

THE "PUBLIC IMAGE" OF GEORGE WALLACE
IN THE 1968 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Nineteen hundred sixty-eight was incredible in many respects. The year was unprecedented and recorded many "firsts." Man maneuvered within the moon's gravitational pull; a man lived and functioned with a transplanted heart. Individuals and groups of students, blacks, hippies, yippies, rightists, leftists, and dissidents demanded to be heard and heeded. The year was one of confrontation, a year when the Establishment became the enemy, and the alienated became the activist. It was a year when few expected the astounding and were reluctant to accept the unthinkable. Riots, assassinations, and invasions were rampant. Many Americans viewed the political scene with images of apprehension, alarm, and diffidence. Voters carelessly groped for a man with solutions to these perplexities. In short, the American public was susceptible to strong if not rational voices in 1968.

From coast to coast the people were impressionable and ready for change. Ex-Governor George C. Wallace of Alabama, as a third presidential candidate, threatened Republican and Democratic contenders with a stalemate if not victory. Running under "The American Independent Party" banner, he vowed to "tell the American people what they wanted to hear." His message of peace, unity, and "law and order" was welcomed by many, scrupulously examined by few, but finally rejected by the majority.

This study will view the "public image" of George Wallace during 1968 and its effect on the election. Although "the image" concept has been broadly applied to history, economics, psychology, anthropology, and social psychology, its relevance to the communication field and relative processes has been virtually ignored until recently. This introductory chapter will present (1) a discussion of the image as a rhetorical tool, (2) the purpose of the study, (3) an historical background of the times preceding the 1968 campaign, and (4) a biographical portrait of George C. Wallace.

"The Image" as a Rhetorical Tool

Rhetorical theorists from ancient to modern times have recognized the impact of the speaker's character in effecting persuasion. For examination purposes, the source (or speaker) is usually studied separately from the message or speech, causing a breakdown in the normal communication situation. For the listener however, the source and message are viewed as a monistic process with the message being simply an extension of the source.

Communication theorists beginning with Aristotle have described and recorded techniques and traits effective speakers should use for persuasive purposes. Aristotle's three artistic proofs for the art of persuasion were pathos (emotion), logos (logic), and ethos (speaker's character). In discussing ethos he wrote:

. . . the speaker must not merely see to it that his speech [as an argument] shall be convincing and persuasive, but he must [in and by the speech] give the right impression of himself, and get his judge [audience] into the right state of mind. . . . it is highly important that the speaker should evince a certain character, and that the judges should

conceive him to be disposed towards them in a certain way, and further, if possible, that the judges themselves should have a certain attitude towards him.¹

In creating ethos in and by the speech, Aristotle does not recognize the "reputation" or "image" a speaker brings to the communication situation. As a result, ethos has no past or future, but only a present tense. Aristotle implied however, the mutual interdependence of the speech and speaker's past because good character can enhance a speech's effectiveness, while good speech characteristics (content, organization, style and delivery) support the speaker's character.

During Roman and Renaissance periods the Aristotelian concept of ethos was expanded and clarified and writers continued to discuss the interaction of the speaker and speech. George Campbell discussed the effect of speaker ethos in his book, Philosophy of Rhetoric, by noting that ". . . to be good is the only sure way of being long esteemed good, and to be esteemed good is previously necessary to one's being heard with due attention and regard."² He expands the role of character so that it includes a speaker's entire reputation.

The rhetorical critic today still employs the concept of ethos and ethical proof. Studies of interaction between the source of a message and the message itself are also used. Most of the source credibility studies, however, are concerned with a speaker's influence on the audience's acceptance of the message content. Little has been

¹Lane Cooper, translator, The Rhetoric of Aristotle (New York, 1932), p. 91.

²George Campbell, Philosophy of Rhetoric (New York, 1871), p. 119.

done in determining the effect of message content on the audience's acceptance of the speaker. A statement from Speech Criticism, by Thonssen and Baird, exemplifies the desired area of research during their time. "A rhetorical judgment is a composite of data and interpretation that is intended to reveal the effect of a given speech upon a particular group of listeners."³

Recently, contemporary critics have been assuming that the aim of speech criticism should include evaluation of any significant aspect of the rhetorical transaction. The eager critic has a vast repertory from which to choose. For example, he may study the communication, its abundance or lack of ideas and artistry, its relation to current intellectual, scientific, religious, political, philosophical, educational, or artistic problems, its relation to the speaker's deeds, its value, impact, or results. The critic should not be bound by previous approaches or methodology but should develop his personal ideas, thoughts, and styles. Anthony Hillbruner in Critical Dimensions: The Art of Public Address Criticism, reiterates this need:

It would be an error [to emulate approaches] because it would limit his potential, and in fact undermine his moves toward fulfilling his own creative probings and possibilities. Where possible, the critic should look for methods that would provide unique assessments, assessments in depth of the speaker's impact upon specific audiences as well as upon his times. This is the least that he can do as an efficacious scholar and critic.⁴

Hillbruner also feels the critic should utilize elements of a particular

³Lester Thonssen and A. Craig Baird, Speech Criticism (New York, 1948), p. 9.

⁴Anthony Hillbruner, Critical Dimensions: The Art of Public Address Criticism (New York, 1966), p. 72.

theory of intent which fit not only the speech, speaker, or situation, but also the times.

Few individuals, in viewing retrospectively the 1968 political year, would categorize it as a traditional campaign. That year introduced to the American scene the first major third party candidacy in recent years and the proclaimed "New Politics." Politicians searched for understanding of the new technological environment precipitated by the electronic media and its psychic and social consequences. Because of the new and expanded media the message of the political communicator had lost much of its importance, and the politician's "public image" had taken its place. Since the visual dimension of the political communication had been extended, the public found it easier to form an image of its political leaders via television rather than other anachronistic media. This study will discuss, at a later point, the visual image's decisive influence on individual political choice.

Because the new concept of "public image" played an important role in the 1968 politics, it seems feasible to use a new rhetorical approach in examining this concept. Thomas D. Harrison, who has done considerable work with "the image" from a rhetorical perspective, states:

. . . [the image] has its roots primarily in rationalism as opposed to behaviorism. It is a model of the pragmatics of human communication from the point of view of the perceiver. Persuasion is measured in terms of the effect of rhetoric on the mind of the perceiver rather than upon subsequent behavior or upon the purpose of the speaker. The image is useful because it directs us into the mind of the auditor, because it points towards the manner in which communication alters that mind, and because it facilitates an understanding of the

manner in which persuasion functions as a principle of social cohesion.⁵

The importance of using the "public image" concept as a rhetorical tool in lieu of the ethos concept lies in examining all the ways a speaker communicates himself and his messages and their effects upon the audience's acceptance of the speaker and his speech. Rhetorical persuasion is viewed from the perceiver's point of view--not the speaker's nor the critic's.

Purpose of the Study

The intention of this study is to examine the public image of George Wallace in the 1968 presidential campaign from its earliest inception to its general acceptance and at the same time, to determine if this image contributed to his defeat at the polls. The study will seek to be an interpretative rather than exhaustive historical research summary and will attempt to view Wallace's image from as an objective posture as possible. Both primary and secondary sources will be used in order to reflect the feeling that people had toward Wallace. Available public opinion polls will be employed to show voter intent and attitudes toward the issues, candidates, and related factors.

The "image" concept will be constructed primarily from the work of three men: Walter Lippmann, Public Opinion, Kenneth E. Boulding, The Image: Knowledge in Life and Society, and Daniel J. Boorstin, The Image: A Guide to Pseudo-Events in America. In addition, an interpretative work on the public image, "The Public

⁵Thomas Dail Harrison, "The Image: A Systems Approach to the Rhetorical Act," unpublished paper, Department of Speech and Drama, Central State College, Edmond, Oklahoma, 1968, p. 2.

Image of the 'New South' in the North, 1870-1890" (Unpublished Master's thesis, Department of Speech, University of Oklahoma, 1966), by Thomas D. Harrison, will be used.

The design of the study is two-fold. First, this thesis seeks to develop a theoretical construct or series of guidelines to be used for examining political behavior as determined by the attitudes and images the electorate has of the politician and the political process. Importance is placed upon the role communication techniques play in formulating and reinforcing the "images." The study considers "the image" as communicated by mass media and views the unique role of electronic media in crystalizing national attitudes.

Secondly, the theoretical construct is applied to a case study of George Wallace and his public image in the 1968 presidential campaign. This case study examines the personal and ideological dimensions of Wallace's image as well as the technological aspect of the media role.

The study is divided into four chapters. Following this discussion, Chapter I gives an historical overview preceding the 1968 presidential campaign and a short biographical sketch of George Wallace. In building a theoretical construct, Chapter II answers three questions: (1) What is the nature of "the image?" (2) What is the role of "the image" in politics? and (3) How is "the image" created?

Chapter III examines the public image of George Wallace as it was developed during the 1968 presidential year. Three ideas are developed: (1) the past, present, and future personal image of

Wallace, (2) the ideological dimension and public attitudes, and (3) the technological transmission of Wallace's image to the public. Chapter IV will offer concluding remarks on the study.

Historical Overview

Perhaps the temper of the times or the images of the political contenders threatened Americans in 1968, nevertheless, they were gripped by a pervasive dissatisfaction and an irritable sense of pessimism which clouded all forecasts. What type of leadership did the nation want? To what kind of appeals and promises would the voters respond? Could the populace be pacified? If so, who would do it? What were his strategies? No professional politician in the country could answer these questions with any finality. The National Committee for an Effective Congress took the nation's pulse the first week in January and reported: "At all levels of American life, people share similar fears, insecurities, and gnawing doubts to such an intense degree that the country may in fact be suffering from a kind of national nervous breakdown. . . . a depression of the national spirit."⁶ The majority of Americans contemplated the presidential politics with a strong, simple, and unhappy image of what was happening to their country. A catchphrase indicative of the times was that the nation was "being torn apart by the war and the cities."

Tensions building since the assassination of President Kennedy had erupted into violence and protest. This reaction was ignited by the

⁶"The Big Show: Politics 1968," Newsweek, LXXI (January 8, 1968), 18.

civil rights movement and fueled by prolonged involvement in Vietnam. This violence arose because people committed to social change confronted people committed to the status quo. Critics of the demonstrations contended that such outbreaks were "un-American," and had occurred infrequently in the past. Those who held this attitude overlooked major groups in history that were involved in violent political movements. Among those were the American Indians, Appalachian farmers, American colonists, white Southerners, White Anglo-Saxon, Protestant Americans (WASP's), Woman's Suffrage and others.⁷

Some citizens declared America was a "sick society" while others argued it was merely experiencing the oldest problem of politics--the nonviolent transfer of power. Although the answer was nebulous, one fact was evident; the number and variety of participants in demonstrative protests increased and encompassed a larger portion of society members. Dissident students and black factions were joined by various middle-class groups and respectable professionals such as teachers, doctors, nurses, researchers, and clergymen.

The historical backdrop of the 1968 election year cannot be minimized in this study; however, other events such as the Vietnam war and racial violence need to be analyzed for their influences in the election results.

⁷For excellent summary on violent political movements see: Jerome H. Skolnick, The Politics of Protest (New York, 1969), pp. 10-24.

The Vietnam War

United States involvement in all major wars since 1775 has induced domestic protest and violence. Until recently this was a marginal and easily ignored phenomenon because the magnified patriotism obscured the voices of dissent. The violent conflict arising from opposition to the Vietnam war followed a different course. This is the first time a large number of youths and students have been violately opposed. Previously, they were the major source of patriotic sentiment. This also marks the first time opponents have realized increasing popular support for "their cause."

There is a correlation between the degree of military involvement and the magnitude of the protest. The first real dissent came in the spring of 1965 after the first "nonretaliatory" air attacks against North Vietnam began and the first "acknowledged" U.S. combat troops were landed in South Vietnam. Since that time the scope of protest had grown with escalation of man-power and general war efforts. The war had taken a high toll of American lives, even surpassing the number killed in Korea by the spring of 1967, and bewildered citizens asked, "Why?"⁸ The question is the same everywhere, though asked differently.

Prior to and including 1968, there was no completely organized Anti-War Movement in the United States. Instead, hundreds of ad hoc groups had appeared in response to specific Vietnam issues such as escalations, bombing resumptons, and draft policies. A report by Jerome H. Skolnick, entitled The Politics of Protest, discusses the parallelism of demonstrations and opposition.

⁸Ibid., p. 29.

. . . the size of demonstrations varies directly with the popular opposition to the war during the period 1965 to 1968. Thus, the strength of the movement would seem to be causally related to widespread American attitudes and sentiments toward the war. . . . There is a widespread feeling among those who participate in active criticism of the war that the movement would collapse without the presence of a worsening military situation and a domestic social crisis, and this feeling gains credence from the slackening of protests after President Johnson's speech of March 31, 1968, and the preoccupation with "straight" politics during the McCarthy and Kennedy campaigns.⁹

The attitudes of a large percentage of the dissenters could not be aligned with the war and its supposed causes. They found it did not qualify as a just war as defined by St. Thomas Aquinas. He felt a just war must meet three qualifications: (1) the cause must be just, (2) the ruler must be legitimate, and (3) the means employed must be proportionate to the ends in view.

To a great majority of Americans the cause in Vietnam was unjust. They did not see the beginning of the war nor hear the blare of trumpets or "day of infamy" to announce its presence or arouse the populace to enemy presence. It did not break, like the Korean War, with an invasion from the Communist North. Instead, prolonged public attention was given to Vietnam and its issues over a period of years. The public was vaguely aware of the fall of Dienbienphu in 1954, the Geneva Accords, and Premier Diem's regime of a "democratic one man rule." Diem was favorably portrayed by the American news media until his despotism then assassination in November, 1963. As the war continued to grow and the Diem regime was replaced by a succession of strong men, juntas, and shadow governments, the

⁹Ibid., p. 31.

American public became increasingly aware and disturbed. This frustration began snowballing as the war expanded and numerous Americans gave their lives.¹⁰

By the end of 1967 the character of Lyndon B. Johnson was being questioned. The images of President Johnson and Senator Goldwater changed considerably after the 1964 election. A majority of Americans were relieved in 1964, when Barry Goldwater, a man who urged an escalation of the war, was defeated and Lyndon Johnson, a man who said no American boys should be sent to do the job Asian boys should do, was elected. The scene changed after three years, as Skolnick said: "It seems fair to say that the anti-Vietnam War Movement has been energized in part by a deep personal bitterness against the speaker of those words, and without the promises of 1964 the movement might have assumed a milder character."¹¹

As books about the war proliferated more Americans learned the Vietnamese situation had evolved from the Indochinese War, in which the United States had openly supported the French against the Vietnamese. Legality of American intervention was also challenged, and President Johnson's repeated assertion that "three Presidents . . . [had] committed themselves and [had] promised to help defend this small and valiant nation," seemed to misrepresent President Eisenhower's letter to Premier Diem in 1954.¹² This proposal was to "examine" an assistance program with Diem, which indicated a willingness to

¹⁰Ibid., p. 36.

¹¹Ibid., p. 37.

