DEMOCRATIC SCHISM IN TEXAS, 1952-1957: EMERGENCE
OF NATIONAL LIBERALISM IN THE SOUTH

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DEMOCRATIC SCHISM IN TEXAS, 1952-1957: EMERGENCE OF NATIONAL LIBERALISM IN THE SOUTH

THESIS

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PREFACE

After the Civil War Texas joined the other states of the Confederacy in erecting state Democratic parties designed to exclude the Negro from any participation in politics. When it was seen that neither the Republican nor Populist parties, which made overtures to colored voters, could compete with the white Democratic party, all aspiring southern politicians sought the Democratic nomination, which would almost ensure election. By the time of the First World War the Texas Democratic primary had become, in effect, the general election for state office and the Texas Legislature regulated it as such. Similarly, the party conventions were brought under state law with the result that the state Democratic party and the state government were nearly a single organization.

While the Texas branch was evolving into an efficient organ for the maintenance of white supremacy, the national Democratic party was developing along different lines. During Franklin Roosevelt's tenure as president (1933-1945) the national party began to aid the poorer classes by federal relief programs, by encouraging the formation of labor unions, and by graduated income taxation. The Negro was helped greatly by these programs and expressed his appreciation by voting for the Democratic party. National party leaders were pleased to see him leave the Republican camp and wanted to keep his support.
Southerners opposed some of Roosevelt's financial measures, but they were particularly alarmed over his attitude toward the Negro. To add to their concern federal courts ruled that the Negro had to be allowed to participate in the affairs of the white Democratic party, since it virtually determined governmental matters in southern states. Roosevelt's popularity and the Second World War prevented any serious southern rebellion against the national party and national liberal ideas, but such a movement was only delayed.

Roosevelt's successor, Harry Truman, continued to insist that the Democratic party advocate increased civil rights for the Negro: better job opportunities; more secure voting rights; adequate housing. By 1948, when Truman was seeking re-election, the South was so much opposed to his civil rights proposals that four states, Alabama, South Carolina, Louisiana, and Mississippi, supported a States' Rights nominee for president. Texas gave the southern candidate over nine per cent of its vote at the general election.

That many Texans shared the South's dislike of the national party was evident not only by the general election of 1948, but also by the May state conventions of 1944 and 1948. At both of these conventions conservatives nominated delegations to the national convention which were opposed to the party's candidate for president. No prominent state politicians joined the movements, because they considered that a majority of Texans were opposed to leaving the national party.
By the end of Truman's second term, however, conditions had changed. Truman was subjected to charges of corruption at home and inefficiency in the prosecution of the Korean War. Even worse from the Texas viewpoint, he opposed Texas in its fight to gain title to the ocean floor adjoining the Texas coast, the "tidelands." By 1951 it seemed to conservative Texans who opposed Truman's "socialistic" economic ideas and his civil rights program that the time had come to use the state party to defeat the national party's candidate.

Two groups of Texans were especially antagonistic to abandoning the national party. Voters in the eastern part of the state clung to the Democratic party in state and national elections because it was the "southern" party. Their section contained most of the state's Negroes and was most southern in its traditions and outlook. To these rural "loyalists" was added a number of urban liberals who supported the national Democratic party because of its stand on economic questions. These people were indifferent or opposed to the idea of playing on racial animosities to win elections and were in fact quite willing to join the colored voter in support of the national party.

The conservative Democrats contemplating party revolt had powerful allies, however. The cities were also the home of most of the state's economic conservatives, who opposed the Democratic party more for its economic policies than for its social ones. This group usually voted Republican, but it was also in the
habit of helping conservative Democrats win state elections. Another area of conservative strength was the region south and west of San Antonio, where the larger number of the Texas Latin-Americans lived. The Latin-American minority was actually larger in Texas than the Negro one and distinguished Texas from the other southern states. These Latin voters frequently followed the "counsel" of local county bosses, both white and Latin, who were highly conservative but sometimes rather erratic in making political alliances. Whomever they supported, they did so for their own profit, but they were most often on the conservative side.

These various factions—rural loyalists, urban liberals, urban conservatives, Negroes, Latin-Americans—had such divergent aims and needs that their mutual presence in the state Democratic party was rather absurd. When conservative Democrats gave the signal for a revolt from the national party in 1952, a ferment began in Texas politics which started a realignment of the voters of the state into liberal and conservative camps. This study is devoted to the activities of the urban liberals and their rural allies in their attempt to wrest control of the state party from the conservative Democrats.
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CHAPTER I

THE RE-EMERGENCE OF THE LOYALISTS

As President Harry Truman's second term neared its end, the perplexing question in the Democratic party was whether the conservative South would support a liberal candidate for the presidency. Truman's strong advocacy of civil rights for the nation's colored minority had antagonized the race-conscious South and seemed to endanger the party's chance to retain control of the national administration, a control extending to twenty years. In 1948 four southern states abandoned the Democratic party and the same tide of feeling was running strongly in the whole South again. The passage of three years found new allies emerging to add weight to the former Dixiecrat tide; now the spirit of party rebellion was manifest from Virginia to Texas.

During 1951 some Texas Democrats began to fear that Governor Allan Shivers would participate in a southern revolt against President Harry Truman's renomination and re-election. The fires of the 1948 States' Rights movement were still smoldering and southerners seemed intent on leaving the Democratic party if the national convention renominated Truman or endorsed strong action on civil rights. Shivers had given indications
that he shared the sentiments of the States' Rights politicians and, to oppose him, a group of Democrats loyal to the national party met at Dallas in October. Their announced intention was to work for a delegation of Texas Democrats to the national convention who would support Truman or any other nominee of the party.¹

In January, 1952, Shivers announced his complete opposition to Truman, but he extended his opposition to other potential Democratic candidates, such as Supreme Court Chief Justice Fred M. Vinson. Vinson was unpopular with Shivers because the Supreme Court had ruled against Texas' claim to the ocean floor adjoining the Texas coast, the "tidelands." In answer to questions on whether General Dwight D. Eisenhower could be put on the Democratic ticket in Texas even if he were the Republican nominee, Shivers thought the general could not be listed on both tickets. Shivers had not mentioned any Democrat that he would like as president, and his mode of procedure in the forthcoming elections and conventions was not yet clearly indicated.²

The first step in Shivers' program was to gain control of the state Democratic party conventions in May in order to send a Texas delegation to the national convention which would support Shivers and oppose Truman. Both the local and state leaders of the Democratic party in Texas looked to the governor as the

¹ The New York Times, October 14, 1951.
head of the party and were willing to follow his directions. To ensure that enough rank and file party members shared their loyalty, Shivers engaged the publicity firm of Weldon Hart-John Van Chronkhite to arouse Texans against the Truman administration.³

Hart and Chronkhite found the climate of public opinion amenable to their publicity campaign due to the fact that the Truman administration represented the twentieth year of the Democratic party's reign nationally. Americans had come to expect the benefits of the New and Fair Deals, but had become somewhat weary of the party in power. In 1952 sporadic war in Korea and petty scandals among Truman's followers were taken to indicate that Truman and his party were corrupt and inefficient. The revolution of 1933 had grown old.

Truman seemed to understand the sentiment of the people and announced in March that he would not be a candidate for office in 1952. But in Texas, as in the rest of the nation, Truman continued to be a factor in politics all during the 1952 campaigns. Preferential polls on presidential nominees showed that Texans liked Truman the least of any potential candidate. Texas politicians, especially those coming home from Washington to defend their seats in Congress, had to disavow any connection with Truman policies. Texas' old and venerable Senator Tom Connally decided to retire partly because

his opponent, Price Daniel, linked Connally firmly with Truman's foreign and domestic policies. Even House Speaker Sam Rayburn, running in a "safe" district, was forced to defend himself by saying that he had opposed Truman on his tide-lands and civil rights proposals.\(^4\)

In this rising tide of anti-Truman feeling the Democrats in Texas fighting for loyalty to the party nominee for president had only one anchor: the fact that the party name was still powerful in Texas. Interviews with voters showed that they still considered themselves Democrats; some of them because of the recent economic benefits they had received and others because the Democratic party still seemed the "southern" party. Therefore, the pro-Truman forces' principal, if indeed not their only, slogan was "loyalty to the party." During February and March the activities of Texas Truman supporters had caused the press to dub them "Loyal Democrats" or, more simply, "Loyalists."\(^5\)

The Loyalists were loyal to Truman, but it was something of a relief to them when he declined to run for re-election. Their joy was tempered immediately, however, by Shivers' statement of March 31 that he was campaigning against the liberalism or, as Shivers put it, "socialism" of the national party leaders. Truman's withdrawal would not change Shivers' intentions

\(^4\)The Dallas Morning News, April 2, 7, 14, 15, July 11, 1952.

\(^5\)Ibid., January 17, 18, 20, February 2, 1952.
to fight for southern principles at the national Democratic convention. The governor recognized the existence of the Loyal Democrats and rebuked them for being loyal to a party, name and ignoring party principles. He said that their candidate for the presidential nomination, Senator Estes Kefauver of Tennessee, was put forward to split the Texas Democratic party. 6

The formal break between Loyalists and Shivers followers took place at a meeting of the State Democratic Executive Committee, the governing body of the state party. At a Committee meeting on April 18 Loyalists Walter G. Hall and John D. Cofer moved that those participating in the May state conventions be required to pledge their ultimate support of the Democratic presidential nominee. The Committee voted against the pledge fifty-two to five and listened approvingly to Shivers threaten a Texas revolt from the national party if it did not choose a candidate and platform agreeable to Texans and southerners. He denounced the Loyalists as "self-appointed and self-seeking serfs of a corrupt national machine" with whom there could be no compromise. 7

Considering that Shivers had control of the state party the Loyalists did not expect to win the May conventions. Their strategy was to attempt to repeat the success of Texas Loyalists

6 Ibid., April 1, 1952.

7 Ibid., April 19, 1952; Weeks, op. cit., pp. 19-21.
in 1944, who left, or "rumped," the state convention because
an anti-Roosevelt majority was in control. In that year the
national convention gave half of the Texas seats to the pro-
Roosevelt faction and half to their opponents. Following that
precedent, Loyalists in 1952 asked their followers to walk out
of any convention, including the precinct and county ones, which
refused to pledge support to the national nominee. Rumping
Loyalists would then hold conventions of their own, which would
send a Loyalist delegation to the national convention. 8

Since the Democratic party in Texas completely dominated
the state's politics, the state legislature had prescribed the
way in which the party was to conduct its elections and con-
ventions. Unfortunately, Texas election laws were in such
hopeless confusion that they were untrustworthy guides. The
Shivers group based its opposition to a loyalty pledge on
state law, and so also did the Loyalists base their insistence
on the pledge. As it happened the Texas Republicans, who were
under the same election code as the Democrats, had a party fight
over a loyalty pledge in 1952. In their case the courts upheld
the right to require one, but Shivers pointed out that the
decision did not compel the pledge. 9

The conservative Shivers faction was an easy winner in the
precinct and county conventions, although there were some

8 The Dallas Morning News, April 20, 22, 23, 26, 1952.
9 Ibid., April 29, 1952; Weeks, op. cit., pp. 13, 22.
Loyalists who left, or "bolted," conventions controlled by their opponents. Mrs. Fagan Dickson, staunch Loyalist, said that she refused to abide by the decision of the conservative majority in her convention because it would not guarantee to obey majority decisions in all the rest of the party's conventions, state and national, to which delegates from her county might be sent. This attitude, or threat, of party disloyalty on the part of the Shivers forces was the key which the Loyalists hoped would gain them admission to the national convention.\(^\text{10}\)

To present their case well in advance, Loyalist leaders visited Washington prior to the state convention. The president was unavailable, but national Chairman Frank McKinney received the Loyalists. After the meeting they said that the Loyalists would be seated at the national convention, but they denied that McKinney had made any such promise. Shivers, who was also in Washington, said that he did not intend to walk out of the national convention, seeming to imply that he would accept whatever nominee the party put forward.\(^\text{11}\)

Prior to the state convention, the Executive Committee's Credentials Committee drew up the temporary roll of the convention, and, in the process, decided the disputed counties. In all the contested counties a minority of Loyalists had walked out and held their own conventions. The Executive Committee

\(^{10}\) The Dallas Morning News, May 6, 1952.

\(^{11}\) Ibid., May 21, 23, 24, 1952.
naturally seated the conservatives, but they also gave seats to the Loyalists in counties where they had had the majority. Loyalist Committeeman Stuart Long moved a minority report requiring all delegates to the state convention to pledge loyalty to the party nominee.\textsuperscript{12}

The Loyalists had only 119 of the convention's 1226 votes; consequently, they made plans well in advance for a bolt. The convention was held in San Antonio, ironically the one large city which the Loyalists had won. Here, Maury Maverick, ex-congressman and ex-mayor of San Antonio, had used his name and skill to obtain the county's votes for the Loyalists. He assumed the direction of the bolt by renting a hall at La Villita, a restored section of Old San Antonio, and hiring buses to transport bolting delegates.\textsuperscript{13}

Maverick used Long's proposed loyalty oath as the issue on which to stage his withdrawal; when the Executive Committee had reported the temporary roll, Maverick asked that Long's minority report be accepted instead. The conservatives did not dignify Maverick's request by granting a roll call on the issue, nor did Maverick want one. After some banter between Maverick and the conservatives, the convention chairman ruled in favor of a point of order that the Long proposal required more than state law did. Upon hearing the ruling Mavericks

\textsuperscript{12}Ibid., May 27, 1952; Weeks, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 28-38.

\textsuperscript{13}Weeks, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 28-38, \textit{The Dallas Morning News}, May 28, 1952.
invited all who would take the loyalty pledge to assemble at La Villita, but all the Loyalists did not follow him. A roll call, "for the record," showed that 1186 county votes were cast. It was estimated that about 500 people left with Maverick and 2000 remained, but many of those leaving had been spectators.

The Loyalist convention was rather confused; due to rain the first session met in a room too small to hold all the delegates. Loyalist leaders asked each of those present to sign a card stating whether he had been a delegate to the state convention and whether he would support the Democratic nominees for office. These cards formed the basis for the convention roll. With the ending of the rain, the afternoon meeting was held in an open patio where tourists, spectators and delegates mingled informally.

With all the confusion, the Loyalists still managed to conduct their convention in much the same manner as the official one. A list of delegates was chosen by congressional district caucuses along with presidential electors for the November general elections. After the offices were filled, delegates listened to speeches and passed resolutions as political conventions had always done. Loyalists asserted that labor had the right of collective bargaining, that Negroes had

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the right to participate in politics, that the United Nations was a good thing, and that they approved Truman’s foreign policy. Loyalists had done their work, but their main problem was to gain recognition as Texas’ representatives to the national convention.16

The Loyalist delegation represented some of the newer forces in Texas politics. Organized labor had ten or more representatives on the delegation. Texas racial and cultural minorities were recognized by placing Ed Idar, Latin-American leader, and Arthur De Witty of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People in the group. The group as a whole was rather young and idealistic.17

It was inevitable that the Loyalists’ case at Chicago, the site of the Democratic convention, would be fought on the basis of whether the convention thought their admission would weaken or strengthen the party. With the experiences of 1948 fresh in everybody’s mind, there was much sentiment for requiring delegates to make some kind of loyalty pledge to the party. This desire was tempered by the fear that a pledge would cause the South to leave the party again. The result of this dichotomy was a series of moves by northern groups for party


loyalty, moves successively weakened by concessions to the South. 18

On July 18 the Loyalists appeared before the Democratic National Committee's Credentials Committee. Network television and radio carried Maverick's blasting of the Shivers faction as Republicans and Dixiecrats and prophesying that they would place Eisenhower's name on the Democratic ballot in Texas. John Cofer supported Maverick by accusing Texas National Committeeman Wright Morrow of being anti-Negro. This was a delicate charge in the civil rights-conscious convention, but Morrow denied it. Morrow and Shivers asked for the recognition of the conservative delegation on the grounds that it represented the overwhelming majority of Texas Democrats. The Loyalists, they said, were trying to exclude people from the party. Both the Credentials Committee and its parent, the National Committee, voted to seat the Shivers faction, but the convention itself would have the final word. 19

The Texas Loyalists now became involved in the fight between the national liberal forces, represented by Kefauver and Governor Averell Harriman of New York, and the moderate-conservative group in the convention. Kefauver and Harriman wanted to require a loyalty pledge and to write a strong civil rights plank


in the platform, thinking that these actions would strengthen their chances for nomination and election. On July 20 Harriman addressed the Texas Loyalists and informed them that he was fighting for their right to be seated and for a strong civil rights plank. The Loyalists cheered him and booed the name of Senator Richard Russell of Georgia, the southern candidate. Harriman not only expected votes from the Texas Loyalists for his civil rights plank, of course; he also expected them for himself. Obviously if the Loyalists were seated, it would be only because Harriman and Kefauver had control of the convention. 20

