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MICHIGAN NEWSPAPERS AND THE CANADIAN  
RECIPROCITY AGREEMENT OF 1911

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**MICHIGAN NEWSPAPERS AND THE CANADIAN RECIPROCITY  
AGREEMENT OF 1911**

**By**

**Phillip Charles Buta**

**A THESIS**

**Submitted to  
Michigan State University  
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## **ABSTRACT**

### **MICHIGAN NEWSPAPERS AND THE CANADIAN RECIPROCITY AGREEMENT OF 1911**

**By**

**Phillip C. Buta**

Reciprocity scholars have long argued that American newspapers selfishly proposed and fought for a reciprocity agreement with Canada because it was a means to reduce the price of newsprint. The purpose of this study is to offer a comprehensive review of newspapers in one state, Michigan, in an attempt to evaluate this long held tenet of reciprocity scholarship.

This study is based on a review of over two hundred newspapers, various professional journals, and government documents. Secondary sources also provided significant material on the political situation in Washington.

This thesis has shown that newspapers in Michigan faced the agreement with a complex and often conflicting array of economic, political, social, and regional concerns that led to a diverse newspaper response. The narrow focus of reciprocity scholars on large regional newspapers, ignored the politically animated smaller dailies and weeklies that made up the majority of the American newspaper press.

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For my wife  
Wendy Collins Buta  
whose patience and support knows no bounds

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## Chapter I

### Introduction

The state of Michigan has always maintained a deep interest in Canadian-American relations. This interest was a direct result of the extremely close economic, social, professional, familial, and geographic relationships that have developed between Canada and the Great Lakes region since the colonial era. From the era of the Canadian rebellions in the 1830's to the Free Trade Agreement of 1988, Michigan has directly felt the impact of Canadian-American relations. Agreements and treaties made between London and Washington, and later Ottawa and Washington, often gathered front-page coverage in Michigan newspapers and became focal points of Michigan political debates.

The Canadian Reciprocity Agreement of 1911 illustrated the considerable impact of the relationship between Ottawa and Washington on the state of Michigan. The agreement proposed the elimination and reduction of duties on numerous agricultural and natural articles produced in both countries. In addition, the agreement promised to reduce or eliminate duties on a smaller number of manufactured products. These numerous reductions directly affected a substantial majority of Michigan's agricultural and manufacturing interests. Western Michigan fruit, central Michigan dairy products, and eastern Michigan wheat all exemplified the wide range of agricultural products directly effected. Although primarily an agricultural agreement, Michigan industries directly benefited from certain schedules. For example, Detroit automobile

manufacturers received a lower duty on the export of their product into Canada as a result of the agreement. Grand Rapids furniture manufacturers received their raw material, lumber, free of duty as a result of the agreement.

Reaction to the agreement in Michigan, often diverse and complex, characterized the nation's response. For example, Michigan farming organizations, such as the State Grange, often developed the arguments used by the National Grange in their fight against the agreement in Washington D.C. Michigan dairy farmers echoed the dairy opposition voices coming from states like New York and Vermont. Michigan farm implement manufacturers reflected other midwestern implement manufacturers in their desire for a greater share of the Canadian market. Michigan's responses truly depicted the nation as a whole with its diverse agricultural, natural product, and manufacturing interests.

Michigan newspapers furnish an excellent portrait of the local and regional responses to the agreement in the state. Local newspapers were of great importance to their communities in 1911. For large and small communities, the local organ or organs symbolized the progressive and thriving society that existed within their locality or region. In most cases, local news often received more coverage than national news, unless they overlapped, as the reciprocity agreement demonstrated. As the main sources of local, national, and international news for Michigan citizens, local newspapers provided them with a clearinghouse for information. Information on the anti-reciprocity position of the local grange often appeared in the same issue that discussed the problems encountered



by Prime Minister Sir Wilfred Laurier in selling the agreement to Canada. In addition, Michigan newspapers provided the local citizenry an outlet for their concerns as well as a hub for local debate through their letters to the editor sections. Finally, many, but certainly not all, newspapers attempted to persuade their readers through editorials. A local newspaper that failed to mirror local sentiment often acknowledged these differences and addressed their community's concerns. A local newspaper clearly offers a picture of local and regional responses that a national or even a state organization, politician, or interest can not provide.

Scholars of the Canadian Reciprocity Agreement of 1911 have focused on two areas of study. Some scholars have focused on President William Howard Taft and his Administration. These scholars have questioned the motivating factors behind the Administration's desire for reciprocal relations with Canada. Other reciprocity scholars have focused on the debate over the agreement that engulfed the country for the first half of 1911.

Scholars have focused primarily on President William Howard Taft's reasons for soliciting a potentially controversial agreement. L. Ethan Ellis fired the initial shot over this question when he concluded that "All in all the times were troubled for Mr. Taft. Tariff reform a boomerang, the powerful press hostile, foreign policy under attack, Congress in turmoil, and the country showing signs of revolt, small wonder that he sought a way out of the woods. A path must if possible be opened to the clearing before a November storm closed the way."<sup>1</sup> Ellis deduced that the political climate demanded action

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<sup>1</sup>L. Ethan Ellis, *Reciprocity 1911: A Study in Canadian-American Relations*

from Taft on the troublesome tariff. The agreement provided the necessary response to urban demands for tariff reform with its hoped for benefits of cheaper food. In addition, the promise of free newsprint might have delivered an uneasy press into the Taft fold in time for the upcoming elections. Ellis believed that constant pressure from newspaper publishers dating back to the failure of the Payne-Aldrich Tariff directly led to the Taft Administration's Canadian reciprocity policy.<sup>2</sup>

Ronald Radosh suggested an alternative reason for the Administration's policy. In discounting Ellis' conclusions on the influence of newspaper publishers and the political situation, Radosh surmised:

to view the Taft Administration's desire to achieve a treaty as a result of its succumbing to the pressure of one narrow interest [in this case the newspaper publishers] misses the point. In reality, it was the American manufacturers who were the most vociferous supporters of reciprocity, and their persistent activity on behalf of a treaty was responsible for its emergence as a political issue.<sup>3</sup>

Radosh concluded that American manufacturers, no longer in need of protection from foreign industries and deeply concerned about a saturated American market, aggressively sought the opening of foreign markets to American products. The continued efforts by American manufacturers since the turn of the century propelled the

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(New Haven: Yale University Press, 1939), p. 15.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 28-34, 69-71.

<sup>3</sup>Ronald Radosh, "American Manufacturers, Canadian Reciprocity, And the Origins of the Branch Factory System," *Canadian Association for American Studies Bulletin* 3, no. 1 (spring/summer 1967): p. 26.

issue into national prominence.

Robert E. Hannigan introduced a very different perspective of the Administration's reasons for seeking reciprocity. Hannigan suggested that Ellis and Radosh have offered "...motivations, largely electoral, which are less incorrect than too narrow."<sup>4</sup> In its place Hannigan offered a more complex view, where economic necessity replaced political considerations. "By 1910," he argued that American policymakers,

had come to the conclusion that an integrated North American economic order, organized around the needs of the American industrial system, would be little short of critical to the future prosperity of American business. They wished to block Canada's development into a core state, to guarantee for the American economy a cheap and continuous supply of Canadian natural products, and to secure for American firms the Canadian market for industrial goods.<sup>5</sup>

Hannigan clearly situated the Administration as primarily concerned with developing a continental economy in which the United States dominated. As a result of this continental economic system, the United States would find itself better able to compete in the world economy.

In his review of the Taft reciprocity policy as well as subsequent scholarship, Gordon T. Stewart observed that "Hannigan placed Canada squarely in the midst of American open-door diplomacy of the early twentieth century." But Stewart added,

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<sup>4</sup>Robert E. Hannigan, "Reciprocity 1911: Continentalism and American Weltpolitik," *Diplomatic History* 4 (winter 1980): p. 2.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., pp. 2-3.



A problem arises, however, in treating the Canadian relationship in the same conceptual terms as America's relationship with China or the Latin American states. The stubborn fact remains that Canada's geographical contiguity to and similarity with the United States in economic organization and expectations have given it a special place in U.S. policy formulations.<sup>6</sup>

For Stewart, Hannigan's failure to take into account the unique economic situation between the United States and Canada that already existed in 1910-1911 provided an incomplete portrait of the Taft Administration's policy development. Stewart showed that, despite imperial tariff preferences, American exports to Canada continued to grow in proportion to British exports during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The situation had transcended tariff barriers, to where the United States and Canada inevitably became natural trading partners. In defining the motivating factors behind the Taft Administration's reciprocity program Stewart, sounding strikingly similar to Hannigan, added,

The American goals were to continue to detach Canada from the empire, increase the U.S. share of the Canadian market, gain readier access to Canadian natural resources, and encourage, in general, Canadian integration into a unified North American economy. It was not so much a case of obtaining an open door as of taking the door off its hinges.<sup>7</sup>

Much like the arguments used by Hannigan, Stewart believed that a

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<sup>6</sup>Gordon T. Stewart, "A Special Contiguous Country Economic Regime: An Overview of America's Canadian Policy," *Diplomatic History* 6, no. 4 (fall 1982): p. 340.

<sup>7</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 346.

continental economy was the primary objective of the Administration's reciprocity policy. Stewart clearly placed the motivations beyond the simpler political arguments put forth by Ellis and Radosh. In addition, he argued that the Administration had developed a Canadian policy, distinct from its general open door policy, which took into account the unique relationship between the two countries. These conclusions exhibited an evolution in the study of the Taft Administration's policy goals.

Reciprocity scholars have also turned their attention to the reciprocity debate that occurred throughout the country in the first half of 1911. Again, Ellis laid the groundwork on the subject for subsequent reciprocity scholars. Ellis utilized Congressional debates as well as major regional newspapers and professional journals from around the country in an attempt to define the nation's response. Regrettably, Ellis' study fell short in its comprehensiveness in one critical area, the reaction of the American newspaper publishers to the agreement. In his study of newspaper publishers he failed to take into account two important groups. First, Ellis neglected the newspaper publishers of Michigan in his study. The state of Michigan provided the nation with numerous individuals and organizations that played a key role in the national debate. The absence of the Michigan press left a significant gap in his study. Second, Ellis' study of newspaper publishers' reaction, focused on large regional newspapers, overlooking an untold number of smaller dailies and weeklies. The problem with this limited perspective becomes apparent in his conclusion that, "The press also took a remarkably unanimous stand, regardless of political or sectional

allegiances."<sup>8</sup> A closer examination of the Michigan press undermines Ellis' far-reaching conclusion over press unanimity and shows diversity in newspaper response.

Kendrick A. Clements offered that the American response to the agreement symbolized a mutated form of American expansionism. The administration, as well as many in the American public understood that "reciprocity would promote the development of cultural and economic ties which would also encourage unionism in Canada," in addition, these American unionists "opposed the coercive tactics of annexationism, which they regarded as self-defeating."<sup>9</sup> The concept of unionism placed Canada squarely along the lines set out in Hannigan and Stewart: a unified North American economy with the United States as the predominant power. Clements, like Ellis, simplified the position taken by newspaper publishers when he commented, "...strongly backed by most newspaper publishers (who hoped for cheaper pulp for newsprint), Taft pressed tirelessly for the measure."<sup>10</sup> Apparently Clements did not accept Ellis' view of an "unanimous stand" by the press. In its place Clements offered a much vaguer assertion of newspaper publishers' response that needs clarification.

Steven B. Zamiara introduced a uniquely regional view to reciprocity scholarship that placed Michigan squarely at the forefront of the national debate over the agreement. Zamiara proposed that the influence and ideas of Michigan politicians, organizations,

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<sup>8</sup>Ellis, p. 85. In addition, Ellis' attempts to find trends in newspaper response along chronological lines are not entirely borne out in this author's research.

<sup>9</sup>Kendrick A. Clements, "Manifest Destiny and Canadian Reciprocity in 1911," *Pacific Historical Review* 42 (1973): p. 34.

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 35.

industrialists, and others extended far beyond Michigan into the realm of the national debate that centered in Washington. Through his study of some of the numerous Michigan men who appeared before congressional committees, Zamiara postulated that: "Michigan was...responsible for most of the arguments used by the opponents of reciprocity."<sup>11</sup> In addition, Zamiara placed Michigan pro-reciprocity forces at the forefront of the debate in Washington. But Zamiara, much like Ellis, placed Michigan newspapers in an apparently harmonious position by stating that "...the most vocal supporters of reciprocity were the newspaper publishers, for the agreement would remove the \$4.90 per ton duty on newsprint..."<sup>12</sup> Zamiara's study came up short primarily because of his failure to mention the divisions within the Michigan press. True, many Michigan publishers were some of the most vocal supporters of the agreement, but many others were some of the most vocal opponents of reciprocity as well.

Stewart offered the most recent review of the American public's response to the agreement. His study focused on the strategic thinkers in the Taft Administration. The key figure for Stewart was Charles H. Pepper of the Bureau of Trade Relations in the State Department. Pepper developed and implemented the policy and responded to the criticism from farmers and their organizations.<sup>13</sup> The arguments developed by Pepper became the main source of material used by the pro-reciprocity publishers, politicians, and industrialists throughout the debate of 1911. Stewart

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<sup>11</sup>Stephen B. Zamiara, "Michigan and Canadian Reciprocity: 1911," *Michigan Academician* 2, no. 3 (winter 1970): pp. 101-102.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., p. 100.

<sup>13</sup>Gordon T. Stewart, *The American Response to Canada Since 1776* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1992), pp. 105-113.



regrettably made little mention of the press and their stand during the first half of 1911.

A reassessment of press reaction seems necessary. Borrowing a quote from Robert E. Hannigan, the conclusions reached by reciprocity scholars on press reaction "...are less incorrect than too narrow." Certainly the possibility of a lower cost for newsprint would appeal to any newspaper publisher. But concerns over the local economy or the political affiliation of a certain publisher unquestionably influenced the stand taken by a local newspaper. By revealing that 1 in 4 Michigan newspapers that took a stand opposed the agreement, this study will suggest that anti-reciprocity newspapers were a more vocal and significant force than most reciprocity scholars have concluded. Ellis, the only reciprocity scholar to detail newspaper response, studied only a small portion of the American press. In his limited study of the nation's urban dailies, Ellis repeatedly commented on the rarity of anti-reciprocity newspapers, even though he outlined a contemporary poll that seemingly countered his claims over newspaper response.<sup>14</sup> Radosh and Clements joined Ellis in concentrating on large daily newspapers and national forces like the American Newspaper Publishers

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<sup>14</sup>In his study of the dailies' response to the agreement during the period of February 9-March 4, 1911 Ellis looked at forty-four daily newspapers throughout the country and commented that three of these newspapers opposed the agreement. The contemporary poll from the *Chicago Tribune* that Ellis used showed a striking similarity with the conclusions of this author. It showed that in twenty-two western and central states, only seventy-three per cent of newspapers that responded, favored the agreement. Ellis had a tendency to define newspaper response solely on the arguments presented by urban dailies. Ellis also described another poll taken in Vermont by the *Free Press* of Burlington. This poll more closely resembled Ellis' conclusions by revealing that eighty-seven per cent of the newspapers that took a position on the agreement, favored it. Ellis, pp. 85-87, 108-109, 136-139.

Association (ANPA). Ellis even pointed out that the ANPA received its financial support from "...slightly over three hundred of the country's two thousand dailies."<sup>15</sup> This hardly constituted an authoritative view of the countless other smaller dailies and weeklies that did not get involved in the ANPA's activities. This paper will include these "lesser" newspapers from a state deeply effected by the agreement and come to a different, broader view.

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<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 30.

## Chapter II

### The Michigan Connection 1846 - 1911

The origin of formal economic relations between the United States and Canada can be traced to the repeal of the British Corn Laws in 1846.<sup>16</sup> This action by the British government eliminated the preferential treatment Canadian agricultural and natural products received in the British market. Canada found itself in need of a new market for its surplus. The United States, with its growing demand for natural and agricultural products coupled with its geographical proximity, offered the most likely alternative market. Preliminary negotiations, begun as early as 1846, failed to lead to any agreement. Repeated attempts by Canadian and British officials met with continued rebuke in Washington by a Congress that wanted more than a free exchange of natural and agricultural products. By 1853 American interest in opening the St. Lawrence to American commerce coupled with growing concerns over the rights of American fishermen off the Canadian coastline, provided the American congress the impetus to give Canada access to the American market. The treaty approved by the United States Senate in August 1854, satisfied these concerns and gave the Canadians the free access to the American market which they had desired since 1846.

During the treaty's tenure, trade between the two countries

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<sup>16</sup>Many of the details of this summary of 19th century Canadian-American relations originated from the United States Tariff Commission's, *Reciprocity and Commercial Treaties* (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1919), pp. 21-24. Also David Drury, "Michigan's View of the Canadian Reciprocity Treaty, 1854-1866" (master's thesis, Michigan State University, 1959), pp. 1-29.

increased substantially and both enjoyed a fair amount of economic prosperity.<sup>17</sup> But by 1863, the United States began to seriously consider abrogating the treaty. Numerous developments since the treaty's inception created a climate in the United States which deeply opposed reciprocal relations with Canada. First, in order to raise revenues in 1858, Canada raised numerous duties on American goods not on the free list. Many in the American government saw this as a snub to the spirit of the treaty, that being the increase in trade between the United States and Canada. Second, the Union, much like the Canadian government, needed to raise revenues. These revenues went to pay for the growing costs of the war with the Confederacy. As a result, protectionism gained a foothold and quickly spread throughout the Union. Finally, Canadian sentiment toward the Confederacy's cause led to much resentment of Canada and provided another salvo against the treaty. By March 1865, the United States gave the one year notice for termination as required by the terms of the treaty of 1854.

Michigan interest in a closer Canadian-American relationship quickly coalesced shortly after becoming a state. During the mid-nineteenth century, Michigan farmers joined state Democrats in support of a closer relationship with Canada.<sup>18</sup> Farmers considered that higher tariffs benefitted only industrialists and restricted their access to manufactured goods. In addition, the opening of the St.

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<sup>17</sup>Reciprocity scholars and contemporaries debated the agreement's impact on both nations. Many scholars have pointed out that numerous factors like the Crimean War, population expansion in both countries, and the American Civil War exerted more influence than the treaty on both economies. See Drury, pp. 9-21 and U.S. Tariff Commission, p. 22.

<sup>18</sup>Drury, pp. 30-47.

Lawrence to Michigan farmers promised an alternative and possibly cheaper route to the industrialized eastern seaboard. During the duration of the treaty the Republican rise to power led to a radical change in the state's view of the agreement. Michigan farmers, supporters of the treaty before its enactment, now opposed the agreement because of the perceived detrimental effects on Michigan agriculture.<sup>19</sup> Michigan wheat, wool, and barley farmers felt that prices for their products had dramatically fallen as a direct result of the increased Canadian competition. Michigan farmers, joined by Michigan lumbermen, formed a significant opposition to a renewal of Canadian reciprocity that would once again resurface with the agreement of 1911.

For thirty years after the abrogation of the treaty, successive Canadian governments repeatedly attempted to reestablish reciprocal ties, but met with continued rejection from an unresponsive United States. American indifference and hostility to these overtures ushered Canada into the "National Policy." The "National Policy" planned to build Canadian self-sufficiency through the development of the western provinces and as a result provide a market for manufacturing interests in Quebec and Ontario. In the words of Prime Minister John A. McDonald they attempted to "go it alone." This entailed an elaborate rail transportation system linking the western provinces to the rest of Canada. This also meant the raising of tariffs to protect infant industries in the eastern provinces from foreign, mostly American, competition.

Sir Wilfred Laurier's ascension to power in 1896 led to the

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<sup>19</sup>Ibid., pp. 51-57.

continuation and expansion of the "National Policy" goals of developing domestic industry and agriculture. Laurier, frustrated with continued American obstinacy, sought another foreign market for Canada's growing agricultural and manufacturing exports. The result of this search came in the form of a return to the imperial preference. Laurier, commenting on this shift in Canadian policy, bluntly reported, "There will be no more pilgrimages to Washington. We are turning our hopes to the old motherland."<sup>20</sup> Tired of continued rejection, the Canadian government would no longer take the initiative in seeking out reciprocal relations with the United States.

The rise of protectionism in American society after the Civil War manifested itself in the success of the Republican party. Through Republican legislation like the Dingley Act of 1897, tariffs continued to rise on foreign goods. The popularity of protecting American industry from cheaper European products appealed to many urban Americans concerned about job security.

The beginning of the twentieth century brought a gradual shift in the protectionist views of the American public. The rising cost of living for those in urban areas coupled with concerns over a predicted shortage of natural and agricultural products, led to a rethinking by the American public of the Republican tariff policy. This policy came under increased attack from a Democratic party that found increased electoral success in the rapidly growing cities of the Northeast and Midwest. The Republican party grew deeply divided on how to properly implement the tariff. Standpatters in

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<sup>20</sup>Ellis, p. 5.

Congress held to the stringent Republican protectionist doctrine of the late nineteenth century. Progressive or Insurgent Republicans in Congress held that the protectionist system needed to adapt to current public demands. These Republicans considered that the failure of standpatters to respond to the public's demand for tariff reform promised continued Democratic successes at the polls.

With his election to the presidency in 1908, William Howard Taft found himself caught in the middle of this quagmire. During the campaign, Taft, a Republican, understood the political situation and pledged to reduce the excessive tariff rates that had piled up during past Republican administrations. The first opportunity for Taft to fulfill his campaign pledge came in March 1909 with the introduction of the Payne-Aldrich tariff to the nation.

The bill that passed the House of Representatives upheld many of the ideals inherent in Taft's pledges for tariff revision. Duty reductions in coal, hides, iron ore, wood pulp, lumber, newsprint, and numerous other natural products, promised to prove popular to various sections of the population. The bill then encountered a Senate less inclined to the ideal of tariff reform. The Senate left many of the reductions from the House bill absent from the final Senate bill. Taft, realizing that it was the best bill he could get from a standpat Senate, signed it into law and proclaimed it "...the best tariff measure ever passed by a Republican Congress, and hence the best tariff bill the people have ever known."<sup>21</sup> It quickly became apparent that Taft misjudged the public's response to the bill. Supported by many in the American public, tariff reform

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<sup>21</sup>Ibid., p. 13.

Republicans and free trade Democrats argued that the final version of the tariff act failed to properly address the growing crisis in America, namely the high cost of living.

The Payne-Aldrich Tariff of 1909 directly led to a trade conflict with Canada. New provisions in the act authorized the President to penalize a country that might discriminate against American goods. An agreement made by Canada, with France, offered tariff reductions on certain products entering Canada in return for lower duties in the French market. Through the interpretation of the new tariff laws of the United States these reductions were discriminatory and a trade war with Canada appeared imminent. Against this backdrop Secretary of State Philander Chase Knox sent a delegation to Ottawa to prevent a rift in Canadian-American trade relations. Negotiations in March 1910 resolved the tariff dispute and opened up the opportunity to discuss reciprocal relations. The Administration, now aware of the public's dissatisfaction with the Payne-Aldrich Tariff, attempted to once again tread in the waters of tariff reform.

