting in Kenny's club in late 1926, Raskob became increasingly captivated by national politics. The capitalist used to be a Republican and even donated generously to the campaign of Coolidge when he ran in 1924, as he believed Coolidge to be a firm believer in property rights after he fired many policemen in Boston who participated in an illegal strike, but Raskob's stance on Prohibition forced him towards the Democratic Party and Smith.[182] On first glance, it seems like Raskob and Smith were political opposites, apart from their stance on Prohibition. Despite this, Smith had such faith in his friend that he appointed Raskob in 1928 to be the chairman of the DNC, where he remained seated until 1932.[183] This is because in actuality, the two men differed less than one would think. Factory safety, minimum wage, maximum hours, and laws that sought to protect women and children, that Smith so readily advocated in New York State, were already exercised at ventures that Raskob affiliated with, such as DuPont and General Motors. In fact, since the 1910s they were implemented there to an even higher degree than was necessary by law. Many social issues concerning capitalist ventures that Smith advocated for did not concern Raskob's interests. As a businessman, as far as Smith was concerned, Raskob did not exploit his employees.[184] And this was the reason why the men did not collide; Smith never believed in interfering with capitalism or businesses, he only believed in interfering with human suffering, and this was something on which the devout Raskob could most certainly agree.[185]

In the years between 1926 and 1928, the two men became political partners. They did not differ on issues fundamentally and had a shared resentment towards Prohibition. Smith would

[179] Handlin, *Al Smith and His* America, 128.
[180] Josephson, *Al Smith: Hero of the Cities*, 356.
[181] Handlin, *Al Smith and His* America, 128; Farber, *Everybody Ought to Be Rich,* 33-35.
[182] Farber, *Everybody Ought to Be Rich*, 176, 220.
[183] Handlin, *Al Smith and His* America, 128.
[184] Farber, *Everybody Ought to Be Rich,* 226.
[185] Josephson, *Al Smith: Hero of the Cities*, 288.

politicize the issue of Prohibition on a national scale, and Raskob would help the Democratic Party by funding Smith's campaign immensely by raising funds from other capitalists and himself, totaling an amount of 80 million dollars in today's conversion.[186] Although Raskob was responsible for the biggest increase of funding that the Democratic Party had ever seen that even transcended the established Republic Party's funds, he did not lead Smith's campaign. In fact, it was Belle Moskowitz that was the mastermind behind Smith's social plans and also strategized Smith's 1928 presidential campaign.[187] Indeed, during Smith's years of being the governor of New York State, Moskowitz advised Smith on the many social welfare laws that he implemented. This political partnership continued when Moskowitz also became Smith's lead adviser and strategist during the 1928 presidential campaign on social issues, many of which Franklin D. Roosevelt implemented in his New Deal.[188] However, Smith and Moskowitz did not see eye to eye on the issue of Prohibition, and therefore their co-operation during Smith's governorship and campaigns was one of constant back and forth where they modified each other's views on Prohibition and social issues.[189] Smith's determined stance on Prohibition during his 1928 presidential campaign can therefore not be explained through his campaign manager and advisor Moskowitz and was more likely influenced by other factors, such as his friendship and partnership with Raskob.[190]

As already mentioned, instead of becoming Smith's advisor and strategist, he became a most efficient fundraiser as the chairman of the DNC. However, when Smith was contemplating who to choose for the position of DNC chair, many warned him against appointing Raskob. Smith's advisors such as Moskowitz pleaded to Smith that appointing the Catholic businessmen, so new to the Democratic Party and politics at all, would be a mistake.[191] But Smith did not budge, stating that this was the least that he could do for his good friend, who wanted a public role in politics rather than to work behind the scenes.[192] That Smith appointed Raskob as chairman of the DNC, despite all the negative responses and warnings, showed how much influence Raskob had over Smith, perhaps not in a negative manipulative way, but certainly as a friend and a respected member of his inner circle. Just like Moskowitz, Franklin D. Roosevelt also thought of this decision poorly, he saw that having a Catholic presidential candidate *and* a Catholic chairman of the DNC, would certainly alienate many Southern and Western Democrats.[193] And Roosevelt was right, with Smith and Raskob in power, a new wind was

[186] Chiles, *The Revolution of '28*, 93; McGirr, *The War on Alcohol,* 172.
[187] Perry, *Belle Moskowitz*, 184-213.
[188] P.H. Stuart, 'Political Social Work: Belle Moskowitz Encourages Her Social Work Colleagues to Engage in Political Action', *Journal of Community Practice* 28:2 (2020) 112-120, 118.
[189] Schwartz, 'Review: The Woman as Liberal', 111; Perry, *Belle Moskowitz*, 140-161.
[190] Burner, *The Politics of Provincialism*, 199.
[191] Farber, *Everybody Ought to Be Rich,* 233.
[192] Josephson, *Al Smith: Hero of the Cities*, 370.
[193] Ibid., 370.

blowing through the Democratic Party. And this wind was quickly shifting towards the repeal of Prohibition, indeed alienating many other Democrats.[194]