Although the Shivers group was approved by the convention Credentials Committee on July 22, events of the previous day seemed to favor the Loyalists. Senator Blair Moody of Michigan had persuaded the convention to pass a rule that the chairman of each delegation would have to guarantee that his group would make every endeavor to provide that the Democratic nominees for president and vice-president would be placed under the Democratic heading on the November ballot in his state. This was, of course, to avoid the conditions in 1948 when some states had put States' Rights candidates on the ballot as the state Democratic candidate. 21

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Shivers had given the assurances required by the pledge of the twenty-first, but in a statement released from Austin on the twenty-second he said that the oath did not require Texas Democrats to support the party nominee. The state convention in September would be required to put the nominee's name under the Democratic heading, but it could still choose to give no support to the nominee himself, said the governor. On the basis of these remarks liberals on the Credentials Committee filed a minority report asking that the Texas Loyalists be seated. 22

The Loyalists' case was finally settled on July 23. William Proxmire of Wisconsin urged the seating of the Loyalists by warning that Shivers' statement of the twenty-second showed how weak his party loyalty was. Shivers took the rostrum in his own defense and said that he had always voted Democratic. He knew that Texans were regarded as more conservative than some others in the party, but he thought that there was a constitutional right for people to disagree. He pointed to his adhering to the loyalty oath as proof of his intentions. Shivers' speech was a masterly political maneuver, but he had avoided a direct statement that he would or would not support the nominee. However, the convention, by a voice vote, confirmed the Shivers faction in their places. 23


The convention nominated Governor Adlai Stevenson, a moderate, for the presidency, and the delegates returned home. Although Maury Maverick claimed that McKinney betrayed the Texas Loyalists, most of them thought they had achieved a victory by forcing Shivers to agree to put the nominee on the ballot in Texas. Some of the conservatives agreed with them, but most seemed relieved that a moderate was the nominee, rather than Harrison or Hefauver.²⁴

Although the main attraction in the political skies for Texans was the national convention, there was also a contest for the gubernatorial nomination in Texas. Ralph W. Yarborough, an Austin attorney, was opposing Shivers for the office. Shivers labeled Yarborough the candidate of the "national political bosses;" the Texas Loyalists, at least, were behind him. They had endorsed his candidacy at their La Villita convention, and they had followed his campaign closely from Chicago. Yarborough, although denying he was a Loyalist, announced that he would support the Democratic presidential nominee, and supported the Loyalists in their attempt to get party loyalty pledges. Despite local animosity toward "Trumanism" and the fact that Shivers was running for his second term, usually easily obtained by a Texas governor, Yarborough received approximately 30 per cent of the

vote. However, Shivers won the party's nomination, which in Texas was tantamount to re-election.25

On the same day as the party primary Texas Democrats held precinct conventions leading to the September convention. This convention supposedly wrote the governor's platform for the general election and certified the party's nominees. Actually, the principal function had come to be the election of an Executive Committee. Because the party looked to him for leadership, the governor usually controlled the September convention; so much so in fact that it was called the "governor's convention."

With his prestige enhanced by his renomination Shivers won another victory in the precinct and county conventions. Just before the meeting of the county conventions in August, Shivers asked them to pass resolutions to require the presidential candidates, Stevenson and Eisenhower, to express themselves on state ownership of the tidelands. The question was really directed at Stevenson, because Eisenhower had already announced his belief in state ownership. The issue had been before the nation for several years, and a Supreme Court decision had been rendered against the states, but Texans were greatly aroused in May, 1952, when Truman vetoed a bill giving title of the tidelands to the states. Texans were not divided over the merits

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of getting the tidelands. The Loyalists at La Villita endorsed state ownership and almost every other organized group in the state was also in favor. It is not surprising then that Shivers chose this as the issue to rally his supporters.\footnote{Ibid., April 1, May 28, 30, August 3, 12, 1952.}

Conservatives in the county conventions interpreted the resolution as a slap at the Democratic party and passed it enthusiastically. Not stopping at this rebuke, they also paraded in anti-Stevenson demonstrations and cheered wildly at the mention of Republican Eisenhower. Shivers had ample proof that his followers had only the slightest interest in Stevenson, but that they were highly enthusiastic about Eisenhower.\footnote{Ibid., August 3, 1952.}

Apparently to bolster his position even further, Shivers conferred with Stevenson in a highly-publicized meeting at Springfield, Illinois, on August 23. At this conference Stevenson informed the Texas governor that he agreed with the Supreme Court and Truman; he would not work for the return of the tidelands to the states. Shivers thereupon announced that he would not vote for Stevenson, not only because of the tidelands, but also because Stevenson was not sympathetic to the South in his opposition to the use of the filibuster in the United States Senate and in his support of the Fair Employment Practices Commission idea. In view of his year-long campaign, first against Truman and then, when Truman withdrew, against
the "socialistic" leaders of the national party, it seems that Shivers never intended to support the Democratic nominee. But because Stevenson was a moderate, Shivers had to dramatize the Illinois governor's antagonism to the best interests of Texas and the South. By using the non-partisan tidelands issue to make the demonstration Shivers cut the ground from under the Loyalists. It was a master stroke of politics.  

The Loyalists, who thought the question had been settled at Chicago, were once again fearful that Shivers would place Eisenhower on the Texas ballot as a Democrat. There seemed to be a conservative trend of thinking toward doing just that. Although Shivers, in a state-wide radio address on August 27, denounced the national party because of its abandonment of its ancient principles, he did not endorse leaving the Democratic candidate off the ballot in Texas. Price Daniel, the victorious candidate for the United States Senate nomination, was more specific. On September 1 he proposed two sets of Democratic electors, one pledged to Eisenhower and the other to Stevenson. Republicans in Texas did their best to encourage the trend by listing all the Democratic nominees for state office as the Republican nominees also. Shivers, Daniel, and the rest of the conservative Democrats listed under Eisenhower on the ballot seemed symbolic of the fusion of interests between the Texas

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28 Ibid., August 24, 1952.
conservative Democrats and the national Republican party. 29

Loyalist Creekmore Fath threatened a law suit if the conservatives put two sets of Democratic electors on the ballot. Sam Rayburn, having weathered a conservative challenge for his seat in Congress, also denounced the idea of two Democratic candidates and hinted that Democratic congressmen who supported Eisenhower might not get good committee assignments. On September 6, three days before the convention, Shivers announced that there was no legal way to list Eisenhower as a Democrat, but he urged the convention to show the voter how to vote for the state nominees as Democrats and Eisenhower on the Republican ticket, although a vote for the Republican ticket would accomplish the same results. 30

The convention followed Shivers' wishes, although extreme conservatives asked for a vote on the question of putting Eisenhower on the Democratic ticket. No such vote was allowed, but the convention urged all Texas Democrats to vote for Eisenhower. Shivers asked all state officials to vote and campaign for the Republican candidate. To this end, he removed the few Loyalists from the state Executive Committee and filled it with

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29 Ibid., August 27, September 2, 1952; Weeks, op. cit., p. 83.

his staunch lieutenants. There would be few state Democratic leaders fighting for the Democratic presidential nominee.\textsuperscript{31}

Actually, the Loyalists were rather relieved that Shivers allowed Stevenson to be listed as a Democrat, with no competing Democratic electors. Maverick, a voice from the wilderness, accused Shivers of violating his oath taken at the national convention, but technically Shivers had not even done that. The extreme conservatives once again agreed that their leader had not been active enough in opposing the "socialists" in the national party and a group of disgruntled conservatives who had lost their move to put Eisenhower on the Democratic ballot constituted themselves the "Texas Democratic Party" with electors pledged to Eisenhower. Loyalists, however, filed suit against the party,\textsuperscript{32} and their electors were denied places on the ballot by the courts.

The Loyalists then turned to the campaign for Stevenson. Although they had few resources in money or campaigners, they hoped that Texas' traditional "loyalty" to the party would give the state's electoral vote once again to the Democratic candidate. The Loyalists followed the direction of Rayburn, whose idea of a presidential campaign was to get all the Texas congressmen to stump for Stevenson. Some refused, but only


\textsuperscript{32}\textit{The Dallas Morning News}, September 10, 11, 12, 14, 17, 1952; \textit{Weeks, op. cit.}, p. 88.
J. Frank Wilson of Dallas was an avowed Eisenhower supporter. The Loyalists used all possible speakers, including Yarborough and John C. White, state commissioner of agriculture who was the only state official to refuse to allow the Republicans to list his name in their column.33

Loyalist speakers had a most difficult time with the tidelands question. Rayburn tried various approaches to the issue, but the best he could do was to say that Shivers and Daniel were making it impossible for Stevenson to compromise with Texas. Loyalists Grover Sellers and William McGraw, both former state attorneys-general, accused Daniel of losing Texas' case before the United States Supreme Court by linking it with those of other states. Even the Loyalists must have felt that such arguments were feeble, and it is certain the people of Texas did. Eisenhower won Texas' electoral votes by a wide margin.34


34The Dallas Morning News, October 24, 30, November 4, 1952.
CHAPTER II

THE EVOLUTION OF URBAN LIBERALISM

The shock of Stevenson's defeat and the vote of confidence which Texas gave Shivers in November, 1952, left the Loyalists weak and disorganized in the winter of 1952-1953. Few indeed had been the Texas politicians who had come forth to lead the faithful; Johnson made only slight exertions for the party and this skillful navigator of the tides of public opinion was copied by most of the other Texas office-holders. Rayburn fought bravely, but almost alone, and there seemed to be no one who could take up the mantle of leadership when he returned to Congress. In default of the well-known figures of the party, Loyalists again were left to the care of such tested men as Fath and Maverick, who were loyal but relatively powerless.

One of the first goals of the Loyalists was to establish contact with the national party. During the heat of the presidential campaign in October, 1952, Wright Morrow resigned as Texas national committeeman. The national committee accepted his resignation, but the state Executive Committee refused to do so, and Morrow, after considering the matter at his leisure, decided to remain at his post. In effect however, Sam Rayburn
served as committeeman, but he could not serve very effectively in that office while attending to his job in Congress. At any rate the Loyalists thought that they should have some kind of formal organization which the national party would recognize as the spokesman for the Democrats in Texas.

On May 17, 1953, several hundred Loyalists met at Buchanan Dam near Austin to discuss the formation of a permanent organization to represent the Loyalists—and Democrats—of Texas. They decided to establish an executive committee similar to the official one, with a man and a woman member from each state senatorial district, to serve until a Loyalist convention could be called to set up an authorized executive committee. In other words, since the Loyalists could not capture the official party committee, they produced a rival which would be an imitation of the conservative-dominated one. The Loyalists could not carry out their plan exactly since not all senatorial districts were represented at Buchanan Dam; therefore, an interim committee consisting of the Loyalists at the dam was to serve temporarily. This committee, called the Democratic Organizing Committee, had as chairman Byron Skelton, a former candidate for a post as national committeeman. Other party stalwarts such as Mrs. Jud Collier, Fath, and Maverick were also members, and even several politicians took their political future in their hands, or rather put it in the hands of the Loyalists, and joined the group. Among them were seven
state representatives (including Maury Maverick, Jr.) and Ralph Yarborough.  

As a statement of policy Skelton called on the official Executive Committee to admit their status as Republicans, after supporting Eisenhower, and resign. However, Skelton and the other Loyalist leaders were more interested in getting approval of their committee from the national party. To obtain this they invited Stephen Mitchell, the national Democratic chairman, to Texas to discuss Texas politics. Mitchell accepted the invitation and arrived in July, but when he finished conferring with the Loyalists, he made no commitments on recognizing their new organization. In fact, he publicly called for a return of the conservatives, including Shivers, to the party fold, an idea that was anathema to the Loyalists.  

Regardless of Mitchell's non-committal attitude, Loyalists interpreted his position to be one of agreement with their aims, and they continued to hope for his official blessing. In the meantime, there would be an election in a year and organizational work had to be done. Some Loyalists in the summer of 1953 toyed with the idea of two sets of Democratic candidates in 1954, an idea which the Shivers faction had been forced to reject because of the legal complications involved. On one thing the Loyalists

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1 The Dallas Morning News, May 18, 1953.

2 The Dallas Morning News, May 18, July 2, 1953; The Texas Observer, November 14, 1956.
were agreed, however; the need for a convention representing
the rank and file of Loyalists before the elections and con-
ventions of 1954. The date tentatively set for this conclave
was November, 1953.  

This convention was never held, due to the opposition of
Rayburn, who, after the adjournment of Congress, returned to
Texas to survey the political situation. At Salado in December
Rayburn persuaded the Loyalists to dissolve their Organizing
Committee by mass resignation from it. When the Loyalists did
so, Rayburn founded the Democratic Action Committee, which was
to maintain contact with the national committee and work for
the election of Loyalists to the state conventions. As the
Action Committee evolved, a screening committee composed of
Byron Skelton, Kathleen Voigt of San Antonio, and D. B. Harde-
man of Denison, all staunch Rayburn supporters, suggested new
members for the national committee to appoint. It could be
fairly maintained that Rayburn had simply taken the Loyalists
into his paddock on a short rein.  

The new group had Rayburn's blessing and it soon obtained
that of the national committee. On May 5, 1954, a roll call
of the national committee omitted the name of Wright Morrow,
whereupon he arose in the audience, which also contained

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4 The Texas Observer, October 26, 1955, November 14, 1956;
The Dallas Morning News, December 2, 1953; The Texas Observer,
November 9, 1955.
Rayburn's screening committee of Skelton, Voigt, and Hardeman. Mitchell quickly said that Texas had no national committeeman. Two weeks later Mitchell announced that the national committee recognized the Action Committee as the spokesman for the Democrats of Texas, giving as a reason the fact that the liberals were raising money for the national party. In June Skelton remarked that Shivers was considering removing Morrow as national committeeman, an act that Skelton thought would be devoid of charity on Shivers' part.5

While the older Loyalists were gaining the approval of the national party, to the detriment of the Shivers forces, there was activity by the younger members of the party. The Texas chapter of the Young Democratic Clubs of America had been dormant for several years prior to 1953, but in October of that year young liberals at San Antonio selected delegates to the national Young Democratic convention. At the same time conservatives organized a delegation and both of them turned up at St. Paul in November. There, the convention refused to seat either of the delegations on the ground that neither had been certified by the local committeeman or committeewoman. The conservatives and liberals returned to Texas determined to secure recognition from the national organization.6

5The Dallas Morning News, May 6, 19, June 14, 1954.
The state Executive Committee selected the national committeewoman, Mrs. H. H. Weinert, as the one to reorganize the Texas Young Democrats. To assist her the committee appointed an advisory board of young liberals and conservatives, with the conservatives in the majority. Under the circumstances the conservatives were firmly in control of arranging the convention and soon had organized a number of clubs. The liberals, initially at a disadvantage, refused to serve on Mrs. Weinert's committee or attend the convention, but planned to hold their own after the conservative one.\footnote{The \textit{Dallas Morning News}, February 6, 9, 10, 28, 1954.}

The conservative convention was important because it showed that conservative leaders, especially Shivers, valued national party recognition for both young and old conservative Democrats. In addition to the national president of the Young Democrats, Neal Smith, the conservatives also invited Adlai Stevenson, Stephen Mitchell, Senators Daniel and Johnson and any other Loyalist, with Shivers extending a personal invitation to Stevenson and Mitchell. Stevenson and Mitchell did not come, nor did Johnson and Daniel, but conservative speakers emphasized the fact that conservatives were Democrats too. Mrs. Weinert went so far as to urge that conservatives support the Democratic party in national elections, while the state Executive Chairman, Wallace Savage, said that Republicans would not be allowed to cross-file for state offices.\footnote{\textit{Ibid.}, February 7, 9, 26, 27, 28, 1954.}
Liberal young Democrats ignored the pleas to return to the conservative fold and held their own convention at San Antonio on May 8 and 9 with Ralph Yarborough the principal speaker and attacks on Shivers as the order of the day. The liberals elected Dean Johnston, an instructor in English at the University of Houston, as the president, his chief rival being Charles Grace, a law partner of Maury Maverick, Jr. David Bunn, a representative from the national Young Democrats, was present as an observer, which duty he had also performed at the conservative convention. His recommendation was evidently for the liberals, because the national executive committee of the Young Democrats granted the liberals in Texas a charter in July.9

By the summer of 1954 the liberals were in full control of the state party, in so far as recognition by the national party organs could give it to them, but actual control still rested with Shivers. He would have to be ousted from the governor's mansion before the liberals could be assured of complete victory. There was some question in the spring of 1954 as to whether Shivers would defy the no-third-term rule of Texas gubernatorial politics, but this doubt was resolved on April 19 when he did announce for the race. Liberals were automatically opposed to Shivers; therefore, whoever ran against him, if he were slightly less conservative than Shivers, could

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9Ibid., May 9, 10, July 19, 1954.
count on liberal support. There were really only two eligible liberal candidates for governor, Ralph Yarborough and John White. When White chose to run for re-election as agriculture commissioner and Yarborough entered the governor's race, liberals hoped fervently that Yarborough, who had been loyal to the party in 1952, would defeat the party apostate, Shivers. 10

However, the main issue of the campaign did not become the question of party regularity in 1952. As mentioned above, speeches at the conservative Young Democratic convention indicated that Shivers was willing to embrace the doctrine of loyalty to the party, and on April 24 the state Executive Committee took a firm step in the direction of party loyalty when it announced that Democrats would not be allowed to list their names on the ballot under both the Republican and Democratic headings. At the same time Shivers invited the liberals to unite with conservatives in the interest of party harmony. On May 19, in response to Mitchell's recognition of the Action Committee, Shivers said that he had offered to raise money for the national party. 11

Plainly Shivers was willing to make gestures toward party loyalty, thinking no doubt that the extra votes might be helpful, especially in light of the no-third-term tradition in Texas. Interestingly enough, considering the magnitude the

10 The Dallas Morning News, March 30, April 20, 30, 1954.
11 Ibid., April 25, May 19, 1954.
party loyalty issue later came to assume in liberal thought. Franklin Roosevelt, Jr., one of the initiators of the loyalty pledge at the 1952 national convention, said on September 15, 1953:

The so-called loyalty pledge at the last convention was not a loyalty pledge at all. It was only a statement by each delegate that he would honorably see to it that the national candidate's name be placed on their ballots on the Democratic line. As a result, each delegate was free to support either the Democratic or Republican candidate in the national election.12

Europeans have a saying that one need not be a stronger supporter of the monarchy than the monarch himself, and Shivers certainly fulfilled Roosevelt's definition of a loyalist. Perhaps not too surprisingly then, in view of the disputed question of who was a Loyalist and also in view of the fact that hundreds of thousands of Texans had supported Eisenhower, Yarborough did not stress the loyalty issue during the campaign.