The Taft Administration's keen interest in reciprocity did not find an apparent match in the Laurier government. Although interested in gaining the support of farmers in the western provinces, who sought free access to the huge American grain market, Laurier realized that the successful National Policy, based on self-sufficiency, also proved immensely popular in the industrialized east. The National Policy, born out of the American rejection of the 1854 treaty, led to a rise in British nationalism in the eastern provinces. Laurier, convinced that a limited agreement on natural and agricultural products could give him the western farmers' vote



without alienating the imperialist, industrialized east, agreed to enter negotiations in November 1910.

During the negotiations with Canadian officials the American representatives had a clear set of objectives. First, the Taft Administration, deeply concerned with Canada's drift toward a closer relationship with the British Empire, sought to cut imperial ties and reintegrate Canada into the continental economy. Second, in this integrated economy, Canada would provide the badly needed raw materials for American industry as well as a nearby source of agricultural surplus that would stabilize food prices in the United States. Third, even though the American delegation realized the political difficulties Laurier might face from eastern manufacturers, they sought reductions on a smaller number of manufactured items to avoid opposition from agricultural groups on the ground that the agreement unfairly discriminated against their interests. The result of two months of negotiations came in the form of an agreement in January 1911.

Michigan opened the year 1911 in the midst of significant changes in the social, economic, and political fabric of the state. The Michigan of 1911 illustrated the nation's shift from a rural to an urban society. The 1910 census of Michigan considered the rural population as slightly larger than the urban population.<sup>22</sup> By 1911, many in the state believed that the situation had reversed, giving the urban population the slight edge. Flint, with a population of

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<sup>22</sup>Statistics from the 1910 census come from two sources: *Deckerville Recorder*, April 28, 1911, p.4 and Frederick C. Martindale, Secretary of State, comp., *Michigan Official Directory and Legislative Manual For the Years 1911-1912*, pp. 280-283, 619-716.

approximately 13,000 in 1900, exemplified this shift to an urban society when it grew to more than 38,000 in 1910. In nine other Michigan cities the population exceeded 20,000 and in many of these cases they encountered the same phenomenal growth patterns over ten years as Flint. This massive growth of Michigan urban centers translated into increased economic and political might.

Michigan symbolized the growing importance of the Midwest's manufacturing and agricultural resources to the nation at large. For example, at the beginning of 1911 the automobile industry of Michigan consisted of forty-five companies in ten cities. This important industry clearly placed Michigan as the leading state for automobile manufacturing with a yearly output of 315,250 automobiles. Pulp and paper manufacturers were another significant industry in the state of Michigan. In 1911 they maintained thirty-nine mills spread out among twenty-four cities. In addition, manufacturers of agricultural implements, cement, cereals, furniture as well as many others, comprised an integral part of the Michigan economy.

Michigan agricultural interests maintained a strong political and economic influence after their decline from majority status. Through their representative organizations, Michigan farmers influenced the positions taken by many in the state legislature as well as the United States Congress. The Michigan State Grange, Michigan Farmer's Alliance, Ancient Order of Gleaners as well as other organizations, represented a farming population whose products were often highly in demand. Products like western Michigan fruit found a lucrative market in Chicago. Corn and wheat

from the southern lower peninsula and sugar beets, beans, and other grains from the thumb were all significant agricultural products sent to American and world markets

The Civil War had altered Michigan from a traditionally Democratic state to a Republican stronghold. Michigan Republicans maintained this dominance for the next forty years through their uniformity on issues like the tariff. By 1911 the state Republican party had already begun to experience the forces that had overtaken the national party. In other words, progressive, tariff reform minded Republicans replaced the more conservative, stand-pat elements of the party. The elections of 1910 illustrated this shift within the Michigan Republican party. Progressive Republicans, Chase S. Osborn and Charles E. Townsend, replaced conservative Republicans as governor and as a United States Senator respectively. Their predecessors, Fred W. Warner and Julius C. Burrows, opposed tariff reform measures and would come out against the agreement of 1911. The elections of 1910 also resulted in the addition of two Democrats to represent Detroit and Grand Rapids to the United States House of Representatives. Previously the twelve members of the Michigan delegation were Republicans. The state Republican party discovered that a rift, much like the chasms among the national Republicans, had developed within the party and this often translated into increased success for the Democratic party.

### Chapter III

#### The Reciprocity Debate of 1911

In a message to Congress on January 26, 1911, William Howard Taft officially presented the Canadian Reciprocity Agreement to the American public. This message outlined Taft's reasons for seeking reciprocity with Canada as well as encouraged Congress to act quickly on the agreement:

We have reached a stage in our development that calls for a statesmanlike and broad view of our future economic status and its requirements. We have drawn upon our natural resources in such a way as to invite attention to their necessary limit...A farsighted policy requires that if we can enlarge our supply of natural resources, and especially food products and the necessities of life...we should take steps to do so now...a source of [food] supply as near as Canada would certainly help to prevent speculative fluctuations, would steady local price movements, and would postpone the effect of a further world increase in the price of leading commodities entering into the cost of living.<sup>23</sup>

Taft's statements and actions on reciprocity with Canada laid the groundwork for a debate over reciprocity and the Republican tariff. For the next six months the country found itself embroiled in a debate that engulfed the nation.

The immediate reaction from Democratic and Republican leaders mirrored the relatively quiet wariness of many of their constituents. Congressman Edward L. Hamilton of Michigan embodied this cautious approach: "I have so far had but little

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<sup>23</sup>U.S. Congress. *Canadian Reciprocity Special Message of the President of the United States Transmitted to the Two Houses of Congress January 26, 1911*. 61st Cong., 3rd sess., 1911. S. Doc. 84, pp. v-vii.

expression from Michigan. Before acting I desire full information and am taking measures to obtain as complete expression as possible."<sup>24</sup> For Hamilton this meant writing numerous letters to influential constituents in the fourth district asking for their opinions of the agreement. In a similar fashion, congressman Francis Henry Dodds asked for comments from local businessmen and newspapers in the eleventh district. In a few instances, newspapers in some of the major cities in Michigan provided politicians with some immediate feedback. The *Detroit Free-Press* declared Taft's plan "A surprisingly good agreement..." The *Free-Press* added, "Don't reject...our best customers and friends, the Canadians...or they will reject us."<sup>25</sup> The *Evening Press* of Grand Rapids joyfully declared that "the prospect for freer trade relations between the two countries and an ultimate decrease in the cost of living seems to be in sight."<sup>26</sup> These words of hope echoed those used by Taft in his special message of January 26. In most cases though, politicians, newspapers, and organizations took the first five days after the agreement's introduction to formulate their positions.

The month of February signified an end to the relative calm that initially greeted the agreement. Newspapers, farming organizations, and protectionist Republicans in Congress began a vocal debate that continued nearly unabated for the next five months. To build support for the agreement, President Taft set out on a tour of midwestern states making notable stops in Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois. During the tour, Taft reiterated many of the arguments

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<sup>24</sup>*The Calumet News*, January 30, 1911, p. 1.

<sup>25</sup>*Detroit Free Press*, January 27, 1911, p. 4.

<sup>26</sup>*The Evening News* (Grand Rapids), January 27, 1911, p. 4.

for reciprocity that he made in his message to Congress. In addition, he addressed the mounting concerns coming from midwestern farmers. On February 10, at the National Corn Exposition in Columbus, Ohio, Taft attempted to defuse agricultural opposition to the agreement:

In respect to corn the American farmer is king and will remain so...[the] sending of any part of Canada's surplus [wheat] through our country...will not affect the price of wheat for our farmers...Anyone who would initiate a policy to injure the farmer has much to answer for before the bar of public opinion. Let this agreement be adopted and in six months the farmers on the border who now have fears will rejoice...The price of wheat...is fixed by what all wheat exporting countries, including the United States and Canada, can get for their surplus in Liverpool.<sup>27</sup>

The midwestern farmer would not suffer any harm in the implementation of the Canadian Reciprocity Agreement. For the corn farmer, Canadians simply could not compete with American production. For wheat farmers, the price for surplus wheat from both the United States and Canada depended on the prices set in Liverpool. Therefore an influx of Canadian wheat into the United States for milling or reexport would not effect the prices paid to American farmers. The next day, in a speech to the Illinois Legislature in Springfield, Taft reiterated his concerns over the American supply of natural and agricultural products:

The increase of our population and the reduction of our farm exports are going on so rapidly that unless a great

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<sup>27</sup>*The Adrian Daily Telegram*, February 11, 1911, p. 1.

increase in production is brought about within our borders we shall soon consume all that we raise and shall need a source of food supply like that of Canada, right at our doors. We shall be blind, indeed if we reject the golden opportunity to add to the strength and vitality of our country by thus increasing our self-supporting capacity...now Canada is in the mood! She is at the parting of the ways! Shall she be an isolated country, as much separated from us as if she were across an ocean or shall her people and our people profit by the proximity that our geography furnishes.<sup>28</sup>

Within this context, Taft envisioned Canada as the part of the continental economy providing the natural and agricultural products needed for the rapidly industrializing United States. Canada simply was a natural extension of the American economy.

The House of Representatives acted quickly on the proposed agreement, passing it after only two days of debate on February 14, by a vote of 221 to 92. The speed of the agreement's passage reflected the shift in the public's response to the tariff. Many Republicans joined Democrats in the belief that some degree of tariff revision had become a necessity. Many Michigan representatives, concerned over the political repercussions of taking a firm position on the agreement, decided not to vote. Of the twelve Michigan congressmen, seven did not vote, two favored the agreement, and three opposed. Michigan newspapers of all political persuasions viewed this relative lack of response by the Michigan delegation as appalling. "As we observed yesterday," explained the *Adrian Daily Telegram*, "the Michigan delegation was conspicuous for its absence...Reciprocity was by far the most important issue voted upon

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<sup>28</sup>William Howard Taft Papers, Series 9C, Reel 579, pp. 9-10.

in Washington since the Payne bill...And Michigan is more directly interested than any other border state."<sup>29</sup> The anti-reciprocity *Midland Republican*, forgiving the absence of its own Congressman Loud, considered that "...it does appear strange that so large a number, more than half the Michigan delegation, should be absent."<sup>30</sup> The pro-reciprocity *Manistee Daily News* complained about "...our weak kneed Michigan congressmen, who crawl under the sofa when there is a vote on matters affecting their constituents."<sup>31</sup> In the opinion of these and other newspapers, the potentially huge impact of the agreement on the state of Michigan should have translated into a stronger response by the Michigan delegation.

The agreement received much different treatment in the Senate. The opening of Senate hearings on February 20 left thirteen days until the session expired. The Senate, already occupied with other significant legislative and procedural duties, determined that action on reciprocity during the third session was highly improbable. In addition to these time constraints, many stand-pat Republican senators, including those from Michigan, sidestepped the agreement because they sought to avoid a confrontation with the President. On March 4 the sixty-first congress came to a close without voting on reciprocity. On that same day Taft called for the sixty-second congress to have an extraordinary session on April 4, specifically for the passage of the reciprocity agreement.

An interesting debate took place on the campus of Michigan

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<sup>29</sup>*The Adrian Daily Telegram*, February 16, 1911, p. 4.

<sup>30</sup>*The Midland Republican*, February 24, 1911, p. 4.

<sup>31</sup>*The Manistee Daily News*, Febrary 28, 1911, p. 2.



Agricultural College on February 22.<sup>32</sup> The debate, "Why is the Country Divided: The Reciprocity Question," consisted of six members of the College's faculty and administration presenting their arguments before judges and an audience of students. The judges promised to give a verdict on the agreement's merits after the debate. The debate turned into quite a spectacle. Students filled the armory in half an hour and many stood for the debate. The M.A.C. Band played before and after the debate, creating an enthusiastic and patriotic crowd on Washington's Birthday. The negative team, led by M.A.C. President J.L. Snyder, focused their arguments primarily on the possible injury to the Michigan farmer. They concluded that a flood of Canadian agricultural products would lead to lower prices for Michigan farmers' goods. In addition, the agreement unfairly singled out farmers and made little reductions on manufactured items. The affirmative team, consisting of three of the college's faculty, focused their arguments on the consumer. Professor W.O. Hendrick argued that "It is a question...in the interests of the whole people and not for one class only. The farmer should not be allowed to monopolize our markets."<sup>33</sup> The judges considered the debaters equally convincing and turned to the audience for a decision. The audience also considered both sides convincing and divided fairly evenly on the final verdict.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>32</sup>The following description of the campus debate comes from the two weekly campus newspapers *The Holcad*, February 27, 1911, p. 14 and *The M.A.C. Record*, February 28, 1911, p. 2.

<sup>33</sup>*The M.A.C. Record*, February 28, 1911, p. 2.

<sup>34</sup>Each of the two campus papers took a different view of the final audience results. The student-run, *The Holcad*, argued that the show of hands from the audience proved inconclusive and inaccurate. But a final decision, most likely by the judges, gave victory to the affirmative team. *The M.A.C. Record*,

On March 1 and 2 the interest of Michigan turned to the Democratic and Republican state conventions. The Democrats convened on March 1 in Muskegon and as the *Muskegon News Chronicle* pointed out, delegates and observers quickly realized the most significant issue facing the convention: "That Canadian reciprocity would be the big bone of controversy was indicated in the hotel corridor discussions previous to the district caucusses [*sic*]...The battle over reciprocity, it became apparent, was largely one between the agricultural districts and the cities."<sup>35</sup> The agricultural delegates' anti-reciprocity arguments received little consideration from the urban delegates who commanded the convention. As a result, the convention approved of reciprocity in its platform:

Having been repudiated by the people throughout the country at the last election, the administration is now seeking to escape from its fatally wrong position on the tariff question by a movement to establish a reciprocity treaty with Canada. We recognize the merit embodied in the true principle of reciprocity properly applied with a concurrent downward revision of the tariff and we commend the statesmanship of the democratic representatives in congress who rose above partisanship in connection with the pending treaty.<sup>36</sup>

The Republican convention that assembled the next day in Saginaw also found delegates deeply divided on the reciprocity issue. The

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published by the college, estimated that two-thirds of the audience voted. Of that two-thirds, 230 voted for the affirmative and 291 voted for the negative, giving the negative a margin of fifty-six per cent to forty-four per cent. The reasons for this difference are not clear, but possibly the college run paper, run by an anti-reciprocity administration, may have slanted the final results. Likewise, the student-run paper may have been heavily influenced by a faculty that was pro-reciprocity.

<sup>35</sup>*Muskegon News Chronicle*, March 1, 1911, p. 1.

<sup>36</sup>*Ibid.*, March 2, 1911, p. 2.

Michigan press considered these divisions within the Republican party as somewhat similar to those encountered by the Democrats, but acknowledged that they were on a much larger scale. The *News-Palladium* of Benton Harbor echoed a familiar observation when it commented on the Republican convention: "Reciprocity overshadowed all other questions relating to the platform. Farmer delegates were generally counted as opposed to the Canadian agreement and the city delegates in favor of it." The *News-Palladium* continued, "Both at Muskegon and Saginaw the same question caused the only real discussion - the reciprocity plank."<sup>37</sup> Michigan politicians' overwhelming concern for reciprocity clearly showed the perceived impact of the agreement on the Michigan populace. In Saginaw, Governor Osborn presented an impassioned speech in support of the agreement. Faced with a strong desire by most delegates to avoid defining the position of the state party, Osborn declared, "It is impossible for this convention to indorse President Taft and ignore the reciprocity agreement with Canada, the greatest of his works."<sup>38</sup> But Osborn faced a convention overwhelmingly concerned with the opposition of Republican farmers, a key group in the Republican fold. The final platform praised Taft but intentionally avoided any reference to reciprocity.

The end of the sixty-first congress on March 4 brought representatives and senators back to Michigan, where they entered into the continuing debate that had engrossed the entire state. The voices that continued to grow in volume came from the opposition,

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<sup>37</sup>*The News-Palladium* (Benton Harbor), March 2, 1911, p. 1 and March 4, 1911, p. 4.

<sup>38</sup>*Detroit Free Press*, March 3, 1911, p. 1.

most notably from the grange. Local granges continued to discuss the issue and sent numerous resolutions opposing the agreement to their representatives. Grange leaders, most notably N.P. Hull, Master of the Michigan State Grange, canvassed the state on speaking tours to strengthen and mobilize the opposition. One interesting discussion on reciprocity that took place during the recess came from former Congressman and Senator-elect Charles E. Townsend. Townsend proposed an amendment to the reciprocity agreement that would encourage Canadian and American officials to confer on the possibility of developing a Great Lakes to ocean waterway. Governor Osborn strongly supported the Townsend plan: "The development and improvement of the St. Lawrence basin is as important to the people who occupy the North American continent as is the Missouri basin."<sup>39</sup> The proposal apparently offered Townsend a defense against the anti-reciprocity farmers of Michigan. The possibility of lower transportation costs to the eastern seaboard and Europe would definitely appeal to the state's farmers. Townsend proclaimed that "For every dollar the farmers lose by reciprocity, they would gain ten through this project...It will bring ocean competition into the heart of the American continent."<sup>40</sup> At the end of the month Townsend brought this message to the Zach Chandler Republican club in Lansing. The farmers present showed surprisingly little concern for this issue and diverted him away from the subject in order to get to the agreement's proposed duty reductions on agricultural products. As this event clearly showed, Townsend's attempt to placate the

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<sup>39</sup>*St. Joseph Evening Herald*, March 6, 1911, p. 1.

<sup>40</sup>*The Port Huron Times Herald*, March 3, 1911, p. 1.

farmer failed. The Michigan State Grange successfully developed an organized movement that was unwavering in its opposition to the agreement

The beginning of the extraordinary session of the sixty-second Congress signaled a new direction for that body, one that involved tariff revision. The elections of 1910 installed a fundamentally different Congress from the sixty-first. The House of Representatives had a Democratic majority for the first time since 1895. The Senate came under the increased influence of tariff reform minded Republicans. Taft found more allies for reciprocity, but a vocal majority of the Republican party remained opposed to the agreement.

Much like the previous session, the House acted quickly on the measure, passing it in three weeks by a vote of 268 to 89. The Democrats in the House, eager to move on to a more general revision of the tariff, gladly led the way to the agreement's passage. Unlike the previous session, the entire Michigan delegation voted on the agreement, with four supporting the agreement and eight opposed. The latter certainly feared the political effect of voting for an agreement which most Michigan farmers opposed. John M.C. Smith, representing the third district, declared his concerns for the farmer and his vote before the House:

No one has undertaken to say how it will be of benefit to the American farmer, and that task, I apprehend, will not be demonstrated upon the floor of this Chamber. It is not satisfactory to them to say they will not be injured. The question is, How will they be benefited? Do you think that by admitting the farm products free into their market you will benefit them?...I hold in my hand more

than 40 telegrams, received yesterday and to-day, all protesting against the enactment of this proposed treaty into law...the majority are sent by farmers and granges.<sup>41</sup>

The two Michigan Democratic congressmen, representing Detroit and Grand Rapids, voted for the agreement, much to the delight of their urban constituents. In addition, one of the two Republicans that voted for the agreement was H. Olin Young. Young represented an Upper Peninsula that possessed a large number of mining towns seeking lower prices on food stuffs. On the whole, the Michigan delegation voted along clearly defined lines that placed the agreement against the backdrop of a social conflict between urban and rural societies.

For the next three months the attention of the country shifted to the Senate. The Senate Finance Committee became the focus of that attention with its hearings on the reciprocity agreement in April and May. Over a hundred effected interests, a majority of which opposed the agreement, appeared before the committee to make their case. Michigan interests were well represented at the hearings with leading agricultural, industrial, commercial, and political men from throughout the state testifying before the committee.

N.P. Hull, Master of the Michigan State Grange and President of the American Dairy Farmer's Association, led a delegation of Michigan agricultural leaders to the hearings in early May. The delegation joined other farming organizations from around the country in a well-orchestrated attack against the agreement directed

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<sup>41</sup>U.S. Congress. Senate. *Reciprocity with Canada, Compilation of 1911*, 62nd Cong., 1st sess., 1911. S. Doc. 80, pp. 2988-2990.

by the National Grange and its allies. These delegates had clearly defined goals. First, they sought to underline the political strength still held by farmers and second they discussed the likely detrimental effects the agreement would have on the farmer. Hull's Michigan delegation led the way. "I want to say one word in regard to the sentiment in Michigan," explained J.W. Hutchins, Secretary of the Michigan State Grange,

I am among the farmers, and I am a farmer myself...I know what their sentiment is. I know what their talk is. To-day they stand unanimously against this measure....Party lines have fallen to pieces, and we are standing united as farmers against this measure. We believe that it will be injurious to the farmers. We are not here alone representing the Michigan State Grange, with its 900 organizations and 70,000 members. We are voicing the emphatic opinion of the farmers of Michigan.<sup>42</sup>

Another important figure in the Michigan agricultural delegation, former Michigan governor Fred M. Warner, focused his comments on the detrimental impact of the agreement on the Michigan and national dairy industries. Warner argued that farmers and others involved in the Michigan dairy industry received a higher price for butter, cheese, and milk than their counterparts in Canada. The agreement would result in the lowering of American dairy prices to the levels paid to Canadian competition. These price reductions would not only effect dairy products, but the vast majority of Michigan agricultural products. "Michigan is interested greatly in the

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<sup>42</sup>U.S. Congress. Senate. Committee on Finance. *Reciprocity with Canada, Hearings on H. R. 4412*. 62nd Cong., 1st sess., 1911. S. Doc. 56, pp. 297-306.

production of hay," added Warner,

and in talking with one of the largest dealers in Detroit...he told me that two-thirds of the hay he sold last year was from Canada, and the Canadian farmer paid a \$4 duty. It can not fail to make a difference in the price, and from a citizen's standpoint, irrespective of party, it would appear to me that the farmers in this country, whether of Michigan or Minnesota, should have the same consideration at your hands as the man that is making automobiles in the city of Detroit or a man that is making stoves; if you are going to give preferences to one, we certainly ought to have it for the other.<sup>43</sup>

Warner questioned the agreement's exclusive focus on agriculture and wondered aloud why manufacturing interests appeared to receive preferential treatment. These comments echoed a prevalent tenet of the anti-reciprocity cause that believed the agreement offered the farmer a raw deal.

C.E. Bassett, Secretary of the Michigan State Horticultural Society, offered the Finance Committee an area of agriculture rarely seen during the debates. The focus on wheat and other grains by agricultural interests dominated the discussions before the Committee. Bassett's concern over the welfare of Michigan fruit farmers expanded the sphere of the hearings. Bassett refuted claims by proponents of the agreement that the Canadian market actually offered American fruit growers an expanded home market. "The possibility of fruit raising in Canada," Bassett observed,

is marvelous, a great deal more than I ever expected, and a great deal more, I believe, than you gentlemen

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<sup>43</sup>Ibid., pp. 492-497.



appreciate...we export just as many as we import...It is true gentlemen, that figures do not lie, but sometimes figures can be manipulated in such a manner that they get a good way from telling the truth, and it is well to understand why it is possible we have exported to Canada a half a million barrels of apples in a single year and at the same time received from Canada a half a million barrels. It must be understood that the half million barrels which went from the states into Canada were not consumed, but were sent there because of the fact that shipments could be best made through the port of Montreal...So that our exportation, you may call it, into Canada, of nearly half a million barrels was practically for a foreign market other than Canada, while the direct fruit from Canada was for American consumption, and came into direct competition with our fruit.<sup>44</sup>

So instead of aiding the American fruit grower, the agreement threatened to undermine his control of the American market.