After the successful nomination as Democratic presidential candidate, the political team of Smith and Raskob was now targeting first and foremost federal control over businesses and the modification of Prohibition, while the social reform plans of Moskowitz fell to the background.[195] This was clear because of the following changes within the Democratic Party. Once Smith became the presidential nominee for the Democratic Party, he did not hold his tongue anymore on the issue of Prohibition to please the Southern and Western dry Democrats. By telegram, he made his stance on the amendment clear, stating that it was the duty of the president to change the condition that so many Americans disagree with, by making 'fundamental changes' to the Volstead Act.[196] All the while Smith publicly spoke out on Prohibition to his fellow party members, Raskob was also swaying the DNC towards repeal as its chairman. In his first speech as chairman he touched upon the topic by stating that it is necessary to make a careful plan in which the constitutional rights of Americans are restored and bootlegging and organized crime are halted, but also in which the evils of the saloon will not return.[197] Stating repeal in a way that it deals with the current impaired status of individual freedom of Americans, but that it must not lead to an intemperate society, he was copying the rhetoric of the AAPA. The AAPA wholeheartedly agrees with the dangers of alcohol to society but argues that Prohibition by federal enforcement is unconstitutional. Furthermore, by mentioning organized crime in cities such as New York, he emphasized the fact that Prohibition also leads to an unruly society.[198] Of course, issues other than Prohibition were also discussed during 1928, such as social welfare, labor rights, and public facilities, which were issues that Hoover and Smith largely did not see eye to eye on.[199] Prohibition was, however, the one issue that caused the biggest upset in urban ethnic voting blocs, and this was mainly because of the racial and religious component of selective Prohibition enforcement.[200] As we now know, Smith and Raskob's campaign against Prohibition was partly ethnically motivated, as they did see the amendment as an attack on their cultural and religious heritage, however, as Raskob was also a board member of the AAPA, his stance was also partly economically motivated.

Raskob's connection with the capitalist world meant that, although at this time during the 1928 elections the Democratic Party was still more inclined to be a party for the working man, critics such

[194] Burner, *The Politics of Provincialism*, 149.
[195] McGirr, *The War on Alcohol,* 171.
[196] Ibid., 170.
[197] Farber, *Everybody Ought to Be Rich,* 236.
[198] Kyvig, *Repealing National Prohibition*, 80-81.
[199] Chiles, *The Revolution of '28*, 72.
[200] McGirr, *The War on Alcohol,* 177.

as Norman Thomas of the Socialist Party said that Smith was using his attack on Prohibition to gain voters for the capitalists of Wall Street.[201] Other opponents of Smith used his Catholicism against him, stating that a vote for Smith was a vote for the Pope in Rome, or simply used his decisiveness on the Prohibition issue to attack him.[202] Eventually Hoover won in many formerly Democratic states. Having lost the South and the West to Hoover, the same areas that Smith had a conflict with during the 1924 National Democratic Convention on the Klan issue, Smith simply stood no chance in the 1928 presidential campaign and he had lost 41% to 58%.[203]

Despite this loss during the 1928 presidential election, the partnership between Smith and Raskob did have far-reaching consequences for the future of the Democratic Party. While losing the former Democratic West and South to the Republican Party, Smith made substantial progress in Northern industrialized cities. In the twelve largest cities of the United States, he had succeeded in gaining the majority of the votes.[204] The next chapter analyzes in what way Smith and Raskob's new Democratic vision on Prohibition influenced these new voting blocs, but also how his opponents used Smith's and Raskob's Catholicism and immigration background to gain votes for Hoover.

[201] Farber, *Everybody Ought to Be Rich,* 237; McGirr, *The War on Alcohol,* 171.
[202] Handlin, *Al Smith and His* America, 132-133.
[203] McGirr, *The War on Alcohol,* 187.
[204] Ibid.*,* 186.

4. The Influence of Smith and Raskob on the 1928 Presidential Election

In the years leading up to the presidential campaign of 1928, Al Smith's stance on Prohibition hardened. Although Smith was already opposed to Prohibition four years earlier, his main goal then was to make an exception for beer and light wines, and even then, he was willing to drop this when he feared losing the nomination. This moderate stance on Prohibition changed when Smith met John Raskob in October of 1926. They quickly became good friends and political partners, which led to Raskob funding the Democratic Party immensely and becoming the chairman of the Democratic National Committee.[205] Under the influence of Raskob, Smith's campaign became increasingly focused on countering federal intrusion in everyday life. The Eighteenth Amendment was one blatant example of such an intrusion, and for this reason, it attracted the attention of both Smith and Raskob. This chapter analyzes the results of the change of attitude toward Prohibition that Smith and Raskob brought about in the Democratic Party's agenda in 1928. Which political shifts were noticeable when Smith's campaign became increasingly adamant on repeal, and how did this influence voters? What other factors were also important during the election, such as Smith's Catholicism, the denunciation of the Ku Klux Klan, Smith's immigration background, and his progressive social plans?