¹²"Why Vietnam," United States Government Publication (Washington, August 20, 1965), p. 5.

furnish "aid in developing a strong viable state."¹³ The Tonkin Gulf Resolution of August 7, 1964, authorizing the President "to take all necessary measures to repel any armed attack against the forces of the United States and to prevent further aggression," was interpreted as an over-extension of Presidential power.¹⁴ As subsequent events and ideas developed, many citizens began questioning the truthfulness of their government's purpose in Vietnam.

A majority of the dissenters were opposed to the war because of the military tactics employed. As Arthur Schlesinger Jr. wrote concerning the war, in Violence: America in the Sixties:

And the war in which we are presently engaged is far more brutalizing than the Second World War or the Korean War. It is more brutalizing because the destruction we have wrought in Vietnam is so wildly out of proportion to any demonstrated involvement of our national security or any rational assessment of our national interest. In this war we are killing beyond need.¹⁵

The use of napalm, defoliation, and saturation bombing, along with the mass killings, caused minority groups to question the justice of the war and the legitimacy of the system.

Basis for dissention and revolt was transmitted via war coverage by the media. Skolnick stresses this fact by writing:

¹³ See President Eisenhower's letter of October 23, 1954, to Premier Diem of South Vietnam, emphasizing the dependency of any economic aid on forthcoming "assurances" and "performance" in the area of "needed reforms." The letter did not mention military assistance. Department of State Bulletin (Washington, November 15, 1954), p. 735f.

¹⁴ The New York Times, August 6, 1964, p. 8.

¹⁵ Arthur Schlesinger Jr., Violence: America in the Sixties (New York, 1968), p. 50.

This is the most fully reported war in history; one could go further and say that this is the only war in which millions of citizens in their homes have been granted access to immediate experience and background knowledge that would enable them to doubt their own government's version of what was happening.¹⁶

Academic and literary figures who set a precedent by their widespread opposition supported the critics. United States Senate "doves," such as Fulbright, Morse, Hatfield, McGovern, Gore, Kennedy, Mansfield, and McCarthy provided continual incentive for dissenters, and they were often joined by "hawks," such as Symington, Stennis, and Russell. Several of President Kennedy's administrators such as Galbraith, Reischauer, Schlesinger, Sorenson, and Hilsman, sided with President Johnson's opposition. Men like U Thant, Pope Paul, and Arnold Toynbee also encouraged critics of the war.¹⁷

While the movement's main support had been white professionals, students, and clergy, several of the groups drifted toward "confrontationism." Originally, the demonstrations were non-violent marches, sit-ins, and picketings. Physical injuries resulted from police intervention and counter-demonstrators, when dissenters of the status quo in Vietnam turned their "peaceful" gatherings into violent demonstrations and used guerrilla tactics on college campuses. One such incident at San Jose State College in November, 1967, occurred when Dow Chemical, the CIA, and the Armed Forces came on campus for recruitment purposes. Similar occurrences spread across the United States during 1968.¹⁸

¹⁶Skolnick, pp. 42-43.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 43.

¹⁸Hugh Davis Graham and Ted Robert Gurr, Violence in America: Historical and Comparative Perspectives (New York, 1969), pp. 517-519.

By mid-1968 the opinion polls declared the dissenting minority had become the majority. A Gallup poll of August 1968, asked, ". . . do you think the U.S. made a mistake sending troops to fight in Vietnam." Some 53 per cent answered "yes," and 35 per cent said "no."¹⁹ An earlier report by Newsweek (January 1, 1968) disclosed the following findings:

Quite obviously, more Americans than not are still determined to see the U. S. "win" the Vietnamese war. But winning in Vietnam does not appear to mean to them what it meant in World War II. What most Americans seem to insist on is an honorable solution that will avoid humiliation of their country. In theory, that condition could be met if the war were simply ended on terms that ruled out an immediate Communist take-over of all of Vietnam. In practice, however, it seems probable that the only way this could be accomplished would be for the U. S. to achieve a settlement permitting it to station troops on South Vietnam for the foreseeable future.²⁰

In general, the critics, especially in 1967 and early 1968, were successful in projecting the relationship between the war and the American domestic crisis. A repeated theme became the cry for "reordered priorities."

Racial Violence

The racial disorders before early 1968 were embedded in a tangle of social, economic, political, and psychological issues and circumstances which arose out of an historic pattern of Negro-Caucasian relations in America. President Kennedy advanced the cause of the Negro by setting the stage for the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and President Johnson secured the enactment. Although this law settled

¹⁹Skolnick, p. 44.

²⁰"Outlook: an American Dilemma," Newsweek, LXXI (January 1, 1968), 17.

the public accommodations issue, the voting rights were still unaffected until later, when a more effective suffrage law was passed.

In the summer of 1964 sociologist Lee Rainwater found that working and middle-class families favored the social reform movement.²¹ This movement dominated Democratic politics and led to the Great Society program and the War on Poverty. The general consensus viewed "the poor black man" as being given a chance to work his way out of poverty and to prove himself worthy.

As white attitudes changed, so did the Negroes'. They were gaining a new sense of self-respect and self-image, resulting from the civil rights movement and racial advancement. The non-violent demonstrations in the South, new laws and court decisions, accompanied by the increasing support of white public opinion, gave the Negroes a new confidence for the future. Suddenly, a "revolution in expectations" arose because Negroes no longer felt they had to accept second-class citizenship. Their common life now appeared more intolerable than ever. The legislature and court successes led to intensified expectations and resulted in dissatisfaction within the limits of the legal and legislative programs. Price M. Cobbs and William H. Grier, authors of Black Rage, made this clear.

Over the past decade, black Americans have undergone profound changes in their conceptions of themselves and the world in which they live. It is ironic how many of these changes have remained unnoticed by many whites, even those white Americans purporting to make scientific inquiries into the thoughts, feelings and behavior of black people. Black Americans are undergoing a psychological revolution and,

²¹Lewis Chester, Godfrey Hodgson and Bruce Page, An American Melodrama: The Presidential Campaign of 1968 (New York, 1969), p. 32.

considering its implications, the wonder is that up to now it has been so peaceful.²²

Negro impatience led to the nonviolent and violent rebellions of the middle 1960's. In 1963 many civil rights workers started losing faith in the government and especially the major political parties. John Lewis, in his article, "March on Washington," states: "We cannot depend on any political party, for both the Democrats and the Republicans have betrayed the basic principles of the Declaration of Independence."²³

At the same time Negro militants complained of a contradiction between the lack of action at home and American commitments overseas. This was pointed out by Sally Belfrage in her article, "Freedom Summer." "How is it that the government can protect the Vietnamese from the Viet Cong and the same government will not accept the moral responsibility of protecting people in Mississippi?"²⁴

In mid-1966 Stokely Carmichael, of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), brought to the public eye the slogan "Black Power." It was soon evident that a shift of major importance was taking place between the nonviolent and violent blacks. Since the civil rights movement was organized on the assumptions of American institutions and government responsiveness, black militants began to view these assumptions more critically. Soon the movement looked at

²²Skolnick, p. xi.

²³John Lewis, "March on Washington," Black Protest: History, Documents, and Analysis, 1619 to the Present, edited by Joanne Grant (New York, 1968), p. 376.

²⁴Sally Belfrage, "Freedom Summer," Black Protest, edited by Grant, p. 399.

racism in the Northern urban ghettos. The voices of the civil rights activists met and merged with those of the black Northern, urban lower-class, and soon a black militant struggle was activated.

Although riots had occurred across America between 1963 and 1966, they did not have the effect of those in 1967. That year recorded 150 civil disturbances. These were more specific and premeditated and employed more regularized uses of force. Those involved felt Negro rights were still being withheld, and the white society could only be changed with violence.

Four years after Rainwater's optimistic report a similar document bore the proof that the Great Society program and the War on Poverty were causing bitterness and frustration and appeared to have all but collapsed. Racial Attitudes in Fifteen American Cities, by Angus Campbell and Howard Schuman, found a nation still divided and moving toward two societies, one black and one white. In looking at the Negro protest the report found a large minority, one-third of the sample, or over one million people, did not believe "real progress" had been accomplished for Negroes; and discriminations in employment and housing were still major problems. The report also discusses the militant minority.

Largely contained within this third is a much smaller group of individuals who see violence as necessary to right injustices they believe are the lot of the Negro in America. This group is small but not trivial in numbers. More important, these individuals have the sympathy and perhaps to some extent the support of the larger minority. . . . The most important fact about those inclined toward violence is that they are not an isolated band of deviants condemned by almost all other Negroes, but are linked to a much larger group by a

common definition of the problems that beset the Negro in America.²⁵

Survey material from Watts, Newark, and Detroit suggested increasing support and sympathy for riots in black communities. Over half the people interviewed in Los Angeles felt the riot in Watts was a purposeful event with a positive effect on their lives.²⁶ They felt the violent action offered the only practical and feasible opportunity for overcoming the inequities of a long history of discrimination.

The reactions to mass violence between the black and white population was quite different. The Gallup poll in August 1967, found that nationally almost a third of all white persons felt lower regard for Negroes because of the riots.²⁷ Few regarded the violence as justifiable, and they saw it as an endless expedition rather than a protest. This is possibly true, for the events of 1968 suggest that violent racial incidents have become, at least temporarily, part of the routine course of events instead of sporadic calamities.

Early 1968 contained a rising incidence of disorders, but the aftermath following Martin Luther King Jr.'s assassination was unprecedented. Several facts are significant: (1) April, 1968, compared with all of 1967, had nearly as many disorders, and more cities and states were involved. (2) More arrests and injuries were

²⁵ Angus Campbell and Howard Schuman, "Racial Attitudes in Fifteen American Cities," Supplemental Studies for the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders (Washington, 1968), p. 62.

²⁶ T. M. Tomlison and David O. Sears, Los Angeles Riot Study: Negro Attitudes Toward the Riot, Institute of Government and Public Affairs, University of California (Los Angeles, 1967), p. 33.

²⁷ Skolnick, p. 185.

recorded in April 1968 than in all of 1967 and almost as much property damage. There were also more National Guard (34,900 to 27,700) and federal troops (23,700 to 4,800) mobilized in that month than in all of 1967.²⁸

As the election grew near it was evident to the general populace that violence was increasing. Generally, it began earlier in 1968 and continued longer than in previous years, and not all of the increase in the spring of 1968 could be attributed to Dr. King's assassination. This was undeniably a time of crisis, tragedy, and impending chaos. The public on both the left and right of the political spectrum was alienated from the center, while the "moderates," or middle majority, were riddled by apprehension and tormented by conscience. The dominant concern seemed to be the foreboding threat of some changes in society, which encompassed the Vietnam war and racial uprisings. Each candidate promised leadership that would control and monitor the social changes that were forthcoming.²⁹

The pollster Louis Harris, in mid-July 1968, reviewed the political scene and concluded, "A central fact of the late 1960's in America is that the old economic divisions which were the keys to understanding political behavior no longer apply."³⁰ He foresaw the new divisions based on reactions to three vital issues: (1) what role,

²⁸Lemberg Center for the Study of Violence, Riot Data Review, No. 2 (Waltham, Massachusetts, 1968), pp. 59-60.

²⁹James H. McBath and Walter R. Fisher, "Persuasion in Presidential Campaign Communication," The Quarterly Journal of Speech, LX (February, 1969), 19.

³⁰Louis Harris, "The Coming Political Lineup," Los Angeles Times (July 18, 1968), Part II, p. 16.

especially militarily, should America take in the world? (2) by what means should minority members be accorded equal rights with whites? and (3) how should individual and group protestors be handled? Harris also found that two political forces, a change coalition and a no-change coalition, were developing in response to the issues. The change coalition was composed of "Negroes, Spanish-speaking and Jewish people, the young, the affluent, and the educated." The no-change coalition contained the "deep South whites, low-income whites in Northern industrial centers, conservative suburbanites, and older people." He concluded that either group could be a decisive factor in the 1968 or future elections.

Although the Vietnam war and civil disorders were prime issues that distorted the public's image of their world, the over-riding question in the minds of the American voters was, In light of the issues, what candidate can best control the changes that threaten society? The rhetoric of all three major candidates was charged with an effort to resolve pressing social upheavals via disguised persuasion. The task of each was to mold an "image" of himself as the man most capable of administering the policies necessary to cope with the problems of a changing society.

Biographical Sketch of George Wallace

Attitudes and political dreams are formulated, nurtured, and brought to fruition as products of earlier observations and experiences. Since this is a case study of the "public image" of George Wallace, those events which contributed to who he was and what he was in the 1968 Presidential campaign will be emphasized.

Early Life and Education

George Corley Wallace, the eldest of George C. Wallace, Sr., and Mazelle Smith Wallace's four children, was born in Clio, Alabama, on August 25, 1919. He had the classic childhood of a Southern back-country boy. His father was chronically ill, with only one lung, but had the spirit to constantly fight, politic, and raise hell. His mother, who managed the entire family, was fervently religious and ambitious in regard to her children. She was a stern authoritarian.³¹

The first twelve years of Wallace's life were spent in a "run-down" house with "inadequate sanitary facilities" and without electricity. In 1931, with \$5,000 left by a "rich uncle," the family moved into a new brick house with indoor plumbing and electricity. With the death of the father in 1937, mortgage holders foreclosed on all the family property except the house. The mother went to work in order to support her four children.

In high school Wallace was president of his senior class, a debator, and quarterback of the football team. He won the State Golden Gloves, a bantam-weight boxing championship, two years in a row, and earned a "fighter" reputation which would follow him throughout his life.³²

He entered the University of Alabama shortly after his father's death and worked his way through college and law school by waiting on

³¹"A new look at Wallace--What He may do to the Election," U.S. News, LXV (January 29, 1968), 56-57.

³²"The life of George Wallace," U.S. News, LXV (October 28, 1968), 45-47.

tables, clerking in the registrar's office, and driving a taxi. He received an LL, B degree in 1942 and was a member of the law school's honor court. With a law school diploma but no "connections" with which he could practice in a law firm, he went to work driving a dump truck for the State Highway Department in Tuscaloosa.³³

The War Years

Wallace met and married Lurleen Burns, a dime store clerk, in 1943, and, soon after, volunteered for pilot training with the Army Air Corps. Before completing training he was struck with spinal meningitis and layed in a coma, close to death, for nearly a week. He survived that battle but sustained a slight hearing impairment. With pilot plans abandoned he entered flight engineer's school. During the war, he was assigned to the B-29 bomber flight crew with the 20th Air Force Group that conducted bombing missions on the Japanese coastland. Returning home after the war, he was discharged as a flight sergeant and won the Air Medal and a Bronze Star for participation in the air offensive against Japan. Disability payments which he received from the Veterans Administration for a "psychoneurosis condition" later proved to be a political question which his opponents often raised.

Entry Into Politics

After his discharge Wallace returned to Alabama and accepted appointment as the state's assistant attorney general. Eager to launch his own political career, he returned to his hometown and was elected to the state legislature in 1946. At twenty-seven years of age he

³³Ibid., p. 45.

defeated two opponents and soon opened a law office in Clayton, Alabama, which he and his brother operated between legislative sessions.