Yarborough's main attack on Shivers was that he had been involved in dubious financial deals, especially one transaction in which Shivers had purchased an option on land in Hidalgo County. In 1946 Shivers had paid $25,000 for the option and had sold it later in the year for $450,000 to a group of investors. These people had then become involved in a lawsuit, and Shivers had been called upon to make a written deposition, which was kept under seal by the court. A Yarborough supporter

forced the court to release the deposition, which was published in June, 1954.  

In addition Yarborough hammered away at the failure of insurance companies in Texas, and the inaction of the Shivers-appointed state insurance commission. He was also excited about the fact that an aide of Shivers, John Van Cronkhite, received $9,000 from an insurance company which went bankrupt.  

Yarborough continued to dwell on financial scandals during June, trying to leave the impression that the administration and Shivers were corrupt. He spoke of the "mess in Austin," in obvious imitation of the successful Republican campaign of 1952 against Truman's mess in Washington.

Shivers attempted to counterattack by asking Yarborough to deny that organized Negroes (the NAACP) and organized labor (the CIO-PAC) from other states were financing his campaign. Yarborough was able to retort that he received contributions only from Texans and continued to emphasize Shivers' financial corruption, asking that Shivers reveal his income tax returns.

In desperation Shivers raised the segregation question. When the Supreme Court had issued its decision of May 17, 1954, in which segregation was held unconstitutional in a public school,

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14 Ibid., May 19, June 25, 1954.

15 Ibid., June 27, 29, 1954.

16 Ibid., July 3, 6, 11, 1954.
Shivers had made a very moderate statement. At that time he said that the problem of segregation could not be settled in a short time, but that Texas would not abolish her public schools. In the midst of his campaign for re-election, however, he began to see the matter in a different light. On July 14 he said that he stood for the operation of the public schools on a segregated basis and he demanded to know Yarborough's opinion on the matter.\(^{17}\)

Yarborough had not expressed any opinion on segregation and now that he was forced into one, he simply agreed with the policy of the State Board of Education to continue to operate the schools on a segregated basis for the next school year. Having considered the matter further, in a speech in east Texas on July 17 he said that he was against "forced mingling of children where they don't want to go," but he assured his audience of white and colored people that Negroes would have truly equal schools with whites when he was elected. Some liberals, especially colored ones, were disappointed with his "equivocation," but undoubtedly it was highly realistic.\(^{18}\)

Although Yarborough had Shivers on the defensive with his charges of corruption, he decided to raise another issue against him, the one which had insured Shivers' victories in 1952—the tidelands. On July 13 Yarborough accused the Republican

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\(^{17}\text{Ibid.}, \text{May 18, July 14, 1954.}\)

\(^{18}\text{Ibid.}, \text{July 15, 18, 1954.}\)
administration in Washington, especially Attorney General Brownell, of not giving Texas title to her tidelands for the three leagues out to sea to which she was entitled, but to only three miles. This simple statement aroused the conservatives to action in Washington and Austin, because they had been thinking the same thing. Actually Yarborough was only quoting John Ben Shepperd, Texas attorney general, who had said in a speech that Brownell was not as sound as he might have been on Texas' claims to the tidelands.\textsuperscript{19}

Fuel was piled on the fire when Brownell refused to comment on the charge, and conservatives scurried around frantically to find some high-ranking Republican to deny the rumors, and give Texas her tidelands once and for all. Eisenhower was said to have assured Daniel that he was in favor of the Texas claims, and Yarborough took credit for forcing this admission. However, it was not until July 20, when an Interior Department spokesman assured Texans that they had a valid title to three leagues of ocean floor and July 21, when Eisenhower endorsed the statement, that Texans were satisfied.\textsuperscript{20}

Yarborough was content also; he closed his campaign as it had begun, with charges of corruption in Austin, and awaited the results of the election. They were an earthquake in Texas politics. Johnson was running for re-election as senator, but

\textsuperscript{19}Ibid., July 14, 16, 1954.

\textsuperscript{20}Ibid., July 16, 17, 21, 22, 1954.
without even bothering to campaign he received a 500,000-vote majority over his conservative opponent. In the governor's race Shivers defeated Yarborough by only 23,000 votes out of 1,350,000 cast. However, he did not have a majority of the total vote because two minor candidates obtained 35,000 votes. According to Texas law a second primary was necessary in order for one candidate to obtain an absolute majority. 21

Shivers had not had much success in accusing Yarborough of being a captive of the labor unions of the Negroes; therefore, he switched his attack in the second primary to the question of Communist influence in Texas. This tactic was suggested by the fact that for several months before the election the people of Texas had been saturated with the idea of Communist threats against the nation and the state. Shivers must have considered the idea of using Communism as a weapon even earlier, however.

In November, 1953, the Distributive, Processing and Office Workers of America commenced a strike in Port Arthur against a number of retail stores. In that same month Shivers activated the Texas Industrial Commission to determine whether the DPOWA and other Texas unions had Communist members. According to the Industrial Commission the DPOWA had been under Communist influence at least, and, through Shivers' urging, the CIO took jurisdiction of the strike. 22

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In April, 1954, at a special session of the legislature called to deal with financial matters, Shivers had a bill introduced to outlaw Communism in Texas. Shivers asked for a death penalty for a convicted Communist, but the legislature set the punishment at twenty years' imprisonment or a fine of $20,000 or both. Only seven liberals in the House dared to oppose the bill, which Shivers signed into law on April 16.  

As it happened, only a week later Senator McCarthy and the Secretary of the Army began their televised hearings on Communism in the army. People in Texas, as everywhere else, found the hearings of consuming interest, and, whether or not they approved of McCarthy, were made forcibly aware of the charge that Communists were infesting the government and the army. The hearings dragged on for two months, not ending until the middle of June. But just as they ended another reminder of the omnipresent danger of Communism was revealed by Carlos Castillo Armas' invasion of Guatemala, said to be a Communist state. No sooner had Armas conquered Guatemala than the long-drawn Communist-French guerrilla war in Indo-China made headlines with the spectacular news that the French and the Communists were signing an armistice which would give part of that country to the Communists.  

In view of the intense public interest in the subject there is little wonder that Shivers found Communism to be the best

23 Ibid., April 8, 9, 13, 16, 1954.
24 Ibid., April 22, June 18, 19, July 21, 1954.
issue with which to attack Yarborough. Even during the first primary he had made several references to the likelihood that Communists and their sympathizers would support Yarborough, but during the second primary Shivers devoted most of his time to accusations that Communist-dominated labor unions in Port Arthur were supporting Yarborough in order to remove Shivers. In addition, teams of Port Arthur residents were sent around Texas to tell their "Port Arthur Story" and show a film which portrayed a deserted Port Arthur (it was later admitted that the film was made at five o'clock in the morning) suffering because of left-wing labor unions. Whites and Negroes were shown together on the picket lines and the audience was told that the best way to keep those evils from spreading to the rest of Texas was to vote for Shivers.25

In a speech at Port Arthur on August 11 Shivers ridiculed Yarborough's assertions that there were no Communists in Texas and said that the people of Port Arthur could judge for themselves on that question and also on whether or not Shivers was the man to control the Communists. He said that Yarborough himself was no Communist but that some of his supporters were of dubious quality and that all seven House members who had voted against the Communist control bill were supporting Yarborough.26


26The Dallas Morning News, August 12, 1954.
This type of campaign was hard for Yarborough to fight. He was "it" in the favorite indoor political game of "guilt by association." He himself was not a Communist, but, according to Shivers, Communists were supporting him. At first Yarborough tried to continue his attacks on Shivers' financial misdeeds, using for his second campaign a charge that Shivers had profited through a part-ownership of a printing company at Mission which received state printing contracts.  

But Yarborough's accusation was not as effective as Shivers' raising the hue and cry of a hunt for Communists. As if to confirm the people's anxieties during a summer laden with fear of Communism, the United States Congress during the middle of August and the middle of the election in Texas voted severe restrictions on the Communist party in the United States, with fewer dissenting votes than there had been in the Texas Legislature on the same subject. Shivers could point with pride to the fact that he had been aware of the Communist menace even earlier than the national Congress had been.  

Yarborough was forced to face the Communist issue and tried to do so by urging a stronger anti-Communist stand in Europe, by ridiculing Shivers' claims that there were numbers of Communists in Texas, by saying that Shivers had not put a single Communist in jail, and then by saying that Shivers was

27Ibid., August 11, 1954.
28Ibid., August 17, 1954.
talking about the Port Arthur strike and Communism but was doing nothing about them. Finally he took a leaf out of Eisenhower's 1952 campaign book and said that he would go to Port Arthur after his election and settle the strike, which Shivers was not able to do.29

By putting Yarborough on the unpopular side of the most highly discussed issue of the day, an issue with which Yarborough had not the slightest connection except in the minds of Shivers, his advisers, and several hundreds of thousands of Texas voters, Shivers had once again demonstrated his political ability. In the second primary he defeated Yarborough by 92,000 votes out of 1,458,000 cast, a considerable majority, but far short of his previous triumphs. As was expected the large cities, Dallas, Fort Worth, Houston, San Antonio, and Austin, which had given Eisenhower a heavy vote in 1952, and which, therefore, were strongholds of independent and Republican thinking, gave Shivers a 45,000-vote majority. But there was another area of the state which gave Shivers a larger majority than the cities did, and on a far smaller total vote. This area was the region southeast, south, southwest, and west of San Antonio, the Latin-American section of Texas. This region, excluding its two large cities of San Antonio and Corpus Christi, produced only 200,000 votes, but it gave Shivers 123,000 of them and an edge over Yarborough of 46,000. All the rest of the state,

29 Ibid., August 14, 16, 26, 1954.
including the large cities, had 1,250,000 votes, but only gave Shivers a 45,000-vote majority. 30

It is plain then that the large cities and the southern part of the state were Shivers' strongholds. Outside Dallas, Fort Worth, and Houston Yarborough ran abreast of Shivers in all west Texas (north of San Antonio), central Texas, and east Texas. He was especially strong in the rural counties and medium-sized cities influenced by rural ideas. It could be said that Yarborough's support came from those farm and small town people who were not yet reconciled to the idea of leaving the Democratic party as a steady thing, while Shivers was supported by the cities, where people were beginning to vote their pocketbooks and their prejudices gleaned from the newspapers, and by south Texas, whose Latin-American citizens were easily intimidated by their Anglo neighbors to vote for the most conservative candidate.

The July election was very stimulating, not only for Texas liberals, but also for the national ones. The national liberal press, almost all of which supported national Democratic policies and detested Eisenhower and McCarthy alike, rejoiced after the first Texas primary in the belief that conservative and Republican voting in Texas was on a decline. Naturally the August election dampened their hopes, but they asserted that the campaign proved once again how much the

Communist threat aided conservatives and how much advantage the conservatives had in the matter of campaign funds. (Even the thoroughly conservative *Dallas News* agreed that the campaign had been one of the costliest in Texas history, estimating that Shivers and Yarborough spent more than a million dollars each.)³¹

Almost unnoticed in the excitement of the elections were the Democratic precinct and county conventions leading to the September state convention. The primary conventions were held on the same day as the first election; therefore, the gubernatorial vote was not known to the delegates at that time. However, in the county conventions which followed the delegates were sorely perplexed to know which of the candidates to support. If the September convention was to be the governor's convention it would be very useful to know which man would be governor, and almost the sole dividing line in the county conventions was whether the delegates thought Yarborough or Shivers would win. Some counties went to the length of naming two sets of delegates, one to go if Yarborough won, and one to go if Shivers won. Many erstwhile conservatives, wanting to get on a new band wagon, were quite ready to go over to Yarborough if he were to be the new governor. This readiness of Texas party members, liberal and conservative, to follow the winning candidate, illustrates how little principles were involved and how much expediency was. Liberals, in falling in behind Yarborough's

name in the conventions, were in some cases acting from principle, but many times simply from expediency: he was the man who could lead them to victory.

However, there were two outstanding examples of voting according to principle, on both the conservative and liberal side. Indeed, the two opposing factions seemed to be polarizing, almost in the literal sense of the word, around the two largest cities in the state, Dallas in the north and Houston in the south. Under the astute direction of Mrs. Frankie Randolph, a well-to-do Houstonian with a flair for precinct organization who insisted that every effort had to be made in the precincts likely to go liberal and no effort wasted in the others, Harris County (Houston) had become a very doubtful county for the conservatives at best and was likely to become a liberal stronghold. Houston had evolved one stage beyond its sister cities in Texas; while they were just discovering that they were antagonistic to the interests of the traditional Democratic party in Texas as found in the rural areas, and hence voting Republican and conservative, Houston was discovering that the best way to get what it wanted was to go in a liberal direction. It too did not want the type of policies espoused by the rural Democrats of Texas, but it felt that Republicanism had even less to offer; therefore, the Houston party was evolving into a liberal Democratic party not much different from the ones in Los Angeles or New York City.
Dallas conservatism was based on as firm an ideological basis as Houston liberalism was. There was no particular leader of the Dallas conservatives, but the large numbers of wealthy and intelligent business and professional men who ran a very efficient city government in Dallas and campaigned enthusiastically for Eisenhower were completely convinced that even the rural Democrats were too liberal in their proposals for spending the people's money and that liberals of the Houston variety were heretics to the American way of life. Therefore, Dallas conservatives were as dedicated as their opposite numbers in Houston.

Oddly enough, this dedication on the part of the Houston liberals and the Dallas conservatives made them in many ways closer to each other than to the vast majority of Texas Democratic party members, who were quite willing to go along with the dominant political figure in the state, be he Shivers, Yarborough, Johnson, Rayburn, or whoever. Dallas and Houston found themselves outside this middle ground of politics, and this was especially true at the state party convention in September, 1954.

