



ARTHUR HARRY MOORE (July 3, 1879–November 18, 1952), New Jersey's only three-term governor under the state's second constitution, was elected in 1925, 1931 and 1937.

Moore was a Jersey City native, born in the Lafayette section, of working-class parents, Robert White and Martha (McCoomb) Moore, of Irish and Scottish descent. Moore, known as "Red," dropped out of the local public school system at the age of thirteen to take a clerk's job at \$3 per week. White-collar oriented, he continued his education in his spare time, taking courses at Cooper Union in Manhattan and developing proficiency in bookkeeping and typing. Moore also became involved in local Democratic politics, gaining from his speaking ability the sobriquet, "the boy orator of Lafayette." In 1907 his longtime friend, H. Otto Wittpenn, was elected mayor of Jersey City, and Moore entered City Hall as his secretary. In 1911, following the death of the Hudson Democratic leader Robert Davis, Moore assumed Davis's post as city collector. On March 28 that year Moore was married to Jennie Hastings Stevens, a downtown neighbor. He taught the men's bible class in Lafayette Reformed Church, where his bride taught Sunday School. The couple had no children.

In 1913, after Jersey City adopted the commission form of government, Moore ran successfully for a spot on the five-man governing body. As director of Parks and Public Property, he projected an image of "the kiddies' friend" by promoting recreational facilities and opportunities for the city's youth. Gregarious by nature as well as conviction, Moore became increasingly active in church, charitable, and fraternal affairs, and he made programs for handicapped children his area of special concern.

In 1916 H. Otto Wittpenn ran unsuccessfully for the governorship, losing to Republican Walter E. Edge. Subsequently, Wittpenn virtually retired from the political scene. Moore then reworked his cooperative arrangement with a fellow commissioner, Frank Hague, into a formal alliance. Moore led the Hague slate to a clean sweep in the 1917 city commission elections, beginning Hague's thirty-year stay as mayor of Jersey City. In 1921 and 1925, Moore led the ticket to similar municipal victories. During this period he resumed his formal education, attending evening classes at the New Jersey Law School in Newark. He passed the state bar exam in 1922 and received an LL.B. in 1924.

As early as 1921, local politicians began to boom the popular Moore for the governorship. Hague, now in control of the state Democratic organization, waited until 1925, when he easily secured Moore's nomination in an uncontested primary. Moore ran on a "wringing wet," antiprohibition platform against the Morris County state senator, Arthur Whitney, a Republican who had the support of the Anti-Saloon League. The state GOP, in turn, focused its campaign on the alleged menace of "Hagueism" in state government. Although Moore carried only three counties, Hudson's plurality of 103,995 gave its local hero a comfortable victory margin in this off-year election.

Frank Hague saw the governor's office primarily as a source of jobs for his patronage-based party machine. Moore gave the right answer when he told the press after his election: "You can say for me that in patronage matters I am strictly organization." Still, the new governor could not maximize his patronage potential unless he cooperated with the Republican senate, which had a broad advise-and-consent power. A political realist, Moore determined that a bipartisan spirit would mark his administration. His conservative political outlook, summed up in a pet phrase as "the best governed are the least governed," furthered this

cooperative spirit. His style was generally accorded a friendly reception in New Jersey's legislative halls, and his confrontations with the legislators, rare indeed, came about when he assumed a more conservative stance than they.

Three items from the year 1927 illustrate the temper of Moore's first administration. The first involved improving the potable water supply for north Jersey, a priority item for both governor and legislature. Moore, a proponent of "home rule," recommended that north Jersey municipalities resolve the problem working alone or via intermunicipal arrangements. The legislature, on the other hand, approved a constitutional amendment authorizing a series of regional water supply districts organized and controlled by the state. With Moore cool and Hudson County hostile, the voters rejected the idea in a November 1927 referendum.

Land use control was another major issue. After the United States Supreme Court, in a 1926 case, approved such control in principle, the New Jersey legislature proposed that the state constitution be amended to allow municipalities to exercise zoning powers. Since only local governments were to utilize the new tool, Moore and Hague approved of the amendment, campaigned for it, and saw it accepted by the voters.

A third area of controversy was a Republican plan for a major highway construction program in New Jersey. Moore was sympathetic, believing a modern road network essential to the state's development. But the governor nonetheless refused to sign a tax bill to help fund the program, asserting that it was an undue burden on the taxpayers. The gasoline tax (which became law), coupled with a \$30-million bond issue approved that autumn, set the foundation for New Jersey's first comprehensive highway system, totaling some eighteen hundred miles. Complementing this program was the work being done to tie New Jersey and New York City closer together. In 1927, Moore and Governor Al Smith of New

York opened the Holland Tunnel to vehicular traffic and marked the start of construction for the George Washington Bridge. During the following year the two chief executives dedicated a pair of bridges connecting Staten Island to New Jersey—the Goethals Bridge and the Outerbridge Crossing.