As a young legislator Wallace identified himself with Jim Folsom, the dominant personality in Alabama politics. Folsom was a warm but boisterous governor of Alabama in the late 1940's and between 1955 and 1959. He tried without success to befriend Negroes and poor whites alike by proposing such measures as the poll tax repeal. Wallace pursued an undistinguished career as a state legislator and county judge, and for a time wore Folsom's colors of a racial liberal. After winning election as a state circuit judge he broke his ties with Folsom, who at this time had ruined his health and career by heavy drinking.³⁴

In 1958 with school desegregation as the dominant issue in Alabama politics, Wallace ran unsuccessfully for governor. Described by newspaper reporters as the more "moderate" of the two candidates, he was endorsed by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and the Alabama Jewish community. He also received a "favorable" rating from the AFL-CIO Alabama Labor Council. His "big hurt" resulted from denouncing the Ku Klux Klan, which supported the winner of the election, John Patterson. Although Wallace later denied it following his defeat, he is reported to have commented, "John Patterson out-niggered me. And boys, I ain't going to be out-niggered again."³⁵ In his next attempt he won.

³⁴Luther J. Carter, "George C. Wallace: He's not just whistling Dixie," Science, CLXII (October 25, 1968), 437.

³⁵Daniel J. Boorstin, American and the Image of Europe (New York, 1960), p. 267.

Wallace had his first "flare up" with federal authorities in 1958 and early 1959, as Circuit Judge. This episode illustrates perfectly the strategy used in building his successful career: "the strategy of challenge, surrender, and bluster--always used in that order."³⁶

Representatives of the U. S. Civil Rights Commission, in order to investigate charges of voter discrimination, asked to see Alabama voter records in Wallace's district. He quickly impounded the records and released them to a county grand jury. When ordered by U. S. District Judge Frank Johnson to surrender the records or go to jail for contempt, he surrendered. Years later he denied this and stated, "These characters from the evil Civil Rights Commission and Justice Department were backed to the wall--they were defied and backed down. . . . this 1959 attempt to have a Sherman's march to the sea had been stopped in the cradle of the Confederacy."³⁷ This episode, in the next campaign, became the central theme of his rhetoric. He stated: "I called Judge Johnson publicly in 200 speeches on the stump and on TV a integrating, scallawagging, carpetbagging liar."³⁸ This was Wallace's first step along the trail of victorious defeats. As Robert Sherrill pointed out in his book, Gothic Politics in the Deep South, ". . . it was from this embarrassing experience that Wallace developed his almost psychotic dislike for federal judges; insulting Johnson specifically and all federal judges in general has become a stock maneuver."³⁹

³⁶ Robert Sherrill, Gothic Politics in the Deep South (New York, 1968), p. 327.

³⁷ Ibid., p. 327.

³⁸ Ibid., p. 328.

³⁹ Ibid.

Governor of Alabama

In 1962, with the slogan, "Stand up for Alabama," Wallace breezed through to a victory with the largest vote ever given a candidate for governor in that state. He campaigned on a militantly segregationist platform and promised that if necessary to prevent integration, he would stand in the "school-house door." He was reportedly backed by the Ku Klux Klan.

Following his victory, in which the course he would follow in the near and distant future was decided, he told a gathering of state senators before his inauguration, "I'm going to make race the basis of politics in this state, and I'm going to make it the basis of politics in this country."⁴⁰ If anyone doubted his intentions, the inaugural address stilled them forever. The closing lines of his famous inaugural speech were to be repeated over and over again. "In the name of the greatest people that have ever trod this earth, I draw the line in the dust and toss the gauntlet before the feet of tyranny. And I say, Segregation now! Segregation tomorrow! Segregation forever!"⁴¹ His chance had finally arrived to become Governor, and this position was a stepping stone in becoming a major spokesman on states rights, constitutional government, free enterprise, and individual property rights for the South and later the nation.

Politics in the south has always been an interesting activity to observe. Many of the politicians were certifiable populists, and others

⁴⁰Michael DeForrest, editor, George Wallace a Rebel and His Cause (New York, 1968), p. 12.

⁴¹Chester, Hodgson and Page, p. 267.

flamboyantly anti-communists; some were more colorfully anti-federalistic, and many have been strikingly anti-integrationalistic. The fame that rested on the shoulders of George Wallace as the standard-bearer of segregation came from his assumed success.

From 1962 to 1966 he was a powerful liberal governor and continued the liberal-populist policies of the Folsom years. He taxed and spent money at an astonishing rate, shocking many of his conservative admirers in other states. The state's miserably low appropriations for education were doubled with the launching of a \$100-million school construction program to build fifteen junior colleges and numerous trade schools all over the state. Teachers' pay was increased by 47 per cent, and the free textbook program was expanded. Students were given access to the school system throughout the state by a system of free bus transportation. He initiated the largest massive road building program in the state's history and began an enlightened project to clean up the state waterways. Unemployment compensation was raised and the hourly wage of all state government employees increased.⁴²

Many called Wallace a populist, because of his big spending programs. But as Sherrill stated:

In the last analysis one must judge the degree of populism behind a welfare or a public-works program according to who pays for it. In Alabama it is the consumer who pays. . . . Paradoxically, he kept taxes off big business and industry, yet the money leaders fear and distrust him; he piled new taxes and debt on the people, and they love him.⁴³

⁴²Carter, "George C. Wallace," p. 437; DeForrest, p. 13; Oklahoma City Times, October 29, 1968, p. 24.

⁴³Sherrill, pp. 339-340.

He raised the revenue for his social programs by increasing sales taxes on essentials like food and gasoline, which eventually hurt the poor people. The state's return from taxes and other receipts increased from \$673 million in F-Y 1962 to \$1.7 billion in fiscal 1967, but even with this increase many of Wallace's critics in the state educational system felt he failed to press for necessary and adequate revenue measures and left Alabama's entire educational system seriously underfinanced.⁴⁴ Luther J. Carter points this out in Science, October 25, 1968:

The public schools suffer from gross disparities and under-evaluation in the assessments on which local property taxes are based. Alabama school people have long called for leadership by the governor's office and the legislature to correct the situation, but Wallace never chose really to come to grips with this property tax issue or with other controversial tax problems.⁴⁵

On the question of civil rights Wallace split with the liberals in 1962. His attorney general, Richmond Flowers, urged him to condemn Klan bombings and shootings and not to confuse the question of violence with the question of segregation and integration. Flowers later told an interviewer:

Wallace refused to come out for law and order in his inaugural address. He said that was integrationist talk and he would not use such words. When I warned him that he'd have federal troops in Alabama if he resisted the desegregation orders of the courts, he said, "That's exactly what I want them to do."⁴⁶

Wallace campaigned in 1962 and promised to refuse any illegal federal court order by standing in the "school-house door." It had been

⁴⁴Oklahoma City Times, October 29, 1968, p. 24.

⁴⁵Carter, "George C. Wallace," p. 437.

⁴⁶Oklahoma City Times, October 29, 1968, p. 24.

standard political policy in the South for candidates to swear they would go to jail before surrendering to Washington. Wallace's promise was different, but it caught the public's attention and imagination when he was true to his word. The event took place in 1963 at the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa. He barred the entrance temporarily, but finally stepped aside in obedience to a federal court order. His national image grew, for during the same year President Kennedy on three occasions either issued orders that federalized the Alabama National Guard or threatened to send U. S. Army troops to handle the state's racial troubles. In 1965 President Johnson mobilized the National Guard to protect demonstrators who were marching from Selma to Montgomery in protest of alleged voting-rights discrimination.⁴⁷

After Wallace's incident at the University, he began receiving speaking invitations across the country. One such invitation changed the course of his dream and his life. At the University of Wisconsin in the 1963-1964 winter, late in the afternoon, a man called Wallace's suite at the hotel with a fantastic scheme for running in the Wisconsin primary. He not only ran in Wisconsin, where he received 34 per cent of the vote, but he also ran in Indiana, pulling 38 per cent, with 43 per cent in Maryland.⁴⁸ He launched his short Democratic Presidential campaign of 1964 during the debate in Congress on the 1964 Civil Rights Act. He claimed the pending bill would "destroy the system of government in this country," and he called it "the forerunner of land

⁴⁷"The Life of George Wallace," U. S. News, p. 46.

⁴⁸Chester, Hodgson and Page, p. 271.

reform in the United States."⁴⁹ Four days after Senator Barry Goldwater captured the Republican nomination, Wallace withdrew from the race. His main reasons were lack of campaign funds and difficulties with "unpledged" presidential electors in Alabama. The 1964 primaries established his position as the "Southern leader" and gave birth to an even greater idea, the presidential campaign of 1968.

Realizing he must secure his home base, and knowing the necessary finances would come from Alabama, he had to retain control of the state. With his administration drawing toward the end, he frantically appealed to the legislature to amend the state constitution so he could succeed himself, realizing many of the legislators had already committed themselves to prospective candidates. He beseeched, orated, and even threatened to halt all state financial support to the legislators' counties. He used all the political muscle he had, and finally the bill passed the House.

When a Senate filibuster blocked passage of the amendment, he sought to alter the rules on the number of votes needed to end a filibuster; he appealed to the state supreme court to end the filibuster by court order; and finally, he decided to enter the counties of the recalcitrant senators to take the issue "to the people."⁵⁰

He failed, and the Senate defeated the amendment by three votes.

In desperation he turned to his wife, Lurleen, who agreed to run as an obvious front. Lurleen Wallace won a resounding victory at the polls, but the strenuous job of campaigning, the burden of the office, and her spreading disease of cancer allowed her to serve only one year

⁴⁹"The Life of George Wallace," p. 47.

⁵⁰DeForrest, p. 13.

in office. She died on May 7, 1968. Although her death lessened his power of control, Lurleen's short term secured Wallace financially.

All Southern governors have numerous ways to raise money, and Wallace was no exception. By the middle of 1967 he had over one million dollars in his campaign fund, with contributions coming from Alabama business-men, asphalt and highway contracting industries, and the state liquor industry. "Foot-loose and fancy free," his war chest stuffed with money, George Wallace now was ready to advance his cause to the nation.

CHAPTER II

"THE IMAGE," A THEORETICAL VIEWPOINT

Having viewed the historical background of the 1968 elections and George Wallace's personal life, it is now necessary to consider the nature and role of "the image" and its theoretical application in order to understand how Wallace's public image influenced election returns. The image is not a new aspect of elections and campaigns, but the systematic analysis and definition of it are rather new in the field of political science.

The public images of political candidates have served for decades as simple models of reality. They have abstracted political complexity and confusion of what the voters interpret as human character. The "image" can thrust politicians to victorious heights or the depths of defeat. Since it is impossible for candidates to meet all the voters, they must depend primarily on advertising and the mass media to transmit their names and images to fellow citizens.

The advent of new electrical media has forged many changes in the "image making" processes. Today a public figure tries to convey his image or impression via a sales tool used by "Madison Avenue" technicians and public relation opinion molders. To those involved with public behavior and attitudes "the image" is a contemporary word used in describing total public posture and the impression the

public has about a political figure.¹ Image builders attempt to show that their candidate possesses the same view of the world that the potential voters have. The candidate's communications and stands on issues are interpreted throughout the campaign for voter and his candidate image alignment. The potential voter is encouraged to vote for the candidate closest to his own self-image. Thus, each presidential election is really, as Samuel Lubell describes, "a self-portrait of America, a self-portrait with each ballot serving as another brush stroke and through which all the emotions of the American people find expression."² The electronic media have intensified the impact of personality on politics and have helped create a more realistic "image" of the politician.

The objective of this chapter is to answer three questions: (1) what is the nature of "the image?" (2) what is the role of "the image" in politics? and (3) how is "the image" created? This study establishes a theoretical construct applicable in viewing the public opinion of any public figure. Chapter III applies the construct in a case study of George Wallace's public image in the 1968 presidential election campaign.

The Nature of "The Image"

Mental Structure

In order to understand "the image" a person must be familiar with its basic components. This section will describe the

¹William L. Safire, The New Language of Politics (New York, 1968), p. 202.

²Samuel Lubell, The Future of American Politics, 3rd rev. ed. (New York, 1965), p. 24.

human psychological processes involved which allow "the images" to be created.

Each individual has a cognitive structure or frame of reference that determines both what and how information will be received. Perception occurs at the moment this information or stimulus engages the cognitive structure.

In a sense our minds are like computers which have been fed various types of information. This information, along with our "feelings" at any given time, comprise our "cognitive structure." We see the world through the distorted lens of this frame of reference. Both what we attend to and the meaning we give to incoming stimuli are influenced by our individual structures.³

Over the process of time the cognitive structure becomes a structured predisposition that responds to a given stimulus the former being used by an individual in the perception of his world. Thus, he perceives things in a particular light because of previous education, habits of mind, accepted dogmas, religious or social affinities, and notions of his own personal interest. Few events, speeches, or actions fall on completely new ground, because the perceiver has predetermined biases, and these biases are the results of attitudes. When important events require formation of a view, these pre-existing habits, dogmas, or attitudes help determine the impression he will experience, the view he will form and ultimately, his behavior. An attitude has been defined by Beck as

. . . a learned and more or less generalized and effective tendency or predisposition to respond in a rather persistent and characteristic manner, usually positively or negatively

³Don E. Beck, unpublished notes, Department of Speech and Drama, North Texas State University, Denton, Texas, 1968.

(for or against) in reference to some situation, idea, value, material object or class of such objects, or persons, or group of persons.⁴

This individual stand may be in reference to a person's attitudes on economic, political, or religious institutions, or it may refer to the family, school, or government.

An individual becomes an American, a member of the Presbyterian church or the Republican party, because he has acquired appropriate attitudes concerning these institutions. He is born into a family that possesses established attitudes, but as he matures and becomes a member of institutions, he develops his own attitudes. His early childhood interaction with other children and adults allows him to label the objects, persons, events, and groups he encounters and to establish criteria by which he approves or disapproves of them.⁵ Because of man's ability to conceptualize and form images in his mind, he is able to experience the attitude without the benefit of direct contact with the referent. Sherif, Sherif, and Nebergall conclude,

In short, an attitude reflects a form of consistency in response to social stimuli. They provide man with a systematic, predetermined set of categories which determine in advance his response to various ideas and objects. They are learned characteristics; tend to be perpetuated; are fused to objects; serve to generalize response and are value laden. Having an attitude means that the individual is no longer neutral toward the referents and that he is positively or negatively disposed in some degree toward them in a lasting way.⁶

⁴Don E. Beck, "The Nature of Attitudes," unpublished notes, Department of Speech and Drama, North Texas State University, Denton, Texas, 1968.

⁵Carolyn W. Sherif, Muzafer Sherif and Roger E. Nebergall, Attitude and Attitude Change (Philadelphia, 1965), p. 4.

⁶Beck, "Nature of Attitudes."

This section has described briefly both the formulation and the effect of the human mental structure. Each individual has a cognitive structure and attitudes which filter experience and determine how received information will be translated, divided, and distributed into categories. The best way to determine the role of the cognitive structure in the development of political attitudes is to examine the function of man in the political arena.

"The Image"

"The Image" concept, as discussed in this thesis, is based on the contribution of three men, each working independently of the other -- Walter Lippmann, Kenneth E. Boulding, and Daniel J. Boorstin. Although all three approaches are related, each man describes his "image" differently and it involves the processes of perception, cognition, interpretation, reaction, and attitude-attitude change.

The attitude criterion discussed in the previous section becomes the "belief system," which is composed of numerous "images" of the past, present, and future, and includes "all the accumulated, organized knowledge that the organism has about itself and the world."⁷ The belief system is a lens through which information about the physical and social environment is viewed. The system orients the individual and defines his environment and its characteristics. All images are stereotyped because they oversimplify reality. The subjective perception does not always reflect accurately the objective reality.