Bassett described his recent trip through Ontario where he discovered that many Canadian fruit growers did not harvest their fruit because of the high tariff wall and small Canadian market. The agreement promised to eliminate this wall and as a result, Ontario fruit growers would flood American markets like Detroit with their cheaper products. In the case of Detroit, Ontario fruit growers, closer to the market than their western Michigan counterparts, could sell their product at a much lower price. The agreement promised to disrupt the Michigan fruit growers' markets and offered them no benefits in return. The Canadian market was simply too small to make a difference to American fruit growers. Bassett concluded on a somber note when he discussed the future of American agriculture:

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<sup>44</sup>Ibid., pp. 43-44.

The effect of this bill will be not only to reduce the market values of our crops, but it means a setback to agriculture. It means many more times the loss of any few dollars; it means the loss of our crops and land, too. I hate to hear a man talk dollars. I tell you there is a matter of principle in this, and while it is true that wheat might be injured and fruit injured and milk and butter and cheese, it is going to lessen and lower the standard of agriculture in the States.<sup>45</sup>

Clearly Bassett saw the agreement as the impetus for a decline in the status of the American farmer. The agreement promised to further the continuing exodus of rural residents to the more thriving urban centers of America.

A small number of Michigan manufacturing industries effected by the agreement also appeared before the Finance Committee. The most notable was the pulp and paper industry. Nathaniel H. Stewart of Kalamazoo represented the paper manufacturers of Kalamazoo, Allegan, Berrien, and St. Joseph counties. He concluded that the agreement "meant, if carried into effect, the annihilation of the paper-mill manufacturing institutions of Michigan, as well as the whole of the United States."<sup>46</sup> Stewart explained that the Canadian mill owner had the advantage of easier and cheaper access to raw materials. Much like the agricultural delegation that preceded him, Stewart questioned why the agreement singled out his industry while other industries remain protected. Stewart outlined the importance of his industry to the state of Michigan and the United States:

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<sup>45</sup>Ibid., p. 47.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid., p. 1335.

This is something like the fifth industry in the United States - the paper industry - and it involves in capital invested in the mills about \$400,000,000, with an annual output in those mills of something like \$300,000,000...in the entire state of Michigan, we have to-day 39 paper mills and 9 wood and sulphite mills...in the entire state of Michigan, we have invested in this paper industry \$20,800,000, and I speak in general for all, as I speak to the tune in my own county of \$9,450,000 alone...In the Kalamazoo mills, alone...we employ 250 people to the mill. Nine of them means 2,250 employees alone...and they are most all heads of families...and the average of four to one in a family is not any too great, and we have 9,000 people living off those mills in my own county...To stop those wheels running means idleness and starvation for those people; it means the roofs will tumble down and let in the sunlight and rain in the plants, and as they are destroyed our people are building up an alien country.<sup>47</sup>

Stewart certainly painted a bleak picture of the American paper and pulp industry's future. Bernard Benson of the International Brotherhood of Paper Makers assisted Stewart in his fight against the agreement. Benson represented 4,000 Kalamazoo paper mill employees. He briefly explained the position of his union:

We believe anything detrimental to the industry will be detrimental to the workers that are engaged therein. For that reason we protest against the passage of this reciprocity bill...we believe the transfer of the industry to Canadian soil will eventually compel us who work at the trade to go there to work, and we do not feel that we want to be compelled to leave our native country.<sup>48</sup>

This patriotic appeal on the part of this union representative coupled with the economic argument from Stewart provided the foundation

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<sup>47</sup>Ibid., p. 1339-1340.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid., p. 964.

for the industry's opposition to the agreement.

Michigan's pro-reciprocity manufacturers did not show the intensity of their anti-reciprocity counterpart. The Senate Finance Committee did not hear any direct testimony from Michigan manufacturers in support of the agreement. Twenty-eight furniture manufactures from around Grand Rapids had Senator William Alden Smith read a petition to the Senate on April 6. It praised the agreement and asked for the removal of all duties on manufactured furniture and refrigerators traded between the two countries. Three other significant industrialists appeared before the committee: James Couzens, general manager of Ford Motor Company; Henry Leland, manager of Cadillac Motor Car Company; and Levi L. Barbour, vice president of the Michigan Bolt and Iron Works. They came as part of the seven member delegation representing the Detroit Board of Commerce. All three decided to defer their discussion to Milton A. McRae, President of the Detroit Board of Commerce.

Strangely, McRae, Detroit's commercial leader, focused his attention on a rebuttal of the agricultural delegation's arguments against reciprocity. McRae said little to the Finance Committee about the possible benefits to Detroit or his newspaper interests as a result of this agreement. He argued that the American farmer had nothing to fear from duty reductions. "The United States will remit duties to the amount of \$4,850,000 by the reciprocity agreement," explained McRae,

Yet of this \$4,850,000 more than \$1,600,000 comes from duties on lumber, and nearly \$500,000 accrues from

duties levied on the imports of fish. These two sums aggregate \$2,100,000. This leaves a balance of \$2,700,000, which the farmers might allege would be taken out of their pockets...As a matter of fact, there must be subtracted from this \$2,700,000 the duties levied on pulp, fertilizers, tobacco, salt, railroad ties, wooden staves, cedar posts, mica, and coke. The pitifully small amount left compared to the great agricultural communities of the United States leads one to ask, "Why all the opposition?"<sup>49</sup>

McRae also reiterated the pro-reciprocity tenet that asserted that as wheat exporting nations Canada and the United States depended on overseas markets to set prices. In turn, the agreement would not effect the price of American wheat because even if the Canadian wheat grower sent his product to the United States, the aggregate of the American and Canadian surplus would still end up in Europe. In addition, McRae observed that the agreement offered benefits to certain Americans including farmers. American millers would profit from Canadians sending wheat to the United States instead of Europe for processing. The farmer would also benefit from the agreement because of the duty reduction on lumber, their primary building material. On the whole, McRae's overwhelming concern for the farmer's well-being showed the defensive nature of many of the proponents of the agreement. They attempted to avoid discussion of the benefits that they might accrue and instead focused on the farmer and his interests.

Michigan Governor Chase S. Osborn also appeared before the Senate Finance Committee in May. His decision to testify was a direct result of the Michigan agricultural delegation's testimony. In a May

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<sup>49</sup>S. Doc. 56, p. 590.

15 letter to Taft, he offered his assistance:

If I can be of slightest service in favor of the treaty, I will go to Washington. The alleged representatives of the farmers of Michigan who have been in Washington giving their views do not reflect, in my opinion, the dominant sentiment of Michigan and do not represent all of the farmers by any means. I am a full member of the Michigan grange and know something of the farmers [sic] sentiment.<sup>50</sup>

Two days later Osborn came to Washington and testified before the Finance Committee. Osborn focused his presentation on two aspects of the Michigan response to the agreement. First, as mentioned above, he questioned the validity of the Michigan agricultural delegation's representativeness. Second, he sought to undermine their conclusion that the agreement would prove detrimental to Michigan farmers.

As the state's chief executive, Osborn believed that he truly understood the sentiment of the state of Michigan. His understanding of that sentiment differed greatly from the observations of the agricultural delegation. Osborn pointed to the debate over the agreement that occurred at the Michigan Agricultural College in late February as evidence of the true sentiment of the state:

You had the president of our Michigan Agricultural college before you the other day, a most distinguished, eminent gentleman and a scholar. He appeared upon the side of a debate recently...upon the question of this reciprocity proposition. He was against it, and some of

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<sup>50</sup>Taft Papers, Series 6, Reel 414.

the other professors of the faculty were against it, and arrayed for it against these debaters were a number of the younger professors, and when they had concluded the judges of the debate refused to give a verdict, and it was left to the vote of about 1,100 of the young students, representing the farming element of Michigan. They decided in favor of reciprocity three to one. I simply give you that as an indication of the fact that these younger representatives of the farm homes have given this some thought, and that probably may be taken in a measure to reflect the sentiment of their fathers.<sup>51</sup>

Osborn considered this one of the many signs that not all Michigan farmers supported the position of the Michigan State Grange.

With 100,000 acres of farm and timber lands, Osborn felt that if the agreement would hurt anyone financially, it would hurt him. For the bulk of his testimony, Osborn refuted the perception that Canadian agriculture would come into direct competition with American agriculture. In order to defend this conclusion Osborn compared the wheat crops of Canada and the United States. Osborn declared that in the harsh climate of the Canadian prairies,

Everywhere on the height of land it is true the frost comes every single month of the year, so there can be absolutely no intelligent or any successful competition between any part of Canada and at least Michigan, and I think there can be no competition with any part of the United States...they can not compete with Michigan fruits in the Berrien County district; and now the Michigan fruit district has taken itself away clear up to the Straits on the west side, where the climate is moderated by the

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<sup>51</sup>S. Doc. 56, p. 925. Osborn's conclusion of a three to one margin conflicted with the reports of the two college newspapers. As mentioned earlier, both newspapers reported an extremely close decision. His reasons for reporting the skewed numbers appear obvious, given his strong pro-reciprocity position. See note 32.

winds that come over Lake Michigan.<sup>52</sup>

The two countries raised essentially different products as a result of the climactic conditions. Frost in the prairies of western Canada produced a poorer grade of wheat than that produced in Michigan or in the American prairies. In addition, the moderate climates of western Michigan could find no equal for fruit raising in Canada. After three weeks of further hearings, the Senate Finance Committee passed the bill onto the Senate for consideration on June 8.

Michigan Senators William Alden Smith and Charles E. Townsend contributed notable speeches to the Senate debates of June and July. Senior Senator Smith held fast to his convictions on protectionism. Echoing the concerns of the old protectionists, Smith pondered, "...what are the privileges of American citizenship? To labor and toil, preparing the vineyard for the stranger who only comes to us at daybreak and again recrosses our border as the sun goes down." Smith then appealed to his colleagues to remember the strong emotional and historical ties the United States had to its agrarian farmers:

The burdens of this Government have in times past been heavy and hard to bear; were we able to enlist our northern neighbors when the day of reckoning came? Did they assuage the anguish of broken hearts or bind up the exposed wounds; did they defend us on the field of battle alongside the farmer soldier whose interest is now in jeopardy; did they pay the debt incurred in the maintenance of the Union of the States, the largest ever assumed by a free people? No! It fell upon the toiler in factory and field, and without complaining he has paid it

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<sup>52</sup>Ibid., p. 928.



ungrudgingly.<sup>53</sup>

The paper mill industry joined the farmer as a victim of the agreement. Smith described the promise of this growing Michigan industry: "The paper-mill industry in the State of Michigan is yet in its infancy; forests and men and money are ready to contribute abundantly as the demand for paper increases."<sup>54</sup> The agreement promised to undermine the development of this industry by transferring its control to Canadian paper mills that manufactured the product at a much lower cost. Smith's speeches lauded the long standing protectionist belief that nascent industries and agriculture needed protection to grow in the face of cheaper foreign competition.

Townsend regarded the agreement as incomplete, but not damaging to interests of Michigan. In his first major address before the Senate in late June, the junior Senator from Michigan announced:

Personally, I would not have brought it [the agreement] forward at this time and in this form if I had been in control of this matter. I would have striven hard and long for a treaty which would have included all of the products of Canadian and United States industries...It would have seemed in the eternal fitness of things that there should be one great economic unit in habitable America north of the Gulf of Mexico. It is one country by nature, but in the economy of man it has been made in two, accompanied by all the economic waste of separate organizations.<sup>55</sup>

Nature dictated a unified North American economy, this agreement provided the first step toward this goal. Like Osborn, Townsend

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<sup>53</sup>S. Doc. 80, p. 3339.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid., p. 3485.

<sup>55</sup>Ibid., p. 3519.

painted the Canadian hinterland as a kind of frozen tundra unsuitable for agriculture, "I would prefer to clear a farm from among the forests and stump barrens of Michigan than to encounter the frosts and privations of northern Canada."<sup>56</sup>

Townsend's deep waterway project constituted the heart of his position. The project provided the focus for his arguments and culminated in an amendment to the agreement. The amendment asked the President to undertake negotiations with Canadian officials to develop the waterway:

This bill will be, we hope, a step in the direction of commercial peace and harmony. Thus the way will be open for the beginning of the final and greatest achievement of all, viz., the opening up to the mighty commerce of Canada and the United States a deep waterway from the Lakes to the ocean through that international stream, the St. Lawrence River...Being convinced that the project which I propose will confer greater benefits on both countries than those which flow from any tariff...I seek to project it upon the attention of the Senate and of the country....To me this is a greater proposition than the Panama Canal.<sup>57</sup>

On July 21, the Senate, urged by Taft to pass the Canadian Reciprocity Agreement without amendments, rejected Townsend's deep waterway amendment. Later that day, Senator Smith gave one of the last major speeches on the agreement before the Senate. He again reiterated the need for protectionism and added that Canada needed to cut its imperial ties in order to become truly independent on the North American continent. On July 22 the Senate passed the

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<sup>56</sup>Ibid., p. 3520.

<sup>57</sup>Ibid., p. 3526-3531.

agreement by a margin of 53 to 27. The positions taken by the Michigan Senators reflected the divisions in Michigan, between progressive and stand-pat Republicans, between urban and rural societies, and within the agricultural community itself.

The nation's attention immediately shifted to the debate in Canada. Prime Minister Laurier called for elections almost exclusively to settle the reciprocity issue. Canadian opposition to the agreement found a political outlet through Robert Laird Borden and the Conservative party. Opposition mainly came from eastern industrialists and those desiring to maintain close ties with the British Empire. Laurier garnered support from western farmers, many of which were ex-Americans, who desired access to the huge American market. In this atmosphere, the debate naturally focused on the course of Canadian development. The Conservative opposition argued that the American delegates secretly veiled the annexation of Canada, the real purpose of reciprocity, behind the facade of closer economic relations. The Conservative strategy appealed to the emotions of the British Canadians. They even enlisted the support of British poet Rudyard Kipling: "It is her own soul that Canada risks today. Once that soul is pawned for any consideration Canada must inevitably conform to the commercial, legal, financial, social, and ethical standards which will be imposed on her by the sheer admitted weight of the United States."<sup>58</sup> The emotional card played by the Conservatives along with concerns over the loss of American branch factories and a host of other problems with the Liberal government led to its overwhelming defeat on September 21.

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<sup>58</sup>*Montreal Star* as quoted in *Detroit Free Press*, September 8, 1911, p. 1.

American interest in Canadian elections reached a new high, as *The Calumet News* observed: "The United States never watched a Canadian election before with so much interest, and though the result was awaited in Canada with feverish concern, Americans waited it with hardly less anxiety. The reason for this was that this country never before had such a direct interest in a Canadian election."<sup>59</sup> The *Detroit Free Press* discussed its experiences: "The election across the border stirred up almost as much interest on this side as if Detroit had taken an active part in the casting of the ballots. The Free Press office was fairly bombarded with telephone calls..."<sup>60</sup> Most larger Michigan newspapers covered the events leading up to the election. They offered in depth coverage into the positions of each party as well as the dynamics of the electorate. The evening of the election found Taft at a banquet in Kalamazoo, where he discovered the results: "The defeat of reciprocity in Canada is a great disappointment to me. I had hoped that the pact would be put through to prove the correctness of my judgement that it would be a good thing for both countries. It takes two to make a bargain, and, if Canada declines, we can still go on doing business at the old stand."<sup>61</sup>

For the people of Michigan the reciprocity debate extended far beyond the halls of the United States Congress. From local debates at county libraries and area granges to larger debates at venues like the Michigan Agricultural College or the Republican State Convention, Canadian reciprocity was more than a peripheral issue for the vast majority of the Michigan populace. The expected impact of the

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<sup>59</sup>*Calumet News*, September 22, 1911, p. 4.

<sup>60</sup>*Detroit Free Press*, September 22, 1911, p. 6.

<sup>61</sup>*The Calumet News*, September 22, 1911, p. 1.

agreement on Michigan placed many of the state's leaders at the forefront of the national debate. N.P. Hull, William Alden Smith, Chase Osborn, Milton McRae and other Michigan men provided national leadership that was deeply rooted in a concern for the welfare of Michigan interests.

## Chapter IV

### Michigan Press Reaction to the Economic Issues

The debate over reciprocity confirmed the significant roles Michigan newspapers played in their local communities and regions. The sheer number of Michigan newspapers attested to this importance. Approximately 600 newspapers existed in the Michigan of 1911. From cities like Grand Rapids, with seven English language newspapers, to communities like Lincoln (population of 123 in 1910), newspapers dotted the Michigan landscape. The existence of these newspapers suggested that the Michigan populace supported and depended on their local paper for news, information, and opinions. Likewise a local newspaper often reflected the opinions of its readers. If they found themselves at odds with the local populace on an issue, as many did with reciprocity, they addressed the concerns of their region or locality in their editorials or news articles. The remainder of this paper will focus on thematic issues that ran throughout Michigan newspaper response. By defining and analyzing these issues and concerns of Michigan publishers, a new and more considered approach to newspaper reaction will rise from reciprocity scholarship.

L. Ethan Ellis provided subsequent reciprocity scholars with a framework for study. Many have expanded on Ellis' conclusions, offering a more detailed picture of the situation in Washington and across America. As mentioned earlier, Ellis provided the only major analysis of newspaper response to the agreement. This analysis deserves a reassessment for two reasons. First, in his study of the

nation's press he concluded that an unanimity in response existed toward the agreement, when in fact there was much diversity. Second, he studied the press reaction along chronological lines, offering little detail of press reaction along economic, social, political, and geographical lines.

Ellis' study of the American press focused exclusively on major urban and regional papers that maintained close ties with the American Newspaper Publishers Association (ANPA). These large metropolitan dailies used substantial amounts of newsprint and the proposed duty reduction on newsprint would mean considerable savings for these publishers. For obvious reasons then, most of the newspapers in Ellis' analysis favored the agreement. The problem with Ellis' narrow study of the American press was that it left out smaller city dailies and town weeklies that made up the majority of the Michigan and American newspaper press. The ANPA counted only five Michigan newspapers from Detroit, Grand Rapids, and Jackson as members of their organization in 1911. Ellis provided an excellent study of the ANPA, its leadership, and its members but this analysis does not constitute a true picture of the nation's newspapers. Concerns over the possible effects of the agreement on local interests had an equal, if not greater influence on the newspaper publishers of Michigan, than the benefits of free newsprint. A closer examination of the Michigan press will show great diversity in response to the agreement of 1911.

Ellis' study of the pro-reciprocity press focused on three periods during the debate: the first two weeks after the agreement's announcement on January 26, the last weeks of the 61st Congress at

the end of February and the beginning of March, and the extra session of the 62nd Congress in May, June, and July.<sup>62</sup> Ellis suggested that at these three periods during the debate, certain issues and arguments (e.g., that the agreement would not injure the farmer) emerged and received greater attention than others. This approach comes up short for two reasons. First, a study of the Michigan press shows apparent differences with his conclusions. In many cases, the Michigan press highlighted certain arguments at times different than those mentioned by Ellis.<sup>63</sup> In other words, Michigan newspapers followed few of Ellis' chronological patterns. Second, Ellis' overwhelming concern for the chronological pattern of the debate, resulted in a lack of depth when it comes to examining the wide range of issues that concerned newspapers. This failure necessitates a different approach to the study of newspaper reaction, an approach that reviews issues individually and not chronologically. The

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<sup>62</sup>For Ellis' chronological patterns see pp. 85-86, 108-109, 136-138.

<sup>63</sup>For example, Ellis concluded that the first mention of possible trust involvement in the opposition to the agreement came during the extraordinary session (Ellis, p. 137). This study found numerous pro-reciprocity newspapers that mentioned trust involvement in the first three months of 1911 (See *Detroit Free Press*, February 15, 1911; *The Hillsdale Daily*, January 28 and 30, February 13 and 27, 1911; and *The Monroe Democrat*, March 10, 1911). In addition, Ellis observed a "conspicuous absence" in early newspaper discussion of the agreement's benefits to American farmers (Ellis pp. 85-87). This study found many early discussions on the agreement's beneficial aspects to the Michigan farmer. Examples of newspapers that discussed the agreement's benefits to Michigan farmers are in *The Saginaw Daily News*, February 1, 1911 (Why Canadian Reciprocity Will Benefit Our Farmers); *The Daily News* of Grand Rapids, February 1 and 4, 1911; and *The Allegan Gazette*, February 4, 1911. Finally, Ellis believed that in the first weeks of the debate, "Where possible, local interests became the basis of favorable arguments" (Ellis, p.85). This study discovered that many newspapers in localities that would have benefited from the agreement used national (i.e., cost of living) arguments to defend the agreement in equal or greater frequency during the first weeks of the debate. For some examples of newspapers that based early arguments (January 27-February 9) almost entirely on national issues see *The Bay City Times*, *The News Palladium* of Benton Harbor, and *The Saginaw Daily News*.



primary issue, raised by those on both sides of the debate, concerned the economic impact of the agreement. Ellis acknowledged this and along with his lengthy treatise on the publishers' demands for free newsprint focused his brief review of newspaper response on economic issues within the chronological time line. However, in addition to the economic issues, newspapers also gave generous attention to political, social, and regional concerns.<sup>64</sup> A detailed analysis of these "other" issues coupled with a more structured approach to newspaper reaction to economic issues, will lead to a more comprehensive and thorough study than that provided by Ellis. The following pages will review newspaper responses to certain national economic concerns, as well as find trends in newspaper responses along political, social, and regional lines. In addition, this section will evaluate Michigan newspaper response to the agreement's duty reduction on newsprint and offer a perspective not found in Ellis' study. This review will reveal the various factors that

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<sup>64</sup>Ellis did not ignore these issues entirely; rather he provided coverage that only scratched the surface of these important issues. In a scant six sentences he briefly described certain aspects of these non-economic issues. For example, Ellis' coverage of newspaper publishers' political discussions was limited to those publishers amused at the predicament of Congressional Insurgents. (Insurgents favored tariff reform, but since they came from agricultural districts deeply opposed to reciprocity, they became reciprocity's biggest opponents.). However, Michigan newspapers engaged in the reciprocity debate argued over numerous other political theories and realities such as Republican protectionism, the elections of 1910, and the upcoming elections of 1912. Ellis also made a brief reference to newspaper concern over local interests in the debate's first weeks, regrettably these general remarks provided little insight into a very significant and diverse influence on newspaper publishers. Finally, Ellis limited his review of regional newspaper response to two brief observations: first, he reported that midwestern newspapers were those most likely to show amusement at the Insurgents' dilemma and second, he remarked that the discussion of free newsprint was limited to midwestern and southern newspapers. These brief and relatively insignificant comments failed to provide any appreciable understanding of regional patterns. Ellis pp. 85-86, 108-109, 136-137.

not only influenced an individual newspaper publisher, but also led to a diverse Michigan press response to the agreement.

Michigan newspapers, much like those of the entire United States, focused on the effects of the proposed agreement on the national economy. The Taft Administration's goals behind the reciprocity agreement, namely, lowering the cost of living, securing a nearby source of raw materials and agricultural products, and creating a closer economic and social relationship between the two countries, became the foci for much of the debate in Michigan newspapers. An additional economic question that garnered a huge share of newspaper attention originated in the farmers' concerns over the effect the agreement might have on the prices for their goods. These economic issues provided the fodder for much of the debate of 1911.