In his first administration, Moore also had to cope with the social problems of the "Roaring Twenties," including prohibition. Highway crime and disorder, especially at so-called "road house" night clubs, led the governor to ask the legislature to enlarge and strengthen the state police, an agency that had been established in 1921. Little progress, however, was made. A crime of another sort brought Moore national headlines in the autumn of 1926. This was the infamous Hall-Mills murder case, an alleged crime of passion that caused a sensation in the press. Moore appointed Hudson's state senator, Alexander Simpson, to prosecute the state's case against the late Reverend Edward Wheeler Hall's widow. Following a tawdry courtroom drama played to the hilt by the prosecution, the jury failed to convict, much to the embarrassment and chagrin of New Jersey officialdom.

In 1928 the Hague organization could not prevent a Republican landslide in New Jersey; the GOP easily secured the governorship for Morgan F. Larson and retained its hold on both houses of the state legislature. But the Republicans' monopoly of power meant that they could not avoid the blame for the economic depression that followed. A. Harry Moore, waiting on the sidelines, worked hard to stay in the public eye. He maintained a rigorous speaking schedule, continued his involvement in fraternal and church activities, and even had a weekly radio program over station WOR on Saturday evenings. At the end of 1930, Moore, the unofficial but obvious Democratic choice for governor, began in earnest the long drive that led to his second term.

In 1931, Moore was a polished and hardy campaigner. He believed in em-

phasizing patriotic and religious themes—"stick to the broad generalities of the eternal verities"—and added color with a series of amusing and tear-wrenching anecdotes. During the campaign he berated President Herbert C. Hoover and incumbent Republican Governor Morgan F. Larson for the misery they had brought to nation and state; in counterthrust, the GOP's gubernatorial candidate, Camden County leader David Baird, Jr., could do little but cry "Hagueism." It was no contest. Improving on his 1925 campaign, Moore ran well in every county but Camden, and his plurality of 230,053 votes was the largest recorded under the 1844 constitution. Another 1931 milestone was the dedication of the A. Harry Moore School in Jersey City, an institution designed specifically to meet the educational needs of handicapped children.

Economic problems dominated the governor's second term. Moore's own approach was consistent with his conservative political philosophy: the state must reduce or postpone expenditures to enable local governments and the private sector to regenerate themselves. The 1932 legislature gave him discretionary power to curb state spending—and Moore did just that. He pruned state appropriations drastically, from a total of \$34.5 million in 1931 to \$28.3, \$19.7 and \$20.7 in 1932, 1933 and 1934 respectively. He diverted money from state programs, especially from highway construction, to keep municipal governments afloat and provide direct relief to the impoverished. Moore, a machine politician who knew the importance of the personal touch, spent long hours in Trenton listening to the woes of the jobless and trying his best to meet their needs.

The governor believed that the depression was an opportune time to reorganize state and local government. He proposed, among other things, that New Jersey's cumbersome administrative structures be streamlined and placed under the firm control of the chief executive; that the courts be overhauled; that a "home rule" amendment be added to the constitution;

and that a sales or income tax be adopted to give the state a stable revenue base. Moore's only success in these matters, however, came when the legislature provided the statutory base for a modern system of municipal finance. Overall, he could do little to accelerate the movement for constitutional reform in New Jersey.

Moore's second term was marked by more than the depression. Two items that received worldwide publicity were the Lindbergh kidnapping in 1932 and the burning of the cruise ship *Morro Castle* in 1934. Moore supervised the investigation of the kidnapping, and he personally helped direct rescue operations in the waters off Asbury Park. The repeal of prohibition also took place during this administration. The state legislature authorized a mix of state and municipal Alcoholic Beverage Control Commissions, and it was Moore's responsibility to implement the new program.

The advent of the New Deal put the governor's states' rights philosophy under some strain. Nevertheless, as FDR's program unfolded, Moore lobbied vigorously to insure that New Jersey receive her fair share of public works projects and federal relief funds. In addition to these gubernatorial duties, in 1934 Moore conducted a campaign for a seat in the United States Senate, a goal he pursued at Hague's insistence. The quest was successful. Although 1934 was a comeback year for the New Jersey GOP, which obtained the governor's office for Harold G. Hoffman, Moore moved on to the nation's capital.

He served only half his term as United States senator, and the years were not overly happy ones. True, Moore brought home a generous supply of federal projects for his city and state. (Jersey City's Medical Center and Roosevelt Stadium are prime examples.) But he was ill at ease on the New Deal team, especially after Roosevelt moved in a welfare-state direction. Moore voted against social security (the only Democratic "no" vote in the Senate), the public utility holding company bill, and the 1935 amendments

to the Agricultural Adjustment Administration Act, and he opposed Roosevelt's court-packing plan. He referred to the Senate disparagingly as "a cave of winds" and—perhaps with a sense of relief—accepted Hague's invitation to run again for the governorship in 1937.

By now the Democrats' "copyright candidate," Moore faced the Reverend Lester H. Clee of Essex County. Interestingly, Mrs. Moore's sister was married to the minister's brother. Despite this relationship, the 1937 contest was bitter and hard fought. Often on the defensive, Moore claimed that he was really not a foe of Roosevelt and the New Deal and that New Jersey needed an experienced man at the helm. Hudson pulled him through, its 129,237 plurality offsetting the fact that his opponent carried 15 counties.