At the state convention the Dallas conservatives threatened trouble as they had at the convention in 1952 because they believed that Shivers was not pure enough in his conservatism. In both liberal and conservative camps the test of political purity was the willingness or unwillingness of party leaders
to admit "traitors" back into the party councils. As has been demonstrated, Stephen Mitchell, Sam Rayburn, and Lyndon Johnson were quite willing to admit apostates back into party membership. This was thought of as weakness by the more convinced liberals. Similarly, Shivers issued an invitation for liberals to rejoin the party in February and June, 1954, and when William McGraw, a Loyalist who had supported Stevenson in 1952, came to labor in the conservative vineyard in 1954, Shivers rewarded his efforts by offering him a newly-created Dallas Criminal Court judgeship. The Dallas conservatives, as adamant in their opposition to traitors as the liberals, were opposed to McGraw's appointment, but McGraw received the post anyway.\textsuperscript{32}

Harris County furnished the example of liberal opposition to Shivers on principle. Although the Credentials Committee of the State Democratic Executive Committee threw out most of the large liberal-controlled delegations in favor of contesting conservative ones, they seated the Harris County liberals. This was done partly because their victory in Houston had been so complete that the conservatives had not thought a challenge possible and also because the Houston delegates promised the Credentials Committee that they would help Shivers to conduct a harmonious convention. However, when word was sent out during the convention that Shivers would not accept any nominees of the senatorial district caucuses for places on the Executive

\textsuperscript{32} The \textit{Dallas Morning News}, September 13, 1954.
Committee if they were hostile to the governor, Harris County led a floor fight to ensure that all nominees of the district caucuses would be seated. The move was defeated 4317 to 1739, with almost half the anti-Shivers vote coming from Harris County. With their cause completely defeated all the Harris liberals could do was to heckle speakers (including Shivers) who claimed that the governor was a friend of the laboring man.33

Liberal choices for the Executive Committee from Beaumont, Corpus Christi, and Houston (including Mrs. Randolph) were rejected by the Shivers forces, and the liberals, although they had frightened the conservatives during the summer, were not in a much better position than they had been in 1952. Their old foe, Shivers, still controlled the party machine and was still governor. Liberals could not win major elections, although their candidate, Yarborough, had shown suprising strength. It is true that he had denied being a liberal on several occasions, but he was so much more one than Shivers that liberals could only hope that he would not become discouraged by defeat and give up running. Outside of Harris County liberals had few other resources, only a few rural counties, some medium-sized cities, and scattered strength over the state. It appeared that providence alone could turn this thrice-defeated, doubly-disorganized group into a cohesive and victorious force.

33Ibid., September 12, 14, 15, 1954.
CHAPTER III

DIVIDED LOYALTIES

After the formality of Shivers' re-election as governor in November, 1954, liberals in Texas realized that their fight to gain control of the Democratic party in the state would be longer and harder than they had previously thought. In 1952 they believed that the September convention would return to party regularity, as those of 1944 and 1948 had done. Their hopes were dashed, of course, but they were nevertheless sure that Yarborough in 1954 would be able to punish Shivers for his "treason." With the Yarborough defeat the liberals were again confronted with the fact that Texas politics were no longer as simple as they had been ten or twenty years before. Shivers' conservative following contained a considerable number of people resolutely opposed to national or state liberal ideas, and they saw in Shivers the perfect champion of their cause.

One of the great advantages of the conservatives was the fact that the press of Texas was either indifferent or hostile to liberals and their efforts. Liberals were often incensed with news stories in Texas papers which gave the impression that
the liberal movement was something of a conspiracy, and, as a result of this feeling, a liberal meeting in the fall of 1954 resolved to found a more friendly newspaper. Mrs. R. D. Randolph was a leader of the movement, and she had the assistance of Franklin Jones of Marshall, the publisher of a small east Texas paper, The East Texas Democrat. The liberal leaders decided to acquire The East Texas Democrat, move it to Austin, the center of political activity in the state, and merge it with an Austin paper, The State Observer. The new paper was called The Texas Observer, and it was to have a state-wide circulation and outlook under the editorship of Ronnie A. Dugger, a young newspaperman of pronounced liberal views.¹

As it happened, The Texas Observer was founded at precisely the right time to aid the anti-administration cause. The first issue was printed on December 13, 1954, at the very beginning of a series of scandals in Texas which were to destroy Shivers' popularity with the average voter. The first inkling of corruption in the state administration came from stories published in The Cuero Record, a small newspaper in south Texas. The Record's editor, Ken R. Towery, became suspicious of the fact that Cuero's respectable citizens were entertaining Negroes and Latin-Americans. When he investigated further, he found that these Negroes and Latin-Americans were war veterans who were induced to sign papers for reasons that were rather vague. Some

¹The Texas Observer, December 13, 14, 1955.
of them thought they were to get land free from the state or to get a bonus of some kind, and, in fact, some of them did get money, but not from the state. They were paid by the promoters who were interested in their signatures on applications for a state loan with which to buy land.²

Towery's stories indicating that some kind of fraud was being practiced on the state government first became widely known in November, 1954. Soon various agencies of the state were inquiring into the matter, and the De Witt County grand jury at Cuero began to take testimony. By December 11, state Senator Dorsey Hardeman was calling for the Senate Investigating Committee to look into the veterans land program, and all eyes turned to the Veterans Land Board which administered it. Soon after the Second World War the state began to purchase land for resale to veterans, who were given up to forty years in which to repay the state. The Land Board, composed of the land commissioner (Bascom Giles), the attorney general (Shepperd), and the governor (Shivers), had to approve both purchases of land by the state and applications for loans by veterans. Investigation revealed that fraud was practiced by land promoters, who, after obtaining applications from a large group of veterans, would sell land to the state at much higher prices than the

promoters had paid for it for the use of the group whose signatures the promoters had obtained. 3

Obviously the promoters could not have succeeded unless state officials accepted their valuation of their land, and first testimony, and then admission, from Bascom Giles showed that he had accepted bribes to approve the schemes of the land speculators. Giles' position had become so untenable by the end of December, 1954, that he refused to take his oath of office on January 1, 1955. The story of the land scandals continued to be told in the state press with Giles being convicted in the public mind long before he was in fact. 4

Since Shivers and Shepperd were also on the Land Board, many people naturally began to assume that their guilt was equal to that of Giles. Even the highly conservative Texas Legislature was forced to question them about their activities. Shivers and Shepperd defended themselves by saying that they were seldom in attendance at the meetings of the Board, sending proxies to vote for them. Nevertheless, the legislature reprimanded them for not keeping closer watch over the affairs of the Board. With this attitude on the part of the legislature, it is easy to understand that the average Texan developed a very low opinion of the integrity of Shivers. When Ken Towery appeared


on a national television program in the spring of 1954 and said that he hoped that two more indictments would be returned in the land scandals, a great many Texans were under the impression that he meant Shivers and Shepperd. He denied the implication, but Texans did not forget it.  

Shivers' popularity dropped steadily as the scandals became more widely known. Early in January, 1955, the reliable Belden Poll found that 64 per cent of the voters approved Shivers' administration; in May 52 per cent approved; in August 45 per cent did so; while by September, only 22 per cent did so. The land scandal was the most important cause of Shivers' losing his following, and the name of Bascom Giles was an albatross around the neck of the governor of Texas.  

Liberals naturally became more interested in political work as Shivers' popularity decreased, and as early as December, 1954, liberals began to plan for the state conventions of 1956, doubly important because the May convention would elect delegates to the national convention, which would nominate a candidate for the presidency. The liberals were still represented principally by the Advisory Council, loyal to Rayburn, and this organization provided the leadership for anti-Shivers activities in 1955 and 1956. On March 27, 1955, the Advisory Council elected officers and made plans for the forthcoming year of


6The Texas Observer, September 21, 1955.
campaigning. The principal officers elected were James Sewall of Corsicana as chairman, Byron Skelton, Mrs. Randolph and Mrs. Voigt. They planned to organize Texas by regions, and, to raise money and maintain interest in the movement, they planned a series of speeches and dinners.7

In pursuance of these objectives, the Advisory Council sponsored speeches by Senator Keefauver of Tennessee in May, and Democratic Chairman Paul Butler in June. By August, the Council was able to present $30,000 to the national Democratic headquarters. The Council's drive to organize the state was also quite successful under the supervision of Bob Sawtelle, Yarborough's 1954 campaign manager, who became the state director of the Council's organizational work. He established his office at San Antonio, where Mrs. Voigt, the secretary to the Council, kept her records. Under the direction of Sawtelle and Mrs. Voigt the Council mailed kits on political organization to thousands of Loyalists by September, 1955, in the hope that they would use the information to defeat the Shivers faction. The liberal Young Democrats helped in the work to the best of their ability. Rayburn was gratified with the progress of the campaign.8

Rayburn, because his name was synonymous with "Democrat" and because the members of the Advisory Council were loyal to him, was in effective control of the Texas liberal-loyalist movement in 1955. He was interested in winning the general elections of 1956 for the Democratic party, not only in Texas, but also throughout the nation. To do this he realized that many Eisenhower supporters, especially those Democrats who had supported him in 1952, would have to be persuaded to return to the Democratic column on election day. The new national chairman, Butler, naturally agreed with Rayburn. Their attitude toward politics in Texas was that the regrettable occurrences of 1952 would be forgiven if only the Democratic leaders in the state, especially Shivers, would return to the party in 1956.

With scandals weakening his administration Shivers was willing to compromise with Rayburn and Butler in order to again lead the Texas delegation to a national convention. At a breakfast given by Rayburn in Washington on May 5, 1955, Shivers was assured by Butler that he would be seated at the national convention if he legally won the May conventions. Shivers still maintained that he could not support Stevenson, but implied that he would do all else in his power to promote the fortunes of the Democratic party. Butler said later that they also discussed the position of Wright Morrow as committeeman. Butler

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told Shivers that Morrow's successor as committeeman would have
to be a life-long Democrat who was acceptable to Johnson and
Rayburn as well as Shivers. The implication which everyone
drew from these discussions was that Shivers was to fire Morrow,
pay lip service to party loyalty, and be re-admitted to the
bosom of the Democratic party. 9

When Texas liberals learned that Shivers might regain
national acceptance, they were highly indignant. Butler was
scheduled for a speaking and fund-raising tour of Texas in
June under the auspices of the Advisory Council, but some
liberals in east Texas were so opposed to the tour that they
received the national chairman only after personal intervention
of Rayburn. The thought that Rayburn and Butler were considering
a compromise with Shivers led The Texas Observer to classify
the liberals over the state either as dependent on Rayburn or
independent of him. It considered the leadership of the
Advisory Council and most other liberals over the state as
Rayburn followers, with only the east Texas rebels and the
Harris County stalwarts as strong enough to stand alone. 10

During Butler's tour of Texas in June he avoided meeting
Shivers (which Shivers denounced as harmful to the party), but
he dwelt on the theme of forgiveness of past sins against the
party on condition of a return to the party fold, an idea

especially popular with the Eisenhower supporters in his audiences. Butler avoided contact with the conservatives and associated widely with Loyalists and liberals, but the main impression of liberals was that party disloyalty was no longer considered a barrier to gaining positions of trust in the party. 11

Shivers kept his word, if he had ever given it, by declaring in June that it was understandable that the national committee wanted their members to be loyal to the party. Morrow rightly interpreted this to mean that he was about to lose his job, which he did at a meeting of the state Executive Committee in July. Morrow was quite bitter at Shivers' action and accused him of running the state party for his own benefit, regardless of principle. Many of the dedicated conservatives were of the same opinion, thus putting Shivers in the strange position of being considered a double traitor, execrated alike by the extreme conservatives and the extreme liberals. 12

Morrow's post was left vacant until October, when the lieutenant governor, Ben Ramsey, was appointed to it by the Executive Committee. Johnson was quoted as saying that he, Rayburn, and Shivers conferred about the appointment and decided on Ramsey. Ramsey stated that he voted for Stevenson in 1952 and wrote a letter to Rayburn pledging his support for

11 The Dallas Morning News, June 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 1955.
the Democratic party in that campaign, but asking that his name not be used. More important from Rayburn's viewpoint Ramsey declared that he would support the presidential nominee of the Democrats in 1956, and he thought the Texas delegation to the national convention should do the same. Rayburn, Johnson, and Butler were satisfied with Ramsey's assurances.\textsuperscript{13}

The liberals were not pleased, however. Ramsey not only seemed to them a dubious Democrat, but, in his role of presiding officer of the Texas Senate, he had demonstrated that he was a thorough-going conservative, especially on bills affecting organized labor. He was therefore doubly obnoxious to the liberals. Furthermore, in an Advisory Council meeting preceding the Ramsey appointment the liberals had pushed through a resolution that no position of influence would be given to those office-holders who had left the party in 1952. Ramsey had allowed his name to be listed on the Republican ticket and his loyalty was suspected.\textsuperscript{14}

To demonstrate their dissatisfaction with Rayburn's moves toward conciliation of the conservatives, many liberals announced their refusal to attend a dinner in honor of Rayburn in Fort Worth on October 27, 1955. The affair was sponsored by both conservatives and liberals, with an invitation even extended to Shivers, who refused. Other conservatives did attend, however,

\textsuperscript{13}\textit{Ibid.}, October 12, 19, 1955; \textit{The Dallas Morning News}, October 8, 7, 1955.

\textsuperscript{14}\textit{The Texas Observer}, October 26, 1955.
and many liberals were willing to sit down with them. The declined invitations to the Rayburn dinner were only the first lightning flashes of an approaching storm.\textsuperscript{15}

On November 4 the Advisory Council met to elect a successor to Chairman Sewell, who was retiring for reasons of health. Skelton was elected to succeed him, not without some liberal mutterings that Skelton was a Rayburn puppet. Creekmore Fath was not content with muttering, however, and moved a resolution that the position of national committeeman be left vacant until the May convention. He could see no reason for the appointment, since the post had been vacant since 1952. His resolution was meant to censure Rayburn, but other liberals were not prepared for such a move. Bob Eckhardt of Houston moved a substitute that in the future committeemen would have to be active Democrats. The Eckhardt amendment carried, although even it was considered too stringent by some of the Council and by Rayburn himself.\textsuperscript{16}

Unorganized liberals continued to protest the Ramsey appointment, sending wires to the national committee urging that he not be seated. The liberal Young Democrats were also against Ramsey, primarily because he had refused to grant them a charter, preferring the conservatives. Young Democrats instead.

\textsuperscript{15}Ibid., October 26, November 2, 1955; The Dallas Morning News, October 28, 1955.

\textsuperscript{16}The Texas Observer, November 2, 9, 1955; The Dallas Morning News, November 5, 1955.
Regardless of the liberal protests the national committee accepted Ramsey and even abandoned the idea of a general loyalty oath at the 1956 convention. The national committee did understand the feeling of the Loyalists in Texas as evidenced by a letter written to The Texas Observer by the committeeman from Oregon. He reported that he had opposed Ramsey until Ramsey had said that he would support the national nominee in 1956 and expected that all the other state office-seekers on the Democratic ticket would do the same. The Oregon committeeman assured the Texas Loyalists that there was a strong sentiment on the committee to not desert them as the committee had done in 1952.17

Liberals had to content themselves with assurances of this nature and recognize that it was not as politically popular to advocate party disloyalty in Texas in 1955 as it had been in 1951 or 1952. Actually the liberals, if they had been Loyalists only, would have been content with the state of affairs in which an arch-conservative of the Ramsey variety would advocate party regularity, and with the many evidences that the Loyalists would triumph in 1956. Liberals, however, had evolved beyond the point of wanting only party loyalty, and they were increasingly conscious of the need for a statement of exactly what they did believe.

Some of the things which liberals wanted were simply changes in the election laws suggested by their experiences in the Shivers era. They wanted to abolish the poll tax and substitute party registration shortly before the elections, partly to keep Republicans out of Democratic primaries and conventions and partly to register voters when political interest was at a peak. The poll tax had to be paid by January 31 of an election year and many people were not interested in politics at that time. Liberals also opposed the cross-filing permitted in the 1952 election. Conservatives also saw disadvantages in that practice, and it was made illegal by the 1955 Legislature.

The crucial difference between a liberal and a Loyalist, who might have advocated repeal of the poll tax, was their stand on the question of advocating the rights of the Negro, the Latin-American, and organized labor. A Loyalist whose main concern was to win elections would endorse the ideas presented by a "conservative Loyalist" in June, 1955, who believed that elections were to be won in Texas by avoiding the mention of Negro, Latin-American, and labor union problems, and dwelling on such things as water programs, national defense, and the rural electrification program. By contrast, liberals were not afraid to grapple with minority or labor union questions.  