The possibility that the agreement might have lowered the cost of living appealed to many in the cities and larger towns of Michigan. Taft hoped that the agreement would calm urban concerns about the increasing costs of foodstuffs. But Taft cautioned urban dwellers not to expect too much:

It is my own judgement that the reciprocity agreement will not greatly reduce the cost of living, if at all. It will, however, steady prices by enlarging the reservoir of supplies for those things that are raised in both countries, and it will make more remote the possibility of cornering such commodities and extorting excessive prices for them from the public.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>65</sup>Taft's Fourth of July speech in Indianapolis, Indiana. See U.S. Congress. *Republican Reciprocity*. 62nd Cong., 1st sess., 1911. S. Doc. 63, p. 5.

Charles M. Pepper of the Bureau of Trade Relations in the State Department, the author of the Taft Canadian reciprocity policy, added that the agreement might lead to "...the possibility of cheapening the food supply, or at least preventing it from becoming higher in the future."<sup>66</sup> The cost of living issue obviously held some weight in the Administration's policy formulation, but many in the pro-reciprocity press tended to exaggerate the projected claims of Taft and Pepper.

On the whole, pro-reciprocity newspapers believed that the placing of Canadian agricultural and natural products on the free list would tend to lower the prices of these items for the consumers of Michigan. *The Manistee Pioneer-Tribune* declared that the purpose of the agreement was clear: "President Taft is trying to lower food bills, by this scheme of reciprocity, and as soon as the consumer gets this through his noodle, strong pressure will be brought upon congress to stand by the nation's ruler."<sup>67</sup> For tariff-reform minded newspapers the tariff often represented the demon of high prices. To many in the pro-reciprocity press, the consumer had long suffered in the face of better organized farmers and industries that had secured protection for their products in the past. The actions of these organized interests resulted in higher consumer prices for food products and industrial goods. Many newspapers felt the agreement reversed this trend. *The Detroit Times* in a blunt comment that echoed throughout the state press mentioned: "It is about time the

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<sup>66</sup>Stewart argued persuasively that Pepper "originated modern American policy toward Canada." The Taft Administration drew from Pepper's research and depended on his conclusions to answer opponents of the agreement. See Stewart pp. 105-112. Pepper quote from State Department Archives as quoted in Stewart p. 107.

<sup>67</sup>*The Manistee Pioneer-Tribune*, February 3, 1911, p. 4.

consumer got some little consideration out of Washington."<sup>68</sup> Much like the Administration, some in the pro-reciprocity press cautioned consumers against expecting too much. "It is likely that no change will be apparent for some time," observed *The Daily Mining Gazette*,

and then only in the direction of steadying prices to a reasonable level...The truth is that the consumer, overjoyed at the prospect of legislation actually intended to relieve him, has set up a howl of delight that has alarmed high protectionists. The consumer has been accustomed so long to being ignored, sat upon and told to sit quiet in his corner and pay the bills that any little attention like the reciprocity measure goes to his head.<sup>69</sup>

The pro-reciprocity press agreed that the consumer would benefit, but differed on the degree of that benefit.

Anti-reciprocity newspapers took issue with the conclusion that the tariff caused the high cost of living. They felt that those who sought a reduction in the cost of living focused on the wrong target. According to newspapers like *The Pigeon Progress*, the real culprit behind the high cost of living went unnoticed:

No legislation that would tend to lower the price which the farmer gets for the products of the farm would in any degree lessen the "high cost of living." The tariff on these products is not responsible for this-it is the excessive rates charged for transportation, and the exorbitant profits made by those "middlemen" through whose several hands these products must pass before reaching the consumer. If Congress really wants to do something to reduce the cost of food it might be well for it to investigate this phase of the situation.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>68</sup>*Detroit Times*, February 10, 1911, p. 12.

<sup>69</sup>*The Daily Mining Gazette* (Houghton), February 12, 1911, p. 4.

<sup>70</sup>*The Pigeon Progress*, March 10, 1911, p. 1.

The problem with the middlemen revolved around their control of the market for foodstuffs. Trusts controlled the distribution of agricultural products to the cities. The cold storage houses joined the milling and meat packing monopolies in the manipulation of the prices for food products. They held eggs and dairy products from the market in order to inflate their prices. The agreement apparently would assist them in consolidating their control of the market. These monopolies would receive their raw materials in a free market and sell their finished product in a protected market. The *Clare Sentinel* continued along these lines, "Ostensibly the treaty was intended to lessen the cost of living, but it is not consistent in this...why is wheat free, tariff on flour, pork free, tariff on bacon."<sup>71</sup> The anti-reciprocity press asked those urban laborers clamoring for lower food prices to contemplate the effects of the agreement. "Cattle, sheep, and hogs are to come in from Canada free," *The Northville Record* observed,

but the duty of 1/4 cents per pound remains on the meat. The laboring man will not want to buy a big fat steer and stake him out in the back yard so as to cut off a hunk of fifteen or eighteen cent beef every day for dinner. To be sure wheat is booked to come in free under the treaty but the laboring man eats flour and not wheat and the duty on flour is left at fifty cents per barrel.<sup>72</sup>

The desired beneficiaries of the agreement, the consumers, would not benefit from it, since they did not directly use the products reduced.

Pro-reciprocity newspapers wrestled with this issue of trust

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<sup>71</sup>*Clare Sentinel*, February 24, 1911, p. 4.

<sup>72</sup>*The Northville Record*, March 3, 1911, p. 4.

control. They approached the problem from two different perspectives. A mostly Democratic group of the pro-reciprocity newspapers argued that the agreement did not go far enough to help the consumer. "The chief criticism of the president's reciprocity program," *The Kalamazoo Gazette* observed,

is that while it is supposed to give consumers of this country free access to the markets of Canada, it will do this largely through the middle man, and that in most important cases these middle men are members of the great trusts which have so rapaciously [*sic.*] advanced prices on the necessities of life.<sup>73</sup>

The "ultimate consumer" received little relief from the agreement and the lumber, cold storage, milling, meat, and other trusts received the benefits of lower duties. A larger number of the pro-reciprocity press argued that because of the United States' proximity to Canada, the agreement essentially undermined trust control of foodstuffs. *The Fowlerville Review* suggested that "the general public would be the gainer in that it would reduce the cost of living in both countries, and with increased territory it would be impossible to manipulate the food products as they can be manipulated at the present time."<sup>74</sup> The food trusts, not the farmers, became the victims of the agreement. *The Marshall Statesman* observed that:

Unless the big concerns that have succeeded in taking charge of the distribution of food stuffs extend their operations so as to get control of the products of Canada, the result will be a material decrease in the cost of many kinds of food in the United States...It is only when

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<sup>73</sup>*The Kalamazoo Gazette*, February 3, 1911, p. 4.

<sup>74</sup>*The Fowlerville Review*, February 2, 1911, p. 1.

foodstuffs get into the hands of large distributing agencies that they reach a class small enough to combine, and wealthy enough to control process. If these men combine to advance the prices they do it for themselves - not the farmers, and the free import of Canadian foodstuffs, would cut into their excessive profits, and not into the prices the farmer receives.<sup>75</sup>

The agreement promised to reduce the cost of living by undermining trust control of food distribution and the farmer would receive no injury from this process.

Many Michigan newspapers joined others throughout the state in challenging the essence of the cost of living question. In the first week of debate, Congressman Charles E. Townsend suggested that the cost of living, "quality considered," was not too high. For Townsend, Michigan citizens enjoyed an unprecedented amount of economic prosperity that lead to their abandonment of frugality. As a tariff-reform minded Republican, who would later vote for the agreement, Townsend shocked many in the pro-reciprocity press.<sup>76</sup> The *Detroit Times* sharply retorted:

There are some thinly-stocked cupboards around these

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<sup>75</sup>The *Marshall Statesman*, March 3, 1911, p. 4.

<sup>76</sup>The reasons for Townsend's reactionary views on the high cost of living issue become immediately apparent when studying the response of Michigan newspapers. Townsend, like many of his colleagues, were known to "straddle the fence" on controversial issues. He sought to avoid alienating any of his constituents, who often held contradictory views on the tariff and cost of living issues. Townsend never opposed the agreement outright, but sought to mollify the opposition by offering the deep waterway project. Taft brought much pressure on Townsend during the fight for reciprocity and this pressure, along with the tariff reform fervor that ousted Julius Burrows and placed Townsend in the senatorial seat, contributed toward his vote in favor of reciprocity. See *Detroit Times*, February 10, 1911, p. 12; *The Hudson Post*, May 16, p. 4., printed an excellent letter from Townsend that showed his noncommittal attitude on reciprocity; and *The Saturday Evening Star* of Jackson February 18, 1911, p. 4.

parts just now, which TALK about the "QUALITY" of living will not help fill...The owners of these cupboards weren't considering the "quality of living" when they marched to the polling booths and dropped in their votes for Townsend...They have to overlook the matter of quality.<sup>77</sup>

This impassioned reply to Townsend's comments certainly established the cost of living question as a class issue. Townsend apparently addressed a different segment of society than the working classes discussed by the *Times*. *The Lowell Ledger* progressed a little further:

Some senators object to President Taft's tariff treaty with Canada on the ground that the price of living is not too high. How very comfortable it is to draw a congressional salary from Uncle Sam; and how easy everything looks from that point of view. Let the honorable gentlemen try it from the laboring man's standpoint, and try making a daily wage do the work of two. "Oh, but that's different you know."<sup>78</sup>

These pro-reciprocity papers questioned Townsend's understanding of working class conditions. They considered his focus on the middle and upper classes as exclusive of the real situation encountered by the laboring classes of Michigan.

Michigan newspapers on both sides of the reciprocity debate often agreed with the issue of quality raised by Townsend. The pro-reciprocity, pro-tariff reform, *Manistee Pioneer-Tribune* commented, "If the man who howls about the cost of living as compared to twenty years ago will honestly get down and figure he will find that if living costs more than it did twenty years ago, it is partially

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<sup>77</sup>*Detroit Times*, February 1, 1911, p. 12.

<sup>78</sup>*The Lowell Ledger*, February 2, 1911, p. 6.



because he buys more and lives higher."<sup>79</sup> A majority of the newspapers that echoed Townsend's comments were negative. Soon after Townsend's statements, the anti-reciprocity *Huron County Tribune* of Bad Axe added, "Those who complain of living expenses should not forget that they never before had so much to buy living with."<sup>80</sup> *The Tribune* continued along this line with an editorial in May which described the common cost of living situation of a local citizen:

It's the craze for variety. The postman used to come twice a day [week?]; now he comes five times. The telephone not only costs \$60 a year, but doubles the orders at the grocers and of course the grocers' bill. Hardwood floors mean twice the work of carpets. Theatres and picture shows take time and money. The costs of guests is doubled - we have six courses instead of three, with expensive desserts. The old way was good enough but we haven't had the moral courage to follow in the face of common practice...the determining principle in fixing the standard of living should be the discovery of the minimum needed to maintain full efficiency.<sup>81</sup>

This position differed greatly from that mentioned by the *Detroit Times* and *Lowell Ledger*. The focus on the working classes by these newspapers portrayed an urban group struggling to survive against rising food prices. On the other hand, Townsend, *The Huron County Tribune* and others focused on a middle class, often rural, population that experienced a vastly prosperous lifestyle unmatched by anything known before in this country. The cost of living was not the issue, rather the morality and frugality of the age were the

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<sup>79</sup>*The Manistee Pioneer-Tribune*, August 4, 1911, p. 4.

<sup>80</sup>*The Huron County Tribune*(Bad Axe), February 10, 1911, p. 2.

<sup>81</sup>*Ibid.*, May 26, 1911, p. 4.

issues. A newer, more expensive urban age had overtaken the old moderation of rural life.

Supporters of Canadian reciprocity in the press and in government, urged opponents to take a broader view of the agreement. This meant taking a look at the beneficial socioeconomic aspects of future continental unity. The Administration led the way in this crusade. In a speech to the National Grange, Agriculture Secretary James W. Wilson explained that, "Whether the political union of two countries ever comes about or not, we will become more and more one people, developing along similar lines and supplanting each other in many respects."<sup>82</sup> The Administration's Canadian policy expert, Charles Pepper, believed that, "The Canadian Reciprocity Agreement in substance amounts to extending the area of protection on this continent."<sup>83</sup> The Administration clearly believed in a type of unified North American economy that addressed the nation's concerns over future shortages in agricultural and natural products. In addition, the future may bring the continued opening of the Canadian market to American manufacturers. In other words, the two nations would adapt to each other's needs to form a continental economy in order to better compete in the world market.

The pro-reciprocity Michigan press joined the Administration in stressing that critics should look beyond the local effects of the agreement and look to the future of the nation as a whole. They echoed the concerns of many of their readers as well as the president when they addressed the agricultural and natural product shortages,

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<sup>82</sup>Taft Papers, Series 6, Reel 398, p. 5.

<sup>83</sup>Ibid., Series 6, Reel 399.

the need for new foreign markets for American products, and the need to follow those natural lines of trade that the United States shared with no other country.

The rapid growth of American cities in the early twentieth century translated into concerns over the United States' self-sustaining capabilities. The shrinking rural population meant that fewer farmers grew less for these expanding cities. The long term economic effects of this situation concerned many Michigan newspapers and government officials. As mentioned earlier, Taft's concern over the limitations of the American supply of agricultural and natural products influenced his Administration's decision to seek reciprocity. These very concerns reverberated throughout the Michigan press. Some in the pro-reciprocity press agreed that, "The grain production for this country is said to be even now but little in excess of the local consumption and the Canadian grain may be needed here as our own city population grows."<sup>84</sup> These expected shortages led many papers to seek out the origins of the problem. "It should be remembered," *The Manistee Daily News* commented,

that ours is not solely a manufacturing country nor solely an agricultural country, but a blending of both. It is apparent that our production of foodstuffs at the present time is not keeping pace with demands. It is but reasonable then to permit our people to buy dairy products, eggs, poultry, meats, and vegetables from the cheapest markets...What Canada can spare us may be of some assistance until our own farms are made more productive and are increased in numbers.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>84</sup>Besides a few minor changes in syntax, virtually the same article appeared in a few western Michigan newspapers. See *The Dowagiac Daily News*, February 4, 1911, p. 7 and *The Niles Daily Sun*, February 2, 1911, p. 1.

<sup>85</sup>*The Manistee Daily News*, January 30, 1911, p. 2.

Canadian agricultural products apparently provided temporary relief until American farmers could increase production or more in the American public turned to farming.

The anti-reciprocity press concluded that the solution to the problem of agricultural shortages lay in the profitability of American farming. As farmers received less for their products, the economic opportunities in the urban centers of Michigan expanded, leading many to leave their agrarian heritage. To counter this trend, politicians, newspapers, and organizations from across the nation promoted a "back to the farm" movement. The movement proposed that, in return for farmers remaining on or returning to agricultural lands, they would receive a higher profit than in the past. These profits, comparable to those earned in the cities, would come as a result of protection from cheaper foreign competition. Clearly then, anti-reciprocity newspapers believed the agreement undermined this movement to enhance American self-sufficiency. The American agricultural supply would increase under a movement to encourage farming and the projected need for Canadian grain would dissipate. "We talk about keeping the young man on the farm," pondered the *Livingston Republican*, "but what object is there for him to stay where he can make nothing. The reciprocity idea is a severe blow to the cry, back to the soil."<sup>86</sup> In addition to the economic benefits derived from the movement some observed the social benefits of rural life. "Our population has increased so very much more rapidly in the cities than in the country," suggested the *Ypsilanti Daily Press*,

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<sup>86</sup>*Livingston Republican* (Howell), February 8, 1911, p. 1.

that we have the spectacle of the law of enlightened self-interest, as enthroned in the cities and their population, working against the agricultural interests and, it seems to us, to the decided injury of this country...it will certainly retard the flow of the "back to the farm" stream which sociologists and the philanthropists and the railroad corporations have so industriously been at work upon for the last few years, in order to overcome the congested centers in the cities and overcome the rapid increase in criminality, insanity and other permanent burdens loaded upon the rest of the people, by reason of unsanitary conditions, by reason of starvation conditions, of underpaid and underfed conditions in the cities, which react upon the country and build up a cost charge which everybody who has any property at all has to help in shouldering.<sup>87</sup>

Anti-reciprocity newspapers questioned Taft's reasons for turning to Canada for grain instead of encouraging its production in the United States. Most in the anti-reciprocity press did not envision the continental economy of the Taft Administration. Rather, they sought to keep the United States self-sufficient in an increasingly global economy.

In addition to concerns over the American agricultural supply the Taft Administration also desired a nearby source of raw materials for American industries. These desperately needed natural products included such commodities as iron ore and various minerals, fertilizers, and the most significant, timber. The Michigan lumber industry, an important industry to the state in the nineteenth century, had declined in significance by 1911. The relatively trivial attention given to it during the debate by newspapers, politicians,

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<sup>87</sup>*Ypsilanti Daily Press*, April 29, 1911, p. 2.

and organizations attested to this declining importance. No organized lumber organizations in the state made any significant comments in opposition to the agreement. Congressman Joseph W. Fordney, with significant ties to the industry, provided the most vocal outlet for the lumber industry's concerns. In a speech and discussion period before the House that lasted for over two hours, Fordney commented: "I say that it is absolutely unfair to put the product of that great, magnificent industry, the product of the mills, upon the free list unless you are going to help the consumer, and I ask you whether or not the reductions recently made inured to the benefit of the consumers?"<sup>88</sup> Interestingly, Fordney, the lumber representative in Congress, focused the majority of his attention on the farmer. He accepted this strategy because farmers provided a much better example of an injured interest than the lumber trust of the country.

Michigan newspapers made little mention of the agreement's impact on the state's lumber and natural products industries. Most of these sparse comments came from pro-reciprocity newspapers seeking to strengthen their arguments. Often these newspapers turned to local lumber industries to bolster their defense of the agreement. "Congressman H.O. Young of this district," observed *The Daily Mining Gazette* of Houghton, "argues...that it will hurt the paper business and the lumber business of this district. We do not agree with the congressman and we believe that the lumberman of the local district is satisfied that the measure will work him no injury."<sup>89</sup> Some pro-reciprocity newspapers noted that opponents came

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<sup>88</sup>S. Doc. 80, pp. 2265-2266, 2700-71.

<sup>89</sup>*The Daily Mining Gazette* (Houghton), February 7, 1911, p. 4.

primarily from natural products industries. *The Daily Tribune* in South Haven noted that the only local opponents were "our paper manufacturers," *The Tribune* then added, "and the gentlemen who own most of our forests object to competing with the crown-lands of Canada."<sup>90</sup> Fordney's concern for the farmer led some newspapers to question his motives. *The St. Johns News* sarcastically mused that "It cannot be possible that Congressman Fordney opposes the Canadian reciprocity treaty because it puts lumber on the free list. Banish the thought! Mr. Fordney's concern for and love of the farmer has nothing to do with it [free lumber]."<sup>91</sup> Anti-reciprocity newspapers considered the reductions on Canadian timber as minimal and these reductions would not bring the two nations any closer together. "The duty on lumber is so low," observed *The Clinton Republican* of St. Johns, "amounting to about 8 per cent last year, while the average of the entire protected list was about 40 per cent, that its removal will make very little difference to the manufacturer, and no difference to the consumer."<sup>92</sup>

The concept of a continental economy that originated with the administration and became advocated by the pro-reciprocity press also included in its platform the opening of the Canadian market to American manufactured products. In early January Canadian negotiators refused to allow massive duty reductions in manufactured items, realizing the potential political problems this might have entailed. American negotiators, more concerned about reductions in natural and agricultural products, asked for minimal

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<sup>90</sup>*The Daily Tribune* (South Haven), June 27, 1911, p. 2.

<sup>91</sup>*The St. Johns News*, February 15, 1911, p. 2.

<sup>92</sup>*The Clinton Republican* (St. Johns), February 2, 1911, p. 4.

reductions in manufactured goods to appease a potentially hostile rural population. Michigan's urban, pro-reciprocity newspapers rejoiced at the prospect of freer access to the Canadian market. The *Detroit Free-Press* believed that "it [the agreement] increases the possibilities of exporting the products of Detroit factories."<sup>93</sup> Michigan manufacturing centers would find in Canada a developing agricultural and raw material economy needing the industrial strength of the United States to fully develop the potential of the Canadian northwest. This potential market appealed to many as *The Niles Daily Sun* gleefully observed, "When the vast northwest territory is fully populated, as it bids fair soon to be, what a market it will afford American manufacturers."<sup>94</sup> Some in the anti-reciprocity press questioned the need to open the Canadian market for American manufacturers. "You say we can ship in our...automobiles," declared *The Northville Record*, "well we don't want to. Can't make enough autos now to supply the United States demand."<sup>95</sup> For many in the anti-reciprocity press the American market for agricultural and manufacturing products still needed further development under the protectionist system.

One additional area that apparently fit into the continental economy scheme related to American agricultural products finding an outlet in Canada. Michigan farmers joined the anti-reciprocity press in condemning this as an absurd idea. Canada, a predominately agricultural country with few major metropolitan centers and a total population of approximately 9,000,000, obviously would have little

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<sup>93</sup>*Detroit Free Press*, January 27, 1911, p. 4.

<sup>94</sup>*The Niles Daily Sun*, February 2, 1911, p. 1.

<sup>95</sup>*The Northville Record*, February 3, 1911, p. 4.



need for American agricultural products. Pro-reciprocity newspapers countered with the argument that the Michigan farmer produced many agricultural goods that often complemented those raised by the Canadian farmer in their harsh northern climates. The *Escanaba Daily Mirror* gave a detailed example of an agricultural product that fit into this category:

It is noted in trade reports that a considerable quantity of fresh eggs are now finding their way across the Canadian border, to meet the demand for this farm product among our friends in Canada. The egg season in Canada naturally begins somewhat later than it does in this land, due to the difference in climate, and as a consequence while eggs are plentiful and comparatively cheap in the northern states at the present time, the Canadian supply is not sufficient to meet the needs of the people of the country and they are in the market for American eggs...And more of these eggs would find a market in Canada were it not for the Canadian tariff of three cents per dozen levied on importations...In the same manner, when eggs are plentiful in Canada, and scarce and dear in this country, the American tariff of five cents per dozen prevents eggs from Canada being shipped to this country to supply the demand...Just now the American farmers are at an actual disadvantage in not being able to get rid of their surplus by sending it to Canada.<sup>96</sup>

Free trade in agricultural products between the two countries would end the massive price fluctuations farmers had experienced in the years leading up to the agreement. The increased Canadian demand, as well as supply, would stabilize prices and undermine speculative corners. Additional pro-reciprocity newspapers suggested that other products, ranging from western Michigan fruit to central Michigan

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<sup>96</sup>*Escanaba Daily Mirror*, March 13, 1911, p. 4.

potatoes, would follow this pattern. On this latter product *The Daily News* of Grand Rapids observed a recent occurrence that strengthened this argument:

In 1908 the American potato crop was short, especially in Michigan, and the price went over a dollar a bushel. Canada had a large crop, but the American duty of 25 cents a bushel...largely prevented importations. Tempted by these high prices, in 1909 American farmers paid exorbitant rates for seed to overplant, the result being such an overcrop that the price delivered on cars to Greenville and other Michigan primary markets slumped to 10 cents and below...There was meantime a good price for potatoes in the Canadian market, but the Canadian tariff of 20 cents a bushel...was sufficient to prevent American farmers benefiting therefrom.<sup>97</sup>

The Canadian market offered Michigan farmers a natural complement to the American market. The stability the Canadian market offered Michigan farmers compensated for any minor losses from the agreement's duty reductions.