⁷George A. Miller, Eugene Galanter and Karl H. Pribram, Plans and the Structure of Behavior (New York, 1960), p. 16.

Walter Lippmann, discussed this in his book, Public Opinion, and defined "stereotype" as an oversimplified pattern that helps people find meaning in the world.⁸ This pattern or "image" is often distorted in accordance with the individual's predispositions.

[The] trickle of messages from the outside is affected by the stored-up images, the preconceptions, and the prejudices which interpret, fill them out, and in turn powerfully direct the play of our attention, and our vision itself. . . . In the individual person, the limited messages from outside, formed into a pattern of stereotypes, are identified with his own interests as he feels and conceives them.⁹

Another student of public opinion, Lawrence A. Lowell, put it similarly: "Each looks at, and looks for, the facts and reasons to which his attention points, perceiving little, if at all, those to which his mind is not directed. As a rule, men see what they look for, and observe the things they expect to see."¹⁰

Individuals carry "stereotypes" of groups, other individuals, and classes in their minds. Examples are "images" of Negroes, "Russians," "Communists," or the "Viet Cong." This stereotype tends to satisfy the individual need and give a feeling of security and defense against daily experiences.

Kenneth E. Boulding, in The Image: Knowledge in Life and Society, defines his "image" of the world as knowledge. "What I am talking about is what I believe to be true; my subjective knowledge. It is

⁸Walter Lippmann, Public Opinion (New York, 1932), p. 37.

⁹Ibid., p. 23.

¹⁰Lawrence A. Lowell, Public Opinion in War and Peace (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1923), p. 22.

this image that largely governs my behavior. . . . The image is built up as a result of all past experience of the possessor."¹¹

His model of "the image" is multi-dimensional and denotes that in a single perception at least ten dimensions are involved for the formulation of a meaning: space, time, objective and personal relationships, value, emotion, conscious-unconscious-subconscious areas, certainty-uncertainty or clarity-vagueness, reality-unreality, and the public-private role.¹² For example, the meaning of a politician's speech depends upon when and where it was delivered, how it related to other events of the occasion, the value it had for the listener, and the emotion it aroused. Also included is how conscious the listener was of the speech, whether the meaning of the message was certain, clear or vague, whether the event was real or unreal, and finally, how other observers felt about the same speech. All of these dimensions influence its interpretation.

Certain parts of "the image" may be important and others unimportant at different times, but "the image" belongs to the individual perceiver and no one else. Many politicians have misconstrued an "image" to mean something they own or possess, but it belongs to and is the sole item of the public.

Because of man's ability to conceptualize and form images of events, people, and places in his mind, he experiences attitudes and creates images without the benefit of direct contact with the referent.

¹¹Kenneth E. Boulding, The Image: Knowledge in Life and Society (Ann Arbor, 1956), p. 6.

¹²Ibid., pp. 47-48.

The "image" at this point becomes public and is shared by many individuals. This contact with the image generates a first impression that is soon overlaid by influence from peers, leaders, or the mass media. "Part of our image," Boulding implies, "of the world, is the belief that this image is shared by other people like ourselves who also are part of our image of the world."¹³

This "public image" results from a universe of discourse or a process of sharing the message and experience. Although individuals in an audience hear the same speech, they all perceive it from different positions. Their "public image" will be quite similar in certain areas, especially the time and place of delivery, and quite different in others."¹⁴

Daniel J. Boorstin in his book, The Image: A Guide to Pseudo-Events in America, approaches the "public image" from an ethical viewpoint. He feels that men in former generations were motivated by ideals and values yet to be attained. For this reason Lippmann chose to use the word "stereotype."

I have been speaking of stereotypes rather than ideals, because the word ideal is usually reserved for what we consider the good, the true, and the beautiful. Thus it carries the hint that here is something to be copied or attained. . . . Our stereotyped world is not necessarily the world we should like it to be. It is simply the world we expect it to be.¹⁵

Thus, man was made by his environment. The Twentieth Century man still holds this belief, but also believes his environment can be made by him, along with ideals and values; in other words, they have been

¹³Ibid., p. 14.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 132.

¹⁵Lippmann, p. 104.

attained. The language of ideals has been replaced by the language of images. As Boorstin explains it, a public image has five characteristics.

(1) "An image is synthetic. It is planned: created especially to serve a purpose, to make a certain kind of impression."¹⁶ Because of man's finite knowledge and his inability to know everything about any one thing, he must form his image from information obtained through others. He sees things as others mean for them to be seen. One danger is apparent here: it is very easy for individuals to construct and control the meaning of images by manipulative means.

The overshadowing image. . . covers up whatever may really be there. By our very use of the term [image] we imply that something can be done to it; the image can always be more or less successfully synthesized, doctored, repaired, refurbished, and improved, quite apart from [though not entirely independent of] the spontaneous original of which the image is a public portrait.¹⁷

There are "public images" all around us. On the international scene we find the military, scientific, and economic "image" one country wants another to have. Domestically, it is found in the slogans used by politicians: "The New Deal," "The Fair Deal," and "The Great Society." It is also apparent in corporate advertising: "Rock of Gibraltar" (Prudential Insurance Company), "When It Rains It Pours," "57 Varieties," and "Milk From Contented Cows."

(2) "An image is believable. It serves no purpose if people do not believe it. In their own minds they must make it stand for the institution or the person imaged."¹⁸ Politicians would never be elected

¹⁶ Daniel J. Boorstin, The Image: A Guide to Pseudo-Events in America (New York, 1964), p. 185.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 185.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 188.

and companies would never sell products if their "public image" was unbelievable. "The public will either ignore or reject a communicated image if it is not made interesting, appealing, and convincing; the public must believe it, identify with it, and call it its own."¹⁹ Lippmann says, concerning believability of stereotypes:

For when a system of stereotypes is well fixed, our attention is called to those facts which support it, and diverted from those which contradict. . . . What is alien will be rejected, what is different will fall upon unseeing eyes. We do not see what our eyes are not accustomed to take into account. Sometimes consciously, more often without knowing it, we are impressed by those facts which fit our philosophy.²⁰

(3) "An image is passive. Since the image is already supposed to be congruent with reality, the producer of the image . . . is expected to fit into the image."²¹ In order for an individual to "buy" an image philosophy, he must be able to accept it and adapt it to his own philosophy. He must also believe the producer feels identically about the image. In the early months of a political campaign the image of the politician is a likeness of the party, but by election time the picture has reversed, and the party has the image likeness of the politician. "The image can be perfect. It can be a precise pattern which will satisfy everybody . . . [but it] is the kind of ideal which becomes real only when it has become public."²²

¹⁹Thomas Dail Harrison, "The Public Image of the 'New South' in the North, 1870-1890," unpublished master's thesis, Department of Speech, The University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma, 1966.

²⁰Lippmann, p. 119.

²¹Boorstin, The Image, p. 188.

²²Ibid., p. 189.

(4) "An image is vivid and concrete. The image is limited. . . . It is not enough if the product, the man, or the institution has many good qualities appropriate to it. One or a few must be selected for vivid portrayal."²³

A clear example of this can be taken from the 1948 elections and Truman's victory. Many Democrats had strayed from the party fold, but returned because of alignment of class issues which Truman stressed during the campaign. Although the "public image" of Truman did not change significantly, the "public image" of what was important in the campaign did change. As the campaign progressed, the socio-economic issues became dominant.²⁴

(5) "An image is simplified. In order to exclude undesired and undesirable aspects, an image must be simpler than the object it represents."²⁵

This is evident in the slogans adopted by the Presidents: "The New Frontier" or "The Great Society." It is also apparent in the trademark of corporations. Initials such as IBM, NBC, or CBS all trigger certain responses depending upon our source of knowledge. Lippmann agrees: "In untrained observation we pick recognizable signs out of the environment. The signs stand for ideas, and these ideas we fill with our stock of images."²⁶

²³Ibid., p. 193.

²⁴Bernard Berelson and Morris Janowitz, editors, Reader in Public Opinion and Communication (New York, 1966), p. 460.

²⁵Boorstin, The Image, p. 193.

²⁶Lippmann, p. 88.

The "image" should now be recognizable as the picture, stereotype, knowledge, or cognition within a person's mind. Man has in his mind not only an image of himself, but an image of other people, situations, and organizations. The "image" belongs to the individual perceiver and is turned into a "public image" after being shared by the public. The image has five characteristics. It is synthetic, believable, passive, vivid and concrete, and simplified. The concept is also dependent upon the dimensions of time and space which will be discussed next.

"The Image" in Time and Space

In a view of "the image," the temporal and spatial elements are very important. This system is dependent upon time, for it is composed of chronological pasts, presents, and futures that exert their influence upon one another as the course of events unfolds. As Peter McHugh notes in Defining the Situation, "the past influences the symbolic definition of the present, the definition of the present is influenced by inferences about the future, and the events of the future will reconstruct our definitions of the past."²⁷

The dimension of time could be described as a historical skeleton. Politicians, rhetoricians, and other individuals interested in persuading will take complicated issues and situations, break these down into a simplified state, and attractively communicate them to the public. The public responds by taking the bits and pieces of the

²⁷ Peter McHugh, Defining the Situation: The Organization of Meaning in Social Interaction (New York, 1968), p. 24.

message, applying them to the pictures in their minds, and formulating a "public image." By looking to the future the skeleton continues to grow in age and maturity.

Although the "image" of the world is never identical with reality, man must live and act as if it were true. He uses the tool of feedback in the elimination of errors or false images. It is possible to compare the image of the future with the image of the same period after it has become the past. In November the image of October as it was in September, can be recalled, and this can be compared with the image of October as it is seen in November. An individual is disappointed if the images do not correspond, and acts to adjust one image or the other. According to Boulding, three adjustments can be made.

We can adjust our image of the past and say that it was mistaken, that what apparently happened did not really happen and that we have been misinformed. We can adjust our past image of the future; that is, we can say that the image of [October] that we had in [September] was wrong. We can do this for two reasons, for our image of the future is derived by inference from our general view of the world. We can therefore say, on the one hand, that the inference was wrong and that our view of the world did not really imply that [October] should have turned out the way we expected; or if we cannot deny the validity of the inference, then we must revise our general image of the world.²⁸

The temporal dimension of "the image" involves an event in its past, present, and future roles, while the spatial dimension characterizes an event in its relationship to other events across the boundaries of space. Because individuals in social situations have different

²⁸Kenneth E. Boulding, "The Learning and Reality-Testing Process in the International System," Image and Reality in World Politics, edited by John C. Farrell and Asa P. Smith (New York, 1967), pp. 2-3.

backgrounds and experiences; they view the event from diverse standpoints, and consequently, formulate different images.²⁹

Spatial images can be spread along a continuum, viewed at different positions, and this distance is discriminated as greater or lesser at differing points in time. The following example describes the time and space dimensions of Barry Goldwater and Lyndon Johnson's images between the 1964 and 1968 presidential elections.

The national mood during the 1964 campaign was liberal, although a conservative swing was in process. Lyndon Johnson, the supporter of the "Great Society" and "War on Poverty," was the liberal candidate, while Barry Goldwater was placed on the far right end of the continuum as the ultra-conservative. Johnson pushed the image of a peace candidate, which opposed Goldwater, the man who would sell the Tennessee Valley Authority and defoliate forests and bomb North Vietnam. A handful of ultra-conservative voters in the Southern States and Arizona identified themselves with Goldwater and his image, while many Republicans could not. Goldwater's far-right image allowed these Republicans to accept Johnson's philosophy. This group of supporters, with a majority of liberal Democrats, gave the President an astounding mandate.

Within four years the images of both men changed drastically. Many promises President Johnson made in 1964 were not kept, and he followed the plan of Senator Goldwater in several instances. With betrayed confidence, the nation became frustrated, frightened, and confused, and started moving toward the conservative end of the continuum.

²⁹McHugh, p. 28.

In 1968 the image of Goldwater had changed immensely. He was no longer viewed as ultra-conservative, but more mildly. Because of this change in time and space, many more voters could have identified with him and placed their vote for him in that year.

The image is a function, in a spatial sense, of the position occupied by an observer in relationship to the position of the observed. An individual tends to select ideas which he favors and ignores ideas he does not favor. Thus, the perceptions an individual has of another person or statement are a reflection of his own position. Information that confirms his image will be assimilated; information which challenges his image will be avoided.³⁰ As Berelson, Lazarsfeld, and McPhee point out,

The more intensely one holds a vote position, the more likely he is to see the political environment as favorable to himself, as conforming to himself, as conforming to his own beliefs. He is less likely to perceive uncongenial and contradictory events or points of view and hence presumably less likely to revise his own original position.³¹

The image is a complex but intriguing concept. Industry, military, scientific, academic, and political leaders are learning its nature and subsequent processes, and are aware of its constructive and destructive capabilities. Before investigating these posers, especially as applicable in the political arena, it is necessary to

³⁰For a discussion of perception and the assimilation/contrast dimension as it applies to communication see Don Edward Beck, "The Rhetoric of Conflict and Compromise: A Study in Civil War Causation," unpublished doctoral dissertation, Department of Speech, The University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma, 1966, pp. 57-61.

³¹Bernard R. Berelson, Paul F. Lazarsfeld and William N. McPhee, Voting: A Study of Opinion Formation in a Presidential Campaign (Chicago, 1954), p. 223.

analyze the behavior of people with certain images, and particularly their voting habits and attitudes.

"The Image" in Politics

Determiner of the Individual Voting Behavior

Once an individual acquires an attitude, he selectively translates all information he receives and is able to evaluate a communication from several positions along a continuum. By studying his behavior it is possible to identify his "images." "It is only from behavior," Sherif suggests, "that we can infer that an individual has an attitude. In short, attitudes are inferred from objects, persons, events, and issues over a time span."³² The behavior that usually results from an image is in the form of actions and verbal utterances.

There is a relationship between attitudes and an individual's susceptibility through communication. The ego-involved partisan attacks all positions that are not his own, and any communication from an opposing point of view is rejected. Beck points out that ". . . communications from heretics or renegades are likewise grouped with the opposing position and are rejected with equal vehemence and determination."³³

Sherif predicts there is less susceptibility to change when an individual is more ego-involved. He further feels that a person exposed to an extremely discrepant communication will never react to it by

³²Sherif, Sherif and Nebergall, p. 6.

³³Beck, "The Rhetoric of Conflict and Compromise," p. 60.

changing his attitude toward the communication in order to reduce his tension or dissonance. In fact, the person may become steadfast in relying on his original stand.³⁴

Conversely, the less-involved person is non-committed to either position. His range of acceptance and rejection is small and his un-opinionated area quite large. He examines the message more scrupulously and forms images because of attitudes in related areas. Since the undecided voter often makes the difference between winning and losing an election, the wise political candidate will aim his persuasive rhetoric at this group.

Berelson, Lazerfeld, and McPhee discussed the problem of the voter caught in a political cross-pressure.