18The Texas Observer, June 27, 1955.
The Texas State Democratic Women's Clubs at Houston in July, 1955, listened to a series of speakers on the subject of desirable liberal goals for Texans. Some of the speakers refused to call themselves liberals, but the speeches were collectively the liberal creed. Bill Cooper of Dallas, president of the Democratic Veterans of Texas, wanted Texas to be a state in which civil rights could be guaranteed to the minorities. Dr. Chloe Armstrong, professor at Baylor, wanted teachers to have the right to join unions. Dr. W. H. Bryant, Tyler oil man, wanted the laboring man to have better wages in order to help the whole economy, while Franklin Jones wanted less restrictive laws on organized labor. Tom Moore, district attorney of Waco, wanted revision of the tax structure and various public welfare programs, including improvements in education, prison reform, and a state water program. These proposals would have been considered progressive in any section of the country, but they were radical in Texas. Liberals, being aware that their aims were difficult to attain, were willing to accept less than a full loaf, but they were not willing to surrender the Texas branch of the Democratic party, which they considered the national liberal party, to any variety of conservative. This attitude of the liberals in Texas was brought forcibly to Rayburn's and Johnson's attention during the May convention. 19

19 Ibid., August 3, 1955.
Rayburn was in a very strong position in the fall of 1955; compared to his strength in 1951 and 1952 he was almost invulnerable. In addition to the Loyalist organization and the Shivers' scandals, Rayburn had the national reputation of Lyndon Johnson on his side. As majority leader in the Senate in 1955, Johnson demonstrated great aptitude for keeping the various factions of the Democratic party working together and by so doing acquired national recognition. He suffered a heart attack in the summer of 1955 and spent the fall recuperating at his ranch in south Texas. There he conferred with leading Democratic senators, Shivers, Adlai Stevenson, and Rayburn. As he recovered there began to be rumors that he would consider accepting the nomination for the presidency. Johnson denied the rumors and after Stevenson's visit said that he would support him again in 1956, a statement that became more significant after Stevenson's announcement in November that he was again a candidate for the nomination. 20

Whatever Johnson's national aspirations were, many considered him an ideal figure for Texas' favorite son at the national convention. He was of course a Loyalist, but his exertions had been so slight in 1952 that he had not antagonized the conservatives, and he seemed one to unite the divided Texas party as he had the national Democrats. Newsweek, in its

November 7, 1955, issue, made so bold as to predict that Johnson would lead the Texas delegation to the convention. In a major policy speech at Whitney on November 21, 1955, Johnson, in several asides from his main speech, mentioned the need for a Texas delegation which would work for the nominee and which would not be dominated by either the extreme conservatives or extreme liberals. Even more important from the senator's standpoint was his statement that there was a smell of victory in the air. Johnson was not fond of lost causes.  

The defeat of Shivers seemed fairly certain before the end of 1955, but in the closing days of the year it appeared to be completely assured. On December 15, 1955, the U. S. Trust and Guaranty Company, a hybrid banking and insurance firm, was declared insolvent. Its failure involved 128,000 depositors who had invested over five million dollars with it. Just as 1955 had opened with Giles resignation and the publicity of the land scandals, so also did 1956 begin with the suspension of examiners from the Insurance Board and a growing list of insurance companies declared bankrupt. The bankruptcies could have been accepted by the public, but it soon became apparent that the Insurance Board, much like the Lam Board, had connived with dishonest promoters of fraudulent insurance companies.  

As company followed company into bankruptcy the public became more and more outraged. Testimony revealed that many of the companies had given state legislators (most of whom were lawyers) "retainers" to represent them before the Insurance Board and other state agencies. This revelation stirred the public to wrath against the legislature in general, but much of the public indignation was directed against Shivers, because he had appointed the commissioners on the Insurance Board and continued to defend them even after it was revealed that they had been incompetent or corrupt. The former chairman of the Board and continued member, Garland Smith, was unable to face the storm even with Shivers' support and resigned on January 30, 1956.  

With the new series of scandals thrown on Shivers' doorstep his support simply vanished. Even the conservative press of the state deserted him and the moderate papers suggested his impeachment. The Houston Press compared the scandals under Shivers to those under Truman on the national scene and thought Shivers was behaving much as Truman had done. When Shivers mentioned in February that he had been asked by some of his friends to consider a fourth term as governor, the Amarillo News, an erstwhile supporter, bluntly told the governor that he could not win another term.  

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Shivers prudently abandoned the gubernatorial race on March 1, but he remained in the fight for control of the May conventions. To rally his forces for their final battle Shivers raised the question of "interposition," which was meaningless until defined. Traditionally the term had meant the "interposing" of state sovereignty between the individual citizen and the central government. Shivers said that his version of interposition was that the Tenth Amendment to the United States Constitution should be amended to strengthen local government. He proposed to accomplish this by having the May conventions pass resolutions in favor of placing a referendum on the primary ballot in July, which, if passed, would constitute a mandate for the state legislature to petition Congress for the amendment of the Tenth Amendment. 25

The Loyalists and liberals under Rayburn’s direction were almost assured of victory, however, regardless of the issues which Shivers raised; the scandals were too overpowering to be forgotten. Only internal disunity could defeat the Rayburn forces and this did seem something of a threat. Liberals continued to be restive under Rayburn’s dictum that former Shivers-conservatives would be welcomed back. In San Antonio, where Kathleen Voigt was loyally obeying the Rayburn directive, some of the liberals refused to work with Shivers’ followers and other liberals were sympathetic to their refusal. 26

Organization was carried on by Loyalists at a rapid pace, however. Precinct and county groups held training sessions on the conduct of conventions, lists of Loyalists were drawn up, and the Advisory Council dispatched literature and advisers to the various parts of the state. A handbook sent out by the Advisory Council bore the message, "On to Chicago with Sam Rayburn," and undoubtedly the Loyalists were anticipating such an eventuality with a great deal of pleasure.\(^{27}\)

Rayburn, however, was determined to leave nothing to chance. Regardless of Loyalist organization or weakness in the conservative camp, he wanted further assurances of victory. Accordingly, on March 7, he proposed Lyndon Johnson to be Texas' favorite son at the national convention and also the leader of the Texas delegation. Johnson refused to commit himself immediately, and Shivers, wary of Johnson's powers of persuading all factions to unite, bided his time until Johnson made a definite statement.\(^{28}\)

For the liberals the Johnson candidacy posed a dilemma. If they were afraid that Rayburn might compromise with the conservatives, they were certain that Johnson would. The Advisory Council, loyal though it was to Rayburn, voted (over the objection of Skelton) to present some propositions for Johnson's acceptance before the Council agreed to support him. The Council, through

\(^{27}\)Ibid., February 22, March 7, 1956.

\(^{28}\)The Dallas Morning News, March 8, 26, 1956.
its steering committee, delegated a group to visit Johnson and inquire whether he would agree to the selection of delegates by the congressional district caucuses rather than by Johnson, to the delegation supporting him only on the first ballot, and to the idea that Johnson would not completely dictate the delegation's course of action at the convention. In other words the Council wanted a relatively free delegation, even from Johnson. Johnson, although not yet an avowed contender for the leadership of the Loyalists, refused to make any commitments to the Council. 29

The liberal debate over the merits of Johnson as a leader continued with The Texas Observer saying that although Johnson was a dubious liberal, Shivers had even fewer liberal inclinations. He would attract all the Loyalists, and he would ensure victory. Johnson seemed to believe the same thing, because on state-wide television on April 10 he announced that he would seek the leadership of the Texas delegation. Johnson tried to minimize the split in the Texas party and promised to be the leader of all factions. In rebuttal of the idea that he might form a southern state rights block at the national convention (an idea which had worried the liberals in Texas), he disavowed any interest in support from delegations other

than that of Texas and said that he would never be a force for division in the national party.\textsuperscript{30}

Shivers immediately accepted Johnson's challenge and the broader issues in the controversy were lost in vicious name-calling between Shivers on one side and Rayburn and Johnson on the other. Rayburn was shocked at Shivers' questioning of his patriotism, linking his name once with Santa Anna, the ultimate insult in Texas, and once saying that Rayburn placed the welfare of the Democratic party over that of the nation. Shivers was hard put to find weaknesses in Johnson's armor, stressing for the most part the charge that Johnson was supported by the liberals, a group which included the National Association for the Advancement of the Colored People, the Americans for Democratic Action, and, of course, the Texas liberals.\textsuperscript{31}

Actually, many of the Texas liberals would have been less unhappy associated with the NAACP and the ADA than they were with Johnson. Some of the feminine liberals advanced Minnie Fisher Cunningham as "favorite daughter" in opposition to Johnson. Franklin Jones thought Johnson for favorite son worse than Shivers as the leader of the delegation, and most liberals agreed with The Texas Observer that it was necessary to keep as much bargaining power with Johnson as possible.\textsuperscript{32}

\textsuperscript{30} Ibid., April 4, 11, 1956; The Dallas Morning News, April 11, 1956.

\textsuperscript{31} The Dallas Morning News, April 11, May 1, 1956; The Dallas Times Herald, April 1, 1956; The Texas Observer, April 18, May 2, 1956.

\textsuperscript{32} The Texas Observer, April 18, 25, May 2, 1956.
It did not seem, however, that the liberals would have much control over the senior senator from Texas. The Belden Poll taken before the May conventions found that 62 per cent of the voters were in favor of Johnson, with only 18 per cent supporting Shivers. In much of the state the precinct conventions of May 5 were simply popularity contests which Shivers had not the slightest chance of winning. Johnson's complete victory in the precincts was confirmed in the county conventions, and it was ascertained that he had at least 1149 of the 1898 votes of the state convention. Johnson thought that Texans had given him a mandate over both the Shivers-conservatives and the extreme liberals.\textsuperscript{33}

Although realizing it was unlikely to be liberal-controlled, The Texas Observer listed the objectives of the liberals in the state convention. In addition to selecting delegates from the caucuses and staying with Johnson on the first ballot only, which the Advisory Council had asked, the Observer suggested that new, liberal national committee members be chosen from Texas and that the convention replace the conservative Executive Committee with Loyalists. An Advisory Council executive meeting on May 13 also suggested the last two points; an indication that the Advisory Council was becoming more liberal.\textsuperscript{34}

\textsuperscript{33} Ibid., April 18, May 9, 1956.

\textsuperscript{34} Ibid., May 16, 1956.
The liberals resolved to take their stand on the issue of removing the Executive Committee; if they could gain this point the others could be abandoned. However, they were also interested in getting a post as committeewoman for Mrs. Randolph, an honor they considered her just reward. Mrs. Randolph, however, regarded her candidacy as a bargaining point; if Johnson would give permission for the replacement of the Executive Committee, then she would retire in favor of whatever candidate he wanted. 35

Rayburn and Johnson were against the removal of the Executive Committee, regardless of its disloyalty. In the first place Johnson and Rayburn thought removal of the Committee would entail legal complications over the July primary results since the Committee certified the winners of the election. The legal time for the appointing of a new Committee was at the September convention; if it were removed in May a candidate who lost in July could argue that his opponent was certified by an illegal Committee. Equally important in Rayburn's and Johnson's minds was the tradition that the governor or the winner of the July gubernatorial primary was the dominant figure in the September convention, free to select an Executive Committee agreeable to himself. Consequently, they were diametrically opposed to the liberal wishes for the committee's removal. 36


On Monday, May 21, the liberals and Johnson made their preparations for the convention which began on the twenty-second at Dallas. Johnson tried to persuade delegates of the inadvisability of removing the Executive Committee. To Mrs. Voigt of San Antonio he promised the position of chairman of a campaign committee to work for the presidential nominee and to others he showed a statement by Rayburn opposing the expulsion of the Executive Committee. On the subject of committeeeman and committeewoman, Johnson was prepared to accept Skelton, Rayburn's loyal follower, as committeeeman, but he explained to the liberals that the conservatives were opposed to Skelton and that a conservative committeewoman had to be chosen to appease them. However, liberals alleged that Johnson was not giving them any compensation; Skelton they regarded as a Rayburn liability, not a liberal one.\(^{37}\)

At a rally at the Adolphus Hotel on Monday evening storm signals went up for Rayburn and Johnson. When Johnson explained to the crowd that the Executive Committee would not be dismissed, he was met with forty seconds of booing. Even the honored Rayburn was booed slightly when he reiterated his old idea that those who had left the party would be welcomed back. Neither Johnson nor Rayburn were very pleased with their reception, but it was only a foretaste of the events of the twenty-second.\(^{38}\)


After the rally at the Adolphus the Harris County delegates called a caucus of the liberals. Harris County was almost unique in that it had ignored Johnson altogether in its county convention, and therefore considered itself under no obligation to him. At the rally liberals decided to press for the expulsion of the Executive Committee and for the election of Mrs. Randolph as committeewoman. 39

The state convention on May 22 was a tumultuous meeting, comparable to the French National Assembly in the diversity of political opinions and the manner of expressing them. There were three main divisions: the liberals from the large cities, the moderates from the rural counties, and the conservatives from Dallas County and some east Texas counties. Almost the first order of business was a motion by Harris County that the Executive Committee be dismissed, which the convention defeated by 1306 votes to 524. Harris County contributed more than half the liberal votes, with most of the others coming from Tarrant, Jefferson, and Galveston, all urban counties. 40

With this first goal out of their reach the liberals turned to the one remaining: the post of committeewoman. When Johnson let it be known that he wanted Mrs. Lloyd Bentsen, Jr., the wife of a prominent conservative and former congressman, for

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40 Ibid.
the job, liberals were up in arms. The Harris County delegates felt that Mrs. Bentsen's claims to party reward were insignificant compared to Mrs. Randolph's, and Johnson's claim to be appeasing the conservatives appeared highly suspicious to people accustomed to Shivers' tactics in controlling conventions. The liberals had printed handbills on Monday with reproductions of news clippings from the 1952 presidential campaign quoting Congressman Bentsen to the effect that he would not support Stevenson. Bentsen denied that he made these statements, but the handbills were circulating on the floor of the convention and were being given credence. 41

One of the prime reasons for the acceptance of the rumors against Mrs. Bentsen was the way in which Johnson's lieutenants conducted the convention. The convention operated on a temporary list of delegates for almost the entire day, because Johnson was unwilling to permit the Credentials Committee of the convention to report. His reluctance in the matter was due to the fact that the conservative Dallas delegation was challenged by a liberal one, and Johnson had no wish to have more liberals in the convention before Mrs. Bentsen was voted on as committee woman. Consequently, the convention "stood at ease" (recessed) or listened to lengthy and boring speeches while Johnson endeavored to gain his way about Mrs. Bentsen. 42

The impasse was dissolved late in the evening. Johnson made a "triumphal" appearance about six o'clock before a convention becoming steadily more hostile. Immediately after his exit, a delegate from Ellis County, Doss Hardin, gained control of a microphone (it was not always easy for liberals to get microphones that day) and made an old-time, lung-straining speech which roared over the convention like a prairie fire. He demanded to know when the "Shivercrats" in the balcony (Dallas County conservatives) were going to be thrown out and the "good Democrats" (Dallas County liberals) who had been outside the auditorium all day in the hot sun were going to be given their rightful places. The roars of approval that followed his speech showed that the tired delegates were entirely in accord with Hardin. The tumult apparently reached Johnson as well, because he allowed the Credentials Committee to report and the Dallas conservatives to be expelled.43

With the admission of the Dallas liberals, who were also in favor of Mrs. Randolph, and the general feeling of dissatisfaction with Johnson's rather high-handed manner of running the convention, the liberals were in a strong bargaining position. Various rural county delegates had also become disenchanted with Johnson during the course of the day and they were deserting him. When news came that even the San Antonio delegation had gone over to Mrs. Randolph, Johnson capitulated. Mrs. Bentsen asked that

her name be withdrawn from consideration, the Nominating Committee made no recommendation for committeewoman, and Mrs. Randolph was nominated from the floor and elected by acclamation. Just as it seemed that the liberals had gained control of the convention, Johnson's lieutenant adjourned it, to reassemble at the call of the chairman, Raymond Buck.  

The convention gave Johnson nearly everything he asked for, including a delegation pledged to stay with him as long as his name was before the national convention as a candidate for the presidential nomination. The delegation was composed largely of moderates and would be most unlikely to cause Johnson any difficulty in controlling it. To appease the liberals Johnson had created the campaign committee (although by so doing he put an end to the usefulness of the Advisory Council, which had been evolving toward a position of leadership of the liberal cause) and the threat to recall the "adjourned" convention if the Shivers-dominated Executive Committee foiled liberal-loyalist plans.

Nevertheless, the reaction in the convention and boos given Johnson on the Monday evening preceding it were rightly regarded as liberal votes of no-confidence in the senior senator. Johnson, and Rayburn as well, underestimated or ignored the depth

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45 Ibid.
of feeling of liberals opposed to Shivers not only because he had "betrayed" the party, but also because he represented the conservative cause. Johnson and Rayburn saw nothing reprehensible in Shivers' beliefs and supporters; in fact, Johnson and Rayburn shared many of Shivers' ideas and some Shivers men had worked for Johnson. Unless the liberals were willing to become less doctrinaire in their liberalism, or Johnson more so, there seemed to be even stormier times to come in Texas politics.
CHAPTER IV

NEAR VICTORY FOR THE LIBERALS

The land scandals in Shivers' administration gave the liberals and Loyalists encouragement in the struggle to win the May, 1956, conventions; the scandals had the same tonic effect on liberals who were interested in running for governor. It seemed certain by the summer of 1955 that Shivers would not be a candidate for re-election and that any other conservative would be handicapped by being in the same faction with Shivers. In view of these bright prospects, liberals were not reluctant to let their names be considered as potential campaigners against the Shivers' regime or any possible defender.