Changing Their Stances

Although both Al Smith and Herbert Hoover remained evasive on Prohibition during the conventions in which they were chosen as nominees for their respective parties, the men spoke out on the issue after they were officially nominated as presidential candidates. Smith wrote in a telegram to the Democratic Governor Dan Moody of Texas, stating his intention of adjusting Prohibition if he would win the presidential race. Moody and his Houston colleagues, who were bone-dry members of the Democratic Party, saw this telegram as fighting words and promptly began an anti-Smith campaign.[206] Smith's provocative telegram to his dry fellow Democratic member was not, however, against the Democratic Party's stance on Prohibition. During the latest Democratic National Convention, the position on Prohibition was that the amendment or an act regarding Prohibition, had to be supported and enforced by the president, but he could still recommend the repeal or modification of an amendment or act.[207] Hoover also remained evasive on Prohibition during the primaries. However, when accepting the Republican nomination, Hoover also spoke out on Prohibition, stating that he

[205] Chiles, *The Revolution of '28*, 93; McGirr, *The War on Alcohol,* 172.
[206] Lichtman, *Prejudice and the Old Politics*, 81.
[207] Ibid., 81.

supported the Eighteenth Amendment and that modification of the Volstead Act undermined the sanctity of the Constitution.[208]

Smith's stance on the issue of Prohibition was one of modification or repeal, which he said he would have recommended to Congress had he become president. Hoover, on the other hand, was in favor of Prohibition and of the strict enforcement of the Volstead act. This meant that the two men were opposites on the issue of Prohibition. Although Smith lost the support of dry Democrats such as Moody when he spoke out on the issue after his nomination, Smith's wet stance did not necessarily mean certain doom for his campaign, in fact, it is more likely that Smith's campaign was destined to fail from the beginning against a strong opponent such as Hoover.[209] Having said this, the main argument here is that the most important consequence of Smith's stance on Prohibition was not him losing to Hoover, but the radical change in voting blocs.[210] To accurately analyze these shifts in voting behavior that started emerging in the 1928's election, the connection between race, religion, immigration, and Prohibition will also be taken into consideration as these four factors have proven to be inseparable. Prohibition, religion, and immigration are what Smith and Raskob had in common, but race eventually proved to be equally important as the Democratic Party also gained a substantial amount of African-American votes in 1928 compared to 1924.[211]

To prove that Raskob's influence on Smith's stance on Prohibition was relevant to the 1928 campaign's changing voting blocs, a connection must be made between the new Democratic voters and opposing Prohibition. In a group of 471 counties, a statistically significant correlation has been found between voting against Prohibition measures during state referenda and voting for Smith in the presidential elections of 1928. In the same counties where people were voting against Prohibition measures, there was a significant increase in the number of people that voted for Smith.[212] However, because of the strong connection between religion, immigration status, and Prohibition that was shown in the preceding chapters, it is also likely that these voters voted for the Democratic Party as a party that represented all these factors that were so closely entangled. It is therefore also possible that these groups voted for the Democratic Party because of a change in leadership by two Catholic men with an immigration background, who also opposed Prohibition because of their belief that the enforcement is an attack on Catholic immigrants, instead of solely because of the party's changing stance on Prohibition. On the other hand, the same is true for Republican voters. Their vote can be influenced by Prohibition, but also because of immigration and religion. For example, many voters

[208] Lawson, *Smugglers, Bootleggers, and Scofflaws*, 98; Lichtman, *Prejudice and the Old Politics*, 81.
[209] Burner, *The Politics of Provincialism*, 180.
[210] McGirr, *The War on Alcohol*, 187.
[211] The percentage of the African-American vote for the Democratic Party grew from 28% in 1924 to 41% in 1928: Burner, *The Politics of Provincialism*, 238-239.
[212] Lichtman, *Prejudice and the Old Politics*, 78.

stated that their Republican vote was because of Smith's anti-Prohibition stance, although their vote was actually motivated by an anti-Catholicism standpoint.[213] Therefore, to partly separate the Prohibition clause from immigration voting blocs, immigrant urban voters should be separated from immigrant rural voters, to show the effect of the selective Prohibition enforcement in the urban areas.

Table 1. The following figures show the changes in the voting behavior of two different urban areas voting for the Democratic Party, comparing the presidential election of 1924, 1928, and 1932:[214]

New York	Jewish vote on Democrats	Irish vote on Democrats	Italian vote on Democrats	German vote on Democrats	Colored vote on Democrats
1924	51%	63%	48%	46%	28%
1928	72%	82%	77%	73%	41%
1932	81%	81%	79%	80%	58%

Chicago	Jewish vote on Democrats	Polish vote on Democrats	German vote on Democrats	Colored vote on Democrats
1924	37%	51%	18%	5%
1928	78%	83%	45%	29%
1932	85%	85%	59%	30%

When ethnic immigrant voting blocs are looked at nationally, and not just in urban centers, Smith's policies did indeed cause an increase of votes by these groups, but only slightly more immigrants voted for Smith than for Hoover. The difference in these votes when extracting only ethnicity, proved to be significantly less influential than issues such as Prohibition or religion.[215] However, taking table 1 in consideration, these urbanized regions differ from the nationwide analysis substantially, because the ethnic voters overwhelmingly voted for Smith in New York and Chicago. This can be explained by the fact that the nationwide analysis does not make a distinction between urbanized and rural counties. The dissimilarity between the national vote of immigrants on Smith compared to the votes in urban regions is, not surprisingly, caused by the fact that these urban areas are also the places where selective enforcement of the Prohibition measures was an everyday occurrence.[216] Indeed, most major cities saw a steep increase in votes for the Democratic Party, but this is most prevalent in East Coast cities, such as New York, Philadelphia, and Boston, but also in

[213] Burner, *The Politics of Provincialism*, 219.
[214] Ibid., 234-241.
[215] Lichtman, *Prejudice and the Old Politics*, 108.
[216] McGirr, *The War on Alcohol*, 187.