If the voter finds himself holding opinions championed by opposing parties, it has been thought that he could do one of two things: remain in this "inconsistent" position or remove the "inconsistency" by changing one opinion to fit the other. But he has another out: he can perceptually select, out of the somewhat ambiguous propaganda of the campaign, those political cues which remove the problem by defining it away. He can "see" that the candidates do not disagree on the issue at hand or that his candidate really agrees with him or that the opponent really disagrees or that he cannot tell where his candidate stands. Just as the process may reduce the voter's level of psychological tension, so may it reduce his political inconsistency.³⁵

In the political arena we find many public images. The voter's attitude determines his picture or "image" of the politician, the party, and the issues. There are four primarily related areas that house these images. First, he has an image of himself. Every event and

³⁴Muzafer and Carolyn W. Sherif, The Social Judgment Involvement Approach vs. The Cognitive Dissonance Approach (Chicago, 1965), p. x

³⁵Berelson, Lazarsfeld and McPhee, p. 232.

action in his past, regardless how minute, has contributed to what he presently is. His views of life, the world, and his own surroundings are results of his attitudes, experiences, emotions, and especially his values. He pictures himself as an individual who is able to interpret the information he receives and to decide what is right and wrong.

The voter also has an image of society. His attitudes determine his stand on issues that will reflect upon him and those around him. He not only reflects the society in which he lives, but he feels he has an active role in his family, school, church, job, and other organizations. He desires to keep his society safe from aversion to violence, danger, and harm. He prefers a predictable environment to one that is plagued with unpredictable events. His images of terms such as communism or capitalism are results of his background and attitude structure and will determine the course of future action he will take toward such systems.

He also has an image of the political system. From early schooling he has a general knowledge of basic government concepts such as America's independence, the two-party system, and the government bodies (executive, legislative, and judicial branches). Because his overall knowledge is limited, he forms symbolic images which become indexes of complex role and structure images.³⁶ These symbolic images are of great importance to the individual voter and the public at large, for they are pictures of political life, especially of national and international relations. For instance, we tend to think

³⁶Boulding, The Image, p. 109.

of the United States as "Uncle Sam," of England as "John Bull," or of Russia as "a performing bear." There are several images of the political parties in the United States.

The Republican Party is conceived as an elephant, rather old, rather dignified, a little slow, not perhaps terribly bright, but with a great deal of wisdom, hard working, full of integrity, rather conservative, a little isolated from the world around him (and) patient. . . . The Democratic Party is thought of as a donkey, active, agile, clever, a little unsure of himself, a bit of an upstart, quick, sensitive, a little vulgar and cheerfully absurd. The images are reiterated by cartoons and have been of great importance in establishing the political climate.³⁷

The symbolic image is necessary because the human imagination can bear limited amounts of complexity. When information becomes intolerable it is translated into symbolic images. "The instability of voting behavior is a result of the complexity of the detailed image which is summarized in the symbol. Small changes in our detailed valuations may make all the difference between preferring one symbol and preferring another."³⁸

Finally, the voter has an image of the politician. His picture is created from all the past and present information he has about the man. This current image allows him to formulate a future picture that he considers true. If his attitudes align with the image, he will accept, at least partially, the candidate. If not, the man and his beliefs will be rejected. The candidate's personal and ideological images must be positively projected for greater public acceptance and attitude change. Technically, this projection is carried out today with the help of the mass media.

³⁷Ibid., p. 111.

³⁸Ibid., pp. 111-112.

This section has examined several aspects of individual diversified attitudes and voting behavior. An image or attitude becomes public when it is shared by the public, and as individual attitudes can be inferred from behavior and examined by response to communications, so can public attitudes be inferred and investigated. They are indicators of election results, therefore, politicians watch them carefully during election campaigns. The following section discusses determiners of this influential public voting behavior.

Determiner of Public Voting Behavior

In viewing voting behavior it is often convenient to divide people into liberal and conservative categories. This can be misleading, however, especially for the uncommitted who do not divide their opinions into agreement with or opposition to the issues. In reality, the liberal-conservative cleavage is in varying degrees and the real difference between them may lie in shades of grey instead of black or white. At the conservative end of the continuum are those who may agree, and support all or most measures with a "conservative" tendency, while those at the opposite end are united in support of all or most liberal causes. Between the two extremes are the voters with mixed opinions, who support conservative views on some measures and liberal views on others. As it was noted in the space dimension of the image, the voter's perception of the candidates' stands on issues is affected by his own position. The voter is able to increase the consistency of his own position by perceiving his candidate's stand as similar to his own and the opponent's stand as dissimilar.

For example, in the 1948 presidential election, the Republicans who favored price control perceived Dewey as favoring price control (70 per cent), and few who opposed price control perceived Dewey as favoring it (14 per cent). The Republicans who were against controls perceived Truman as favoring them more than the Republicans did.³⁹

When voters are in disagreement within their own party, the ego-involved Republicans and Democrats imagine their candidate's stand on the issues in harmony with their own stand. When they disagree with the opposition candidate, the ego-involved are quickest to perceive the disagreement. As Berelson, Lazarsfeld and McPhee point out, "the stronger the partisanship, the greater the (mis)perception of agreement with one's own side and the less the (mis) perception of agreement with the opposition. Presumably, misperception makes for partisanship, and the reverse."⁴⁰ The strongest supporters of a candidate, the ones most interested in and active for his election, usually take the least equivocal position on their party issues. Those who favor the party position generally support the candidate strongly. The more intensely a voter holds an ego-involved position during the campaign, the more likely he is to see a favorable political environment conforming to his own beliefs. His image discounts uncongenial and contradictory events or points of view, and makes less likely a revision of his original position. This partisan-motivated "image" perception increases the differences between the parties. The highly motivated Republicans and Democrats are farther apart in their images of political issues than those who are unmotivated.

³⁹Berelson, Lazarsfeld and McPhee, pp. 215-233.

⁴⁰Ibid.

As previously mentioned, the image role in politics is viewed as a determiner of individual voting behavior and a determiner of public voting behavior. In order to clarify perception and image role in voting behavior, adequate communication exposure is necessary, and is discussed in the following section on creation of "the image."

Creation of "The Image"

Only a small part of the voter's image of the world at election time is really of his own making. The original image was faint and perhaps shapeless, but finally evolved into a stronger and more definite picture. This transformation of the public image resulted from all information received by the voter. This section discusses the creation and evolution of "the image."

Few voters can observe, first hand, the sequence of acts that comprise even the smallest segments of the political process. As Walter Lippmann once said, ". . . the world that we have to deal with politically is out of reach, out of sight, out of mind, it has to be explored, reported, and imagined."⁴¹ Therefore, man must depend upon and trust a communication system which will reveal and clarify for him portions of the political scene. Without a capable network to enlarge and magnify candidates and their speech, it would be impossible for politics to span and influence our nation and world. This communication process also provides rationality for mass politics.

A people can sensibly debate their collective actions only if they share a common fund of knowledge and information. And only if they have some minimum appreciation of how others have been

⁴¹Lippmann, p. 29.

informed about the state of affairs can citizens decide upon the wisdom and the validity of the reasoning behind the actions of their leaders.⁴²

Political orators have consistently used the mass media for communication processes. Their roles as articulators of a collective identity, and as champions of specific interests are conditioned and limited by the communications media available to them. No politician can rise above restrictions set by specific communication networks to which he has access. Consequently, they have adopted different means of communicating with each change in technology. All these changes have contributed to changes in the "public image" of the politician and the political process.⁴³

Invention of the printing press created a new environment, and man could suddenly read and think in isolation. "Individualism was born," states Marshall McLuhan, "and it became possible to separate thought from action. Politically, the newly discovered privacy of the reader made a point of view possible."⁴⁴

The radio epoch was the next communication revolution, and it became a nation-builder, for it communicated the spirit of national unity instantaneously. Radio welded a political party system into a national machine for Franklin Roosevelt. His coalition was composed of the traditional Democratic South, farmers, laborers, and ethnic

⁴²Lucian W. Pye, editor, Communications and Political Development (Princeton, 1963), p. 6.

⁴³Ibid., p. 58.

⁴⁴"The Message of Marshall McLuhan," Newsweek, LXX (March 6, 1967), 55.

minorities. The President communicated directly with the nation in by-passing a hostile press, local newspapers, and often obstructionist Congress and by having "Fireside Chats" in homes of average voters.

The next communication revolution began in 1952 with the first national television campaign. The communication techniques were planned and carried out by "Madison Avenue" image manipulators and cut across traditional party lines, stressing the candidate's personality. This was the beginning of the new electrical media transmission that would soon nationalize campaign communications and declare the mass-media-built "public image" important.

Nature of Current Communication Media

We shape our tools and thereafter they shape us. Since our tools are extensions of our senses, they shape the way we experience reality.⁴⁵

Political life in America is undergoing a fundamental change, primarily because of changes in the means of communication. Marshall McLuhan, an interpreter of human communication, is perhaps best known for his books, Understanding Media and The Medium is the Message, in which he builds three main theses.⁴⁶ The first states that the media of communication are extensions of the human personality. Just as the tool was an extension of the hand and the automobile

⁴⁵John Culkin, S. J., "A Handful of Postulates," McLuhan: Hot and Cool, edited by Gerald Emanuel Stearn (New York, 1967), p. 52.

⁴⁶See Marshall McLuhan, Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man, New York, McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1965. Also McLuhan and Quentin Fiore, The Medium is the Message, New York, Bantam Books, 1967.

an extension of the foot, so are electronic media an extension of our nervous system.

The second divides media into "hot" and "cool." The hot media convey direct information to an individual with his participation at a low level. The process of communication with a cool medium involves extensive participation of the recipient. Print and radio are hot media, for the printed page and broadcasted sound project plenty of information and require less involvement of the receiver. Television is a cool, low-definition medium that provides a minimum of information and requires high participation and involvement. Although television has prompted the creation of many "images" it cannot in itself "create" a personality. The image of the existing personality is given a wider audience or an enlarged meeting place where he can appear before the voter.

The third principle says that the medium is the message. McLuhan means that the medium, by itself, does something to an individual apart from what the message is able to do. Electronic media have brought a massive change to our society, much more important than any message they have transmitted. At one point in time Paul Revere had to ride through every Middlesex village and town. Today he would not have to ride; he could stand in front of a television camera and simultaneously be in every village and town. Today there is no sequence, no taking of the news from place to place. The world is zooming by in front of the nation's eyes, and the public is there reaching out, touching it, participating, and constantly building images.

As McLuhan says, "The Viet-Nam War is the first world war ever fought on American soil. Thanks to TV, parents have seen their sons killed on the seven-o'clock news."⁴⁷ One reason today's generation is the "Now Generation" is that the electronic media put us in the middle of events instantaneously. Knowing the nature of today's media prompts one to ask with fear, apprehension, and expectancy, "What is the effect of such powerful media?"

The Effect of Media

Man is living in an environment of accelerated technological changes, and he does not realize his "involvement" with the media. As John M. Culkin, McLuhan's peer, wrote, "The environments set up by different media are not just containers for people, they are processes which shape people."⁴⁸

The new Electric Age, with its media penetration and wide geographic distribution and impact, has provided a new, direct, and sensitive link between the politician and the public. A candidate generally uses the mass media to establish a "public image" by appearing on TV and radio, or by making news and buying advertising space in newspapers.

Newspapers in the past have been the traditional medium for conveying political opinion, information, and images to voters, but in the 1960's and especially the 1968 campaign, they could be termed

⁴⁷ Marshall McLuhan, "The Reversal of the Overheated Image," Playboy, XV (December, 1968), p. 134.

⁴⁸ John M. Culkin, "A Schoolman's Guide to Marshall McLuhan," Saturday Review, L (March 18, 1967), p. 51.

secondary, because there are image differences between television and newspaper media. Where a candidate's television image seems largely to be appearance, demeanor, and style of presentation, the newspaper image is conveyed by descriptions of a candidate's reputation and his position on issues. Consequently, they must be created in the reader's mind's eye after considering the published description, whereas the television image is perceived directly.⁴⁹

There is also a problem in whom the image reaches. All political party supporters and non-supporters are exposed to a candidate unexpectedly by television newscasts, or unavoidably by face-to-face spot announcements, but the newspaper image, which is often biased, tends to reach self-segregated communities of readers who have journalistic identities which attract them to the editorial views of one paper over another.⁵⁰

With radio, well-defined sounds satisfy the ear but also require visual pictures to be imagined; however, radio spot announcements, usually inexpensive, reusable, and effective with a good script and pleasing voice, are often used, especially by state and local politicians.

Television requires different involvement. In 1962 it was estimated that nine of every ten homes in the United States had a television set, and the average daily viewing time was five hours.⁵¹ This time has grown even higher in seven years. Television has contributed to image making by its ability to communicate qualities of the person it

⁴⁹Gene Wyckoff, The Image Candidates (New York, 1968), pp. 93-96.

⁵⁰Ibid., p. 101.

⁵¹Daniel M. Ogden and Arthur L. Peterson, Electing the President (San Francisco, 1968), p. 193.

shows, independently of his verbal message or situation in which he is pictured. The middleman between the viewer and politician has been eliminated, and the voter feels he "gets to know" the candidates who come alive in his living room. He meets them, responds to them, judges them in the same way he judges people in everyday situations, and then draws "images" about them.⁵²

The capacity of television to transmit a candidate or issues into diverse regions has helped unify American politics. The media coverage of civil rights battles in the South helped synthesize the national conscience behind Congressional legislation; however, the opposite effect has also occurred when on-the-spot coverage of race riots has worsened the local situation and distorted the national reaction. Television, like man, has dual abilities to build and demolish.⁵³

The influence of television and the importance of image making have made an impact on campaign communication. Some experts feel they modified our existing party structures. As Harvey Wheeler states in the November 2, 1968, Saturday Review:

Mass media are making the existing party structure obsolete and giving rise to a political system based on personality, "flying cadres of media experts," and among other things, an electoral coalition representing new constituencies in American society.⁵⁴

⁵²Penn Kimball, Bobby Kennedy and the New Politics (Englewood Cliffs, 1968), pp. 15-16.

⁵³Ibid., p. 19.

⁵⁴Harvey Wheeler, "The End of the Two Party System," Saturday Review, LI (November 2, 1968), p. 19.

McLuhan states a stronger claim by saying, ". . . the party system has folded like the organization chart. Policies and issues are useless for election purposes, since they are too specialized and too hot. The shaping of the candidate's integral image has taken the place of discussing conflicting points of view."⁵⁵ The cool medium of television does not capacitate a hot event like the Vietnam war or the Chicago Democratic convention. In the hot event everything is taking place, and the viewer of a cool medium is unable to participate.

Penn Kimball also believes the old party structure is being replaced. In his book, Bobby Kennedy and The New Politics, he writes:

The passivity of television watchers and the illusion of experience have virtually eliminated all the old devices for activating direct political participation by citizens. Political meetings and rallies are harder and harder to mount. The telephone canvass of voting lists, organized by computers according to neighborhoods, party affiliations and ethnic backgrounds, has been substituted for personal calls by block captains. Voters are asked to dial a number to hear a candidate's canned answers to their questions on issues. The New Politics is built more and more around the communications device and less and less around person to person contact.⁵⁶

The "New Politics"⁵⁷. -- Those who believe in the "New Politics" feel television and polling effects have hastened the dissolution of

⁵⁵McLuhan, "The Reversal," p. 134. ⁵⁶Kimball, pp. 20-21.