The foremost liberal candidate was naturally Yarborough. The heavy vote he received in the 1954 gubernatorial race and the fact that his two campaigns for the governor's office made him known to Texans across the entire state were excellent reasons for his being the liberal candidate in 1956. To many liberals it seemed only just that he should enjoy the fat years, when he had worked so diligently in the lean ones. Furthermore, political availability dictated the choice of Yarborough as the liberal candidate. Some liberals there were, however, who thought him too prone to equivocate on the key points of the
liberal creed: the rights of the union man and those of the Latin-American and the Negro.

Recognizing that some militant liberals were dissatisfied with Yarborough, two other potential candidates presented themselves before liberal audiences in the summer of 1955. One, John White, had considered announcing for governor in the spring of 1954, but had abandoned the idea. A year later he began to make frequent appearances at political and non-political gatherings and left the impression that he might enjoy moving from the commissioner of agriculture's office to the governor's mansion. The other potential candidate who let his name be used in connection with a governor's race was James P. Hart, an ex-chancellor of the University of Texas and former state supreme court justice. He, like White, started making political appearances in the summer of 1955.

White and Hart seemed to agree that Yarborough's most vulnerable point was his position on Negro rights, especially on the school segregation question. The 1954 Supreme Court decision and the resulting discussion in Texas had encouraged Shivers to use the segregation issue as a campaign tactic against Yarborough in 1954. Yarborough, as mentioned above, supported segregation in Texas for the school year, 1954-55, and opposed "forced" integration. Both White and Hart, on the other hand, took firm stands on the necessity for upholding the Supreme Court decision. As early as March, 1955, White was telling an interviewer that the states had to obey the Court's
decision. Hart, being a former judge, was of the same opinion, and, in fact, made obedience to the Court's decision almost his whole program. If Yarborough were to be replaced as the champion of liberalism, then the integration matter seemed the best means for the elevation of a new leader.\(^1\)

Of equal importance with minority rights in liberal minds were the rights of organized labor. If a candidate were entirely opposed to labor's goals, then he could hardly hope to carry the liberal banner. All three liberal aspirants were invited to speak before labor gatherings, all appeared, and all were applauded. Liberals were inclined to think, however, that Hart was not quite as interested in the cause of organized labor as he was in that of the colored minority. As a state supreme court justice he had upheld anti-picketing injunctions, and, speaking to a labor convention, he refused to endorse the idea of the union shop.\(^2\)

Ultimately there was little question as to the candidate preferred by most liberals. Yarborough had hardly ceased campaigning even after his August, 1954, defeat and he seized every opportunity to speak before liberal, labor, political and non-political meetings. His 1956 campaign really started in September, 1954, and such assiduous work brought its reward. In September, 1955, the Belden Poll showed him decidedly the most

\(^1\) *The Texas Observer*, March 7, August 30, November 2, 1955.

popular liberal candidate. His popularity was not so high with the leadership of the movement, partly because of his stand on Negro rights, but a poll of the Advisory Council in the winter of 1956 revealed that the Council favored him over White or Hart. Hart had substantial support only among the leaders; the rank and file had hardly heard of him. Considering the political facts well, White and Hart decided it best to leave the field to Yarborough, which they did after he announced formally for governor in the last week of March, 1956.\(^3\)

As indicated above, there was no sentiment even among conservatives for Shivers' attempting to win a fourth term, and he withdrew March 1, 1956. Long before his formal withdrawal, however, conservatives had been casting about for a candidate. Their choice was evident long before the campaign of 1956 opened; the Belden Poll of September, 1955, found that Senator Price Daniel was the most popular conservative candidate for governor. Rather surprisingly, in view of the prestige of the United States Senate, Daniel seemed interested, putting out several reports that he might consider the job. It was not until after Shivers' announcement of March 1 that Daniel finally agreed to run, however.\(^4\)

The conservatives, like the liberals, had two minor candidates. One was a rancher from west Texas, J. Evetts Haley,
and the other was a former speaker of the Texas House, Reuben Senterfitt. Unlike the liberals, the minor conservative candidate remained in the race. The liberal minor candidates had thought that their road to success lay in appealing to liberals on the basis of more integration of the races in the schools and greater rights for Negroes; the conservatives took the opposite approach and insisted vehemently that there need be no integration. Haley stoutly maintained that any attempt by the federal government to enforce integration while he was governor would force him to call out the Texas Rangers to arrest United States marshals. Senterfitt's position was not quite so extreme, but was essentially the same ideologically.  

Texans were divided on the merits of integration. A large number of east Texans in the heavily Negro-populated area demanded that segregation be continued at all costs. Other Texans were more moderate; a Belden Poll taken in April, 1955, indicated that 35 per cent of Texans thought that gradual integration should begin in schools where there was only slight opposition to it and 14 per cent thought integration should be started regardless of opposition. There were whites in both categories. Several school districts in the western and southern parts of the state, where Negroes lived, commenced integration in the fall of 1955. There were almost no unpleasant incidents.  

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5 The Dallas Morning News, March 1, 24, 1956; The Texas Observer, June 13, 1956.

6 The Texas Observer, April 11, August 17, September 17, 1955.
The victory of the Johnson-liberal coalition in May, 1956, frightened segregationists, who thought liberals would force the integration question in the state since the precinct and county conventions ignored Shivers' "interposition" resolutions. During May segregationists circulated petitions to put three referendums (or petitions) for the guidance of the legislature on the July primary ballot. One petition called for the use of "interposition" to prevent "illegal federal encroachment." Another asked the legislature to strengthen state laws forbidding intermarriage between whites and Negroes. A third asked the legislature to exempt children from compulsory attendance at integrated schools. Over 165,000 signatures were collected to put the referendums on the ballot and the state Executive Committee acquiesced in their being included. Texans would have a chance to vote, in a rather oblique manner, on the integration question.\(^7\)

In that busy month of March, 1956, another major candidate joined Daniel and Yarborough, one who could arouse most of the state's prejudices, whether against the Negroes, the wealthy, the disgraced conservatives, or the labor union member. He was W. Lee O'Daniel, former United States senator and governor of Texas. He had taken office in Texas during the depression and war years by offering humanitarian programs, by insulting prominent national officials, by using country musicians ("hillbilly" bands),

and in general by appealing to the rural voters. He was adept at playing on the religious ideas of the rural Protestant, using the "Golden Rule" and the "Ten Commandments" as his campaign platform. He had retired from politics in 1948, but in 1956, he sensed that the people were ready to turn out the old administration, and he intended to form the new one.

In June, 1956, the campaigns were well under way and Texas was treated to one of the most colorful, if not enlightening, of all political sessions. From the beginning O'Daniel produced a traveling road show rather than a considered political program. He used a firetruck ("to put out the fires in Austin"), a band of "hill-billies," and innumerable demagogic appeals to the people. Among other things he promised to solve the drouth by inundating a large section of west Texas with water piped from the Mississippi and the Great Lakes, to work for rebates to each federal income-tax payer, and to prevent any integration while he was governor. He attacked "communist labor racketeers," the "millionaire clique," "professional politicians," and the "kept press" in Texas. O'Daniel continued to attract his traditional following with his political showmanship, but this was only the prelude to the main performance.8

The largest part of O'Daniel's campaign was a devastating attack on Senator Daniel. He blasted Daniel's lack of loyalty to the party, his status as "junior" senator from Texas, his

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affiliation with Shivers, his running for governor in the midst of his term as senator, but, above all, his service as attorney general, when he had been a member of the Veterans Land Board. According to O'Daniel, Daniel was privy to all the nefarious schemes of the Land Board and his candidacy was an attempt to conceal the corruption in the Shivers' government from the people. A typical O'Daniel attack ran as follows:

Now the fellow who is now the junior senator from Texas and who was on the land board back when the scandals started and doesn't know whether he is a Republican or a Democrat, decided he would run for governor, even though he hasn't served four years in the office he was elected to. They've got to keep the lid on so we can't find out who got the rest of the money.

O'Daniel kept referring to the guilt of Bascom Giles and implied that Daniel was equally guilty. He said over and over again that the people of Texas were not going to send one member of the Veterans Land Board to prison and another to the governor's mansion.

Yarborough opened his campaign by outlining a humanitarian program for the state, but gradually adopted many of O'Daniel's tactics. He began by asking for better state health and pension programs, safeguards against industrial accidents and compensation to workers disabled, adequate pay for state legislators, and laws

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10 The Texas Observer, June 13, 1956.
11 Ibid., July 18, 1956.
to control lobbyists. As the campaign progressed, he dwelt more and more on Daniel's affiliations with the Shivers' regime, and particularly his connection with the Land Board. Like O'Daniel he accused Daniel of knowing about the land scandals and assisting in them. 12

Unlike O'Daniel, who was something of a lone wolf in politics, Yarborough had considerable organized support. Although it did not endorse him, the state convention of the American Federation of Labor listened to Yarborough in the midst of the campaign, and the members collected money for him at the convention. The liberal Young Democrats endorsed him because he was the only candidate who assured them he would support the Democratic presidential nominee in 1956. With the NAACP, however, Yarborough was not quite so popular. Since he was still against "forced" integration, the NAACP leaders thought him too conservative and asked Negroes to write in the name of some more liberal man. 13

Daniel, as the foremost conservative candidate, had the most influential people and the largest contributions on his side. On the other hand, he was forced to repudiate the idea that he was associated in any way with the Shivers' administration or the land or insurance scandals. He repeatedly denied any knowledge of improper transactions by the Land Board, and

12 Ibid., June 6, 13, July 18, 21, 1956.
13 Ibid., June 6, July 4, 18, 25, 1956.
pointed out that he had left the Board in 1953, two years before the scandals became known. (He plaintively asked how a man running on the golden rule could maintain that he was still a member of the Board.) He promised a crime-investigating commission which would delve into every corner of the state government. The assaults on his integrity continued, however. 14

The unkindest attacks, from Daniel’s viewpoint, were made by the conservative minor candidates, Haley and Senterfitt. Senterfitt had had visions of being the principal conservative candidate and attacked Daniel for not being conservative enough, for not fighting for Shivers in the May conventions and for promising (in an indirect way to be sure) to support the Democratic presidential candidate. Haley, shortly before the end of the July primary, charged that Daniel had made a secret visit to Shivers’ mansion before deciding to announce for governor, implying a Shivers endorsement of Daniel. This accusation from such an impeccable conservative as Haley carried a great deal of weight. 15

In spite of the heated campaign, it is doubtful that many voters changed their opinions from April to July, 1956. Belden Polls in April and June gave almost identical results to the election returns of July 28:


Belden Poll  Daniel  Yarborough  O'Daniel  Others-Undecided
April  41%  21%  18%  20%
June  39%  28%  18%  15%

Election Vote  40%  29.4%  22%  8.6%
(The figures are percentages of the voters.)

Apparently the concerted attack on Daniel simply prevented him from gaining from the undecided voters. O'Daniel, predictably, drew support from rural Loyalists all over the state. In east and west Texas farming counties his vote equalled or surpassed Yarborough's. Among the more sophisticated voters of the largest cities O'Daniel did poorly, his vote running to less than one-sixth that of the Daniel-Yarborough total. On the conservative side, Daniel did not succeed in obtaining as many votes as Shivers had done in either of his 1954 campaigns, with the exception of the largest Texas cities, San Antonio, Dallas, and Houston. In the other large city, Fort Worth, the staunch segregationist Haley drew much conservative support from Daniel, and Haley was also strong in Dallas. As no candidate had a majority of the total vote, Daniel and Yarborough were faced with a second primary.

The referendums on the racial questions were at first glance very comforting to the segregationists. The first proposition, whether children should be excused from compulsory attendance at integrated schools, was the nearest to a plebiscite

on integration itself. The vote was 872,030 in favor of excusing compulsory attendance and 252,985 (22 per cent) against. However, the total vote, 1,125,015, was only 71.5 per cent of the entire vote of the governor's race. Twenty-eight and one-half per cent of the Texans who voted for a gubernatorial candidate refused to commit themselves on the referendum, while 16 per cent of the governor's vote was against the proposition. But at least 55.5 per cent of the governor's vote was cast in favor of excusing the children. These results were very similar to those of the Belden Poll. 18

The segregationist vote was naturally highest in east Texas, ranging from four to eight times as great as that of the opposition. In west Texas, where some integration had already taken place, the segregationists were only two or three times as numerous as their opponents. In south Texas some of the counties (notably Bexar) refused to put the referendums on the ballot; in those which did the segregationist vote was seldom more than twice that of the opposition, usually less. One county, Webb, voted against the segregationists. Obviously the Latin-Americans in south Texas did not believe whole-heartedly in increasing the segregation of the Negro, a segregation which was sometimes directed also against the Latin-American. 19

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19 Ibid.
The second primary had to compete for people's attention with the national party conventions of the Democratic and Republican parties. Texas liberals, although in the minority, were well-represented on the delegation to the Democratic convention at Chicago. Mrs. Randolph opened a headquarters of her own at Chicago and called a liberal caucus, at which the decision was taken to support Johnson throughout the convention, in the hope of getting his support for liberals in the state convention in September. Consequently, the liberals made little protest over the selection of a conservative to work on the Platform Committee, although the principal struggle at Chicago seemed to be over the civil rights plank. Nor did the liberals insist on a daily caucus of the delegation; they were determined to give Johnson all the support in their power.20

No one except Johnson knew what he actually planned to do. On August 11, he announced that he was a serious candidate for the nomination, rather than a favorite-son entry. Southern politicians who were dissatisfied with the civil rights proposals of Stevenson, the leading candidate, were inclined to fall in behind Johnson. Johnson, however, refused to solicit the support of southern delegations or allow his lieutenants to do so. For several days he was the most sought-after politician at Chicago, receiving the principal candidates, Governor Averell Harriman of New York and Stevenson, and

20 The Texas Observer, June 6, August 15, 22, 1956.
practically every United States senator in the city. National television was focused on his door and everyone awaited his next move with bated breath. By the fifteenth, however, Johnson was just another delegation leader. Many favorite-son candidates had gone over to Stevenson and the report was circulating that a moderate civil rights plank would be drafted. Stevenson was almost assured the nomination. 21

The rumors were confirmed with Stevenson's first-ballot nomination on the sixteenth, with Texas not having time to switch from Johnson to the winning candidate. However, since so many candidates had announced their availability for the vice-presidential nomination, it was assumed that Johnson would have a prominent role in advising Stevenson on the election. Stevenson, contrary to custom, told the convention to select whichever candidate they preferred. Johnson and Rayburn were highly displeased with this procedure, but they were forced to acquiesce. The Texas delegation caucused to hear their leaders' views on the proper man to support for the vice-presidency. Johnson made no suggestions, but Rayburn had several things to say. After asking the reporters to leave, Rayburn told the delegation that they had to vote for a southerner on at least one ballot, to maintain Texas' place in the southern ranks. After a token vote for Governor Frank Clement of Tennessee,

21 Ibid., August 15, 22, 1956; The Dallas Morning News, August 12, 13, 14, 15, 1956; The New York Times, August 11, 12, 14, 1956.
Texas could go to Senator Hubert Humphrey of Minnesota, a vociferous liberal and friend of Johnson's. The delegation duly endorsed Speaker Rayburn's ideas. 22

On the convention floor the delegates were told that Clement was not running, but was putting forward Senator Albert Gore of Tennessee. There was momentary panic among the Texans at the thought of voting for a man who was not in the race, but in the nick of time word arrived from Rayburn to vote for Senator Gore, which the delegation did on the first ballot. After the first ballot neither Gore nor Humphrey were serious contenders for the nomination. Only Senator Estes Kefauver, several-times candidate for the presidential nomination, and Senator John Kennedy of Massachusetts remained in contention. 23

The Texas delegation hurriedly caucused off the convention floor and again heard the House Speaker. Rayburn, although he had insisted in the first caucus that Senator Kennedy was an impossible nominee to present to Texas, now had decided that Kennedy was indispensable to the nation. The Texas group heard him in bewilderment, but again voted as he suggested. Unfortunately, Texas was once again behind the losing contender and was chagrined to see Kefauver nominated. 24

23 The Texas Observer, August 22, 1956.
24 Ibid.
Many liberals were somewhat disgusted with Johnson's activities at the convention, considering that he had somewhat hypocritically identified himself with southern interests. As one liberal put it, Johnson did nothing at the convention which Shivers would not have done. At any rate, liberals were free to turn their attention to the last days of the governor's race in Texas. 25

The campaign of the second primary went much the same way as the first. Yarborough continued to charge Daniel with being involved in the land scandals, with being an associate of Shivers', and even with being close to Giles. He used O'Daniel's tactic of referring to O'Daniel as the "little junior senator" and said that the large vote against Daniel in the first election showed that Texans wanted a change. Daniel's principal weapon was to accuse his opponent of being the captive of organized labor and organized Negroes, because of the large vote given Yarborough in the working class and colored boxes. 26