Inherent behind the argument that an economic continental union would prove beneficial was the belief that Canadians were, for the most part, economically and socially the same as Americans. Michigan's pro-reciprocity newspapers believed that similarities in areas ranging from the wages of midwestern and Ontario paper mill workers to organizations like the Free Masons, confirmed the equivalence of Canadian and American societies. For many in the pro-reciprocity press these similarities alluded to something more far-reaching. The *Muskegon News Chronicle* considered the relationship:

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<sup>97</sup>*The Daily News* (Grand Rapids), February 1, 1911, p. 4.

remarkable when we...consider both peoples are from the same stock, that they use the same social and economic ideals and that they are very much alike as to the tolerance in respect of religion. The world's history shows, almost without exception, that where such condition's exist, the two peoples eventually become one...And if it turns out that reciprocity is good business, it is very likely that soon Uncle Sam and Miss Canada will be one, in body, soul and pocketbook - in all save the name.<sup>98</sup>

For many in the pro-reciprocity press, the economic and social similarities meant that some type of political union was inevitable. This unionist position differed greatly from the annexationism of the nineteenth century by suggesting that Canada would join the United States in mutual support of unification.<sup>99</sup>

The anti-reciprocity press divided on the issue of Canadian equality with the United States. A minority of anti-reciprocity newspapers argued that the similarities existed and political union appeared as a viable solution.<sup>100</sup> "We realize that in the Canadian," stated the *Mt. Clemens Monitor*,

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<sup>98</sup>*Muskegon News Chronicle*, March 14, 1911, p. 4.

<sup>99</sup>For further discussion of unionist thinking see Clements, pp. 33-34. For discussion of the impact American statements on annexationism and unionism had in Canada see Stewart, pp. 114-117 and Ellis pp. 109, 114, 146. Pro-reciprocity newspapers' unionist views strongly resembled the unionism of national leaders.

<sup>100</sup>Reciprocity scholars have long argued that the interest by reciprocity opponents, in annexation and political union, came from their desire to agitate British Canadians against the agreement. This agitation would lead to its eventual defeat in the Canadian elections of September. Difficulty arises however, when this argument is placed in the context of local newspaper opposition. Comments on political union by reciprocity opponents in the Senate, House, and even state legislatures were certainly heard by Canadians. On the other hand, an anti-reciprocity local newspaper with a circulation of five or ten thousand probably would have not been heard by the Canadian electorate. In addition, the number of anti-reciprocity newspapers that commented on this was relatively small enough to discount this as a tactic. See Clements, p. 38.



we are bringing into competition with our agriculture no cheap peon, and that in time the equilibrium will be restored...The friends and foes of reciprocity in this country would send up a unanimous shout of welcome if the whole of Canada will come right into the union. That's where it belongs, and is likely to be.<sup>101</sup>

Most in the anti-reciprocity press thought of the Canadian farmer along the lines of the European peasant. A cheaper Canadian living standard translated into an essentially unfair advantage for the Canadian farmer over his American counterpart. Anti-reciprocity newspapers like the *Alcona County Herald* believed that "The Canadian farmer has the advantage of his American competitor in cheaper lands, cheaper wages, and a lower cost to the consumer for clothing and foodstuffs."<sup>102</sup> The *Herald* echoed the long-held Republican, protectionist tariff policy, that supposedly ensured American farmers and laborers against the pauper labor conditions of Europe.

The pro-reciprocity press pointed out that Canadian economic, social, and political conditions being just like the United States' conditions meant that American tariff policy toward Canada was essentially different than that with the nations of Europe. "The arguments that have impelled us to establish heavy tariff duties with European countries," declared *The Pontiac Press-Gazette*,

do not nor never have applied to Canada. Situated at our very door, enjoying natural resources needed in our development and possessing a market for our

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<sup>101</sup>*Mt. Clemens Monitor*, July 28, 1911, p. 4.

<sup>102</sup>*The Alcona County Herald* (Lincoln), May 12, 1911, p. 1.

manufactured goods, Canada has been shown, instead of favoritism, the same cold shoulder that has guided our relations with cheap labor nations abroad.<sup>103</sup>

This issue of continental unity and economy, secondary for many in the anti-reciprocity press, provided the crux of the pro-reciprocity press' argument. In most cases, local and individual interests' concerns must take a back seat to the good of the country.

Another economic issue that garnered much attention in the Michigan press concentrated on the possible detrimental effect of the agreement on the Michigan farmer. The Michigan State Grange, local farming organizations, farmers, and the anti-reciprocity press, believed that this issue provided the foundation for their entire case against the agreement. In addition, these groups considered the agreement as essentially unfair to the farmer because it placed many agricultural products on the free list and lowered few duties on the products the farmer purchased.

The concern over the agreement's impact on the Michigan farmer originated in the duty free importation of Canadian agricultural goods mandated by the agreement. The belief that surplus Canadian agricultural products, most notably wheat, would flood the American market instead of heading to European markets, deeply concerned those in the anti-reciprocity press. A rising supply in the United States would lead to a subsequent decline in the prices paid for American agricultural products. The anti-reciprocity, *Alcona County Herald*, sardonically commented, "Canada's surplus in agricultural products is about 50% and that of the United States

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<sup>103</sup>*The Pontiac Press-Gazette*, January 27, 1911, p. 4.

about 7%. With this surplus rushed to the American market, would it be reasonable to suppose that the prices paid the farmer would be the same?"<sup>104</sup> Evidence to support these conclusions about price reductions visibly existed in markets before the agreement's passage. "Wheat in Minneapolis," observed *The Clinton Republican*,

dropped over nine cents per bushel in the first three weeks of Canadian reciprocity agitation. Beans and eggs also took a big drop...The Republican will venture the prediction that values on all farm products will average much lower the coming year if the so-called reciprocity is adopted. The agitation has already cost our farmers a vast amount of money.<sup>105</sup>

The potential increase in the American supply of agricultural products without an equally dramatic rise in the American demand for these products translated into lower prices for Michigan farmers.

Pro-reciprocity newspapers declared that the Michigan farmer had nothing to fear from the influx of a Canadian surplus. In terms of production, Canadian agriculture offered little challenge to the American agricultural juggernaut. A trickle of Canadian agricultural products would have little effect on the supply and price in the United States. The *Hartford Day Spring* placed the Canadian surplus in discernible terms: "So far as the surplus farm products which Canada might send to the United States are concerned, New York city would take most of them for luncheon and still call for practically their regular allotment of American crops."<sup>106</sup> Unwillingness to

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<sup>104</sup>*Alcona County Herald* (Lincoln), May 12, 1911, p. 1.

<sup>105</sup>*The Clinton Republican* (St. Johns), March 2, 1911, p. 6.

<sup>106</sup>*Hartford Day Spring*, May 17, 1911, p. 4.

accept and ignorance to these facts by reciprocity opponents frustrated many reciprocity proponents. "Note this colloquy before the ways and means committee of the house," stated *The Evening Copper Journal* of Hancock,

Mr. R.P. Grant of Watertown has repeatedly told the committee that the Canadian agreement would ruin the dairy business, in the same spirit in which Mr. Warner the Farmington cheese-manufacturer, has been trying to have his Michigan brethren believe. After Congressman Hill of Connecticut had listened to Mr. Grant's assertions for some time he offered this challenge: "Do you know the amount of butter Canada exports to the United States or to any other country?" "No," replied Mr. Grant. "Do you know anything about the figures on Canadian dairy products?" "No," replied the witness a second time. "Then," asked Mr. Hill "on what grounds do you oppose this agreement?" The incident is significant because it fairly represents the attitude of mind of the vast majority of men who are frightened lest the free exchange of farm products with Canada will put the American farmer out of business...Canada's surplus barley has averaged 2,331,000 bushels for the last three years. The United States raised 162,000,000 bushels of barley last year, For the last twenty years the annual crop variation in our barley crop has materially exceeded the Canadian surplus. A great bugaboo that isn't it! Canada has increased her wheat exports from an average of 15,000,000 bushel a year to an average of 40,000,000 bushels in the last five years; but her average surplus in recent years is only 6 percent of the crop of the United States and her present annual exports are less than the yearly variation in our crop. Another great bugaboo!<sup>107</sup>

Concerns raised by farmers and the anti-reciprocity press over the possible flooding of the American market simply had no merit. The

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<sup>107</sup>*The Evening Copper Journal* (Hancock), February 13, 1911, p. 4.



only impact Canadian agricultural products would have in the American market came from the price stability they would offer farmers and consumers.

Pro-reciprocity newspapers also took a decidedly more global view of market forces, when they claimed that the agreement would not lower the prices Michigan farmers received for their products. Canada and the United States, both agricultural exporting countries, depended on markets overseas to set prices on certain agricultural products. The most notable case involved the Liverpool market for wheat. "The Liverpool market regulates the price of wheat," remarked *The Hillsdale Daily*, "the big wheat crop of Canada can be dumped into Liverpool, where it comes in open competition with the wheat of the United States, and the quantity and the demand makes the price."<sup>108</sup> Therefore, the farmer, currently competing with Canada in a free market in Liverpool, did not need protection in the United States market. Prices for wheat and other internationally traded products would remain the same as the useless tariff wall between the United States and Canada disappeared. The *Detroit Free-Press* pondered a certain scenario:

If it could be imagined that immediately upon securing reciprocity with this country she [Canada] would refuse to send another dollars worth of it [wheat] to Great Britain and ship it all to the United States, which is all that could be imagined, it would simply result in diverting our own products from home consumption to the British market, and we should gain the customers whom the Canadians had abandoned...In short, in respect to food, the whole world is one great stomach.<sup>109</sup>

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<sup>108</sup>*The Hillsdale Daily*, March 17, 1911, p. 2.

<sup>109</sup>*Detroit Free Press*, June 30, 1911, p. 4.

The Michigan farmer had nothing to fear from a Canadian counterpart that sold his product at essentially the same price to essentially the same markets.

The anti-reciprocity campaign in Michigan quickly took issue with the world market view. They believed that Michigan farmers received substantially higher prices for their products than their Canadian counterparts. N.P. Hull pointed out that "The price of wheat in this country will average ten or twelve cents a bushel higher than wheat of a similar grade in Canada. This ought to disprove the claim that the price of wheat is governed by the Liverpool market."<sup>110</sup> While pro-reciprocity newspapers believed these differences came from transportation costs to market, anti-reciprocity newspapers concluded that these differences stemmed from the cheaper Canadian living standard. "We hope that the standing difference in the price of wheat," commented *The Ypsilanti Daily Press*,

between Minneapolis and Winnipeg of ten cents a bushel may in reality simply represent the cost of transportation. But we are very fearful that it does not represent simply the cost of transportation. If it does not, we hope that the cheap wheat grown on the rich, but cheap virgin soil of Canada and delivered to the Minneapolis mills in competition with the dearer wheat grown on this side of the line may not work a damage to the farmers.<sup>111</sup>

Since the Canadian farmer had a lower standard of living, he could

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<sup>110</sup>*Kalamazoo Telegraph-Press*, June 3, 1911, p. 11.

<sup>111</sup>*Ypsilanti Daily Press*, July 25, 1911, p. 4.

sell his product at a lower price than his American counterpart and still make a profit.

Pro-reciprocity newspapers considered this bluster over price differences by the opponents of the agreement as based more on fiction than truth. To counter the vagueness of their anti-reciprocity counterparts, many pro-reciprocity newspapers sought concrete examples of price similarities in Canada and the United States. Instead of comparing prices at Winnipeg and Minneapolis, these proponents of the agreement compared local market prices where the farmer sold his product. *The Allegan Gazette* studied prices in certain Michigan and Ontario cities (see Table 5.1):

In hope to quiet the apprehension many farmers feel over the Canadian reciprocity agreement, because they fear a decline in prices of farm produce if free importation of it from Canada is provided, the following quotations from market reports in Michigan and Canadian papers of the dates stated are given. It will be noted that in many instances the Canadian prices are higher than those in Michigan, and in but few instances are lower. Besides, the Canadian prices show quite as much fluctuation as do our own, indicating that they are subject to the effects of seasons and of varying supply and demand.<sup>112</sup>

Prices often were comparable across the board in products ranging from grains like wheat and oats to perishables like butter, eggs, and cheese. The Ontario markets consistently had higher prices than the Charlotte market and lower prices than the Pontiac market. The placement of the Canadian markets in between these two Michigan markets bolstered pro-reciprocity arguments over price similarities.

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<sup>112</sup>Ibid.

Table 1  
Michigan and Ontario Agricultural Prices in 1910-1911<sup>113</sup>

	July 1910			
	Pontiac		Windsor	
Wheat	\$1.02		\$1.09	
Potatoes	20¢		40¢	
Rye	70¢		68¢	
Oats	48¢		39¢	
Cheese	16¢		12¢	
Butter	27¢		22¢	
Eggs	18¢		20¢	
Chickens	55¢		50¢	
Hay	\$15		\$11	
	February 1911			
	Michigan		Ontario	
	Pontiac	Charlotte	Windsor	Welland
Wheat	\$1	83¢	87¢	85¢
Rye	90¢	---	68¢	---
Barley	\$1.60	---	\$1.34	---
Buckwheat	95¢	---	90¢	---
Oats	43¢	28¢	40¢	35¢
Butter	24¢	14 to 18¢	26¢	25¢
Eggs	28¢	12¢	28¢	25¢
Cheese	28¢	---	12¢	---
Corn	65¢	55¢	60¢	60¢
Hay	\$18 & \$20	---	\$12 & \$13	---
Straw	\$12	---	\$7.50	---
Potatoes	50¢	35¢	75¢	60¢
Steers	---	3 1/2 to 4 1/2¢	---	7¢
Hogs	---	9 1/2¢	---	9 1/2¢
Veal calves	---	10 to 11¢	---	10 to 12¢
Chickens	---	12 to 14¢	---	17¢

<sup>113</sup>*The Allegan Gazette*, March 25, 1911, p. 2. *The Gazette* studied Pontiac and Windsor markets on July 1, 1910 and February 11, 1911. The Charlotte and Welland market surveys were taken on February 21, 1911.

Anti-reciprocity newspapers complained that the agreement unfairly singled out the farmer. The farmer bore the brunt of the tariff reductions, while American manufacturers escaped relatively unscathed. The American farmer would have to sell his product in a free market and purchase his supplies in a protected market. As mentioned earlier, anti-reciprocity newspapers believed that the duty free entrance of Canadian agricultural goods would lower the prices paid for the American farmer's goods, while the prices for the products he needed remained high behind a protective tariff. The Taft Administration had realized this potential problem during negotiations. It quickly became apparent to American negotiators that any large scale duty reductions on manufactured items would not be palatable to Canadian negotiators concerned with the development of their infant industries. Anti-reciprocity newspapers pounced on this issue and declared that if Canada did not want to open her industrial market to American farmers for certain advantages in the American agricultural market, then the agreement was not acceptable nor equitable.

A substantial majority of anti-reciprocity newspapers devoted a considerable amount of attention to the agreement's perceived inequities. The *Hanover-Horton Local*, commenting for the first time in 1911 on a national issue, bluntly stated, "The bill is strangely partial to the manufacturer and prejudicial to the American farmer."<sup>114</sup> This prejudice against the American farmer would prove costly in the long run as his living standard would decline. *The Northville Record* satirically commented on the agreement's impact

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<sup>114</sup>*Hanover-Horton Local*, May 12, 1911, p. 4.

from the perspective of the American manufacturer:

Gee! but this Reciprocity business would be a good thing for us manufacturers. Take off the tariff on all farm products...That will force down the price of the Michigan farmers [*sic*] product, and when the farmer wants to buy clothing, groceries, household goods, milk cans and tin pails, etc., we will soak him good and plenty with the aid of a protective tariff. Great! Isn't it. Free trade for all the farmer has to sell and a tariff on all he buys...Of course he will sell his products for 20 to 30 per cent less and he will pay the same old price for what he buys and his farm will drop in value 20 per cent, but that's all right, he will be the easy mark.<sup>115</sup>

Many anti-reciprocity newspapers, organizations, politicians, and farmers considered the policy of protection as vital to the nation's progress. The agreement took away one part of the protectionist wall and, in so doing, threatened to undermine American industrial and agricultural development. Many others in the anti-reciprocity movement determined that the "raw deal" the farmer received was reversible if more reductions came on the products used by the farmer, the *Mt. Clemens Monitor* commented, "Off with the duties on automobiles, on products of soda ash, on woolen manufacturers, on drugs, on boots and shoes, on sugar. If the farmer is to go on the free list because his products are high in price (although that may be questioned), then let the other fellows come in and 'take theirs.' The argument is just as good one way as it is the other."<sup>116</sup> Protectionist Republicans joined Democratic free-traders in demanding a fair deal. Protection for all (preferable to most Republican newspapers) or

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<sup>115</sup>*The Northville Record*, February 10, 1911, p. 4.

<sup>116</sup>*Mt. Clemens Monitor*, February 3, 1911, p. 4.

protection for none, became the cry of the anti-reciprocity campaign.

Michigan's pro-reciprocity newspapers took issue with the contention that the agreement unfairly discriminated against the Michigan farmer. They argued that the agreement offered numerous reductions on manufactured goods which would translate into enormous benefits for the farmer. "Opponents of the ratification of the reciprocity agreement with Canada have misrepresented it," commented the *Ludington Record-Appeal*,

as a treaty which will lower the duty on commodities which the American farmer has to sell, but not on the commodities which he has to buy...[but] the United States rate is reduced from 45 to 20 per cent, on...agricultural implements...our rates on farm wagons as well as on traction engines...are lowered...Cream separators are manufactured by Canada in large quantities, but are excluded from our market by a duty of 45 per cent...this duty has been abolished...In the manufacture of wire fencing Canada has made considerable progress, and therefore galvanized wire and barbed wire are made free by the agreement, for the benefit of our rural population...The farmer above all else, however, has been demanding for years that the timber resources of Canada, especially in so far as available for building homes, shall be admitted into the United States free. This is done under the agreement.<sup>117</sup>

Pro-reciprocity newspapers believed that certain trusts (e.g., paper, lumber, etc.), as well as the Grange leadership, deceived the farmer into accepting that the agreement would prove detrimental to their interests, when in fact, the agreement fulfilled many of their long-standing desires for tariff reductions. In essence, the agreement

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<sup>117</sup>*Ludington Record-Appeal*, April 13, 1911, p. 2.

offered farmers something better than a fair deal.

Anti-reciprocity newspapers discounted the effects of these duty reductions. They believed the reductions offered little or no tangible benefits to the farmers of Michigan. *The Pigeon Progress* observed that farmers considered "The pretended reduction of duties on the Canadian manufacturers as a 'fraud and a sham' and laugh at the attempt to fool them with the removal of duty on steel wire fencing when Canada produces practically none of these for export."<sup>118</sup> In addition, anti-reciprocity newspapers downplayed the importance of reducing the duty on lumber. *The Clinton Republican* of St. Johns claimed that "the duty on lumber is so low...that its removal will make very little difference...to the consumer."<sup>119</sup> Therefore, a realistic portrayal of the industrial situation in Canada, as well as the American tariff situation with Canada, would reveal the inaccuracies of the reciprocity proponents' claims.

Pro-reciprocity newspapers argued that their major problem with the agricultural opposition was the inherent selfishness of their position. The "what's in it for us" attitude by opponents of the agreement irked many in the pro-reciprocity press of Michigan. *The Northville Record*, an anti-reciprocity sheet, illustrated this selfish economic view: "...'acting on the theory of self preservation' and 'who is who' in a horse trade, we can't for the life of us see where us fellers in the Second Congressional district can gain a cent's worth and we can see where we stand to lose."<sup>120</sup> The pro-reciprocity press argued that views such as these divided the nation by placing

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<sup>118</sup>*The Pigeon Progress*, March 10, 1911, p. 1.

<sup>119</sup>*The Clinton Republican* (St. Johns), February 2, 1911, p. 4.

<sup>120</sup>*The Northville Record*, February 3, 1911, p. 4.



selfish local interests above those interests of the nation as a whole.

"The American farmer has long pursued a selfish policy," commented *The Evening Copper Journal* of Hancock,

Grown fat upon lands which in many cases were given him by our government, he has persisted in producing as little as was deemed proper...Upon a 160 acre farm he has grown less than a Belgian or German farmer would grown on ten, but at the same time has asked that the American people pay him quite as much for the sixteenth part as his brother on the other side of the ocean receives for the whole.<sup>121</sup>

For the good of the nation, the farmer could no longer expect the consumer to pay for his inefficient and selfish policies.

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<sup>121</sup>*The Evening Copper Journal* (Hancock), March 4, 1911, p. 4.

## Chapter V

### Political and Regional Responses

Contemporaries of the debate as well as reciprocity scholars have tended to divide the anti-reciprocity and pro-reciprocity camps into two socioeconomic groups. The conflict pitted the rural anti-reciprocity farming communities against the urban pro-reciprocity masses seeking cheaper foodstuffs. To some degree, the argument holds up to the scrutiny of historical research. Most Michigan farming communities argued aggressively against the agreement for the economic reasons stated above. Most of the cities and larger towns in Michigan argued vehemently for the agreement.

In the context of this perceived urban versus rural conflict, newspapers defined their positions by taking into account their own interests as well as the generic definition of their communities' interests. By this definition, unanimous or near unanimous support should have come from urban newspapers. Upon examining sixty Michigan newspapers in cities of 5,000 or more, fifty-three, or eighty-eight per cent, favored the agreement. This overwhelming response in favor of the agreement certainly corresponded with the perception that most urban dwellers favored the agreement. Michigan's rural newspapers encountered a much more complex situation. As a result, rural newspapers lacked the harmony of their urban counterparts. Of seventy-nine newspapers studied in Michigan towns and smaller cities of less than 5,000, fifty-one, or sixty-two per cent favored the agreement. These results undermined two very different contentions. First, the unanimity of

the press mentioned by Ellis and other reciprocity scholars, obviously did not hold up to closer scrutiny. Second, rural newspapers obviously did not fit neatly into the urban pro-reciprocity versus rural anti-reciprocity distinctions. In so doing they often reflected the volatile and diverse opinions of their rural readers. The agreement's provision for free newsprint certainly influenced rural publishers' views, but this alone did not explain why many still opposed the agreement and why many others snubbed their anti-reciprocity readers by taking a pro-reciprocity position. The failure of Michigan's rural newspapers to fit into either of the clearly defined roles above suggests the need for a further evaluation of the impact of politics and local interests on the rural, and to some degree urban, publisher.