⁵⁷There has been considerable disagreement over the definition of this term. For some the New Politics meant the politics of ordinary people who were fed up with the superficial and hypocritical politics of the two major parties. But this was only a mood or a cause and not a political technique. Kimball attempted a definition in his book. "The 'New Politics' refers to the contemporary contest for political power characterized by primary reliance on personal organizations in preference to party machinery, emphasis on consolidating voters rather than on dividing them along traditional lines of class or region, projection of political style above issues and explanation of the full range or modern techniques for mass communication." Kimball, pp. 1-2.

traditional structures of American politics. For the past century a group of institutions have been mediators between the politician and voter. The responsibility of the political organization, and the ethnic group was to interpret the issues to supporters and rally these people through the campaign. Today these mediator functions are accomplished by the mass media, and the politician goes straight to the public.

The audience of the electronical media is beginning to regard the old political establishment with contempt and responds to almost any candidate who sets himself against the past. As Arthur Schlesinger Jr., wrote in an article for Playboy, January 1969:

The "Old Politics" is becoming a self-perpetuating myth--a myth kept alive by the political professionals, who have a vested interest in its preservation, and by newspapermen, who spend most of their time interviewing political professionals. The people have meanwhile struck out on their own. They base their judgments each evening on Walter Cronkite and David Brinkley and register their views each week through Louis Harris and George Gallup. They regard the old political establishment with contempt and respond to any candidate who sets himself against the old faces. The anti-establishment candidates appeal above all to the students, who thus far have been the only ones to develop modes of organization that will work in the electronic age. In short, the old, slow-motion broker politics is now giving way to the politics of instantaneous mass participation.⁵⁸

The "New Politics" helped to defeat many of the old and worthy politicians such as Governor Pat Brown of California, Senator Paul Douglas in Illinois, Senator Kenneth Keating of New York, President Lyndon B. Johnson, and Vice-President Hubert Humphrey.

Labels like "conservative" and "liberal" have fallen into question, and party heads now urge both conservatives and liberals to

⁵⁸ Arthur Schesinger Jr., "The Statesman," Playboy, XVI (January, 1969), p. 242.

join the ranks of moderation. Both Barry Goldwater and Nelson Rockefeller have been criticized by the Republican party for being too "extreme." This has also been the cry of some Democrats, leveled at both Southern segregationists and Northern integrationists. As Gene Wyckoff states in The Image Candidates, ". . . it is now common campaign practice for candidates to subdue their party identity so that voters will be less prone to think in terms of the 'Democratic candidate' or the 'Republican.'"⁵⁹

For several reasons the influence of issues on election outcomes seems to be declining. (1) Political questions are becoming too complex for ready statements, and former philosophies and cliches no longer satisfy. The public realizes that neither government action nor great amounts of money, upon which past political dialogues soared, are sufficient to meet most problems that arise. Generally, the best stand is to stay loose and general on the issues. (2) To stay "moderate," the candidate assumes middle-of-the-road positions and avoids the extreme. The image is centered around projection of an attitude toward public affairs and an emphasis on personal character and charm, rather than on a detailed set of platform promises and emphasis on specific programs.⁶⁰

Perry feels the trend toward personalized politics will hasten as management and consulting firms expand and as party politics contracts. He quotes Pennsylvania state senator Robert P. Casey as saying, "Politics is changing tremendously. The old ways no longer work. . . . You have to use the new sophisticated techniques, the polling, the

⁵⁹Wyckoff, p. 5.

⁶⁰Kimball, p. 15.

television, the heavy staffing, and the direct mail. You can't rely any more on political organizations. They don't work any more."⁶¹

Campaigns today are big business, that cost approximately one million dollars for a U.S. senatorship or governorship of one of the ten largest states. A businessman who invests this amount in a company has many consultants, and so the politician has professional managers. The late Robert F. Kennedy made this clear in his lecture at Skidmore College in February, 1967, when he stated:

. . . more and more, as our population increases, as the problems of our society become more complex, and as the cost of political campaigns continues to mount--it becomes more and more clear that the package is often more important than the product; that the perceived "image" of a candidate is often more important than what he says.

That is one reason--I believe--why political parties are turning more and more to the pre-packaged, pre-sold candidate.⁶²

It is quite evident that the American people, attitudes, and images have changed considerably in recent years. The political organizations that once drew their strength from ethnic blocks have also been altered. One of the largest and most important changes brought on by the new electronic media is the role and image difference of the politician. To some the present day political leader has charismatic authority and uses the media techniques to win support.

Charisma. --Although there were many charismatic politicians before television, the electronic media has intensified the personality impact on politics. A feature of charismatic authority is that it remains

⁶¹Quoted by James M. Perry, The New Politics: The Expanding Technology of Political Manipulation, (New York, 1968), p. 42.

⁶²Quoted by Kimball, p. 157.

alien, if not hostile, to the normal economic processes. In politics it assumes a variety of forms such as the demagogue, social dictator, military hero, and revolutionary.⁶³ It implies whole-hearted devotion to the leader and is founded on emotion rather than rationality, since the force of activity rests on usually blind, fanatical trust and unrestrained, uncritical faith. Charisma implies a break with legal and traditional continuity, challenges established order and customary restraints, overturns institutions, and appeals to new concepts of human relationships. The set boundaries and norms are established by the authority of the self-appointed leader according to the demands of the mission. The leader is prepared to ostracize his followers who refuse to follow in whatever direction he alone specifies.⁶⁴

A charismatic leader's influence is greater if he places himself outside any political grouping. His following is adventuresome because it courts failure, is constantly obliged to discover new impetus and motives for enthusiasm to confirm its power. Theoretically, the horizons for the leader and group are unlimited as long as the followers remain loyal and the group continues to grow. As soon as doubt sets in, the power and authority collapse, and the followers return to a normal, stable, everyday existence.⁶⁵

⁶³ Max Weber described "charisma" as "The exceptional quality of a person who appears to possess supernatural, superhuman or at least unaccustomed powers, so that he emerges as a providential, exemplary or extraordinary figure, and for this reason is able to gather disciples or followers around him." Julien Freund, The Sociology of Max Weber (New York, 1968), p. 232.

⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 233.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

Charisma can be good or evil, constructive or destructive, because it is generated not only by the personality of the leader, but also by the image he represents in his followers' imaginations at a particular point in time and space. Political charisma, as noted, is characteristic of social change. The leader usually emerges in an atmosphere of crisis or frustration, or during a time of unresolved conflict or threatening disaster. The following often takes political form just as a general weakening in the political fabric occurs, and the leader, in the group's image, anticipates the next stage in national history.⁶⁶

The danger of a politician and his rhetorical charisma or demagoguery is apparent. The followers develop quasi-religious attitudes formed by conversion that does not go deeply into the dispositional structure, nor does it last. The flamboyant oratory and the display of a radiating personality incorporate the mass into a great national effort. The clamorous demands and expectations which are raised far exceed the possibility of fulfillment. The followers tend to believe the persistent grievances are the deliberate action of the demagogue's opponents. Frustration and conflicts result and momentarily produce changes which, if continued, impede the growth of a progressive, modern political order.⁶⁷

The structure of the political discourse, such as the length of communication, the absence of dialogue, and the belief the audience is on a lower level than the leader, promotes the need for exaggeration

⁶⁶Kimball, p. 126.

⁶⁷Edward Shils, Communications and Political Development, edited by Lucian W. Pye (Princeton, 1963), pp. 64-67.

and clichés. The use of "charismatic terms" is not only important but common. It was noted that the populace gives a leader with charismatic authority power which is unexplainable through his personal attributes. A charismatic term has the same invested power. This is explained by Richard Weaver in his book, The Ethics of Rhetoric.

It is the nature of the charismatic term to have a power which is not derived, but which is in some mysterious way given. . . . [the] term is given its load of impulsion without reference, and it functions by convention. The number of such terms is small in any one period, but they are perhaps the most efficacious terms of all.⁶⁸

Weaver lists several examples of contemporary charismatic terms. One of the principle words is "freedom." The greatest sacrifices man is called upon to make are in the name of "freedom," while the meaning attached to the word is quite obscure. The word formerly meant a breaking loose from all anchorages, but it is extensively used by modern politicians and statesmen in an effort to have men assume more responsibility. Weaver continues by giving a second example.

There is plenty of evidence that "democracy" is becoming the same kind of term. The variety of things it is used to symbolize is too weird and too contradictory for one to find even a core meaning in present-day usages. More important than this for us is the fact, noted by George Orwell, that people resist any attempt to define democracy.⁶⁹

Demagoguery is accepted primarily as a fact of life that will be amplified by wireless broadcasting; even today it puts to use the availability of the mass communication media. This is especially true where

⁶⁸Richard M. Weaver, The Ethics of Rhetoric (Chicago, 1965), pp. 227-228.

⁶⁹Ibid., pp. 228-229.

the population is illiterate, geographically scattered, and the members believe they must "mobilize" for the progress of the country. But the media that build up and makes famous a demagog and an ordinary politician, have the same power to destroy him if it is used incorrectly. Today he cannot rely on using the media as a helpmate, he must master them. This is especially true of television. In this cool medium the audience is an active constituent of the viewing experience, and only a cool politician is accepted. For example, Hitler was a phenomenon during the radio age, for both the medium and the messenger were "hot." Everything was said and done; nothing was left for the listener to feel. However, Hitler over television today would be a failure because a "hot" messenger is rejected over a "cool" medium. This explains the success of John Kennedy, who had a compatible coolness and indifference to power, and who adapted fully to television. As McLuhan said,

Any political candidate who doesn't have such cool, low-definition qualities, which allow the viewer to fill in the gaps with his own personal identification, simply electrocutes himself on television -- as Richard Nixon did in his disastrous debates with Kennedy in the 1960 campaign. Nixon was essentially hot; he presented a high definition, sharply-defined image and action on the TV screen that contributed to his reputation as a phony--the "Tricky Dicky" syndrome that has dogged his footsteps for years.⁷⁰

In the next chapter it will be noted that Nixon finally understood the media and changed his image, thus bringing success to his political career.

⁷⁰ Marshall McLuhan, "A Candid Conversation with the High Priest of Popcult and Metaphysician of Media," Playboy, XVI (March, 1969), 61.

Discussion on charisma has pointed to the leadership of many politicians utilizing the mass media. The media are able to cause an individual's defeat if he is unable to master them. Also advantageous to the politician is a working knowledge and use of pseudo-events, unique methods of spreading political messages via the media. The particulars of these events are discussed below.

Pseudo-events. -- "Fact or fantasy," states Boorstin, "the image becomes the thing. Its very purpose is to overshadow reality. American life becomes a showcase for images. For frozen pseudo-events."⁷¹ Politicians are products of their images. Because the image is a creation of the message, they tend to remake themselves in the image other people have of them. Every politician lives a double life, one through the mass media and the other in a private realm. The two images do not always coincide because attitudes on the receiving end vary. Although television appearances, formal speeches, and press conferences project broad outlines of ideas, character, and responsibility (each of which is vital for image building), the settings are necessarily artificial. The images gained from private confrontations result in impressions that travel by word of mouth, and by political columns ending in the minds of the public. Consequently, the political man has found it advantageous to create his own events or happenings. Daniel J. Boorstin, in his book, The Image: A Guide to Pseudo-Events in America, describes how the "public image" is formed and used through

⁷¹Boorstin, The Image, p. 197.

"pseudo-events." He defines "pseudo-event" as merely a false event or one intended to be deceiving.

Boorstin begins with the assumption that Americans are living in a world of unreality, or illusion, and they often accept pseudo-events in place of real events, for two reasons. We are ruled by extravagant expectation

(1) Of what the world holds. Of how much news there is, how many heroes there are, how often masterpieces are made, how exotic the nearby can be, how familiar the exotic can become; of the closeness of places and the farness of places.

(2) Of our power to shape the world. Of our ability to create events when there are none, to make heroes when they don't exist, to be somewhere else when we haven't left home. Of our ability to make art forms suit our convenience, to transform a novel into a movie and vice versa, to turn a symphony into mood-conditioning. To fabricate national purposes when we lack them, to pursue these purposes after we have fabricated them. To invent our standards and then to respect them as if they had been revealed or discovered.⁷²

Boulding and Lippmann both believe the American public has demanded and expected news from the mass media. Today, because of the overabundance of things to learn and know, or, as McLuhan calls it, "information overload," we expect to have news at our finger tips at all times. This includes the most recent "news" from the breakfast newspaper. The radio then fills the gap of "news" since the morning newspaper went to press, and in the evening we expect to be brought up to the hour with national, then state and local, news via television and radio. Our magazines and journals must have some "news" in order to sell. And so reporters, in all media areas have been required to "make news" when none was available.

⁷²ibid., pp. 4-5.

If he cannot find a story, then he must make one by the questions he asks of public figures, by the surprising human interest he unfolds from some common-place event, or by "the news behind the news." If all this fails, then he must give us a "think piece"--an embroidering of well-known facts, or a speculation about startling things to come.⁷³

The news individuals make, and the events they create are not real, for there is a "tantalizing difference between man-made and God-made events." Boorstin lists six characteristics that a pseudo-event possesses:

(1) "It is not spontaneous, but comes about because someone has planned, planted, or incited it. Typically, it is not a train wreck or an earthquake, but an interview."⁷⁴ The difference is evident; the first two are natural or God-made phenomena. Typical examples are the modern Presidential press conferences, national radio, and TV programs such as "Meet the Press" or "Face the Nation." In each case the participants are selected for their newsworthiness and dramatic interest. The events are often planned for their dramatic ability. "A television debate between candidates can be planned to be more suspenseful (for example, by reserving questions which are then popped suddenly) than a casual encounter or consecutive formal speeches planned separately."⁷⁵

(2) "It is planted primarily (not always exclusively) for the immediate purpose of being reported or reproduced. Therefore, its occurrence is arranged for the convenience of the reporting or reproducing media."⁷⁶ The time schedule is arranged for the mass-media

⁷³Ibid., pp. 1-8.

⁷⁴Ibid., p. 11.

⁷⁵Ibid., p. 39.

⁷⁶Ibid., p. 11.

deadlines. "News releases" or "Press conferences" are scheduled in the morning in order to be on the streets in the "Evening Special" or on the Huntley-Brinkley Report or the Walter Cronkite evening news. Often the image maker saves the press material until late at night to produce a greater impact the next morning. Politicians commonly present dual or triple pseudo-events. They call a press conference to announce a later press conference when "additional news" will be distributed. Other announcements are given out in advance "for future release" and written in the past tense to imply the event has not yet occurred when the announcement is made. "The National Press Club in its Washington clubrooms has a large rack which is filled daily with the latest releases, so the reporter does not even have to visit the offices which give them out."⁷⁷

(3) "Pseudo-events can be repeated at will, and thus their impression can be re-enforced."⁷⁸ Eisenhower's favorable public image gained importance because of James Hagerty, his White House press secretary. Twice a day Hagerty held an informal press conference and produced a steady flow of "news." He was also adept at timing the release of big and favorable stories to blanket unfavorable news. When the President took prolonged vacation trips to Augusta or Gettysberg, Hagerty took along pre-prepared executive orders, appointments, and reports which he issued carefully on a day-to-day basis to make news.⁷⁹ Douglas Cater remarked on this practice. "Hagerty has made of public relations an

⁷⁷Ibid., p. 19.