Chicago and Detroit. Other major urban areas saw no significant increase, and most West Coast cities, such as Los Angeles and San Francisco, saw a decrease in Democratic votes during the 1928 presidential election.[217] What explains this unbalanced proportion of the East Coast versus the West, is that most Catholic immigrants, such as Italians and Irish, lived in these Northeastern cities.[218] Not only a strong positive correlation has been found in a group of 471 counties, between opposing Prohibition and being Catholic, but also being Jewish, having any immigrant background, and having a lower economic status.[219] Urban, East Coast, areas with many immigrant, working-class, and specifically Catholic or Jewish voters, saw an increase in votes for Smith in 1928, with a positive correlation for opposing Prohibition. This data shows that Smith and Raskob's stance on Prohibition positively influenced Jewish, Catholic, immigrant and, working-class voters in Northeastern urban areas. However, this explanation has two issues, it does not explain the newly gained approval of African-American voters, and it does not take into consideration the effect of Smith's social reform plans on these new voting blocs.

The African-American Vote

The question of the increased African-American vote for Smith during the 1928 presidential election has two explanations, one related to Prohibition enforcement, and one related to race and religion. On the subject of Prohibition, much like immigrants were the target of selective enforcement of the Volstead Act, African-Americans also were targeted more frequently in the rural South. Even though both African-Americans and white Americans were active in the brewing and smuggling business during Prohibition, the poorer African-American did the dirty work of the manufacturing of alcohol. Because these parts of the process were easier to bust than that of the white employer, African-Americans were more frequently targeted by law enforcement than white bootleggers, even though they did not necessarily received a harsher punishment.[220] Not only in the South did law enforcement officials target African-American more often, but this was also the case in other regions and in urban areas. Neighborhoods that housed immigrants were often targeted by raids to round up illegal breweries in cities such as New York and Chicago, but also in predominantly African-American neighborhoods, illegal breweries and bootlegging operations were frequently raided. During the 1920s, African-Americans were, in cities like New York, as alien as their Italian or Jewish neighbor.[221] Because of this, even though they were historically less associated with alcohol than Catholics and

[217] Lichtman, *Prejudice and the Old Politics*, 125-126.
[218] J.J. Hennesey, *American Catholics: A History of the Roman Catholic Community in the United States* (New York 1983) 173.
[219] Lichtman, *Prejudice and the Old Politics*, 140.
[220] McGirr, *The War on Alcohol*, 81.
[221] Josephson, *Al Smith: Hero of the Cities*, 74.

Jews, they suffered as much from selective enforcement as their fellow city dwellers. African-Americans felt targeted, and public opinion turned against Prohibition, even among those who formerly supported the Eighteenth Amendment.[222]

Another way in which Smith succeeded in swaying African-American voters toward the Democratic Party is because he denounced the KKK. The wound that was created during the Democratic National Convention in 1924 on the subject of the Klan, continued to fester in 1928 when anti-Catholic sympathies of the KKK surged again in opposition to Smith's candidacy. From 1926 onwards, when Smith traveled through the country to give speeches for his candidacy, the countryside was scattered with burning crosses along his route.[223] During the 1920s, the KKK started primarily focusing on attacking Catholics and Jews in response to America's growing immigrant population.[224] In part, this new focus on Catholics and Jews manifested itself into also supporting Prohibition, and because of this, the KKK became connected to the Anti-Saloon League and the WCTU, by acting as a separate militant wing that enforces Prohibition.[225] The organizations found common ground in their hatred of Catholics and their support of Prohibition and joined forces with religious Protestant fundamentalists in attacking Smith's campaign through anti-Catholic propaganda by operating mainly in Protestant churches.[226] Although this strategy succeeded in alienating Southern Democrats from Smith's Northeastern ideals, by siding with the KKK, it also alienated many African-Americans from the Republican Party. Then, Hoover alienated African-American voters further by supporting the Lily-white Republicans to gain a middle-class white voter base in the South. To secure the votes of these racist voting blocs, Hoover appointed Colonel Horace Mann to run this Southern campaign, a man connected to the KKK.[227] Not only was opposition to Prohibition and Catholicism now associated with the KKK, but now the Southern branch of the Republican Party also had ties with the Klan. Because of this, Hoover pushed these African-American voting blocs more toward the Democratic Party in the 1928's election, but also during the following election in 1932.[228] This meant that African-Americans did not so much have many reasons to vote for Smith, but had, in fact, more reasons to vote *against* Hoover, because they were appalled by what the Republican Party now stood for.[229]

[222] McGirr, *The War on Alcohol*, 90.
[223] Josephson, *Al Smith: Hero of the Cities*, 381.
[224] Ibid., 310.
[225] McGirr, *The War on Alcohol*, 134.
[226] Burner, *The Politics of Provincialism*, 92.
[227] Lichtman, *Prejudice and the Old Politics*, 152.
[228] Handlin, *Al Smith and His America*, 134.
[229] Lichtman, *Prejudice and the Old Politics*, 159.