Partisan politics had much to do with a Michigan newspaper's position as well as how it went about defending the position it had taken. The agreement received three different political evaluations from Michigan newspapers. Stand-pat Republican newspapers considered the agreement the ultimate betrayal of the protectionist system, which had so successfully built the United States home market. For Democratic newspapers, the agreement symbolized the beginning of the end for the Republican protectionist system. In addition, the agreement signaled a shift in the Republican party toward the free trade philosophies endorsed by the Democratic party. Finally, Independent newspapers, usually from the progressive wing of the Republican party, considered the agreement in harmony with their approach that sought to lower the tariff downward, while offering a revised and updated approach to the

protectionist system of the nineteenth century.<sup>122</sup>

Newspapers throughout the United States polled their colleagues during the debate in an attempt to define the attitudes of the nation's press as well as its readers. *The Chicago Tribune* and the *Burlington (Vt.) Free Press* led the way by polling newspapers in their respective regions. A similar poll, taken by the *Grand Rapids Herald*, studied the response of Michigan newspapers along political lines. *The Herald* canvassed the approximately six hundred newspapers in the state and received 369 responses. The poll discovered that 262 of the respondents, or seventy-one per cent, favored the agreement.<sup>123</sup> Pro-reciprocity newspapers clearly viewed this poll as reflective of the state's desire for a change in the tariff. Most, like the *Escanaba Daily Mirror*, expanded the scope of the study and declared that "the poll may be taken to correctly reflect public sentiment in Michigan on this subject."<sup>124</sup> In other words, local newspapers, familiar with local sentiment, would accurately represent that sentiment. Anti-reciprocity newspapers challenged these conclusions. *The Howard City Record* played down the results of the poll:

The Grand Rapids Herald must have a wonderful

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<sup>122</sup>Independent newspapers overwhelmingly supported tariff reform. In most cases these newspapers held progressive Republican beliefs, but in many cases these newspapers supported Democratic ideals and candidates. Examples of Democratic newspapers that labeled themselves Independent were the *Detroit Times* and *The Bay City Times*. In addition, not all of the state's progressive Republican newspapers considered themselves Independent, rather many retained their Republican affiliation. Examples of progressive newspapers that maintained a Republican label were numerous, see *The News-Palladium* of Benton Harbor and *The Allegan Gazette*.

<sup>123</sup>Numerous Michigan newspapers reprinted the results of *The Herald's* poll. This version came from the *Escanaba Daily Mirror*, March 16, 1911, p. 2.

<sup>124</sup>*Ibid.*

mathematician somewhere in hiding around its office. After statistics that only little over 300 of 600 Michigan editors had stated how they stand on Canadian Reciprocity as now proposed, will the Herald kindly explain how it deduced the alarming statement by a headwriter that 71 per cent of Michigan editors favor this particular brand of so called "reciprocity." It appears to The Record that this is a case of letting one's enthusiasm run away with them. So long as not even 71 per cent of the whole number replied and the Herald concedes that those who did reply were not anywhere near unanimous on the proposition what is the use of making this kind of play?<sup>125</sup>

Anti-reciprocity newspapers clearly saw fault in the accuracy of the poll. Even if the findings were accurate, they showed that a significant opposition to the agreement existed in the state. Categorizing Michigan newspapers further, along political lines, resulted in a better understanding of these differences in newspaper reaction.

The majority of Michigan newspapers considered themselves Republican. As a result, many Michigan newspapers needed to reconcile Taft's Canadian reciprocity agreement with the policies of nineteenth century protectionists James Blaine and William McKinley. Blaine and McKinley were the quintessential examples of extreme Republican protectionism. They advocated high tariffs as a way to develop the industrial strength of the United States as well as develop a strong home market for American farmers.

Inevitably, Republican newspapers developed different interpretations of the compatibility of the reciprocity agreement and

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<sup>125</sup>*The Howard City Record*, March 16, 1911, p. 4.

protection. A closer study of state Republican newspapers supports this contention. Of the eighty-seven Republican newspapers that proclaimed their positions, fifty-nine, or sixty-eight per cent favored the agreement, leaving nearly a third of the Republican newspapers opposed to the agreement. These statistics show striking similarity to the poll taken by *The Grand Rapids Herald*. *The Herald* declared: "Among partisan Republicans, 68 per cent favor the reciprocity treaty."<sup>126</sup> The theoretical debate over the direction of the Republican party had much to do with these divisions.

Pro-reciprocity Republican newspapers argued on two different fronts that the Canadian reciprocity agreement complemented the policy of protection. First, they argued that the nineteenth century policy of protection included reciprocity. *The News-Palladium* of Benton Harbor declared that "the Republican party from the days of Blaine, father of the reciprocity doctrine, down to the present time has declared in its platforms that it favored reciprocity, reciprocity as the hand maid of protection."<sup>127</sup> The theory of reciprocity traditionally entered into the Republican protectionist philosophy. Both of the party's stalwarts had long ago, as *The Big Rapids-Pioneer* pointed out, declared themselves in favor of reciprocity: "Theoretically the agreement is nothing more than what James G. Blaine argued for two decades ago, and what McKinley set his heart upon doing and was shot in cold blood as he was making a plea in its behalf."<sup>128</sup> In an attempt to show the obvious relationship Republican protectionists had with reciprocity, *The Daily Mining*

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<sup>126</sup>*The Escanaba Daily Mirror*, March 16, 1911, p. 2.

<sup>127</sup>*The News-Palladium* (Benton Harbor), February 4, 1911, p. 4.

<sup>128</sup>*The Big Rapids Pioneer*, May 9, 1911, p. 2.

*Journal of Marquette* brought out an interesting story:

City attorney Brown yesterday resurrected a Republican button, distributed in the presidential campaign of 1896, which has particular interest at this time in view of the opposition to the proposed reciprocity agreement with Canada by many old school Republicans. This button, used in the campaign preceding McKinley's election, bears the words, "Reciprocity and Protection," printed on the pearl...The inscription on the button shows that reciprocity is not a new principle with the Republican party, even in the high protective days of the McKinley bill.<sup>129</sup>

Those protectionists that opposed the reciprocity agreement with Canada could not logically defend their positions. Secondly, pro-reciprocity newspapers argued that Blaine and McKinley essentially never encountered the economic and political problems like those of 1911. The growing demand for agricultural and natural products had pushed national production to its limits. Taft adapted the protectionist policies of the nineteenth century to fit current and future needs. In addition, the popularity of tariff reform forced Republicans to rethink their protectionist policy. "It rather conserves Protection speaking now practically and politically," declared the *Menominee Herald Leader*, "because it grants the artisans and mechanics of this country an arrangement which they believe will afford them a wider market for their wares and thereby forestalls their hostility to Protection as a whole."<sup>130</sup> By appeasing the populace with smaller reductions, reciprocity would save protection.

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<sup>129</sup>*The Daily Mining Journal* (Marquette), February 18, 1911, p. 4.

<sup>130</sup>*Menominee Herald-Leader*, February 7, 1911, p. 2.

Anti-reciprocity Republican newspapers in Michigan considered the agreement an abandonment of the protectionist policy of the past. In their opinion, Blaine and McKinley endorsed reciprocity on commodities that did not come into direct competition with American products. The agreement lowered duties on numerous products grown or manufactured in both Canada and the United States. "This measure strikes at the root of the protective principle and is not likely to bring general prosperity," contended *The Howard City Record*,

Reciprocity died with the revered James G. Blaine; but the reciprocity advocated by Blaine was the genuine article. It was not tinctured with placing staples of the farm on the free list and granting in return lower duties in a few things imported but not used to any great extent by the United States.<sup>131</sup>

Abandoning the protection of the agricultural class had major political implications. *The Midland Republican* suggested that: "if a large element of the party sees the direct protection entirely removed from its class of products, it will surely insist that it be removed from other products. In other words, the farmers will demand that manufacturers be treated the same as themselves."<sup>132</sup> In contradiction to the pro-reciprocity claim that the agreement would defend protectionism against the rising tide of free trade, anti-reciprocity Republicans believed that this attempt at reciprocity would hasten the downfall of the protectionist system. Politically, the Republican party would lose its core constituency to a Democratic

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<sup>131</sup>*The Howard City Record*, February 2, 1911, p. 4.

<sup>132</sup>*The Midland Republican*, February 24, 1911, p. 4.



party that offered a fair deal.

The Democratic newspapers of Michigan overwhelmingly supported the agreement as a first step toward free trade. This study found only six newspapers that openly stated their Democratic philosophies. Five of these six newspapers, or eighty-three per cent, favored the agreement. The one paper that opposed the agreement considered it detrimental to its local paper making industry. These statistics compared favorably with those from *The Grand Rapids Herald*, which stated that seventy-nine per cent of Democratic newspapers in the state favored the agreement.<sup>133</sup>

The Democratic newspapers of Michigan argued that the agreement indicated a step in the right direction. *The Observer* of Grand Rapids suggested that "the idea embodied [in the agreement] is Democratic doctrine pure and simple"<sup>134</sup> *The Observer* continued by declaring: "Wtih [*sic.*] the Republicans reciprocity was to have been the beginning and end of tariff reform. With the Democrats it is but a beginning."<sup>135</sup> A beginning indeed, for the Democrats exploited the opportunity to gain politically from those opposed to the agreement because it unfairly discriminated against the farmer. They often echoed the sentiment that came from *The Ionia Standard*:

While the Democratic members in congress are willing to let President Taft have his reciprocity agreement with Canada, they want the country to have the benefit of its good features, shorn of its bad ones, and to that end a companion measure was passed, known as the "Farmers' Bill," which provides against the discriminations

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<sup>133</sup>*Escanaba Daily Mirror*, March 16, 1911, p. 2.

<sup>134</sup>*The Observer* (Grand Rapids), February 4, 1911, p. 2.

<sup>135</sup>*Ibid.*, April 3, 1911, p.2.

contained in the President's measure.<sup>136</sup>

The bill provided numerous reductions on products the farmer purchased. As a result, Democrats believed that farmers would prefer free trade in everything to the Republican reciprocity policy of free trade only on what they sold. *The Standard* concluded that "the chief ground of opposition was that it strikes a deadly blow at the principle of protection. If this is so, it would not be cause of great grief to a large portion of the American people, who are greatly tired with the uses to which the principle has been applied in furthering monopolistic privilege."<sup>137</sup> The Democratic newspapers in Michigan considered Taft's policy their own and attempted to one up him as he sought to respond to the American public's desire for tariff reform. Interestingly, Democratic newspapers in cities like Ionia and Kalamazoo supported the agreement, while their Republican counterparts in these cities opposed the agreement. With this in mind, it is obvious that partisan politics often influenced a newspaper's position on the reciprocity agreement, sometimes taking precedence over local economic concerns.

The Independent newspapers of Michigan represented a wide spectrum of political philosophies. However, two political philosophies dominated the Independent press of Michigan. The first group, tariff reform minded Republican newspapers, sought to avoid the Republican label because of its interchangeability with protectionism. Second, Democratic newspapers, in a strongly Republican state and locale, sought to avoid alienating any of its

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<sup>136</sup>*The Ionia Standard*, April 28, 1911, p. 4.

<sup>137</sup>*Ibid.*, July 28, 1911, p. 4.

readers with a Democratic label. This study discovered forty-six self-proclaimed Independent newspapers that commented on the agreement.<sup>138</sup> Of this number forty, or eighty-seven per cent, favored the agreement. These numbers differed slightly from those given by *The Grand Rapids Herald*, which calculated that seventy-eight per cent of Independents favored the agreement.<sup>139</sup> In general, Independent newspapers embraced the agreement as a step toward the destruction of large trusts, that had developed under high tariffs.

Moving beyond the realm of political philosophies and into the realm of political realities, it became obvious that the elections of 1910 and 1912 greatly influenced the thinking of the Taft Administration, politicians, organizations, and newspapers. Both elections entered the discussion in such a major way that they appeared in practically every newspaper that took a stand on the agreement.

The congressional elections of 1910 ended twenty-two years of Republican control of the House of Representatives. Progressive Republican newspapers, like *The Minden City Herald*, believed that as a result of the last elections the agreement took on added importance to the party:

Some of the old standpatters have not yet learned that we had an election last fall and that the Democrats will soon be in power because of the stupidity of the party to see what the people demanded. They still insist all is

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<sup>138</sup>*The Michigan Manual* provided the basis for the "Independent" label on newspapers. Each newspaper in the state reported its position to the manual compiled by the Secretary of State.

<sup>139</sup>*Escanaba Daily Mirror*, March 16, 1911, p. 2.

well. President Taft has the foresight to see what the people want and to provide for them. He knows to refuse their demands means party ruin.<sup>140</sup>

The failure of the Republican party in 1910, a result of their widely unpopular protectionist policies, signaled to many progressives in the party the need for action. The Republican party could either lead the way in lowering the tariff or lose control of the Senate and the Presidency in 1912.

Grudgingly, many protectionist newspapers in Michigan joined the crusade for reciprocity. *The Bay City Tribune*, a staunch protectionist daily, argued that the party must acquiesce to the public's demand for tariff reductions:

It is broadly claimed that the Democratic landslide last November was the result of the country being dissatisfied with the high cost of living and which the tariff was claimed as the chief contributory agent...The Tribune has always stood by the protectionist principle, but since...the voice of the country as manifested at the polls last November, sustains the contention regarding the tariff, we are about convinced that it would be an act of wisdom to adopt the Canadian reciprocity treaty...Since the people of the country have indicated by their votes a desire for lower tariff medicine, why not give it to them?<sup>141</sup>

The voters had demanded reform because they believed the tariff led to the high cost of living. Many protectionist newspapers, like *The Tribune*, believed that the Republican party needed to comply with this popular, though misconceived, mandate. Simply put, the voters had rejected protectionism and the country would soon

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<sup>140</sup>*The Minden City Herald*, February 10, 1911, p. 4.

<sup>141</sup>*The Bay City Tribune*, January 31, 1911, p. 2.

discover the consequences of such an action.

Democratic newspapers declared that the elections of 1910 were a clear signal to Congress of the necessity of changing the tariff. *The Monroe Democrat* commented on this voter revolution: "The people who elected the majority of the next Congress are entirely satisfied with the result and have ceased agitation. They are silently and patiently awaiting the execution of their mandate."<sup>142</sup> The reciprocity agreement with Canada was a first step in this direction.

Looming above all these discussions were the upcoming elections of 1912. Republican newspapers, concerned about the farmer vote in 1912, led the way in discussing the future political ramifications of the reciprocity agreement. Anti-reciprocity Republican newspapers declared that this reciprocity policy led to the desertion of the party faithful. *The Northville Record* predicted that urban wage earners would join farmers against the agreement after they realized that it would not reduce their cost of living: "The Republican party will find that the farmers and the wage earners will show in no uncertain manner their resentment of such action in the next national campaign."<sup>143</sup> Because of this resentment of the Taft Administration's action, "farmers will wake up and vote for a good new style democratic ticket that will stand for free trade on everything else."<sup>144</sup> In some cases though, the Democrats would also pay the price come election time. *The Alcona County Herald of Lincoln* declared in early March:

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<sup>142</sup>*The Monroe Democrat*, March 10, 1911, p. 2.

<sup>143</sup>*The Northville Record*, April 24, 1911, p. 4.

<sup>144</sup>*Ibid.*, February 4, 1911, p. 4.

Now that Congress has adjourned without acting upon the Reciprocity matter, it is up to the Democrats in the next Congress to take action on the measure. If it is passed by the Democratic votes, that party will find that whatever gains it has made in the "off year" will be lost in 1912 by their action, especially will this be true of those representing agricultural states.<sup>145</sup>

Any candidate, either Democratic or Republican, that supported the agreement, would encounter an agricultural voting block in the upcoming election that would oppose his reelection.

Many pro-reciprocity Republican newspapers also feared the political consequences of the agreement. The elections of 1912 appeared as an ominous sight on the horizon. The *Detroit Free-Press* concluded that "The rural voter who is going to be alienated from the party because of reciprocity has made up his mind that President Taft must be held to account for originating the policy, and will, unless he undergoes a change of heart in the next 18 months, vote with the Democrats next year to give voice to his resentment."<sup>146</sup> These concerns dissipated somewhat after the Canadians rejected the agreement in September. Relieved to hear of the agreement's failure, *The Oxford Leader* stated:

In our opinion Taft will gain politically by the Canadians' verdict...The farmers, always with the Republican party, who threatened to be swept away from Taft owing to their bitter animosity to his reciprocity program, having no cause of complaint, will line up for the Republican candidate as of yore...Taft has lost his fight for larger continental trade relations, but he has gained politically

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<sup>145</sup>*Alcona County Herald* (Lincoln), March 10, 1911, p. 4.

<sup>146</sup>*Detroit Free Press*, March 4, 1911, p. 4.

in his chances for a renomination and a re-election.<sup>147</sup>

The philosophy of the Michigan Republican press was to put the agreement behind them and proceed forward as if the agreement, and all of its political headaches, never existed.

An interesting facet of the study regarding Michigan newspapers and the Canadian Reciprocity Agreement originates in the distinctly local flavor of newspaper arguments. Up to this point, the vast majority of this paper's commentary has focused on the national issues that resonated throughout the Michigan press ranging from the high cost of living problem to the national political consequences of the agreement. A large minority of Michigan newspapers also addressed their concerns and hopes over the agreement's impact on their locality or region. This paper studied reaction to the agreement from six regions: the Thumb, southeast Michigan, central Michigan, western Michigan, northern Michigan, and the Upper Peninsula.<sup>148</sup> Each of these regions' unique local economies played a significant role in influencing a newspaper's stand on the agreement. Therefore, certain trends become apparent in each of the regions' newspapers.

Agriculturally, each of the regions often raised crops quite

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<sup>147</sup>*The Oxford Leader*, September 29, 1911, p. 4.

<sup>148</sup>In the discussion over regional responses to the agreement, newspapers in cities over 25,000 are studied separately from their respective regions. The interests of a newspaper in a city this large usually did not match those of the rest of the region's newspapers. Michigan's large urban dailies held interests, namely lower cost for foodstuffs and newsprint, similar to those of other urban newspapers throughout the nation. In addition, the agreement's expected benefits to numerous Michigan industries, led most of Michigan's urban newspapers to support the agreement for reasons unrelated to a region's interests as a whole. For examples, see the *Detroit Times* and *The Kalamazoo Gazette*.

different from the others. In western Michigan the fruit grower dominated the region's agricultural output, while in the Thumb farmers that raised beans found it a profitable choice. The newspapers and farmers in these regions also differed greatly in their response to the agreement. From vehement opposition to tacit disapproval to cautious endorsement, each of these agricultural regions responded in its own way to the agreement.

Newspapers in the Thumb strongly opposed the agreement. Of the ten newspapers studied in this region, only three, or thirty per cent, favored the agreement. The Thumb produced a wide range of products ranging from wheat to dairy products. The reciprocity agreement lowered duties on most of the products they raised. This meant that Ontario farmers across Lake Huron, who raised similar products to the farmers of the Thumb, had free access to the primary market of the Thumb region, Detroit. "In Canada we will find that the principle argument in favor of reciprocity is that it will benefit the Canadian farmer," observed *The Brown City Banner*,

Thinking farmers must conclude that it cannot benefit the Canadian farmer by giving him access to Michigan markets without reducing the price to the Michigan farmer, which will result from oversupply...So-called reciprocity will ruin the market of the Michigan farmer on peas and barley and reduce the price on rye.<sup>149</sup>

The predicted flooding of the Michigan marketplace with surplus Canadian goods would be especially damaging to the profits of farmers in the Thumb. The newspapers in this region held closely to

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<sup>149</sup>*The Brown City Banner*, April 28, 1911, Suppl.



the argument that the Canadian farmer had the advantages of cheaper land and wages as well as a lower tariff. The agreement seemed to threaten the future of the expanding sugar beet industry in the Thumb. *The Huron County Tribune* of Bad Axe commented on the possible free entry of sugar beets: "The question is important to the beet sugar companies of Canada as well as Michigan. If beets are on the free list it will mean much more competition for the companies."<sup>150</sup> Canadian companies received far less for their product and the agreement would result in declining prices for the Michigan sugar beet industry to the levels of their Canadian counterparts. The few newspapers that favored the agreement in the Thumb also showed concern for the farmer's welfare. In general, they hoped the Administration would address the concerns of the region's farmers. *The Deckerville Recorder* believed that: "If President Taft and his reciprocity supporters would only give Michigan farmers a little reciprocity on the things he has to buy we don't know of anybody who would register any particular kick on the reciprocity scheme."<sup>151</sup> *The Recorder*, in an editorial entitled "Reciprocity vs. \$13.00 Hay," commented,

In the face of the adoption of the reciprocity pact by congress and favorable prospects for its adoption by the Canadians the present price of hay should effectually dispel the grave fears which have been instilled into the minds of Michigan farmers...A Wheatland township farmer has just disposed of this season's crop of hay consisting of 200 tons at the record-breaking price at the season's opening of \$13.00 per ton. This with the general strengthening of the market on the various products of

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<sup>150</sup>*The Huron County Tribune* (Bad Axe), May 19, 1911, p. 3.

<sup>151</sup>*The Deckerville Recorder*, February 17, 1911, p. 2.

Michigan farms should leave little to be feared from Canadian reciprocity.<sup>152</sup>

Instead of depressing the local economy as others in the region predicted, the agreement would actually have little or no impact on the Thumb's economy.

Another region that possessed a significant number of newspapers opposed to the agreement was the southeast region. This study reviewed fourteen newspapers in the region and discovered that nine, or sixty-four per cent, favored the agreement. The opposition to the agreement appears relatively minor when taking into consideration the fact that many of the communities which these newspapers represented depended heavily on agriculture and their control of the Detroit market. "It seems to us that farmers are discriminated against," observed *The Hudson Post*, "and as Lenawee and Hillsdale counties are agricultural, that our friends are hardly treated fairly."<sup>153</sup> Anti-reciprocity newspapers in this region made the perceived inequities of the agreement the foundation of their opposition. *The Northville Record* asked: "What have you bloomin gents on t'other side of the river got to offer? You propose to send in a million tons or more of hay free where you now pay a \$3 per duty. Why wouldn't that other million ton duty free tend to lower the price on the Michigan product? Why wouldn't the six cents per dozen on eggs tend to reduce the price of Michigan grown eggs?"<sup>154</sup> The agricultural products Ontario farmers would

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<sup>152</sup>Ibid., August 4, 1911, p. 2.

<sup>153</sup>*The Hudson Post*, April 7, 1911, p. 4.

<sup>154</sup>*The Northville Record*, February 3, 1911, p. 4.

send into Michigan markets would considerably lower the prices paid to Michigan farmers. The prices for these products did not come from a world market price, but rather they depended on the local supply and demand in markets like Detroit and Pontiac. The Ontario farmer had long sent his product to Michigan with the tariff added to the price. Eliminating the tariff therefore, meant a reduction in prices to the levels the Canadian farmers truly received without the tariff.