Shivers tried to bolster Daniel's chances by informing the press, after the July election results were known, that the candidates who campaigned without slanderous remarks did the best in the voting. He also said that corruption in the state government was confined to a very few and Yarborough was

25 Ibid.
26 Ibid., August 8, 1856; The Dallas Morning News, July 30, August 1, 11, 14, 15, 18, 23, 1956.
exploiting these few to the detriment of the many honest members of the government. Daniel was not particularly grateful for Shivers' help and asked that he be allowed to run his campaign in his own way.27

Yarborough also received some aid, for which he was more appreciative than Daniel had been of his. In a series of speeches in the last days of the second primary O'Daniel urged his followers to vote for Yarborough, because O'Daniel intended to run as an independent candidate in the November general election. Apparently he thought that Yarborough would be an easier opponent to defeat than Daniel, an assumption not very flattering to Yarborough. Regardless of the motive for O'Daniel's support, Yarborough did not reject it.28

The results of the second primary were a shock to the whole state, but they overwhelmed the liberals. In July the conservative vote seemed to banish all idea of success for any liberal candidate or cause, but the unofficial August returns showed that Yarborough was defeated by only three or four thousand votes of nearly fourteen hundred thousand cast. Once again the Latin-American areas were important in electing the conservative entry; south Texas gave Daniel a majority of more than 30,000, but Shivers had always gotten larger ones there. Outside of south Texas only the Dallas County conservatives

27 The Dallas Morning News, August 1, 3, 1956.

returned their usual large majority (20,000) against the liberal candidate. The large, liberal Harris County electorate gave Yarborough a small majority, along with the rest of Texas outside Dallas County and south Texas. 29

The results were so close that Yarborough gave some consideration to challenging the returns from some of the south Texas counties (Duval County was a notoriously corrupt supporter of Daniel's). However, the official canvass in Tarrant County revealed that a Negro box there had gone for Yarborough 1,036 to 26 for Daniel. The small Daniel vote was remarkable, even for a Negro box, but the most suspicious fact was that most of the names were listed alphabetically and the people were supposed to be listed in the order in which they actually voted. Undoubtedly there were voting irregularities in the state, but very likely there were as many on one side as the other. On September 4, Yarborough formally gave up the idea of challenging the results. 30

After the primary conservatives were concerned that the state Democratic convention in September would certify Yarborough as the party's gubernatorial nominee, regardless of the vote for Daniel. Liberals insisted that they had no such intention. Their main interest from the time of the May conventions had been to gain control of the state Executive.


30The Dallas Morning News, August 28, 29, 30, September 5, 1956.
Committee. In May, liberals had insisted that Johnson and Rayburn expel the conservatives from the Committee, but the Loyalist leaders refused on the grounds that the September convention had the sole authority to designate the new Committee. Johnson had consoled the liberals somewhat by "adjourning" the May state convention and promising to recall it if the Shivers' Committee acted illegally.\(^{31}\)

During the summer there was considerable agitation for the reconvening of the May convention. Shivers challenged Johnson to do so after the Executive Committee placed the interposition and related petitions on the July ballot. A more strenuous cry arose from liberals when the results of the August 4 county conventions were apparent. Contrary to their hopes, liberals did not have a clear-cut majority of delegates to the September convention. A number of counties, including Harris with its huge block of votes, had liberal-conservative disputes which would have to be decided in the first instance by the Executive Committee's Credentials Committee. For this reason liberals raised a clamor for Johnson to recall the May convention and replace the Executive Committee.\(^{32}\)

Johnson refused to recall the May convention, but he repeatedly stated that the September convention would establish an Executive Committee which would support the Democratic

\(^{31}\text{Ibid.}, \text{August 13, September 7, 8, 1956.}\)

\(^{32}\text{Ibid.}, \text{August 1, 5, 1956; The Texas Observer, June 20, August 1, 8, 15, 1956.}\)
nominees in the state and nation. To many liberals Johnson seemed ignorant of the political facts of life, and one, Mrs. Voigt, by virtue of her position as leader of the campaign committee, took it upon herself to educate the senator and the rest of Texas. She issued a pamphlet, "Big Steal of the Texas Democratic Party, 1956 Version," in which she warned that the Shivers forces intended to deny seats to contested, but legally-elected, liberal delegations. Liberals were up in arms long before the convention opened on September 11, and a large number of Texans were more or less aware of the issues involved. 33

To avoid the consequences of a Shivers-Daniel "steal," liberals insisted (as they had done before other conventions) that the delegates' nominations to the Executive Committee be respected and that all legally-elected delegations be seated. Daniel, Johnson, and Rayburn all agreed with the liberals on these points, although Daniel qualified his agreement by saying that he had to have an Executive Committee which would not oppose his entire program. 34

Although the liberals directed all of their attention to the Executive Committee, it recommended only the temporary roll of delegates; the convention Credentials Committee decided on

33 The Dallas Morning News, August 13, 14, September 7, 1956; The Texas Observer, August 15, September 19, 1956.
34 The Dallas Morning News, September 7, 9, 10, 1956.
the permanent delegates. The Executive Committee was controlled by followers of Shivers, but the convention committees were composed of Daniel conservatives, Johnson and Rayburn moderates, and liberals. Although there had been rumors that Johnson would co-operate with the conservatives because he disliked the liberals' behavior at the May convention, there had been no such allegations against Rayburn. It was asserted also that Johnson lieutenants supported Daniel for governor, but in a letter received by a liberal late on the day of the August primary Rayburn said that he was voting for Yarborough. The Texas Observer, in its pre-convention issue, predicted a harmonious convention ruled by a liberal-moderate coalition. 35

The initial adjudication of the contested delegations was made by the Executive Committee's Credentials Committee on the eve of the convention. There were approximately 600 votes in dispute, concentrated in Harris (270), Bexar (81), and Tarrant (96) Counties. The other large urban county, Dallas, was firmly in control of the conservatives, and the liberals did not contest their being seated. The Shivers-controlled Committee listened to the arguments of the liberals and conservatives and, in accordance with the views of more or less impartial observers at the county conventions, seated the conservatives from Tarrant County and the liberals from Bexar. 36

36 The Dallas Morning News, September 12, 1956; The Texas Observer, September 12, 1956.
The Harris County dispute was more complicated. At the county convention the chairman, a conservative, attempted to call the roll of the precincts with the omission of those contested by the conservatives. Liberals then swarmed onto the rostrum and demanded that he call the entire temporary roll, some of whose delegates the conservatives claimed were seated illegally. The roll call resulted in a 1694-1511 victory for the liberals, but the conservatives maintained that omitting the contested precincts would have given a 1474-1321 victory for them. Various other claims were made; the liberals' minimum claim, giving the conservatives the benefit of every doubt, was a seventeen-vote edge, while the conservatives' minimum claim, based on equally generous treatment to the liberals, was a four-vote victory. Both sides admitted that control of the county was disputable; consequently, they agreed to select a liberal and a conservative group and allow the state convention to decide between them.37

The most logical solution would have been to divide the Harris County votes, and indeed all other county votes in the state, between the conservatives and the liberals. This system would have given both factions their just share of the county strength. Unfortunately, the use of "unit-rule," by which a majority of the delegation cast the whole vote of the county, militated against proportional representation. "Unit-rule"

37The Texas Observer, August 8, September 12, 1956; The Dallas Morning News, September 12, 1956.
was a product of liberal and conservative greed for votes; both sides had for their mottoes, "To the victor belongs the spoils" and "Woe to the vanquished."

Predictably enough, the Executive Committee recommended to the convention that the Harris County conservatives and most of the other conservatives disputing seats be placed on the temporary roll. Liberals appealed the decision on Harris County and six others to the convention Credentials Committee. Among the other counties appealed by the liberals were Tarrant and El Paso. Tarrant would be given to the liberals only if the convention were under complete liberal control, but the El Paso county convention had apparently been a fair win for the liberals. The chairman had been remiss, however, in not allowing a roll call vote, his defense being that there had been too much confusion.38

By agreement between Daniel and the liberal leaders, no important business was to be transacted until the Credentials Committee of the convention reported. Accordingly, after the opening of the convention at 11:00 a.m. on September 12 in Fort Worth's Will Rogers Memorial Auditorium, there was little for the delegates to do but listen to speeches and organ music. As the afternoon passed the liberals became more and more impatient and staged demonstrations for Yarborough, who was with

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38 The Texas Observer, September 12, 19, 1956; The Dallas Morning News, September 12, 1956.
the Travis County liberals, and for an immediate vote. Speeches by Rayburn, Johnson and others were listened to indifferently until the Credentials Committee finally produced its report late in the evening.\(^{39}\)

The majority of the Committee recommended seating the Harris, Tarrant, and El Paso conservatives, while the liberal minority moved that the Harris liberals be accepted. An attempt was made by a Houston liberal (not officially a delegate) to get another minority report filed for the El Paso liberals, but he was denied the right to present it. There were rumors on the convention floor that the El Paso liberals had been put on the permanent roll by the Committee and then taken off again. Woodrow Bean, the El Paso liberal chairman, said that a highly-placed authority in the convention (identified as Daniel by one of Bean's associates) told him that the El Paso liberals would be seated if they were willing to vote against the Harris liberals. Bean held a caucus of his group, told them the story, and they voted to stand by the Harris liberals. Bean took this word back to the "highly-placed authority," who thence had the Credentials Committee reconvened, the El Paso liberals thrown out, and the El Paso conservatives seated in their place. The vote was 20-16 for the El Paso conservatives, which was the same as the original vote for seating the liberals. Of the four

\(^{39}\)The Texas Observer, September 12, 1956; The Dallas Morning News, September 12, 1956.
Committee members who switched their vote two were from Latin-American districts (as one liberal said, "areas noted for their political independence") and one was from Johnson's county, Blanco. 40

Harris County was the issue at dispute on the roll call vote of the convention, but the El Paso "transaction" was the standard around which the liberals rallied. Their principal speaker was James Sewell, in other days considered a Rayburn lieutenant. He denounced the El Paso affair in all its ramifications, saying that anyone who had participated in it on the conservative side was unfit to hold political office. The opposition speaker, Hall Timanus of the Houston conservatives, ignored the El Paso issue and said only that the Executive Committee and the Credentials Committee of the convention had performed their tasks fairly. 41

With the Harris conservatives participating, the convention voted 1,006 to 869 against the Harris liberals. Almost half the conservative strength came from the urban counties of Dallas, Harris, and Tarrant. Only 86 other counties, of the 254 in Texas, voted with them: 36 were from the conservative-controlled Latin-American areas, and 26 Loyalist east Texas counties followed the course of "moderation." Rayburn voted his Fannin County delegation with the conservatives and Johnson cast Blanco County's

40 The Texas Observer, September 12, 19, 1956; The Dallas Morning News, September 12, 1956.

41 The Texas Observer, September 12, 1956.
small vote with the majority also. A remarkable thing about the convention was the fact that the doctrinaire Harris liberals (or most of them) with their leader, Mrs. Randolph, were outside the auditorium. Of the other urban liberals, only the Travis and Bexar delegations were on the floor while the bulk of the work was done by rural Loyalists who had hitherto followed the guidance of "Mr. Sam."\(^{42}\)

Daniel's appearance at the auditorium after the vote set off fifteen minutes of hooting, jeering and yelling against him by the liberals, who commanded a majority of the noise at least. He took it in fairly good part, saying that he would endeavor to be the governor of all, even including his jeering opponents. Not until after one a.m. on September 12 did the convention finally adjourn.\(^{43}\)

The work of the convention was moderate and Loyalist, the price Johnson and Rayburn required of Daniel, but the governor-nominee was temperamentally a moderate himself. The convention urged its Executive Committee to support Stevenson and Kefauver and set up a committee to direct the presidential campaign in Texas. The Executive Committee itself was constituted on a moderate-Loyalist basis, after the wishes of Rayburn, Johnson, and Daniel. Daniel tried rather timidly to reject several liberal nominees whom he disliked, but he only succeeded in vetoing

\(^{42}\)Ibid., September 12, 19, 1956.

\(^{43}\)The Dallas Morning News, September 12, 1956.
four. One of Daniel's rejects was that thorn in his side, Mrs. Voigt, who was also dumped from her job as head of the campaign committee; she was punished for her "Big Steal" pamphlet and her efforts to seat the Harris liberals. But another liberal leader, Sewell, obtained a place on the Executive Committee, along with Mrs. Jud Collier and Fagan Dickson. Neither Shivers-conservatives nor liberals were very numerous on the Committee, however. 44

Liberals' anger was directed against both Johnson, of whom they had always had reservations, and their old leader, Rayburn. Most of them agreed with W. O. Cooper of Dallas, who said, "I have lost my last entrail on the battlements under the leadership of Johnson and Rayburn. I have never seen people kick their political friends in the teeth with the kind of vengeance that was done in Fort Worth this day," and, "As far as I'm concerned, I completely exonerate Price Daniel from any part in this fraud. I hold Johnson entirely responsible." Ed Ball of Houston reflected the shock liberals felt at Rayburn's actions: "Rayburn hurt us more than Lyndon did... He was our acknowledged leader...and he deserted us and left us leaderless." Johnson and Rayburn, who played the game of politics as a game with indefinite goals and no unchangeable antagonisms, did not realize the idealistic approach many liberals had to politics

nor the cold-blooded, unswerving hatred other liberals had for conservatives. Both types had been stricken by their leaders' "treason" and declared their political independence of Rayburn and Johnson, with open warfare very likely to follow.  

45 The Texas Observer, September 12, 1956.
CHAPTER V

INDEPENDENT LIBERALS

Liberals could not forgive Johnson for his alliance with Daniel in the September convention, but during the 1956 presidential campaign they looked to him as the leader of the Stevenson forces. Even Mrs. Randolph, by virtue of her position as committeewoman, appeared with Johnson in behalf of the Democratic nominee. Other liberals organized political rallies and collected money for the Democratic party, forgetting for the moment their distaste for some of its local leaders.¹

Actually, the conservative Democrats, including the office-holders, were either neutral or actively aiding Stevenson. Shivers again declared for Eisenhower, but Daniel joined the Stevenson camp. The Executive Committee was so Loyalist that one of its conservative members resigned in disgust because he heard nothing but discussion about the best means of electing Stevenson president.²

The Executive Committee virtually turned the campaign over to Johnson when they appointed Warren Woodward, a Johnson

¹ The Texas Observer, October 3, 1956; The Dallas Morning News, October 8, 1956.
² The Texas Observer, September 19, October 10, 1956.
assistant, campaign director for Stevenson. Johnson's method of campaigning resembled Rayburn's 1952 approach with one exception: Rayburn had used Texas congressmen as speakers, but Johnson preferred his Senate colleagues. In the last weeks of October Texas listened to a procession of southern, border state, and pro-Johnson senators explain the virtues of the Democratic party and avoid mention of Stevenson. Johnson and Rayburn usually accompanied their distinguished guests.  

Liberals did not think that Johnson's method of appealing for votes would win Texas to the Democratic column, however. They wanted more active precinct work directed at the working class and minority voters. Mrs. Voigt, in spite of being relieved from her position as director of the Stevenson campaign, called a liberal meeting for the last week in September to discuss organizational work in the state. The meeting was primarily an urban liberal affair, with representatives from Dallas, Harris, and Bexar counties present. They formed "Texas Democrats for Stevenson-Kefauver" and concentrated their talks on the need for precinct and county activity for Stevenson.  

The Executive Committee on October 4 censured any campaign effort for Stevenson which was not under the control of the Committee. They also directed that any money or records pertaining to Democratic organizations be given over to the Committee.  