The Socioeconomic Stance

The increased popularity of Smith during the 1928 election among immigrants, Catholics, Jews, and African-Americans in urban areas, can also be a response to Belle Moskowitz's plans for social reform. Although selective Prohibition enforcement influenced the life of these groups immensely, they also mainly belonged to the working class, and this meant that Smith's plans for social reform would improve their quality of life greatly. Smith made his progressive intention of increasing public funding to improve schools, parks, and hospitals known among the public by printing thousands of copies of his social plans, and distributing those throughout the country.[230] However, in the rural parts of America, these plans for social reform did not stand a chance against religious bigotry caused by the continuous propaganda of the Prohibition groups, the ministers, and the KKK. In the poorest rural communities, Smith did succeed in gaining some voters, but this did not matter electorally speaking.[231] Analyzes of voters based on income indeed show us that the lower-class voters were much more likely to vote for the Democratic Party than on Hoover, but also, that this was not different in the 1924 election when the Democrat Davis had the same support of these low-income households.[232] Interestingly, however, further analyses showed that well-to-do Jewish and Catholic families were more likely to vote on Hoover than on Smith, which does emphasize the importance of class in these Northeastern urbanized areas.[233] Although Smith's progressive tendencies did increase Democratic votes among working-class Americans in urban centers, they failed to convince the rural working class, and therefore did not yield substantial gains in these rural areas nationally.[234]

Apart from gaining votes among ethnical working-class urban blocs due to their stance on Prohibition and social reform, Raskob and Smith did have another policy that could gain new voters; their big business plan. By advocating for less government intrusion into businesses, they surely counted on gaining votes among middle and upper-class voters, such as the well-to-do immigrant families.[235] Although in reality, the Smith-Raskob alliance would prove to be fruitful for big business, they were fighting against an old stigma that haunted the Democratic Party on an economic level. This stigmatization that the Democratic Party was bad for business was based on three different prejudices. The first is that Democratic politicians would lower tariffs of imported goods, which was believed to be detrimental to domestic trade. This was only based on speculations, however, as no Democratic politician actually lowered such tariffs.[236] The second prejudice was that, because of the Democratic

[230] Chiles, *The Revolution of '28*, 78.
[231] Ibid., 128.
[232] Lichtman, *Prejudice and the Old Politics*, 170-172.
[233] Ibid., 175; Davis, *Jews and Booze,* 147.
[234] Chiles, *The Revolution of '28*, 128.
[235] McGirr, *The War on Alcohol*, 171.
[236] A.F. Burns, 'Ideology of Businessmen and Presidential Elections', *The Southwestern Political and Social Science Quarterly* 10:2 (1929) 230-236, 233.

Party's historical connection with lower social environments and the working class, the Democrats would not promote the interests of businessmen.[237] The third prejudice, as to why businessmen were less likely to vote on a Democratic presidential candidate, was because of the 1896 Democratic candidate William Jennings Bryan's views on the gold standard and his negative depictions of the moneyed class. His stance on abandoning the gold standard caused America's wealthy to contribute to the Republican Party, and then to transfer their prejudices onto the younger generation of upper-class voters.[238] These prejudices meant that businessmen were voting for the Republican nominee during the campaigns of Harding and Coolidge and had no reason to change this status quo, because to them, Smith did not offer a better or safer economic plan than Hoover did.[239]

Because this plan to attract businessmen failed, for the most part, this economic stance was largely negative for the Democratic Party. The other possible outcome would be to lose votes because of their plans favoring big companies, because of the working man's distrust of Wall Street. This sentiment was advocated by the presidential candidate of the Socialist Party, Norman Thomas.[240] Even though in reality, Smith's plans on social reform were much more progressive than those of Hoover, Thomas continued to paint Smith as a false prophet that spoke empty words. Failing to recognize Smith's major influence on social legislation during his four terms as governor of New York State, Thomas succeeded in swaying the Socialist vote away from the Democratic Party, by portraying Smith's social plans for public utilities, such as the two hydroelectricity plants, the Boulder Dam and Muscle Shoals, as not substantially different than that of Hoover.[241] The combined effort of the Socialist Party and the Republican Party in downplaying Smith's progressive tendencies caused the Democratic Party to lose many progressive voters.[242]

The Influence of Religion

Because of the Democratic Party's stance on Prohibition, propagated by Smith and Raskob, many urban voting blocs now moved towards the Democrats. Equally important, however, was the question of religion during the presidential elections of 1928, as Smith and Raskob were both Catholic and Hoover was a Quaker. This proved to be the most important reason why Smith lost many states that were formerly seen as Democratic strongholds to the Republicans in 1928.[243] Although Hoover's campaign did also act on this religious clause to a certain degree, a non-partisan, nationwide slander

[237] Burns, 'Ideology of Businessmen', 234.
[238] Ibid., 234-235.
[239] Lichtman, *Prejudice and the Old Politics*, 195.
[240] McGirr, *The War on Alcohol*, 171.
[241] Chiles, *The Revolution of '28*, 86-87; Burner, *The Politics of Provincialism*, 195.
[242] Ibid., 92.
[243] McGirr, *The War on Alcohol*, 174.

campaign proved much more effective. Organizations such as the Anti-Saloon League, the KKK, and numerous Protestant ministers, printed many pamphlets that attacked Smith's wetness and Catholicism, but also accused him of profiting from gambling and prostitution rings in New York City.[244] The non-partisan organizations acted upon anti-Catholicism that was already deep-rooted into American culture. Catholicism in the United States had connotations with the perceived vulgarity of nuns and pastors, but more relevant to politics, Catholicism was seen as incompatible with democracy, as Catholics were painted as brainless voters who voted for any nominee that was being endorsed by their church or Tammany Hall.[245] The attacks from these organizations differed in style and severity, as the KKK stoop as low as burning crosses to intimidate the Smith campaign and to spread rumors about Smith's wife being alcoholic and vulgar, whereas other parties did not go further than to write articles for newspapers or to preach against Smith in churches. This combined effort did, however, succeed in gaining many voters for the Republican Party.[246]