The large number of pro-reciprocity newspapers in the southeast region may have been a direct result of the numerous towns and smaller cities that would have directly benefited from the agreement's enactment. The opening of the Canadian market to American industrial products as well as the possibility of gaining access to cheaper raw materials, both appealed to the region's industrialists. Adrian, with its significant steel fence factories, applauded the elimination of the duty on wire fencing. The agreement offered them the countless benefits of gaining access to a nearby market that needed their product. Hillsdale's furniture manufacturers, interested in lowering their production costs, welcomed the agreement's duty reductions on lumber. However significant many of these industries were to the region, agricultural concerns still dominated many of the discussions. The region's pro-reciprocity newspapers argued that the agreement benefitted farmers and that many of the region's farmers favored the agreement. The reasoning for this position originated in the strong presence and influence of the Grange in the region.<sup>155</sup> They

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<sup>155</sup>The Grange had numerous local chapters in the region. Lenawee County,

attempted to convince the local farmer that his views and those of the Grange were not always in harmony. The region's pro-reciprocity newspapers repeatedly attempted to undermine and discredit the Grange. The *Monroe Democrat* explained the realities of the Grange's organized opposition:

The admission of the...lobbyists, who have been engineering the protest of the "farmers" against the Canadian reciprocity agreement before the senate finance committee shed a significant illumination on the campaign against the bill. The disclosure that they looked to such eminent agriculturalists as the lumber trust, such industrious farmers as the pulp trust...for financial assistance in promoting the 'farmers' campaign may indicate an unexpectedly altruistic strain in these corporations or, which seems more probable, that these manufacturing interests were the tail that was wagging the farmer dog. Inquiry as to the extent of the protest by the farmers' organizations, membership and so forth, led to the further admission that the opposition was originated and confined largely to the circle of officials in those organizations. Out of this community of interest the "publicity promoters" have evolved the supposedly dominating protest of the great body of American farmers. Considered as a demonstration of publicity promotion it was impressive, but as evidence of the real attitude of the real farmers to the Canadian pact it has now been shown to be worthless<sup>156</sup>

The region's pro-reciprocity newspapers continually criticized the Grange leadership and its association with eastern manufacturers. Although many Michigan farmers rejected the views of their leaders, others still blindly accepted the Grange arguments over the

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with 34 ponoma granges, had the largest number of any county in the state. In addition, Hillsdale (23), Washtenaw (12), and Oakland (13) counties had a significant number of grangers.

<sup>156</sup>*Monroe Democrat*, June 6, 1911, p. 2.

agreement's detrimental effects. Through education, most notably in local newspapers, these farmers would realize the beneficial aspects of the agreement.

The central region of Michigan provided another example of the divisions in the Michigan press over the merits of the agreement. Of the thirty-four newspapers studied, twenty-two, or sixty-five per cent, favored the agreement. Much like the southeast region, newspapers in towns and smaller cities that had industries that directly benefitted from the agreement, often supported it. Big Rapids possessed furniture and wood products industries that would have enjoyed the benefits of free lumber. The local newspaper, *The Big Rapids Pioneer*, wholeheartedly supported the agreement. The region's agricultural towns that had little or no industry, often, but not always, opposed the agreement.<sup>157</sup> Towns like Ithaca, which provided numerous services for local farmers ranging from creameries to agricultural supplies, found many reasons to oppose the agreement. The region consisted of agricultural communities that raised a wide range of products ranging from dairy products in Ionia to corn and wheat in Midland. The focus of debate in the region centered on two aspects. First, the concern that the farmer would bear a tremendous burden, again occupied much of the discussion. Secondly, the political effects of the agreement on the Republican

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<sup>157</sup>To declare that all rural newspapers opposed the agreement is certainly incorrect. In this region, newspapers in Springport, Frankenmuth, Durand, and other non-industrial towns, supported the agreement. However, the majority of non-industrial towns in the region opposed the agreement. Likewise, the *Charlotte Tribune* and *Clinton Republican* of St. Johns opposed the agreement even though it promised benefits to industries in their respective towns. The difficulty of categorizing any absolutes in newspaper response is apparent.

party also garnered much attention.

Anti-reciprocity newspapers in the region reiterated concerns over the effect of the agreement on the farmer. *The Clinton Republican* of St. Johns commented that local hay farmers tended to believe that if "the proposed Canadian reciprocity treaty with Canada is adopted, it will cost Michigan farmers from \$3 to \$4 per ton. The prospects of the treaty has already cost the farmers a very large sum."<sup>158</sup> The region's pro-reciprocity newspapers defended the agreement against accusations that it would prove injurious to the region's farmers. The *Hastings Banner* attempted to quell the fears of local farmers: "If it shall work harm to the farmers of either country, the hardships need not be long endured. The treaty provides that it can be terminated at any time by either party to the agreement. Under such a condition no one need to fear anything calamitous from Canadian reciprocity."<sup>159</sup> Unlike the positions taken by other regions' pro-reciprocity newspapers, the central region's pro-reciprocity newspapers understood the reality of local farmers' opposition. *The Evening Argus* of Owosso commented along these lines: "Canadian reciprocity which is now being agitated all over our country does not have many supporters in this locality...Some who planned to build barns and hire help for the coming season, are loath to carry out plans till the question is settled."<sup>160</sup> Pro-reciprocity newspapers generally conceded that farmers opposed the agreement, but they suggested that the agreement's enactment would prove the baselessness of the farmers' concerns.

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<sup>158</sup>*The Clinton Republican* (St. Johns), March 16, 1911, p. 6.

<sup>159</sup>*Hastings Banner*, June 29, 1911, p. 4.

<sup>160</sup>*The Evening Argus* (Owosso), February 9, 1911, p. 3.

In the central region, the agreement's impact on the upcoming Republican campaign for 1912 also garnered much attention from newspapers on both sides of the issue. The pro-reciprocity, *The Evening Argus* of Owosso, evaluated the potential political problems: "There seems to be one thing certain: That President Taft's advocacy of Reciprocity has cost him many friends among the farmers. Here [if] the nomination for a republican candidate for president [were] the order of business for tomorrow, practically every farmer and small-town delegate would be against the present incumbent."<sup>161</sup> The anti-reciprocity, *The Clinton Republican* of St. Johns, warned: "Mr. Taft nor any other republican cannot be elected president without the farmer vote."<sup>162</sup> The deep interest shown by region's newspapers in the political ramifications of this agreement correlated with the predominance of Republican newspapers in the region. Nearly three out of four newspapers in the region held to some form of Republican principles. The potential for a political disaster, as a result of the agreement, on national, state, and local Republicans deeply concerned those in the Republican press of central Michigan.

Western Michigan newspapers held remarkably similar views toward the agreement. This study reviewed twenty-five newspapers in the region and discovered that twenty-two, or eighty-eight per cent, favored the agreement. Often based in agricultural communities, the positions of these pro-reciprocity newspapers further undermined the assumption of a unified rural press opposed to the agreement. The few newspapers in the region that opposed

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<sup>161</sup>Ibid., February 16, 1911, p. 6.

<sup>162</sup>*The Clinton Republican* (St. Johns), May 11, 1911, p. 4.

the agreement did not possess the fervor of those in the Thumb, central, or southeast regions of Michigan. Their infrequent arguments against the agreement focused on national issues and they failed to mention any local concerns.

Pro-reciprocity newspapers in western Michigan enthusiastically supported the agreement. They often detailed the benefits the agreement offered the region's fruit growers. "Not all Michigan farmers...are opposed to the agreement," explained the *Hartford Day Spring*,

Certain of them who grow fruits see in the measure the opening of a new market for the products of their orchards, a market that will remove a part of their crop from competition with western fruits and a possible betterment of price. If their interest happens to be fruit, there are farmers who believe that reciprocity is not half bad.<sup>163</sup>

The benefits of a new market for local fruit growers, a large and expanding proportion of western Michigan agriculturalists, certainly interested many in the region. Others in the region's pro-reciprocity press saw the agreement as beneficial not only because it opened a new market, but also because it promised to lower the costs of various manufactured goods. "At the present time our own manufacturers are selling goods to the Canadian farmers for less money than they are selling them to our home people," explained *The News Palladium* of Benton Harbor,

If the duty is removed then the Canadian manufacturer can have an opportunity to sell machinery to the farmers

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<sup>163</sup>*Hartford Day Spring*, May 17, 1911, p. 4.



at a lower rate. The market that the farmers of this locality have for their fruits is the near-by city of Chicago and the farmers of Canada and the farmers of the far west will have to pay a tariff to the railroads that will give us a better and more practical protection than any that the government can give...farmers...will also send the Canadians our luscious peaches, for which, having once tasted, they will be willing to pay liberal prices.<sup>164</sup>

The local fruit grower did not need to fear any encroachment of their current market, Chicago, and may in fact discover a new market in Canada. *The News-Palladium* continued: "There are very few peaches raised in Canada and what few there are produced bring a high price. When the Canadian government takes off the duty on American peaches the Berrien peach crop that is raised will bring more money."<sup>165</sup> The pro-reciprocity newspapers in the region apparently felt their opinions justified after a group of fruit growers and dealers met in Hartford on February 17. The organization discussed the interests of Michigan fruit growers in the "fruit belt" of western Michigan, which included the counties of Berrien, Allegan, and Van Buren. The result of their discussions received much attention in the western Michigan press. *The Niles Daily Sun* commented on this important conference: "All subjects were treated, but the most prominent was reciprocity...It seemed to be the consensus of opinion that reciprocity would be beneficial to the fruit growers of this state; at least, it could not do them much harm, and if it should prove a benefit to the country as a whole, it would be to their interests to support it."<sup>166</sup> The region's pro-reciprocity

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<sup>164</sup>*The News Palladium* (Benton Harbor), April 10, 1911, p. 2.

<sup>165</sup>*Ibid.*, May 11, 1911, p. 2.

<sup>166</sup>*The Niles Daily Sun*, February 17, 1911, p. 3.

newspapers considered this half-hearted endorsement by the organization for western Michigan fruit growers and dealers as evidence of the prevailing opinion of the region's farmers.

In the northern lower peninsula the agreement received relatively scant attention. Tepid support by the region's pro-reciprocity newspapers countered the small number of subdued anti-reciprocity newspapers in the region. Eighteen newspapers responded to the agreement and thirteen, or seventy-two per cent, favored the agreement. The *Cheboygan Democrat* exemplified the region's scant and serene coverage of the agreement by summing up its position in a lone comment: "Canadian reciprocity won't be the best thing in the world for our paper mill."<sup>167</sup> The rest of the region reiterated a wide range of concerns raised in the national debate, ranging from the cost of living issue to questioning the motives of the farmers' representatives in Washington. The only other reference to the agreement's effect on local concerns sarcastically came from the *Alpena Argus Pioneer* when it quipped: "This reciprocity agitation, at Washington, has already injured the farmers of Northern Michigan by provoking these heavy rains that are flooding our low-lands."<sup>168</sup>

In the larger cities of the state, where agricultural concerns played a minor role to industrial interests, there existed a near unanimity in support of the agreement. In cities over 25,000, not included in the previous regional studies, this author reviewed twenty-two newspapers and discovered that twenty, or ninety-one per cent, favored the agreement. In addition, in the Upper Peninsula,

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<sup>167</sup>*Cheboygan Democrat*, March 10, 1911, p. 2.

<sup>168</sup>*Alpena Argus-Pioneer*, June 28, 1911, p. 2.

where agricultural development was slow and mining interests continued to grow in importance, this study reviewed sixteen newspapers and fifteen, or ninety-three per cent, favored the agreement. The reasons behind this outpouring of support appear obvious. As mentioned earlier a predicted lowering in the cost of foodstuffs, a reduction in duties on raw materials needed for Michigan industries, and the reduction in duties on manufactured items that could enter the Canadian market, all played a key role in the development of urban and industrial opinions of the agreement. A closer look into the arguments presented along local lines will provide a detailed picture of the Michigan urban and Upper Peninsula response.

The overwhelming support the agreement received from urban newspapers was not entirely unanimous. One of the two urban newspapers that opposed the agreement, the *Kalamazoo Telegraph-Press*, took its position purely on the grounds that the agreement would greatly harm local pulp and paper manufacturers.<sup>169</sup> "Local paper manufacturers are much interested in the...proposed Canadian reciprocity agreement," observed the *Telegraph-Press*,

If Canadian print paper is placed on the free list, American print mills will be unable to compete, not so much because the Canadians have better mills, but they have their waterpower and their timber close at hand. If a clause could be inserted in the reciprocity treaty,

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<sup>169</sup>The other urban newspaper that opposed the agreement was *The Creston News* of Grand Rapids. Strangely, the newspaper originally came out in support of the agreement, but by July its position had changed. The reasons for this shift are unclear, but it is possible that the newspaper looked for guidance from its native son, Senator William Alden Smith. Smith did not openly declare his opposition to the agreement until April. Many of the general arguments frequently used by Smith also appeared in *The News*.

removing the Canadian export duty from wood pulp, the proposition would not be so oppressive to the American paper mill industry; but if the treaty goes into effect, Canadian print paper will come in free, and American mills cannot obtain their pulp without paying the Canadian export duty. This is why Michigan, and more particularly Kalamazoo paper manufacturers are opposed to the agreement now before the senate.<sup>170</sup>

The intolerable situation presented by the Canadian duty on wood pulp from crown lands proved to be the problematic part of the agreement. Eliminating this duty would result in a more level and fair playing field. "The proposed reciprocity treaty admits the free admission of wood pulp only from free-hold lands," continued *The Telegraph-Press*,

whereas over 90 per cent of the pulp comes from crown lands, all of which must pay an export duty. When Mr. Milhan of the Bryant Paper Co. [of Kalamazoo] was in Washington with the other Michigan paper manufacturers, he suggested to the friends of reciprocity, that the proposition would be all right if Canada could be compelled to take off the export duty on wood pulp.<sup>171</sup>

*The Telegraph-Press* did not cloud its argument with a half-hearted attempt to show concern for the Michigan farmer. Rather, it bluntly proclaimed its concerns over the agreement's effect on local industry and declared its support for the agreement if Congress addressed these concerns. This study also reviewed another Kalamazoo newspaper, *The Gazette*. Surprisingly, *The Gazette* ignored local concerns and supported the agreement because it believed in the

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<sup>170</sup>*Kalamazoo Telegraph-Press*, May 20, 1911, p. 4.

<sup>171</sup>*Ibid.*, May 31, 1911, p. 4.

Democratic party's pledge that the agreement was a first step toward complete free trade. In this case politics, not local concerns, obviously influenced *The Gazette's* position.

The large majority of Michigan's urban newspapers favored the agreement and many did so with an eye on local conditions. The benefits for local industries were often numerous and far-reaching. *The Bay City Tribune* observed the impact of the agreement on the local economy:

Saginaw Valley lumber dealers who handle pine will be strongly committed to the Canadian reciprocity treaty. It puts lumber on the free list and relieves importers of pine lumber of a duty of \$1.25 a thousand feet. It is believed it would also build up a large trade in other products between Canadian ports on Lake Huron and Bay City.<sup>172</sup>

In addition to lower prices for lumber dealers, the agreement would more importantly lead to increased activity in the city's ports. Local industries also received an impetus as a result of the agreement.

"The Canadian reciprocity proposition," observed *The Tribune*,

will prove advantageous to the woodworking industry of Bay City. The present tariff on lumber imported from Canada is \$1.25 a thousand feet and some 65,000,000 feet came to the Saginaw river last season from Ontario on which a duty of \$1.25 a thousand feet was paid by the importers. It is rightly contended if the duty is entirely removed importations will be stimulated and consequently a longer life will be given the local box factories, planing mills, etc.<sup>173</sup>

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<sup>172</sup>*The Bay City Tribune*, January 30, 1911, p. 2.

<sup>173</sup>*Ibid.*, February 5, 1911, p. 15.

The agreement promised to give new life to a woodworking industry that had suffered from high production costs. Bay City newspapers believed that the agreement offered the community a multitude of benefits that promised greater prosperity in the future.

Newspapers in Michigan's two largest cities also deserve the attention of this study. Grand Rapids and Detroit possessed numerous industries that directly benefitted from the agreement. Grand Rapids possessed over five hundred factories involved in a wide range of industries, most notable of which was the furniture industry. The "furniture city" especially looked forward to the lower production costs that would have come from the agreement's enactment. "The furniture industry has something to gain and nothing to lose from the proposed reciprocity with Canada," commented *The Evening Press*,

The present protective rates on furniture entering the United States are not changed, but it is proposed to admit free from Canada rough lumber and partially manufactured lumber at reduced rates. This... would help the furniture factories get raw materials advantageously, without endangering the market for their completed product.<sup>174</sup>

In Detroit the benefits to local industry appeared obvious. The *Detroit Free-Press* commented on the impact the agreement had, not only on the automobile industry, but also on the Detroit consumer:

The scheme [reciprocity]...works especially favorably for this section of the country. It permits an enlarged importation of food stuffs, for which Detroit feels a keen

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<sup>174</sup>*The Evening Press* (Grand Rapids), January 27, 1911, p. 19.

need, while it increases the possibilities of exporting the products of Detroit's factories. The decrease of Canada's tax on motor vehicles alone would ensure favor for the treaty here, if no other item in the schedules were of local application.<sup>175</sup>

The automobile industry as well as the over one thousand other Detroit industries, would enjoy access to the growing Canadian market. Many in Detroit envisioned a grand scheme that placed these local industries into a larger context, beyond current economic conditions. Mayor Thompson and Detroit newspapers pictured a future in which Detroit had a pivotal role in the development of Ontario as well as Canada. "The city of Detroit is especially concerned in having the agreement made law by both governments," observed the *Detroit Free-Press*,

Standing on the border of the two countries, her commercial growth was seriously hampered by the overwhelming of Chicago on the south, west and north, while on the east her natural market was cut off by the insurmountable barrier of the tariff...The agreement will largely loosen the bonds which confine her commerce on the east. She is now a larger city than any in Canada. With complete free trade between the two countries, there is no reason why she should not become the industrial metropolis of Canada, all points in which she can reach by water or rail more conveniently than any other Canadian city.<sup>176</sup>

Detroit's past, present, and future explicitly included Canada as a key part of the city's development. The agreement would end the artificial barriers of the past and lead to the explosive development

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<sup>175</sup>*Detroit Free Press*, January 27, 1911, p. 4.

<sup>176</sup>*Ibid.*, February 13, 1911, p. 4.

of Detroit as well as Canada. The future boded well for the city of Detroit as a result of this agreement.

In the Upper Peninsula the reasons for the nearly unanimous support of the region mirrored those given by the major cities of the state. Newspapers throughout the Upper Peninsula repeatedly stressed the widespread support the agreement received in the region. *The Menominee County Journal* of Stephenson briefly commented on the reasons for this support: "Reciprocity with Canada is popular in the upper peninsula, which is in dire need of cheaper food products."<sup>177</sup> The cost of living issue became the chief argument for the agreement in the region's press. Upper Peninsula mining towns saw the agreement as a solution to the problematic high cost of living in the region. *The Calumet News* reported on this question: "Considerable local interest is being manifested in the proposed reduction in tariff rates between the United States and Canada and speculation is rife as to whether the changes would be a benefit or detriment to this district." *The News* continued by focusing on a supporter of the agreement in nearby Laurium: "One of the copper country wholesale houses now finds it cheaper to import turnips from Canada, paying the duty on them, than to raise them in this country, and that the quality of the imported article is better than that raised in this country."<sup>178</sup> The cheaper and tastier turnip provided but one example of the economic benefits the agreement inured for the region's consumers.

The benefits to the Upper Peninsula also came in the form of

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<sup>177</sup>*Menominee County Journal* (Stephenson), February 18, 1911, p. 4.

<sup>178</sup>*The Calumet News*, January 31, 1911, p. 7.



increased shipping for the ports on Lake Superior. *The Evening Copper Journal* of Hancock commented on the impact of this action: "As the nearest reciprocal port for Canadian wheat shipments, via Keweenaw point...the Copperdom has every reason to be greatly interested."<sup>179</sup> The economic benefits of this movement of products through the copper region were enormous. Canadian wheat bound for overseas and American markets might first come through the region's mills for processing and shipment.

Upper Peninsula newspapers devoted little attention to the agreement's effect on the region's mining, paper, and lumber industries.<sup>180</sup> Early in the discussion Representative H. Olin Young briefly questioned the impact of the agreement on the region's industries: "It will hurt our lumber and print paper industry in the upper peninsula."<sup>181</sup> Young also believed that the agreement's reductions on iron ore had little impact on the Upper Peninsula since Canada had not developed competitive grades of iron ore. The position of Young quickly changed after he encountered the pro-reciprocity newspapers and populace of the region, even in such strong lumber towns like Ontonagon and Manistique. *Iron Ore* in

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<sup>179</sup>*The Evening Copper Journal* (Hancock), January 30, 1911, p. 4.

<sup>180</sup>In this study, the lone newspaper in the Upper Peninsula that opposed the agreement, *The Gladstone Delta*, did so apparently because of the same reasons given by the *Kalamazoo Telegraph-Press*. These newspapers believed the agreement unfairly discriminated against the Michigan paper maker. Other Upper Peninsula newspapers generally ignored the agreement's possible impact on the region's lumber and paper industries. The reasons for this lack of attention are unclear. Many of the newspapers in the Upper Peninsula may have felt the considerable influence of mining towns, purely interested in lowering the cost of foodstuffs. This influence, coupled with the promise of free newsprint and the progressive Republican nature of many of the region's newspapers, could possibly explain why they virtually ignored the concerns of the region's lumber and paper industries.

<sup>181</sup>*Menominee Herald-Leader*, January 30, 1911, p. 4.

Ishpeming commented, in an article entitled "Would Assist Our Miners," that local mining interests found benefits in the agreement:

The Canadian pact, as just settled, would aid our mining industries because we make steels cheaper than does Canada, having better mines, better plants and skilled workmen. It would be different with Germany or England, where labor is skilled as our own, where they have fine equipments and where labor is paid very much lower wages than in America. Free steel would be against us decidedly.<sup>182</sup>

The Canadian mining industry simply could not compete with their more entrenched and highly developed Michigan counterparts.

Finally, prevalent among Upper Peninsula newspapers was an anger at the lower peninsula Michigan farmer, rarely found in the remainder of the state.<sup>183</sup> Michigan farmers had long benefitted from a high tariff on their products. Unlike the pro-reciprocity newspapers in other regions, Upper Peninsula newspapers believed farmers and middlemen were to blame for high prices. *Iron Ore* of Ishpeming embodied this approach:

We are heartily tired of the cry of the granger to add to the duty of the things he produces and to make it harder for the mines to do business. The farmer has been getting the fat of the land for many years and if he wants to decrease the cost of his plows he must also agree to give us cheaper butter, eggs, and flour. All we want is fair play, but the farmer isn't disposed for that sort of a game.<sup>184</sup>

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<sup>182</sup>*Iron Ore* (Ishpeming), April 29, 1911, p. 1.

<sup>183</sup>Upper Peninsula newspapers' anger at the Michigan farmer also developed as a result of the Michigan State Grange's push for a tonnage tax through the state legislature. This tax on the products of the Upper Peninsula mines became a contentious point in 1911. *Ibid.*, March 4, 1911, p. 4.

<sup>184</sup>*Ibid.*, February 25, 1911, p. 4.

Much like rural anti-reciprocity newspapers in the Thumb, central, and eastern sections of the lower peninsula, pro-reciprocity newspapers of the Upper Peninsula viewed their respective opponents as selfish and unconcerned over the welfare of the other.

The newspapers of Michigan found themselves at the heart of a controversy. The agreement eliminated the duty on newsprint calling into question the impartiality of pro-reciprocity newspapers' statements in support of the agreement. As mentioned earlier, some scholars, most notably Ellis, considered newspaper publishers, not as innocent beneficiaries, but rather as the masterminds behind the agreement. Many contemporaries of the agreement originally developed this perception. Michigan newspapers certainly stood to directly benefit financially from the agreement's proposed duty reductions on newsprint, but the issue was much more complex for the local newspaper. Unlike large, national organizations such as the American Newspaper Publishers Association, local newspapers needed to look beyond the direct economic benefits to review the impact the agreement might have on their communities as a whole.