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3 The Texas Observer, October 17, 24, 31, November 7, 1956; The Dallas Morning News, October 11, 1956.  
4 The Texas Observer, September 26, October 3, 1956.
Since Mrs. Voigt had collected most of the records of the liberal-loyalist movement and had directed the spending of its funds, she was the one most concerned with the Committee's order. Byron Skelton had already taken it upon himself to ask for the liberal-loyalist records, but Mrs. Voigt refused to give them to him. Although she did attempt to do state-wide campaigning, by the end of the campaign she was concentrating her efforts on her home county of Bexar. 5

Most liberals over the state followed her example and organized in precincts and counties, especially the urban ones. At first things seemed to be going well, but by the end of October liberals sensed a Republican victory. To explain the coming Democratic defeat liberals blamed Johnson. The Executive Committee met only once during the campaign and gave scant encouragement to amateurs assisting Stevenson. Johnson did not succeed in attracting much overt conservative support for the Democrats, nor did he solicit that of the liberals. Mrs. Voigt was rebuked, and Yarborough was ignored. Liberals reported that colored and labor precincts were indifferent to Johnson's leadership and resentful over his treatment of liberals and their ideas. In some part, of course, liberal distrust of Johnson helped the Republicans; liberals hesitated to send their money or even their names to the Johnson-Daniel dominated Executive Committee. 6

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5 Ibid., October 10, 24, 31, 1956.
6 Ibid., October 24, 31, November 14, 1956; The Dallas Morning News, October 8, 9, 26, November 3, 1956.
The Republican victory, even greater than that of 1952, was undoubtedly a personal triumph for Eisenhower, but the embittered liberals saw in it also another manifestation of Johnson's ability to seem to be working for a cause in which he actually had no faith. Liberals believed that Shivers had betrayed them in 1952; they were convinced that Johnson had done so in 1956. In contrast to their situation in 1952 liberals in 1956 had many strong urban organizations; their chief difficulty seemed to be to find a way to use their strength in the most effective manner. Upon the invitation of the Texas Observer Creekmore Fath suggested a course for the liberals.7

In a November Observer article Fath reviewed the history of liberals working through state-wide organizations, beginning with the Organizing Committee of 1953. He considered that it had been destroyed by Rayburn because of its independence. The liberals had worked on the Advisory Council, but it was defunct after the September, 1956, convention. At any rate, it had always been a Rayburn puppet. So far as the new Executive Committee was concerned, it too was dominated by the important political figures of the state.8

In Fath's opinion the great need of the liberals was an organization not under the control of any one man, or even of

7*The Texas Observer*, November 14, 1956.
8Ibid.
a small group of men. He thought that the practice of California Democrats, who had organized local clubs and combined them under a central council free of "boss" direction, was an ideal one for Texans to follow. With the county organizations then in existence, Fath asserted that a state council could be formed within three months.9

The proposals of Fath were exactly the sort of thing that liberals had been waiting to hear. Letters favorable to the plan came to the Observer and a more concrete form of approval appeared with a meeting of about fifty urban liberals in December. Fath explained the principle of the Democratic clubs in California to the group, and they proposed that the same thing be done in Texas. Local clubs would be organized or existing organizations would be persuaded to join the movement and a central meeting was called for May, 1957. In the interim, a steering committee, composed of three labor leaders (Robert Bryant, Jerry Holleman, and Fred Schmidt), Byron Abernethy, professor at Texas Technological College, Voigt, Randolph, Fath, and three others, would direct plans for the convention.10

The new movement, christened "Democrats of Texas," appeared to the Observer to be a different one from others supported by liberals. In the past emphasis had been placed on party "loyalty," but the "Democrats of Texas" seemed to be

9Ibid.

10Ibid., December 19, 1956.
predominantly liberal, a fact which would undoubtedly cause it to lose the support of conservative Loyalists. The state Executive Committee soon proved the Observer's analysis true when it threatened to sue the new group for using the word, "Democrat," in its name. At the Committee meeting which repealed the liberals, James Sewell proposed that the same restriction be applied to the "Democrats for Eisenhower," but the conservative Loyalists thought the case different and defeated the motion thirty-eight to fifteen.\textsuperscript{11}

Regardless of conservative criticism, plans for the liberal convention went forward. Organizers from the liberal steering committee urged counties to send delegates and Mrs. Voigt's list of Loyalists and liberals was available for the committee. The committee decided to allow only five votes for each county delegation, in the hope that the rural Loyalists would not be intimidated by the strength of the urban clubs. During February and March, however, the committee's attention was diverted somewhat by the special election called to fill Governor Daniel's unexpired term in the United States Senate.\textsuperscript{12}

Daniel waited until the September convention confirmed him to be the Democratic gubernatorial candidate to resign his seat. His resignation, published on September 27, was to be effective January 15, 1957, the inauguration day for Texas

\textsuperscript{11}Ibid., January 2, February 19, 1957.

\textsuperscript{12}Ibid., February 5, 19, March 5, 1957.
governors, or earlier if a successor were elected before that date. He asked the Executive Committee to investigate the possibility of having a party primary for the Democratic candidates, and it reported such a primary legal, but of doubtful value. In the first place there was no money in the party treasury to pay for the primary, and in the second Governor Shivers had issued no call for a special Senate election.\footnote{The Dallas Morning News, September 28, October 5, 1956.}

By the timing of his resignation Texans assumed that Daniel wanted the special election held with the November general election. With this possibility in mind, the Republicans advanced a candidate for the position in their August convention. If, as was usually the case in special elections open to all parties, the candidate with a plurality of votes was to be the winner, then one Republican might defeat a large field of Democrats. Thad Hutcheson, the Republican candidate, attempted to file for the post after Daniel's resignation, but the secretary of state refused his filing fee. Hutcheson appealed to the state supreme court, but it told him, as the Executive Committee was to tell Daniel, that there was no call yet by the governor for the election.\footnote{Ibid., August 20, September 29, October 2, 1956.}

Shivers seemed to find Daniel's predicament amusing; the senator had promised Texans that his successor would be elected
and not appointed. Shivers considered that Daniel's resignation was valid only on January 15, and, shortly after receiving it, set off for an Alaskan bear hunt. When he returned (too late to call an election for November) he and Daniel engaged in a long-range dispute, published in the newspapers, over the date for the election, but nothing was actually done until January 15. On that day Shivers appointed William Blakley, a wealthy Dallas business executive, to serve until the new governor, Daniel, could call an election.\footnote{Ibid., September 28, 29, October 18, 1956, January 16, 1957; The New York Times, November 13, 18, 22, 1956.}

The manner of choosing Daniel's successor to the United States Senate became of national significance when the November elections gave the Democrats only two more senators than the Republicans. If Texas selected a Republican senator, Vice-President Richard Nixon's vote would give control to the Republicans. Both Johnson and Rayburn were concerned that the Democrats might lose their Senate majority; it was expected that Shivers, long an Eisenhower supporter, would send a Republican senator to Washington if he had the chance. Contrary to expectation, Blakley assured everyone that, although he was an Eisenhower Democrat, he was a friend and supporter of Johnson and would vote with the Democrats to organize the Senate. Daniel, in spite of his wishes, had the duty of arranging a special election, which he called for April 2.\footnote{The Dallas Morning News, November 10, 21, 1956, January 16, 19, 1957.}
Although his friends began to form "Yarborough for Senate" clubs before all the votes were counted in the August primary, Yarborough himself refrained from an open avowal of his candidacy until January, 1957. As soon as the date of the election was definitely settled, however, he announced that he was in the race with the statement that the Senate election was one that the "bosses" could not win. To the Observer he said that his principal reason for announcing was to encourage his followers to pay their poll taxes before the January 31 deadline. 17

Yarborough's chief conservative opponent was apparently Congressman Martin Dies, well-known during the Second World War as the head of the House Un-American Activities Committee, who had announced his intention to run for Daniel's seat before Daniel won the August primary. With the conservatives concentrating on Dies and the liberals on Yarborough it seemed that there would be an uncomplicated test of strength between the two factions. The November, 1956, Belden Poll found that Yarborough had the support of 36 per cent of the voters, Dies had 33 per cent, and no other candidate had as much as 5 per cent. 18

Attracted by the thought of needing only a plurality to win, several other liberals and conservatives challenged the

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leaders. Both Hart and White, perennial bidders for liberal support, entered the race. On the conservative side, Hutcheson refused to give way to Dies or the odds of running without Eisenhower's name on the ballot and paid his filing fee. He received Eisenhower's endorsement and conservatives feared that he would obtain altogether too many conservative votes.  

To improve conservative Democrats' chances of holding the seat, state Representative Joe Pool introduced a bill in the Texas House which would require a second election if no candidate had a majority in the first; the first and second ranking candidates would contest the second election. Pool's bill had the support of Daniel, Shivers, Rayburn, and Johnson, a phalanx which was able to secure the two-thirds vote in the House necessary for the law to go into effect in time for the election. It still required approval by the Texas Senate.  

The Senate, ordinarily a bastion of conservatism, was not convinced of the merits of the Pool Bill. When its backers tried to suspend the rules to give it immediate consideration, they were only able to get an eighteen to thirteen vote in favor, three short of the required two-thirds. Of the thirteen voting against the bill, six were newly-elected members with memories of the charges of corruption hurled against the legislature in connection with the land and insurance scandals.


This consideration influenced the liberals, but there were also several arch-conservatives against the measure. Both conservative and liberal newspapers thought their opposition resulted from their disagreement with Daniel in a controversy with Shivers over some last minute appointments by the latter. 21

Whatever their reasons, conservative senators defeated the Pool Bill and thereby seemed to insure Yarborough's victory. Yarborough, as befitted the leading candidate, made few statements which could be challenged. For that matter, neither did Dies, who campaigned with quiet speeches before service clubs and other organizations. The most colorful candidate was Hutcherson, who was conspicuous in a field of twenty-two Democrats. The interest expressed by the national press over the possibility of his election, a contingency also discussed by supporters of the Pool Bill, made Hutcherson one of Yarborough's main opponents by the end of the race. 22

The election results were entirely predictable. Yarborough led with 38 per cent of the vote, Dies had 29 per cent and Hutcherson was a respectable third with 23 per cent. The conservatives divided their strength and permitted the liberals to win. The vote for Yarborough and Hutcherson in the urban

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21 Ibid., February 16, 19, 1957; The Texas Observer, February 26, March 5, 1957.

areas demonstrated the continuing division of the cities into liberal and Republican areas of strength; in the ten large urban counties Yarborough was first and Hutcherson second in popularity. In the rural-oriented counties Dies was much stronger than Hutcherson, but Yarborough led in the rural areas also, indicating his appeal to the country moderates and Loyalists.23

Regardless of the cause of the victory, liberals celebrated it madly. They carried their triumphant attitude into the May "Democrats of Texas" convention at Austin, where over 1,000 liberals and Loyalists from 106 counties gathered. Like all others, the liberal convention squabbled over offices. There was so much disputation over the role of chairman that a committee recommended Mrs. Randolph as a compromise candidate and the convention duly elevated her to the formal leadership of the movement, a leadership she had long had informally. The chief casualty of the dispute was Mrs. Voigt, who had been an officer in every previous liberal organization, but who was denied any rank by the Austin convention.24

Mrs. Voigt and the Bexar County delegation were also frustrated in their attempt to obtain a strong resolution in favor of integration. Glenn Anderson, a representative from the California Democratic Clubs, advised the group against

24 The Texas Observer, May 21, 1957.
taking any stand on an issue which would cause divisions within the movement. He thought that to do so in the first convention would be to create splinter factions which would eventually destroy the liberal clubs. In several years, he counselled, the liberals would be strong enough to announce their beliefs, but not until then. The convention followed his advice and voted only to endorse the national Democratic platform and the idea of equal rights for all Texans, regardless of their sex, color, race, or creed. 25

The announced aims of the group were simply to work for the national Democratic party and to strive to obtain reforms in the Texas election code and in state party procedure. They wanted to abolish the poll tax, commence party registration, and obtain control of the state Executive Committee. In general, their goals were political, short-range, and non-controversial, at least within their group. They advanced no liberal creed and the reforms they advocated could be accepted by the most moderate Loyalist. 26

The liberal convention was faced with the same problem that liberals had always been forced to deal with; namely, how to secure the co-operation of moderate and even conservative Loyalists. These Loyalists, primarily rural in outlook if not in residence, were Democrats as much because it was the traditional

25 Ibid.
26 Ibid.
southern party as because it was a liberal party on economic or racial issues. In fact, many of the rural Loyalists were uneasy about the status of the national party as the spokesman of racial and economic minorities, but the rural Democrats had to be wooed by the urban liberals because their votes were necessary in the winning of elections and conventions.

Ten large urban counties, Bexar, Dallas, El Paso, Galveston, Harris, Jefferson, McLennan, Nueces, Tarrant, and Travis, had approximately half the state's population, but their voting strength was never equal to that of the rural areas. Although urban conservatives, both Republican and Democratic, paid their poll tax and took the time to vote, the urban working class and minority electorate lacked either the money or the interest to participate in elections and conventions. Consequently, urban liberals had to recruit rural allies or remain a permanent minority in politics.

In the urban counties the percentage division between the conservative and liberal factions was relatively stable; there was not much variation from one election to the next. In the rural counties, however, where many Democrats could not see or did not consider the liberal or conservative bias of the candidates, personalities were highly important. O'Daniel and Shivers did well in the country because of their colorful, strong personalities; conversely, neither Daniel nor Dies was able to attract the rural vote, to which their standing as the leading conservative candidates entitled them, because both men were dull on the stump.
Almost the only issue, as opposed to personality, which linked the rural voters to liberal leaders was party loyalty, a loyalty which, as Shivers tried to prove, was devoid of any base in reason. Nevertheless, this rural devotion to the party of Jefferson Davis, Robert Lee, Woodrow Wilson, and Franklin Roosevelt was the touchstone with which urban liberals were able to obtain rural votes for liberal candidates and causes. Thus a certain degree of political opportunism entered into the technique of the liberals' stress on party loyalty since they were fully aware that a large number of rural Loyalists did not realize the nature of the organization to which they were being loyal. Nevertheless, urban liberals had to have rural votes.

At their May convention urban liberals avoided mention of the racial and labor questions as much to placate rural delegates as to follow Anderson's advice. It was also the city members who defeated suggestions by urban liberals which would have penalized rural counties in the "Democrats of Texas" movement. One proposal was that only clubs which paid their dues would be allowed to participate. Another was that the executive board, or directive body of the group, be based on population rather than regions, which would naturally have reduced rural representation. The dues-for-participation proposal was voted down and membership on the executive board was to be chiefly by senatorial districts. In addition, a steering committee was established which was composed of the executive
board and one member from each county. This rural-dominated
commitee had, among other duties, the sole right to recommend
the endorsement by liberals of any candidate for state-wide
office. Only the annual convention was based solely on population.
Therefore, the urban liberals, even though they had conceived
the "Democrats of Texas" and furnished the greater part of the
members, did all in their power to conciliate the rural moder-
crates.  

Ralph Yarborough symbolized well this fusion of rural
Loyalism and urban liberalism. He was not the complete liberal
whom some of the city workers would have liked and he was far
more liberal than some of the rural members wanted to admit.
His election represented the high point of the liberal-loyalist
movement, and it was entirely fitting that he addressed their
convention. He had been warned not to appear, he said, because
there would be no important people at the meeting. However,
the delegates at Austin were his friends who had been with him
in his dark hours and now deserved to share his triumph. He
spoke rather nostalgically of Maury Maverick's march in the
rain to La Villita and the fact that the Buchanan Dam meeting
had occurred almost five years to the day before the present one.
He spoke to the delegates of their past achievements and urged
them on to greater efforts in the future. They gave him a
standing ovation.  

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27 Ibid.
28 Ibid.
Yarborough and the convention were symptoms and symbols of the fusion between the "New South" and the "Old" in Texas. While liberals from the cities were urging that racial questions be resolved and the fight commenced to obtain greater economic benefits for all, rural moderates were still concerned with upholding the traditional ways, both in politics and society. They were willing to discuss new things, but they were far from the stage of embracing them enthusiastically.

Texas liberalism in May, 1957, reached a critical point in its evolution. The growing industrialization of the state, with the accompanying urbanization of the rural population, transferred political and social problems from a rural setting to an urban one. The Negro and the Latin-American had gained economic and political rights. None of the traditional southern ideas seemed appropriate to the needs of Texas or Texas liberals, but the question remained: "What tactics would liberals have to adopt in the new era?"

Their own actions gave some clue to their future. Already, urban Democratic organizations were adopting the outlook of their counterparts in the North and West; whatever else they believed, they remained united in the belief that economic needs, especially of the lower income groups, were the most important political issues. This simple doctrine had enabled the national Democratic party to transform itself from the minority to the majority party, and it appeared the only logical approach for Texas urban liberals to follow.
Although they were of necessity compelled to seek rural support, the rapid growth of the larger cities made inevitable the day when most of the state's political power would rest with urban counties. Continuous organizational work would eventually ensure liberal domination in the large cities, and, with it, control of the state government as well as the Democratic party. With that possibility before them, the liberals were undoubtedly wise to insist on precinct work and to press for reforms of the election code which would help them win Democratic party primaries.

At some moment in the future, however, liberals would have to take stock of their aims. Their program of simply wanting to control the state Democratic party in the interest of winning national elections would probably be fulfilled sooner or later. When that time was reached, the liberals would then be confronted with the need to offer some more aggressive policy to appeal to the liberal and moderate voter. Conservatives were well aware of the things they were against, but it would become increasingly necessary for liberals to declare their goals openly. If they neglect to do so, it seems very possible that their movement will remain confined to a few urban organizations, which may control the state Democratic party, but which will have little constructive to offer the state itself.
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