When opponents such as Bishop James Cannon Jr., of the Methodist Episcopal Church and a leading force in the temperance movement, spoke out on connections between Smith's campaign and the Pope, the old bigotry connection between Catholicism and alcohol was used as an argument against Smith.[247] Being unsubstantiated slander towards Smith's religion for the most part, the fears of Bishop Cannon were perhaps less farfetched when seen as an attack against Raskob. Indeed, Raskob's connections to Rome would seem far more problematic to a hardened Protestant, such as Cannon. This is because, before Raskob had so generously donated towards Smith's presidential campaign, he had also donated more than a million dollars to the Catholic church, which made him a Knight of the Order of Saint Gregory the Great and also had gotten him two audiences with Pope Pius XI.[248] Because of his exorbitant spending on Catholic charities after decades of gaining fortunes from capitalist ventures, Raskob was, on paper, more closely connected to Rome than Smith was.[249] Therefore, when Smith appointed Raskob as chair of the DNC, it strengthened the conviction of the Protestant ministers and men such as Bishop Cannon, that Smith should not become president. The fury of the religious leaders, the temperance organizations, and the KKK, became even more rampant because of Raskob's entry into national politics. Raskob was a Catholic self-made man from an immigrant background that most adamantly opposed Prohibition, he was everything that the

[244] Josephson, *Al Smith: Hero of the Cities*, 381.
[245] Dumenil, 'The Tribal Twenties', 22.
[246] Josephson, *Al Smith: Hero of the Cities*, 382.
[247] Handlin, *Al Smith and His America*, 132-133.
[248] Burner, *The Politics of Provincialism*, 198.
[249] Farber, *Everybody Ought to Be Rich,* 206.

Protestant prohibitionists hated.[250] This bigotry of these parties caused them to create a fierce anti-Smith campaign in Southern states.[251]

The Protestant attack on Smith in the South was led by the Methodist and Baptist churches who were also strongly in favor of Prohibition. By preaching to their followers and by influencing the media, they sought to stir the former Democratic Southern areas into the direction of the Republican Party. During the 1928 presidential election in the South, the Protestant churches became very much politicized, there was hardly a minister who was not campaigning for Hoover.[252] As a leading force in the Methodist Church and the most important figure of the Anti-Saloon League in 1928, Cannon had two reasons for trying his hardest to stop Smith's campaign for presidency; Smith's Catholicism and his wetness.[253] Cannon publicly spoke and wrote articles in which he often attacked Smith's stance on Prohibition and his connections with Tammany Hall. In Cannon's eyes, New York City's Tammany Hall stood for illegal wetness and corruption and was responsible for stealing votes for Smith's campaign in New York state.[254] The issue that anti-Catholicism was often defended by stating that voters were merely favoring Prohibition, was also used by Cannon. When Raskob argued that the 'Anti-Smith Democrats', led by Cannon, were using the Anti-Saloon League's Prohibition stance as a way to cloak their anti-Catholic bigotry, Cannon responded that his grievances with Smith were merely caused by fact that he was a 'wet Tammany Democrat', and that it had nothing to do with religion.[255]

A coalition of temperance organizations, Protestant leaders, and the KKK attacked Smith's campaign in 1928 and succeeded in turning many former democrats to Hoover.[256] In this case, anti-Catholicism and temperance are difficult to separate, analyzing the voting results can, however, again distinguish these two factors. When comparing voting behavior with the 1924 presidential campaign and combining the votes of the Democratic candidate John W. Davis and the third-party candidate Robert M. La Follette, a religious factor is very much noticeable in 1928. This data shows that 11% of Protestants left Davis or La Follette for Hoover, but also that a staggering 28% of Catholics left the Republican Calvin Coolidge for Smith. This can, however, as well be influenced by the selective enforcement of Prohibition in cities, but when comparing Catholic urban voters and rural voters, no significant difference was found. One difference that was noticeable between Northern and Southern states was that the percentages were even higher than 11% and 28% in the North.[257] This even stronger

[250] Hohner, *Prohibition and Politics,* 229.
[251] Burner, *The Politics of Provincialism*, 201.
[252] McGirr, *The War on Alcohol*, 174.
[253] Hohner, *Prohibition and Politics,* 217-218.
[254] Ibid.*,* 218-220.
[255] J. Cannon Jr., 'Causes of Governor Smith's Defeat', *Current History (1916-1940)* 29:3 (1928) 373-377, 375-376; Hohner, *Prohibition and Politics,* 230.
[256] McGirr, *The War on Alcohol*, 174.
[257] Lichtman, *Prejudice and the Old Politics*, 42.

division between religions in the North can be explained by the fierce Southern campaign that could have also swayed some Catholics towards Hoover, or because of the more urbanized areas in the North that harbored Catholic immigrants who were targeted by Prohibition enforcement disproportionately. To gain an even better understanding of how Prohibition and religion influenced each other, the voting behavior of wet and dry Catholics was compared. When these Catholic voters are examined in how they voted in 1928, their anti-Prohibition views did matter somewhat but less than Smith's Catholicism. Although more Catholics stated that their reason to vote for Smith was religiously motivated, still some also voted for Smith because of his anti-Prohibition stance. This does reveal that, although religion was more important in the Catholic vote, Prohibition was also a significant factor.[258]