⁷⁸Ibid., p. 39.

⁷⁹Walter Johnson, 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue (Boston, 1960), p. 322.

end in itself rather than a means to an end. . . . For prolonged periods, he has attracted public attention away from compelling problems of leadership with a succession of makeshift and inconsequential diversions."⁸⁰

(4) "Pseudo-events, being planned for intelligibility, are more intelligible and hence more reassuring."⁸¹ Merely the information received from the media gives the receiver a sense of intelligence. Although the public is often incapable of judging intelligently the major issues of a campaign, they are allowed to at least judge the effectiveness of a TV performance.

(5) "Pseudo-events are more sociable, more conversable, and more convenient to witness. Their occurrence is planned for our convenience."⁸² The thick Sunday newspaper comes on a lazy morning; TV entertainment programs are scheduled to appear after the dinner hour for further enjoyment.

(6) "Finally, pseudo-events spawn other pseudo-events in geometric progression. They dominate our consciousness simply because there are more of them."⁸³

The general public has become so accustomed to the world of pseudo-events that a public speaker's deviation from the advance text of a speech can "make news" and create additional pseudo-events. President Johnson's famous last words on March 31, 1968, caused such a stir: "I shall not seek and I will not accept, the nomination of my

⁸⁰Douglas Carter, The Forth Branch of Government (Boston, 1959), pp. 163-164.

⁸¹Boorstin, The Image, p. 39.

⁸²Ibid., p. 40.

⁸³Ibid.,

party for another term as your President." From the closing words, to the ad-lib period by news commentators, to the days of questions and answers, one pseudo-event called for and required another.

Successful politicians in the past few years have used many pseudo-events to create a desired "public image." At the height of the Cuban crisis in 1962 President Kennedy placed Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara before a nationwide television audience for a program devoted to the Russian-built missile sites. The program was designed to create more than "news;" it was an official explanation, and it offered a word of reassurance to a troubled nation. Also in 1962 several American newsmen in Berlin, to gather information from refugees about conditions in East Germany, made contact with young men who were digging a tunnel under the dividing wall. The newsmen financed and photographed many aspects of their work, including the actual digging. After returning to America the team added a sound track and produced a very factual "news" program.⁸⁴

Perhaps one of the best examples of a "public image" created from a series of pseudo-events took place at the University of California in February, 1964, when President Johnson staged the first event in his long drive to create an American "public image" on Vietnam.

. . . [it is] first and foremost a contest to be won by the government and the people of that country for themselves. . . . but those engaged in external direction and supply should do well to be reminded and to remember that this type of aggression is a deeply dangerous game.⁸⁵

⁸⁴George R. Kernodle, Invitation to the Theatre (New York, 1967), p. 590.

⁸⁵Philip Geyelin, Lyndon B. Johnson and the World (New York, 1966), p. 188.

To inform unaware newsmen of the meaning, he sent White House Press Secretary Pierre Salinger around the press room to elaborate on the phrase and its meaning. Salinger advised the speech meant the United States might feel compelled to expand the war to North Vietnam, or even China, to fulfill its commitments.

Some interpreted the message to be intended for Hanoi, but Johnson achieved his purpose. To an estimated seventy-five per cent of the American public, who were unaware the United States was militarily involved in Southeast Asia, the press publicity accomplished the desired backlash and set the stage for the second pseudo-event. This was a news conference by Dean Rusk, called to play down any fear or speculation on the part of the public that the United States might "go North."⁸⁶ Next, the President himself announced that the conclusion was an extreme misinterpretation of his text.

For the next few months the administration continued to play this game, keeping the information before the public with the help of the mass media. Finally, the facts were driven home, and a public image began to formulate.

The alert politician employs pseudo-events to create the desired image by playing on the attitudes of the voter. The design is related to the voter's view of himself, his society, the political and party system, and the politician. Occasionally, the events are aimed at special individuals or various groups, but more often toward the general public. They reflect conditions that prevailed in the past, with expectations of the future.

⁸⁶Ibid.

Pseudo-events are often employed in image formation, and contain six characteristics. They are not spontaneous; nor are they planned for the purpose of being reported or reproduced. They are repeated at will, reassuring, more convenient to witness, and finally, they are capable of spawning other pseudo-events.

The purpose of this chapter has been to develop a theoretical viewpoint of "the image" and its role in politics. The image belongs entirely to the individual voter and becomes "public" only after it is shared. The concept is dependent upon the total process of perception, cognition, interpretation, reaction, and attitude-attitude change.

The image theory was developed by three men. Walter Lippmann interpreted it as the picture or "stereotype" in the perceiver's mind, while Kenneth E. Boulding sees it as an individual's subjective knowledge that governs his behavior. To Daniel J. Boorstin the image has five characteristics: it is synthetic, believable, passive, vivid and concrete, and simplified.

Because of attitudes, the image in the political sphere is a determiner of individual and public voting behavior. However, it is constantly changing, and is dependent upon the dimensions of time and space. Although it uses all forms of mass media, it is crystallized by the electronic medium of television.

The new medium has altered the political image, and is ushering in the "New Politics," characterized by instantaneous mass participation. The personality impact is intensified, and the charismatic leader is common, although the "cool" medium finally destroys him just as it

helped to create him. Pseudo-or false events are useful tools, and are employed in the formation and continuation of the image-making process.

The following chapter will apply this theoretical construct to the image of George Wallace in the 1968 presidential campaign.

CHAPTER III

THE "IMAGES" AND GEORGE WALLACE IN 1968

The image of George Wallace, its conception, formation, interpretation, and influence, will be viewed from three perspectives--the ideological, personal, and technical dimensions. Following a brief summary of the campaign tactics and sequence of events, this study, in the first place, will discuss the nature of Wallace's ideological positions and the effect of these positions on the voter. Secondly, the personal image of Wallace and its place in time will be examined. Finally, a technical discussion illustrating his failure in utilizing the mass media will conclude the chapter.

The Wallace organization had a blueprint designed for a victory in 1968. Several plans were structured, which determined the pattern and growth of his party and campaign, and throughout the election year new assessments were made to determine if revised plans of strategy needed to be implemented. His communications implanted appropriate images into the minds of his followers, but as time progressed these impressions vacillated considerably.

The Wallace Campaign

The dream of becoming President had been in Wallace's mind for years, and the possibility of its becoming reality was apparent following his strong running in the 1964 primaries. This established his position as the "Southern leader." On February 8, 1968, at a press

conference in Washington, D. C., he formally announced his candidacy as the nominee of the American Independent Party. The third-party movement had begun in 1966, and by the summer of 1968 was established in all fifty states of the Union. This enormous and virtually impossible task (because the election laws and requirements of each state differed) proved to the nation that Wallace and his group had the resources, talent, skill, and energy to withstand the pressures of a strong two-party system.

The plan for his campaign centered around four primary points: (1) place Wallace and his party on the ballot in all fifty states; (2) capture the 270 electoral votes necessary for election; (3) capture the sizable "backlash" vote from whites in the North, especially those areas torn by racial violence, and (4) create considerable stumping outside the South and as much nation-wide television exposure as funds would permit.¹ By November 5 all but the second and third stages had been accomplished, and a firm foundation for future politicking had been established. The movement shrugged off claims about third-party candidates never being elected president, and contended the organization would be built across the country to attract dissidents from both Democratic and Republican ranks, and would be a powerful political force not only in 1968 but also in the future.²

In early 1968 Wallace discussed the issues of the campaign with James Jackson Kilpatrick.

¹"A New Look at Wallace--What He May Do to the Election," U. S. News, LXIV (January 29, 1968), 56-57.

²Ibid., p. 57.

What are the issues going to be in 1968? . . . Schools, that'll be one thing. By the fall of 1968, the people of Cleveland and Chicago and Gary and St. Louis will be so god-damned sick and tired of Federal interference in their local schools, they'll be ready to vote for Wallace by the thousands. The people don't like this triflin' with their children, tellin' 'em which teachers to have to teach in which schools, and bussing little boys and girls half across a city just to achieve "the proper racial mix." . . . I'll give you another big one for 1968: law and order. Crime in the streets. The people are going to be fed up with the sissy attitude of Lyndon Johnson and all the intellectual morons and theoreticians he has around him. They're fed up with a Supreme Court that . . . it's a sorry, lousy, no-account outfit. . . . Housing? Sure, that'll be an issue . . . any time the Federal government lays down the law for people . . . fixing the terms and conditions on which they can sell their own homes. . . . Folks won't stand for it. And there's nothing about the sale of private housing in the Constitution either. . . . Vietnam? Yeah . . . well, I think we've got to pour it on. We've got to win this war . . . ³

The early dramatic weeks of April allowed the first half of the campaign to be fought on Wallace's chosen ground. President Johnson's withdrawal, the assassination of Dr. King, the riots, and even the first faint prospects of negotiations in Vietnam increased his appeal to millions of voters. The theme of the times became his theme: law and order. ⁴ In crisis he felt that Americans had attempted to hold on to some cohesive image of their land. His pledge, especially to the hard-working, tax-paying, middle-class majority was "to give the average man on the street a chance to regain a voice in government." ⁵

Wallace decided early in the campaign to go to the public in order to build a favorable national image and forge a new coalition of

³ Quoted by Theodore H. White, The Making of the President--1968 (New York, 1969), p. 346.

✓ ⁴ Lewis Chester, Godfrey Hodgson and Bruce Page, An American Melodrama: The Presidential Campaign of 1968 (New York, 1969), pp. 262 and 289.

⁵ "A New Look at Wallace," p. 57.

the discontented and disaffected. Since he did not have funds to match those of other contenders using mass media, his exposure to the public was via appearances and speeches. He enjoyed this type campaigning because he was gregarious, and easily "identified" with "the common folks." In face-to-face encounters he communicated simple solutions to contemporary problems, and "folks" responded enthusiastically at the dismay of his rivals. His messages conveyed favorable impressions to his followers, who welcomed them. Minor modifications of the individual voter's knowledge structure took place, and the messages stabilized the desired image.

Although the movement's popularity in April showed a Harris poll rating of 12 per cent, it was still regarded as a comic side-show throughout the spring of 1968. The assassination of Robert Kennedy brought a jump to 14 per cent, and by the end of the violent Chicago convention Wallace was polling 18 per cent. The upswing continued to 21 per cent in mid-September, and expectations were set at 30 per cent by election day, if the trend continued. This would mean political disaster, because no presidential candidate would have an Electoral College majority.⁶

Wallace was elated and delighted in telling his audiences, "My candidacy reminds me of the old joke that begins, 'They laughed when I sat down to play . . .'" Well, neither Mr. Nixon nor Mr. Humphrey are laughing much anymore."⁷ By this time he had established a

⁶ Archibald M. Crossley and Helen M. Crossley, "Polling in 1968," Public Opinion Quarterly (Spring 1969), pp. 12-13.

⁷ Fort Worth Star-Telegram, October 20, 1968, p. 6 A.

definite image of a strong third-party contender, and few people, especially politicians, were laughing.

In referring to the high standing in the polls, he believed he was not only "telling the people what they wanted to hear," but was also representing "the mainstream of American thought." He reinforced the image by saying:

. . . there are more of us little folks with right instincts and common sense. . . than there are of the left wing theoreticians, briefcase-totin' bureaucrats, ivory-tower guideline writers, bearded anarchists, smart-alec editorial writers and pointy-headed professors who can't even park their bicycles straight.⁸

The optimism was shortlived. After the first week in October, the movement was declining to defeat. Factors contributing to the decline and defeat are discussed throughout the remainder of this chapter.

Ideological Dimension

The Issues

Basic to all organization is an ideological foundation which serves as a justification for subsequent actions, an explanation of the results, and a basis for making organizational decisions. Accordingly, Wallace's campaign organization had an ideological structure. For ease in examining this philosophy and subsequent images, all candidates can be placed on an imaginary political continuum. Generally, pollsters placed Hubert Humphrey, the liberal, to the left of center. Nixon, the moderate, stood just to the right of the political center, and Wallace, the extremist, stood a good distance farther to the right. These positions

⁸Ibid.

fluctuated during the campaign according to the perception of the individual voter at the time, however, after the close of the campaign candidates could once again be placed in that general order.

During the campaign Wallace's entire platform was arranged into a compact oration tagged "The Speech," which included Vietnam, the Civil Rights Act, Watts rioting, the U. N., and Stokely Carmichael. The speech had no continuity other than Wallace's enthusiasm for communicating it. The speech did reveal the conservative attitudes he was stressing and fell in line with his position on the political continuum. His biggest attraction was the stand on "law and order," and in regard to this he stated:

We've got to change some of the decisions of the courts that have handcuffed the police and all law enforcement in our country. We've got to make it possible to put a criminal behind the bars. I don't mean that we must create a national police force- -I'm against that. . . .

As President I would stand with the police. And when the states called upon the Government for help, . . . I would respond with sufficient troops to quell any domestic disorder and to make it safe to walk the streets of our cities.⁹

In widening the gap between the other two contenders and himself he said:

When both national political parties say we've got to remove the cause of rioting, looting, and burning, they're saying that these anarchists have a cause. This cause is nonsense. If police ran things for two years we'd get these problems straightened out.¹⁰

In contrast to Wallace's stand, Nixon promised to establish a cabinet-level council to coordinate Federal policy on crime, use wire-tapping, and increase police educational programs. Humphrey

⁹"George Wallace Tells His Plans," U.S. News, LXIV (June 17, 1968), 59.

¹⁰James H. McBath and Walter R. Fisher, "Persuasion in Presidential Campaign Communication," The Quarterly Journal of Speech, LX (February, 1969), 21.

defended Supreme Court decisions, proposed more Federal aid to courts, and urged law enforcement agents to ". . . use minimum force. . . . make arrests rapidly and in sufficient number to stem the tide of violence. . . . rather than shooting."¹¹

On Vietnam Wallace's position was equally as simple and conservative.

I [Wallace] feel that there are diplomatic and political considerations involved in Southeast Asia, but I think the over-riding one is that of the military. In my judgment there can be a military conclusion in Vietnam. . . . If the peace talks fail, we ought to lean on the Joint Chiefs of Staff and win this war militarily. And we ought to tell our allies, "you've got to help us if you use our money and our nuclear shield, and if you don't help us you will have to pay back what you owe us, and we've going to cut off foreign aid to you."¹²

Nixon, on the other hand, favored a bombing halt in North Vietnam if American lives were not endangered, de-Americanization of the war, and a role in postwar Saigon government for "any individual" who rejected the use of force. Humphrey stated he would stop the bombing of North Vietnam if Hanoi gave optimistic signs. He also called for a gradual withdrawal of American troops and free elections in South Vietnam.¹³

On sleeper issues such as arms control, Wallace advocated waiting "a while" on ratification of the nonproliferation treaty but speeding up construction of anti-ballistic missile (ABM) installations. On

¹¹The Sunday Oklahoman, November 3, 1968, Sec. A, p. 29.

¹²Michael DeForrest, editor, George Wallace: A Rebel and His Cause (New York, 1968), pp. 28-29.