Clee's charge of widespread vote fraud in Hudson hung like a dark cloud over Moore's third term, but various Hague maneuvers stymied state legislative investigations and court suits. Then, when a United States Senate investigating committee attempted to reopen the controversy in 1940, it discovered that the Hudson poll books had been burned. Another source of adverse publicity was the governor's appointment of Hague's son to New Jersey's highest court, the Court of Errors and Appeals, in 1939.

During these years, the principal concern of the governor and the legislature was economic recovery. With some reluctance, Moore began his third term by diverting more road funds to meet direct relief costs. His own preference was for work-relief, via part federal- and part state-funded highway and water facility construction projects. Though Moore had some success with the WPA, he failed to move a \$60-million highway bond issue through the legislature in 1939. The Republicans, who controlled both houses, opted instead for a bond issue of \$21 million to finance direct relief. The voters approved the issue in a November 1939 referendum.

The governor once more promoted tax

reform as receipts from railroad taxes (a major revenue source in the state for a century) declined. The principal victim of this decline was state school aid, and Moore, always interested in education, suggested that the state consider a broad-based replacement tax. The legislators, believing that new taxes would weaken New Jersey's ability to attract industry and rebuild her economy, turned thumbs down. Their alternative was to bring in new revenue via horse racing, although gambling was then proscribed by the state constitution. Hence an amendment authorizing pari-mutuel betting was presented, and the electorate approved it in June 1939.

World War II began that September, and defense problems soon assumed a prominent place on the governor's agenda. By executive order, Moore set up a Governor's Emergency Committee, the first state civil defense agency in the nation. Reorganized in the autumn of 1940 as the New Jersey Defense Council, it became the coordinating mechanism for state and local civil defense efforts. Moore also had to concern himself with the development and training of the national guard and, in October 1940, with the nation's first peacetime draft. In January 1941, he handed over his office for the last time—but, for the first time, to a fellow Democrat, the former Secretary of the Navy Charles Edison.

Since Frank Hague wanted Moore to be a gubernatorial candidate once more in 1943, he held off on a nominee until late that July, hoping that Moore would acquiesce as in the past. But Moore adamantly refused to run, and Hague turned to Mayor Vincent J. Murphy of Newark, who lost in November to Republican Walter E. Edge. The whole affair led to bitter feelings between Moore and the Hague organization for a while. But by summer 1944 matters were smoothed over, and Moore was selected as a delegate to the Democratic National Convention. In 1945, Governor Edge paid tribute to Moore's long commitment to the field of education by appointing him

to a vacancy on the State Board of Education.

Although Moore continued to maintain a residence in the Lafayette section of Jersey City, during his late years he spent much time at a summer home in Mount Airy, Hunterdon County. Horseback riding was his favorite avocation. His legal practice, corporate directorships, and a multitude of speaking engagements meant that his schedule remained a busy one. Moore's last major political involvement was as campaign manager for Elmer H. Wene, unsuccessful Democratic gubernatorial candidate in 1949. That year also marked the overthrow of the Hague machine in Jersey City. On November 18, 1952, Moore suffered a cerebral hemorrhage and died while at the wheel of his automobile near his Hunterdon retreat. He was 73.

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Richard J. Connors



MORGAN FOSTER LARSON (June 15, 1882–March 21, 1961), New Jersey's fortieth governor, was born in Perth Amboy. He was the son of Peter and Regina (Knudson) Larson. His father was a Danish blacksmith who immigrated to the United States at the age of twenty-two.

Larson's rise from obscurity to the

state's highest elective office in 1929 is a Horatio Alger story in local politics. Educated in the Perth Amboy public schools, Larson later studied engineering at Cooper Union Institute in New York City. In his determination to succeed, he applied the Protestant virtues of hard work and personal sacrifice as a student. He worked in Perth Amboy during the day and commuted to New York for night classes; by 1907, when he was graduated, he had logged a total of sixty thousand miles. Larson served as Middlesex County engineer in 1907–1910 and 1923–1924. He also served as city engineer for Perth Amboy and township engineer for Woodbridge. In 1914 he married Jennie Brogger, and that union lasted until her death in 1927.

Perhaps the most revealing incident in Larson's private life took place in 1921, when his brothers Lawrence and George Larson were killed in a grade-crossing accident. Larson softened the impact of that tragedy on his brothers' seven children by taking them into his home and giving each a college education.

In 1921, at thirty-nine, Larson ventured into electoral politics and was elected state senator as a Republican from Democratic Middlesex County. He was reelected in 1924 and 1927. In 1925 he became the senate's majority leader and a year later its president.

More than any other public concern, transportation interested Larson while he served in the senate, and it provided an issue of sufficient public appeal to bolster his prospects for statewide office. The rising popularity of the automobile during the 1920s and the resultant shift of thousands of city residents to suburban communities dramatized the obsolescence of New Jersey's road system. In 1925 the engineer-turned-political-leader joined Senators William B. McKay and Arthur N. Pierson, of Bergen and Union counties, to win legislative backing for three ambitious transportation projects: the George Washington Bridge, between Fort Lee, New Jersey, and 178th Street in Manhattan; the Outerbridge Crossing,