Smith's Catholicism did cost him many Protestant votes because of the fierce anti-Smith campaign, but as the data from the 471 counties shows, it also made it more likely for Catholics to vote for the Democratic Party. Considering the 28% increase of Catholic votes on Smith compared to 1924's votes on Davis and La Follette, this was a success for the Democratic Party. One more factor to take into consideration however is the immigration background of these Catholic voters. It is estimated that in 1920 America, 85% of the then 18 million Catholics were descendants of immigrants that arrived after 1820. Therefore, the Catholic experience was already very much entangled with the immigrant experience.[259] This then even increased more between 1920 and 1930, when an additional two million Catholic immigrants came to the United States, it was also then that the KKK's crosshairs shifted to Catholicism.[260] Examining the spread of Catholic votes on Smith in 1928, there has not been a significant difference of votes for the Democratic Party when comparing urban and rural Catholic voters.[261] However, when arriving in the United States, most of the Catholic immigrants, apart from some German and Czech farmers, settled in cities in the Northeastern states and around the Great Lakes. This means that in 1928, the majority of Catholics lived in the urbanized Northeastern areas.[262] Therefore, it is fair to say that, although rural Catholics were not more likely to vote for Smith than urban Catholics, because of the sheer number of Catholics in urbanized Northeastern areas, the majority of Catholic voters for Smith came from these cities with selective Prohibition enforcement. Therefore, most of Smith's Catholic voters were also very much influenced by the Prohibition issue, because they live in these urban areas where they were disproportionately targeted.

Both Prohibition and religion proved to be the two main biggest shifts in voting blocs during the 1928 presidential elections. Other factors, such as social issues, immigration, and race were also important as they are all strongly related to each other and religion and Prohibition but were not as

[258] Lichtman, *Prejudice and the Old Politics*, 47-49.
[259] Hennesey, *American Catholics,* 220.
[260] Ibid.*,* 237.
[261] Lichtman, *Prejudice and the Old Politics*, 43.
[262] Hennesey, *American Catholics,* 173.

significant as those two last factors. This is further confirmed by the Democratic Party when Franklin D. Roosevelt held a survey among Democratic politicians in which he asked for the reason for Smith's defeat. 55% stated that his Catholicism proved to be detrimental, and 33% stated that it was Smith's stance on Prohibition.[263] Although religion and Prohibition were given in this survey as two different factors as to why Smith lost to Hoover in 1928, in actuality, this survey fails to understand the complicated dynamics between the two factors and how immigration status also influences and connects these two issues. The fierce anti-Smith campaigns were organized by parties, such as the Anti-Saloon League, Protestant ministers, and the KKK, that were all in favor of Prohibition, but also anti-Catholic or fiercely against immigration.[264] That religion, Prohibition, and immigration were inseparable as factors, was also true, however, for the Americans that voted for Smith. This was not only noticeable when examining the voting data but also, when researching the history of Prohibition in the reasons for adopting the Eighteenth Amendment and the enforcement thereof.

Raskob and Smith's relationship also comprised these three elements; opposing Prohibition, Catholicism, and their immigration background. Because of this, Raskob's influence over Smith caused the voting blocs to separate even more into two camps. The anti-Smith campaign was attacking Smith's view on Prohibition, but that radicalized because of his partnership with Raskob, who was a member of the AAPA. They were also attacking Smith's Catholicism, which was even more highlighted because of Raskob's close ties with the Catholic Church and the Pope.[265] Moreover, the anti-Smith whispering campaigns and threats by burning crosses of the KKK, were primarily sparked by them responding to the influx of immigration, but also because of their hatred of Catholics and them supporting the temperance organizations in providing militant enforcement of Prohibition.[266] In the issues that influenced the elections of 1928, Raskob radicalized the opposition, but also the support of Smith, which brought even more polarization in the voting blocs. Even on issues that turned out to be less detrimental to the campaign, such as Moskowitz's progressive social plans, Raskob angered the Socialist Party because of his success on Wall Street.[267]

Concluding, by choosing Raskob as the chairman of the Democratic National Committee and by following Raskob's views on Prohibition, Smith's created even more incentive among his opponents, such as the Anti-Saloon League, the Methodist and Baptist churches, and the KKK, to launch fierce anti-Smith campaigns, and with that to change many Democratic strongholds to vote for Hoover in the 1928 presidential elections. But Smith and Raskob's opposition to Prohibition, their Catholicism, and their immigrant backgrounds, also created new Democratic voting blocs in Northeastern urbanized

[263] Lichtman, *Prejudice and the Old Politics*, 53.
[264] McGirr, *The War on Alcohol*, 173-174.
[265] Hohner, *Prohibition and Politics*, 229; Burner, *The Politics of Provincialism*, 198-199.
[266] McGirr, *The War on Alcohol*, 134.
[267] Ibid., 171.

areas. The reason that Smith eventually lost the election, was stated by many Democrats to be either because of religious bigotry against Smith's Catholicism, or because of Prohibition. However, because of the strong connection with Catholicism, immigration, and urbanism, and how these three factors are all strongly connected with selective Prohibition enforcement, these factors cannot be separated. Moreover, these factors are all that Raskob and Smith shared, and what made their friendship and political relationship viable, and this exactly shows Raskob's influence on the 1928 presidential election.