This study gathered data on weekly and daily newspapers throughout the state of Michigan and the conclusions apparently provide evidence that dailies, in greater need for cheaper newsprint supported the agreement in overwhelming numbers, while weeklies, which used significantly less newsprint, divided on the agreement. Of the fifty Michigan daily newspapers studied, forty-six, or ninety-two per cent favored the agreement. On the other hand, Michigan weeklies showed much less decisiveness, of the eighty-nine studied,

fifty-eight, or sixty-five per cent favored the agreement. The divisions among Michigan's weekly newspapers were a result of differences in political and local conditions. These conditions obviously influenced certain newspapers more than the promise of free newsprint.

The Michigan newspapers opposed to the agreement found it interesting that urban dailies suddenly found themselves entangled in the details of agricultural economics. Newspapers in all the major cities of Michigan discussed the agreement's impact on the farmers of the state. The *Livingston Republican* in Howell doubted the sincerity of urban newspapers' concern for the Michigan farmer: "The city papers favor reciprocity because they think it will make print paper cheaper. Then too, the city writer knows as much about conditions on the farm as a hog knows about Latin. Do not be misled by their smooth talk about helping the farmer. They want cheap eggs and cheap wheat."<sup>185</sup> The urban newspapers' coverage over the details on such subjects as the Liverpool market, different grades of wheat, transportation costs, and climactic conditions, led many in the rural press to question the motivations behind these large newspapers. Urban newspapers veiled their desire for free newsprint under the false pretense of helping the farmer. *The Howard City Record* wryly added: "The farmers should remember to patronize more generously those daily papers that are laboring so valiantly to promote Canadian reciprocity and force lower prices for farm produce."<sup>186</sup>

N.P. Hull, master of the Michigan State Grange, implicated

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<sup>185</sup>*Livingston Republican* (Howell), June 28, 1911, p. 4.

<sup>186</sup>*The Howard City Record*, February 9, 1911, p. 4.

urban dailies as the driving force behind the agreement. He believed that "this reciprocity proposition started with the big metropolitan newspapers who want free print paper. I am told that a delegation of these big papers called Speaker [of the House] Cannon some time ago and told him if he would support such a proposition they thought they had influence enough to nominate him for president."<sup>187</sup>

Michigan's anti-reciprocity newspapers agreed that the selfish actions of these large newspapers were obvious. *The Clinton Republican* of St. Johns commented on the influence these newspapers had on the Taft Administration:

President Taft was undoubtedly actuated by a sincere belief that the Canadian reciprocity treaty would be a good thing for the whole country, and in his position he was backed up by the metropolitan newspapers and muck raking magazines, in a selfish desire to get free trade with Canada on wood pulp and print paper. In order to seem consistent, they had to advocate free entry of some other things, and farm products were selected, instead of manufactured articles...President Taft...has been influenced in his position by the city newspapers and magazines for free trade on many of the farmer's products.<sup>188</sup>

The agreement's origins, in the opinion of many reciprocity opponents, clearly lied in the urban newspapers' desire for cheaper newsprint. In other words, the American Newspaper Publishers Association (ANPA), the organization representing big city dailies, provided the impetus for the agreement. This conclusion received a degree of validation after the disclosure of the intimate relationship

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<sup>187</sup>Hull's comments came from an interview with the *Kalamazoo Telegraph-Press*, June 3, 1911, p. 11.

<sup>188</sup>*The Clinton Republican* (St. Johns), August 8, 1911, p. 4.

between the State Department and the ANPA. John Norris and Herman Ridder of the ANPA remained in close contact with various State Department negotiators during the discussions between American and Canadian officials in early January. Two days before the agreement became public, Ridder detailed the agreement's pulp and paper provisions in a letter to members of the ANPA.<sup>189</sup> For others, like Senator Charles Townsend, the ANPA did not represent the whole of newspaper opinion. Townsend declared in Congress:

I wish to discuss...the influence of a representative of the American Newspaper Publishers' Association...I am exceedingly sorry that the newspapers, or certain of them, have not purged themselves of the charge that this is measure for the benefit of their special interest...It would have been better for the influence of the press if it had not asked for an exception in its behalf. I know that all of the newspapers of the country are not parties to this special-favor clause. The lobbyists only represented a few as compared with the whole of the papers, and I personally know that many papers are for this agreement because of principle. They believe in it and support it, because it is right.<sup>190</sup>

Townsend and others in the pro-reciprocity press considered the ANPA a liability to their cause for reciprocity. The ANPA's actions, taken regardless of smaller newspapers' opinions, had undermined the impartiality of all newspapers.<sup>191</sup>

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<sup>189</sup>Ellis, p. 69. Ellis believed the ANPA was the driving force behind the agreement. Their support in 1912 was sought by the Taft Administration.

<sup>190</sup>S. Doc. 80, p. 3470.

<sup>191</sup>These comments are not meant to deny the fact that some smaller newspapers supported the agreement because of the newsprint reduction, rather they point out that the ANPA's actions were controlled by a small number of newspaper publishers, most notably William Randolph Hearst. Hearst used approximately a tenth of the country's entire consumption of newsprint. Ellis, on pp. 138-139, briefly described the Hearst campaign for

However, many pro-reciprocity newspapers attempted to deny the claim that publishers had anything to do with the agreement. Newspapers, like *The Evening News* in Battle Creek, ridiculed the claims made by reciprocity opponents: "The discovery that the newspapers are behind the Canadian reciprocity move, with the purpose to make money on 'print' paper needs go only a little way farther to find that the angels are behind the Mexican revolution in order to have the fun of smelling smoke."<sup>192</sup> *The Bay City Times* sarcastically added: "Of course the newspapers put reciprocity in the republican platform, also drew up the bill and put all those ideas in to President Taft's head." *The Times* then added: "Anyway, the newspaper will probably be willing to assume the responsibility and honor of bringing about the measure, even though they did not have anything to do with it."<sup>193</sup> Many pro-reciprocity newspapers did not believe that they influenced the President any more than the Grange or lumber industry. These preposterous accusations simply had no merit.

On February 9 John Norris of the ANPA sent out a list to newspaper publishers that defined the agreement's beneficial aspects for the state of Michigan. The list contained numerous Michigan agricultural and manufacturing industries that would benefit from freer trade with Canada. In addition to this list, prepared by the Bureau of Trade Relations in the State Department, the accompanying letter urged newspapers to push for the adoption of the treaty on the grounds that free newsprint would prove

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reciprocity.

<sup>192</sup>*The Evening News* (Battle Creek), May 11, 1911, p. 4.

<sup>193</sup>*The Bay City Times*, February 15, 1911, p. 2.

beneficial to publishers.<sup>194</sup> This letter from the ANPA resulted in additional animosity from anti-reciprocity newspapers. They believed that they had a duty to the public to expose the cover-up by the ANPA and big city dailies. Norris' list appeared in a majority of the state's newspapers, but the letter to publishers almost never appeared and rarely received any mention. Anti-reciprocity newspapers believed the action by pro-reciprocity newspapers to not publish or discuss the accompanying letter showed the covertness of their positions. The real interests of pro-reciprocity newspapers lied not in the benefits to the state, but rather in their own self-interest. The *Mount Clemens Monitor* explained the real purpose of the list and its accompanying letter from the ANPA: "Last Saturday THE MONITOR received a long screed favoring Canadian reciprocity, as a peculiar benefit to Michigan. It was sent from New York by a newspaper association, of which Herman Ridder, owner of the *Staats-Zeitung*, is president, and its inspiration was the hope of cheaper paper."<sup>195</sup> Michigan's anti-reciprocity newspapers had exposed the selfishness of many of their proponent brethren.

Although newspapers debated the issue of self-interest, their main arguments on the proposed duty reductions on print paper revolved around their own conflict with paper makers. In recent years the ruthless paper trust had continually raised the price of newsprint. This meant that pro-reciprocity newspapers essentially made a defensive argument for their position on print paper's duty reductions. John Norris of the ANPA provided the leading

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<sup>194</sup>Ellis, p. 107.

<sup>195</sup>*Mount Clemens Monitor*, February 17, 1911, p. 4.



commentary in Washington for newspaper publishers: "All but two of the 50 print paper-makers of the country...are violating the Sherman law by restricting the use to which the paper they sell can be put."<sup>196</sup> The paper trust had unfairly regulated prices and the agreement might lead to the dissolution of this trust. *The Manistique Pioneer-Tribune* explained the common problems faced by Michigan newspapers:

It appears that mercenary interests have combined to oppose reciprocity. The average newspaper, that has been paying a heavy toll to the paper trust, is in favor of reciprocity because it sees in it an opportunity of securing paper at a cheaper price. The average country newspaper used to secure its supply of print paper at about \$10 or less per ton. The price since the trust has been manipulating the prices, has been fluctuating between \$50 and \$55 per ton. It means that an office the size of the Pioneer-Tribune has been paying tribute to the trust of from \$120 to \$150 per year. This is one of the reasons why we would like to try reciprocity, for a time, it would reduce the price of paper in the future, but of course it would never replace the \$1500 paid into the coffers of the greedy monopoly during the past few years.<sup>197</sup>

Pro-reciprocity newspapers did not stand alone in their accusations against the paper trust. The anti-reciprocity, *Ypsilanti Daily Press*, suggested an alternative to the reciprocity agreement:

The fact is that for the last three of four years the publishers of most of the country dailies and weeklies at least could scarce afford to put them out for the price they have been putting them out...So far as we are concerned, we are not going to ask for the adoption of

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<sup>196</sup>*The Adrian Daily Telegram*, February 9, 1911, p. 3.

<sup>197</sup>*The Manistique Pioneer-Tribune*, June 9, 1911, p. 4.

this treaty in its present form. But we will ask the pulp schedule to remain at the paper trusts' expense.<sup>198</sup>

Wholeheartedly behind the movement for cheaper newsprint and the breaking up of the paper trust the *Daily Press* added:

"Newspapers of course are interested in getting free wood pulp and free print paper. They have been soaked to the limit by the paper trust and they cannot be blamed for endeavoring to get free print paper and, if they do get it, this will operate to the advantage of everybody that reads the newspapers, in all probability."<sup>199</sup> Many other anti-reciprocity newspapers weighed the personal benefits of free newsprint with the impact the agreement might have on Michigan farmers. Clearly, many came out on the perceived moral side with the Michigan farmer. The *Alcona County Herald* in Lincoln concluded that "Newspapers are being constantly urged to favor the passage of the bill on the ground that it will materially reduce the price of print paper. However, the saving of a few dollars each month doesn't outweigh a principle with the average newspaper, we are glad to note."<sup>200</sup> Anti-reciprocity newspapers as a group endorsed the agreement's idea of hitting the paper trust, but felt it did too much damage to Michigan farmers to provide a reason to support the entire accord.

The belief that newspaper publishers had lost their impartiality did not come solely from anti-reciprocity newspapers. The *Petoskey Evening News* concluded that the newspapers of

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<sup>198</sup>*Ypsilanti Daily Press*, February 10, 1911, p. 4.

<sup>199</sup>*Ibid.*, March 2, 1911, p. 4.

<sup>200</sup>*Alcona County Herald* (Lincoln), February 21, 1911, p. 4.

Michigan had indeed lost their innocence in this fight. *The News* considered that the fight in Washington between the publishers and pulp and paper manufacturers:

gives color to the trust claim that all the papers are for reciprocity because they want access to Canadian print paper, and the opponents of reciprocity are making the most of the farmers that the papers are all actuated by purely selfish motives in this matter...At least it has made the reciprocity side of the fight harder since it has robbed the papers of that degree of influence which can come only through disinterestedness.<sup>201</sup>

No matter what they said, pro-reciprocity newspapers constantly found themselves answering to accusations of self-interest.

The Canadian Reciprocity Agreement of 1911 exposed an American society deeply divided over the tariff, politics, and urbanization. American newspapers provided local communities with an important conduit for expressing their distinctly local perspective of these issues. Politicians and voters turned to an animated and politically active newspaper press for help in defining the political boundaries of the era. Reciprocity scholars, most notably Ellis, have overlooked the diversity of newspaper response because they have generally limited their studies to major regional newspapers. This small fraction of the American newspaper press can not provide a clear understanding of the full range of responses that came from a very lively and diverse majority of smaller dailies and countless weeklies. This study detailed the complex and often conflicting nature of many of the economic, political, social, and

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<sup>201</sup>*The Petoskey Evening News*, May 8, 1911, p. 1.

regional concerns that a typical Michigan newspaper publisher considered during the debate of 1911. Much like the evolution of reciprocity scholarship on the Taft administration's motives (Ellis to Radosh to Clements to Hannigan to Stewart), this thesis has taken the next step, after Ellis, in the development of reciprocity scholarship on newspaper response. Future reciprocity scholarship should expand on this study of Michigan newspapers to include reviews of newspapers in other border states deeply effected by the agreement from New York and Vermont to Minnesota and Wisconsin. A thorough study of newspapers in other states may further develop the comments on diversity brought forth in this paper and lead to a major revision of the American newspaper response to the agreement of 1911.

## **Bibliography**

## **Bibliography**

### **A. Primary Sources**

#### **1. Newspapers**

The newspapers in the following list, compiled from research at the State of Michigan and Michigan State University libraries, provided the author with a clear picture of the diversity of the Michigan newspaper response. This list does not include seventy-six other Michigan newspapers that the author studied. Those newspapers did not editorialize on the issue of reciprocity and in many cases they failed to provide any coverage of the agreement. This study reviewed newspaper response from the negotiations of early January to the final reflections after Canada's defeat of reciprocity in late September.

*Acorn (Three Oaks)*  
*The Adrian Daily Telegram*  
*The Albion Evening Recorder*  
*Alcona County Herald (Lincoln)*  
*The Allegan Gazette*  
*Alpena Argus-Pioneer*  
*Battle Creek Daily Moon*  
*The Battle Creek Enquirer*  
*Battle Creek Journal*  
*The Bay City Times*  
*The Bay City Tribune*  
*Belding Banner*  
*The Bellaire Independent*  
*Benzie Record*  
*Berrien Springs Era*  
*The Big Rapids Pioneer*  
*The Boyne Citizen*  
*The Brown City Banner*  
*The Burr Oak Acorn*  
*The Calumet News*  
*Camden Advance*  
*Cedar Springs Clipper*  
*Charlevoix County Herald (East Jordan)*  
*Charlevoix Courier*  
*Charlevoix Sentinel*  
*Charlotte Republican*

*Charlotte Tribune*  
*Cheboygan Democrat*  
*The Chesaning Argus*  
*Clare Sentinel*  
*The Clinton Republican* (St. Johns)  
*The Courier and Republican* (Coldwater)  
*Crawford Avalanche* (Grayling)  
*The Creston News* (Grand Rapids)  
*The Daily Commercial-Hustler* (Three Rivers)  
*The Daily Mining Journal* (Marquette)  
*The Daily News* (Grand Rapids)  
*The Daily Times-News* (Ann Arbor)  
*The Daily Tribune* (South Haven)  
*The Decatur Republican*  
*The Deckerville Recorder*  
*Detroit Free Press*  
*Detroit News*  
*Detroit Times*  
*The Diamond Drill* (Crystal Falls)  
*The Dowagiac Daily News*  
*The Durand Express*  
*Edwardsburg Argus*  
*Elk Rapids Progress*  
*Escanaba Daily Mirror*  
*Escanaba Morning Press*  
*The Evening Argus* (Owosso)  
*The Evening Copper Journal* (Hancock)  
*The Evening News* (Battle Creek)  
*The Evening News* (Sault Ste. Marie)  
*The Evening Press* (Grand Rapids)  
*The Flint Daily Journal*  
*The Fowlerville Review*  
*The Frankenmuth News*  
*The Gladstone Delta*  
*Gladwin County Record* (Gladwin)  
*Grand Ledge Independent*  
*Grand Traverse Herald* (Traverse City)  
*Gratiot County Herald* (Ithaca)  
*Greenville Independent*  
*Hanover Horton Local*  
*Hartford Day Spring*  
*Hastings Banner*  
*The Hillsdale Daily*

*The Holcad* (East Lansing)  
*Holland City News*  
*Houghton Daily Mining Gazette*  
*The Howard City Record*  
*The Hudson Post*  
*The Huron County Tribune* (Bad Axe)  
*The Ionia Daily Sentinel*  
*The Ionia Standard*  
*The Iosco County Gazette* (East Tawas)  
*Iron Ore* (Ishpeming)  
*Ironwood News-Record*  
*Isabella County Enterprise* (Mount Pleasant)  
*Jonesville Independent*  
*The Kalamazoo Gazette*  
*Kalamazoo Telegraph-Press*  
*The Kalkaska Leader*  
*Lansing State Journal*  
*Livingston Republican* (Howell)  
*The Lowell Ledger*  
*Ludington Record-Appeal*  
*M.A.C. Record* (East Lansing)  
*The Mancelona Herald*  
*Manistee Daily Advocate*  
*The Manistee Daily News*  
*The Manistique Pioneer-Tribune*  
*The Manton Weekly Tribune*  
*The Marlette Leader*  
*The Marshall Daily Chronicle*  
*Marshall Statesman*  
*Menominee County Journal* (Stephenson)  
*Menominee Herald Leader*  
*The Midland Republican*  
*The Minden City Herald*  
*The Monroe Democrat*  
*Mount Clemens Monitor*  
*Mount Pleasant Times*  
*Muskegon News Chronicle*  
*Newberry News*  
*The News-Palladium* (Benton Harbor)  
*Niles Daily Star*  
*The Niles Daily Sun*  
*The Northville Record*  
*The Observer* (Grand Rapids)



*The Olivet Optic*  
*The Onaway Outlook*  
*The Ontonagon Herald*  
*The Oxford Leader*  
*The Parma News*  
*The Petoskey Evening News*  
*The Pigeon Progress*  
*The Pontiac Press-Gazette*  
*The Port Huron Times-Herald*  
*The Portland Observer*  
*Presque Isle County News* (Millersburg)  
*The Record Eagle* (Traverse City)  
*Reed City Clarion*  
*The Roscommon Herald*  
*The Saginaw Courier-Herald*  
*The Saginaw Daily News*  
*The St. Johns News*  
*St. Joseph Evening Herald*  
*The Saturday Evening Star* (Jackson)  
*The Springport Signal*  
*The Times* (Grand Rapids)  
*Tuscola County Advertiser* (Caro)  
*Tuscola County Pioneer* (Vassar)  
*The Whitehall Forum*  
*The Wolverine Citizen* (Flint)  
*Ypsilaniti Daily Press*

## **2. Government Documents**

The following select list of government documents cites those most relevant to this paper. The most notable government documents for any reciprocity scholar, the Senate hearings during the 62nd Congress and the Senate's compilation of 1911, respectively provided excellent information on the response of many of Michigan's special interests as well as the details of the Senate debates of May, June, and July. The 61st and 62nd Congresses also reprinted a plentiful supply of other documents dealing with reciprocity ranging from cabinet member speeches to tariff commission reports.

Martindale, Frederick C., Secretary of State, comp., *Michigan Official Directory and Legislative Manual for the Years 1911-1912*. Lansing, 1911.

U.S. Congress. *Canadian Reciprocity: Special Message of the President of the United States Transmitted to the Two Houses of Congress, January 26, 1911*. 61st Cong., 3rd sess., 1911. S. Doc. 787.

U.S. Congress. Senate. Committee on Finance. *Reciprocity with Canada: Hearings on H.R. 32216*. 61st Cong., 3rd sess., 1911. S. Doc. 834.

U.S. Congress. *Reciprocity: Address by Hon. William H. Taft at the Banquet of the Marion Club, Indianapolis, Ind., July 4, 1911 on Republican Reciprocity*. 62nd Cong., 1st sess., 1911. S. Doc. 63.

U.S. Congress. Senate. Committee on Finance. *Reciprocity with Canada: Hearings on H.R. 4412*. 62nd Cong., 1st sess., 1911. S. Doc. 56.

U.S. Congress. Senate. *Reciprocity with Canada: Compilation of 1911*. 62nd Cong., 1st sess., 1911. S. Doc. 80.

### 3. Other Primary Sources

The Taft Papers provide the reciprocity scholar with another vital source of information. The papers include notable speeches and letters that offer a glimpse at the reasoning behind the administration's Canadian reciprocity policy. The papers include frequent correspondence between Taft and various Michigan men, most notably Governor Chase Osborn and J.L. Hudson of the Detroit Board of Commerce, that discussed issues like the political ramifications of Taft's policy in the state of Michigan. The weekly professional journals below provide examples of the views of the state's agricultural (*The Michigan Dairy Farmer* and *The Michigan Farmer*) and commercial (*The Detroit*) organizations.

*The Detroit*. (Detroit: Detroit Board of Commerce), 1, no. 6-13, January 1911-August 1911.

*The Michigan Dairy Farmer*. (Detroit: Dairy Farmer Company), 2-3, February 4, 1911-September 23, 1911.

*The Michigan Farmer and Live Stock Journal*. (Detroit: Lawrence Publishing Company), 136, no.5-137, no. 14, February 4, 1911-September 30, 1911.

William Howard Taft Papers

## B. Secondary Sources

### 1. Books

- Anderson, Judith Icke. *William Howard Taft: An Intimate History*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1981.
- Baker, Richard Cleveland. *The Tariff Under Roosevelt and Taft*. Hastings, NE: Democrat Printing Co., 1941.
- Ellis, L. Ethan. *Reciprocity 1911: A Study In Canadian-American Relations*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1939.
- Hechler, Kenneth W. *Insurgency: Personalities and Politics of the Taft Era*. New York: Russell & Russell Inc., 1964.
- Stewart, Gordon T. *The American Response to Canada Since 1776*. East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1992.
- Tansill, Charles Callan. *Canadian-American Relations, 1875-1911*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1943.

## 2. Articles

- Clements, Kendrick A. "Manifest Destiny and Canadian Reciprocity in 1911." *Pacific Historical Review* 42 (1973): 32-52.
- Hannigan, Robert E. "Reciprocity 1911: Continentalism and American Weltpolitik." *Diplomatic History* 4 (winter 1980): 1-18.
- Radosh, Ronald. "American Manufacturers, Canadian Reciprocity, and the Origins of the Branch Factory System." *Canadian Association for American Studies Bulletin* 3, no. 1 (spring/summer 1967): 19-54.
- Stewart, Gordon T. "'A Special Contiguous Country Economic Regime': An Overview of America's Canadian Policy." *Diplomatic History* 6, no. 4 (fall 1982): 339-357.
- Zamiara, Steven B. "Michigan and Canadian Reciprocity: 1911." *Michigan Academician* 2, no. 3 (winter 1970): 93-102.

## 3. Other Secondary Sources

- Drury, David. "Michigan's View of the Canadian Reciprocity Treaty, 1854-1866." Master's thesis, Michigan State University, 1959.
- McDonald, Ada Jean. "Canada's Rejection of Reciprocity 1911: An Examination of Factors Influencing the Electorate in Southwestern Ontario." Master's thesis, Michigan State University, 1964.
- U.S. Department of Commerce and Labor. Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce. *The Foreign Commerce and Navigation of the United States for the Year Ending June 30, 1912*. Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1913.
- U.S. Tariff Commission. *Reciprocity and Commercial Treaties*.

Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1919.