Conclusion: The Fall of the Crusaders, Not the Cause

The Happy Warrior and the Knight of the Order of Saint Gregory the Great thought they were destined for greatness as champions of the Roman Catholic Church and their new idea – even representation – of what America had and could become. With this idea, they voyaged on a crusade against the dry forces of America. However, on their way to victory, they encountered an even mightier foe: the same deep-rooted bigotry that succeeded in drying up the United States in the first place, the Protestant Churches of America. The fundamental problem that the White Anglo-Saxon Protestant (WASP) leaders had with the Democratic nomination of Smith, was exactly what Smith and Raskob had in common. In fact, the alliance between Raskob and Smith, which was forged in friendship and smitten in the Democratic Party, was by definition an alloy of three materials, Catholicism, opposition to Prohibition, and immigration, a combination that WASP leaders fought against and tried to control in the United States for decades.

Organizations such as the Anti-Saloon League, which was formed out of a conglomerate of such Protestant Churches, began using anti-immigrant sentiments that rose a few decades before the creation of the ASL in 1891 to vouch for national prohibition. The ASL targeted the saloons in urban areas that were often visited by the newly arrived immigrant groups. This propaganda was a continuation of local prohibition legislatures against these groups that sprouted in counties that housed larger immigrant communities. Eventually, the ASL achieved national prohibition with aggressive lobbying and capitalizing on German hatred during the Great War. The enforcement of the Eighteenth Amendment during the Prohibition Era emphasized this ethnic and religious connotation of Prohibition even further. Raids by Prohibition enforcement began targeting urban areas with many Jewish, Catholic, immigrant, African-American, and working-class households. Now that the saloon was no more, the attack continued on these communities, the people that were perceived by WASP groups as the true threat to the United States all along.

Because this selective enforcement was especially noticeable in urban areas such as New York City, Al Smith and the other Democratic politicians of Tammany Hall saw it as an attack on their voting base and, of course, their immigrant culture. Already known as a wet politician for repealing the Mullan-Gage act, Governor Al Smith of New York failed to gain the Democratic nomination for the presidency in 1924 because of strong opposition from dry Southern states. But Smith returned stronger in 1928, backed by the capitalist John Raskob. However, by joining forces with Raskob, Smith polarized voting blocs even further, radicalizing opposition against, but also support for, the Democratic Party. The Catholic team of Smith and Raskob that strongly opposed Prohibition, alienated former Democratic Southern strongholds because of a fierce attack by the white Protestant Churches, the

temperance organizations, and the KKK. But on the other hand, they also succeeded in gaining a strong Jewish, Catholic, immigrant, African-American, and working-class voting base in urban areas for the Democratic Party – an element that the Democratic Party will maintain, expand, and use to build its broader coalition in 1932.

Smith lost to Hoover in 1928, but their battle was not yet fought entirely, as both men would also try for the 1932 presidential election. However, in this presidential election, it was not Smith, but Franklin D. Roosevelt, who would become the presidential nominee of the Democratic Party to compete against Hoover. To win the primaries, Roosevelt thought he needed to gain the support of the Southern and rural Democrats by avoiding Prohibition and religion, for he realized that Smith's urban alliances had become too strong.[268] However, after Roosevelt's campaign began the 1932's Democratic National Convention by remaining evasive on Prohibition, they quickly realized that this reluctance to speak out on the issue was a mistake. Discussions during the convention revealed that in the last four years, the Southern and Western Democrats now softened in their opposition to repealing the Eighteenth Amendment, with some even supporting repeal entirely.[269] No states were now adamant about keeping Prohibition, so Roosevelt needed to change his stance on the issue. He now declared to repeal the Eighteenth Amendment, as his competitors did as well. This meant that no matter who would win that day, a candidate that vowed to repeal the amendment would emerge victorious.[270]

The Democratic National Convention in 1932 had to choose between four nominees who all vowed to repeal the Eighteenth Amendment, among whom Smith and Roosevelt stood out. This was in stark contrast to 1928 when Smith still had to avoid tackling the Prohibition issue in the primaries. This shift in the Democratic Party's rhetoric was caused by the fact that, in those years, the Great Depression happened, but the alliance between Smith and Raskob had also made such a change possible, for it created a massive voter base that was opposed to Prohibition.[271] The Democratic landslide victory of 1932 by Roosevelt, was what made Smith's plans for the repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment possible. As part of Roosevelt's New Deal, the Twenty-first Amendment, repealing the Eighteenth, was passed by Congress and was ratified on December 5, 1933.[272] But apart from ending Prohibition, the New Deal would also borrow many aspects of Smith's social agenda. Smith's policies in fact will echo throughout Roosevelt's years in many ways, being crucial components of several New

[268] Handlin, *Al Smith and His America*, 142.
[269] Clark, *Deliver Us From Evil*, 204.
[270] McGirr, *The War on Alcohol*, 241-242.
[271] Burner, *The Politics of Provincialism*, 248.
[272] McGirr, *The War on Alcohol*, 246.

Deal programs such as housing, social security, and public works.[273] This meant that in the long term, although the crusade of 1928 was lost, Al Smith and his ally John Raskob won their war for reform.

[273] Chiles, *The Revolution of '28,* 183-184.

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