¹³"How the Candidates Differ on Issues," Newsweek, LXXI (November 4, 1968), 37.

this issue Humphrey's sentiments were almost identical, while Nixon urged prompt ratification and limited ABM deployment.¹⁴ Wallace orated little on such complex and detailed matters as taxes, fiscal policy, foreign trade, or economic questions in general. Where both Humphrey and Nixon had a battery of economic advisers, he stood alone. He felt politicians in the past had complicated solutions to simple problems, so he desired to portray the image of a man who had "simple solutions for every situation," and these seemed guaranteed to eliminate or minimize the problems.

His position on taxes was simple. They were too high. Tax exemptions should be revoked for non-profit foundations, and tax incentives for industry building in rural areas should be invoked. He also believed the poverty program had put too much emphasis on integration and should be abolished, with the money spent instead on trade schools. "The free enterprise system had alleviated more poverty than all the federal programs combined."¹⁵ This approach to "simple solutions" soon prompted a number of voters to accept the man and his ideological image.

Although George Wallace campaigned under the banner of a "law and order" conservative, the real issue that caused his image and popularity to skyrocket was "forced integration." This caught most politicians and commentators by surprise. The third-party operation transferred many of the techniques and devices of Deep South provincial

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵"Wallace Stirs Them Up," Business Week (September 14, 1968), p. 36.

politics to the national scene. The fact that millions of southerners and northerners saw the North as still being the enemy in the raging war between the states became evident as his popularity grew. Wallace identified the origin of his movement when he said, "This movement had its start in the Deep South. I'd like to appeal to the soul of the South so we can join together and go out to the rest of the country and win."¹⁶ This play on "racial fears" was a common appeal used by all skillful Southern politicians. As Robert Sherrill says, "He [Wallace] was more successful than others in previous eras only because the dislocation of the black people and the inability of the nation to absorb these unhappy wanderers had panicked so many white non-Southerners."¹⁷

Wallace had used almost identical words in 1963, as he talked to Alabama and waved the banner of segregation, but in 1968 he discovered a different language had to be used to reach the nation. As Chester, Hodgson, and Page pointed out in An American Melodrama, "he had learned to adapt to Northern sensibilities, one of the oldest devices in the Southern politician's armory. He talked in code."¹⁸ The single speech he had tempered and forged after several years work was the same, but the words "segregation," "Nigger," and "nigra" dropped out of his public vocabulary. Once during the campaign he admitted, "I don't talk about race or segregation any more. . . . We're talking about law and order, and local control of schools, not those other things."¹⁹ In their place were added the words "Negro" (knee-grow), "black-people;"

¹⁶ Quoted by Robert Sherrill, Gothic Politics in the Deep South (New York, 1968), p. 303.

¹⁷ Ibid. ¹⁸ Ibid., p. 279.

¹⁹ Quoted by Sherrill, Ibid., p. 662.

and statements like the following appeared: "I have never in my life made a speech that would reflect upon any one regardless of their race, color, creed or national origin and I don't intend to do so."²⁰ His campaign material and especially the "biography" presented Wallace in a pro-Negro light, but his statements indicated a different attitude. He promised to bring about repeal of all laws that were being used to force integration. These laws included forced integration in school districts, forced bussing of children, forced restriction on a home owner in his choice of a buyer or renter for his property, and opposition to increased Government efforts to force neighborhood integration. Richard Nixon also expressed opposition to "forced integration" and the use of public funds to bus children from one neighborhood to another. Hubert Humphrey, on the opposite end of the continuum, was seen in many voters' eyes as united with the administration.

George Wallace from the beginning had a strong base in the South, especially among the unhappy people who longed for the days of white supremacy. His rhetoric was aimed at this base and coded for acceptance by the remainder of the nation. He sought to form a new coalition of the discontented and disaffected but his hopes required approval by blue-collar workers in the northern and western urban areas, and the white minority groups. Since he received only 13.5 per cent of the electoral vote and 9.5 million popular votes, it is evident that his image was accepted by a small amount of the electorate but rejected by the majority. Those who favored Wallace found his attitudes on the above

²⁰ George C. Wallace, "Quotes from Speeches and Interviews," The Wallace Campaign, Montgomery, Alabama, p. 1.

issues in harmony with their own. The following section describes the attitudes of these people and also those who rejected the image of George Wallace.

Attitudes of the Electorate toward Wallace

The public image of each candidate fluctuated, especially those of Wallace. Firm ideological polarities of left and right did not crystallize except among his most militant supporters. Instead, the Vietnam War and the race issue overlapped and combined with different constituencies of his campaign to produce a sharp rise in the polls. The sudden decline and resultant figures indicated that the position shift was not permanent.

Deep South. -- The appeal of the Alabamian was strongest in the Deep South, where he swept all electoral votes with the exception of South Carolina. His showing there was at the expense of the GOP party, which carried the South in 1964 with Barry Goldwater. In that section of the country a politics of resentment on the race issue was operating. The less well-to-do working class and lower middle class were stirred by the Negro revolution, its liberal and radical white supporters. They responded to Wallace out of respect, trust, and a mutual communicating ability. He spoke to them directly as one of them.²¹

Throughout the remainder of the country he also drew moderate support, his appeal being weakest in the New England and Far West regions. In these areas precinct data indicated he drew most heavily from sections ordinarily expected to vote Democratic. This generally

²¹David Riesman, "America Moves to the Right," New York Times Magazine (October 27, 1968), p. 69.

constituted a protest and renunciation group who were "out of sympathy" with the administration and all its works. The vote in large part was undecided but would probably have gone to Nixon if Wallace had not been on the ballot.²² ✓

When Wallace was polling only five per cent, his strength in the North was attributable to Birchites and Goldwaterites. However, as it approached 20 per cent he was drawing a crosslash between two kinds of voters: first, the middle-class conservative and independent voters, many of whom had supported McCarthy; and second, the white working-class Democrats.

Middle-class conservative and independent. -- The proportion of independent voters in the electorate had risen rapidly between 1964 and 1968 to an all-time high. Generally, they were found among the young, better-educated, and more affluent. They represented a segment alienated from the rest. A CBS pre-election poll estimated that 43 per cent of the American electorate would have preferred a different choice among candidates.²³

Two similar polls, one by Louis Harris and the other by George Gallup, also measured the extent of political disaffection. Gallup indicated 15 million registered Americans "sat out" the election either from lack of interest in politics or from dissatisfaction with the three candidates.

✓ ²² Angus Campbell, "How We Voted--And Why," Nation, CCVII (November 25, 1968), 551.

²³ Walter Dean Burnham, "Election 1968: The Abortive Land-slide," Trans-Action, V (December, 1968), 21.

A majority of 54 per cent in the latest post-election survey said they had split their ticket and voted for candidates of different parties.²⁴

Many of these independent voters; feeling alienated from the mainstream of society, adopted the image of George Wallace and his party. They considered him an estranged and persecuted politician who would give "his last full measure of devotion" for America. Theodore H. White brings this out in his book, The Making of the President 1968. "There was always a grand sense of persecution among the Wallace workers, a nearly religious faith that everyone was against them but the people, and that the saving of white America from the pointy-heads was a cause greater than politics."²⁵

For many of the independents a drift to George Wallace was the only means of registering protest against the "Old Politics." Commentators and politicians expressed astonishment that voters who supported Kennedy and McCarthy in March could switch to Wallace in September, but during this period, as Arthur Schlesinger Jr., writes, "The Wallace effort for a moment moved beyond its racist base and became a repository for general resentment and rancor throughout the land."²⁶

A large percentage of the voters who accepted Wallace's image were the discontented middle-income whites. Many were well dressed, well housed, and relatively well educated. They were Irish, Jewish,

²⁴"Unjust and Unequal," The Nation, CCVII (December 30, 1968), 708.

²⁵White, p. 347.

²⁶Arthur Schlesinger Jr., "The 1968 Election: An Historical Perspective," Vital Speeches, XXXV (December 15, 1968), 151.

Polish, Italian, and a few Negroes. Many were more anti-Johnson and anti-Humphrey than pro-Wallace. The net family income was under ✓ \$6,000 a year, a meager amount to run a house and car and support a husband, wife and two or three children. The Wallace man lived in a comfortable home near the central city where the crime rate was high because Wallace was the first politician to say "your wife can go to the supermarket without fear of molestation when I'm President."²⁷

Although opportunistic, that promise communicated much to the Wallace man. He also believed another promise: ". . . a man who works 25 years to own his own house ought to be able to sell it to whoever he wants to."²⁸ Although the citizen was probably for civil rights at one time, he now feared Negroes might move into his neighborhood and force him to sell his house at panic prices.

He believed Wallace would support "the inalienable right of a parent to decide where his children should go to school." This was important because he could not afford private schools, and the schools in central cities were inferior. He believed the "pseudo-intellectuals," the "guideline writers," and "the ivory-tower editorialists" were his enemies, the ones who advocated integrating schools, open housing, and restricting the police power. Appealing to the middle-class conservatives and independents, Wallace backed up his claim with a typical self-serving example. "There are 535 members of Congress and a lot of these have children too. You know how many send their kids to the public schools in Washington? Six."²⁹

✓ ²⁷ Stewart Alsop, "The Wallace Man," Newsweek, LXXII (October 21, 1968), 116.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid.

White working-class democrats. --A few of these Democrats were demographically marginal Democrats, according to Edward Schneier. They were registered with the Democratic party but their economic, social, and ethnic characteristics could normally be associated with Republicanism. In times of discontent they could be expected to vote Republican or not at all, but the Wallace candidacy allowed them to express their hostility to national policies without severing their traditional party ties.³⁰

Oliver Quayle and his associates, in compiling a study of Democratic defections to Wallace, identified more clearly the defectors. The study was conducted in late July and early August among a cross-section of voters in seven mid-western and mid-Atlantic states. The findings suggested that Wallace Democrats were more likely to be from blue-collar, and to some degree, farm families, union members, middle-income (union wage level) workers, and white citizens.³¹

In the early months of the campaign Wallace sliced away at the labor vote, and by early September he had what appeared to be a solid group of union-member votes. A private poll taken by Walter Reuther's eastern directors of the United Auto Workers, in Connecticut, disclosed a 30-per cent preference for Wallace over all other candidates.³² A poll in the UAW New Jersey plant on August 17 gave Wallace a landslide win of 430 votes compared to Nixon's 92. In Willow Springs,

³⁰ Edward Schneier, "The Scar of Wallace," The Nation, CCVII (November 4, 1968), 456.

✓³¹ "Campaign 1968," Atlantic, CCXXII (November, 1968), 14.

³² Daily Oklahoman, August 24, 1968, editorial page.

Illinois, the vote was 315 for Wallace and 33 for Nixon.³³ These polls indicated to Humphrey that Wallace was taking votes not only from the Republicans but also from the Democrats who usually obtained 70 per cent of the union vote. A Newsweek poll on October 31 had the following report:

At the moment, Humphrey appears to be hurting most in the longtime bastion of Democratic strength, the rank and file of labor, with Wallace doing most of the damage. HHH's chances here depend largely on the success of labor leaders, most of whom support him, in smothering the emotional Wallace surge with traditional bread-and-butter appeals and gridding the third-party vote back 8 or 10 points from its 24 per cent level.³⁴

Several reasons were listed by August Scholle, president of the Michigan AFC-CIO, for the defection to Wallace: (1) a rapid influx of young workers who "take all their benefits for granted" and replaced veterans; (2) a general "lack of loyalty and respect" existed for those who fought for labor's goals in the past (Johnson and Humphrey for examples), and (3) a general unrest and rebellion had been caused by the Vietnamese War, increasing taxation, and other factors.³⁵

Other analysts argued the separation was caused by racism. The white workers felt excluded from the two-party system because extra attention was being paid the Negro. They complained Negroes were hired "without being qualified," to comply with government rules under the civil rights law. Fears for their jobs and seniority were increased

³³"Worrying about Wallace," The Nation, CCVII (September 2, 1968), 165.

³⁴"1968's Voting Patterns," Newsweek, LXXII (October 21, 1968), 31.

³⁵B. J. Widick, "Why They Like Wallace," The Nation, CCVII (October 14, 1968), 359.

when ghetto jobless were hired and trained for jobs that would elevate them above unionists having several years seniority.³⁶

In establishing an image that would be acceptable to these labor voters, Wallace characterized himself as a lifelong friend of the working man with a record of "unbroken opposition to anti-labor legislation." In supporting this image he promised to (1) prohibit government interference in the internal affairs of labor unions; (2) support legislation to provide an equitable minimum wage and desirable working hours, and (3) stop government agencies from any coercive action in strike settlements.³⁷

The Farm Journal, November, 1968, expressed suspicions that Wallace also had a strong hold on farm votes. A sample of 1134 farmers taken from coast to coast in September found Nixon with 52 per cent, Wallace 32 per cent, and Humphrey 16 per cent.³⁸

Other supporters. -- Wallace aimed his communication at the subjective knowledge structure or "image" of his audiences, for he perceived they had mixed images of "fact" and "value" on the cause and future of freedom and prosperity. Besides the support in the Deep South and the crosslash between the middle - class conservative, independent voters, and the white working class Democrats, Wallace had minimal support from other groups of individuals.

³⁶"Worrying about the Wallace Impact," Business Week (August 17, 1968), p. 98.

³⁷Oklahoma City Times, October 23, 1968, p. 7.

³⁸Claude W. Gifford, "How Farmers Will Vote," Farm Journal, XCII (November, 1968), 30.

Gallup found his support was stronger among voters between the ages of 21 and 29 than among older voters, speculating that the young voter took the security of his job for granted. He had never been in a recession nor worried about being laid off, because unemployment compensation would suffice. The older voter, who had memories of the Great Depression and the recession of 1958, was unable to completely abandon class politics. Issues like minimum wage, Medicare, Social Security, and right-to-work laws still had a definite image in citizens' cognitive structure. Schneier concludes:

Wallace offers a new politics, a politics of conviction, of limited interference in people's lives. It is a politics that will not trouble people with issues like poverty, urban renewal or rent subsidies that are irrelevant to their day-to-day lives; a politics that will keep such troublesome phenomena as narcotics, crime, peace demonstrations and college protests out of sight.³⁹

Nation-wide police-department support for Wallace was so prevalent that the New York Times reported he had captured "the cop vote," in the same way they had referred to "the Negro vote" or "the Labor vote."⁴⁰ Negroes and laborers identified with his image of "law and order" and liked his stand against Supreme Court decisions on the handling of accused persons and their confessions. They also praised his belief that police could quell riots if only they were left to do their job without political interference.

Final Outcome. -- George Wallace finished an extraordinary campaign on November 5, although he was a loser. He established a definite

³⁹Schneier, p. 456.

⁴⁰Harry Bruce, "The Future as Fascism," Saturday Night, LXXXIII (November, 1968), 19.

image during the campaign, and although the election returns do not say why he was defeated, several facts concerning his ideological image may be discerned by examining some unusual aspects of the vote.

Although his crusade for "law and order" turned out to be primarily a sectional movement, he managed to carry five Southern states and 45 electoral votes. His thinly veiled segregationist crusade did not go over well in the North, but he did make surprising incursions into the union vote and ethnic populations which were edgy over black rebellion and black crime. He captured 22 per cent of the Italian-Americans and 17.8 per cent of the Slavic-Americans. Most of these votes were at the expense of Humphrey. He also drew a surprising 13 per cent of the Jewish vote, principally from Nixon. He showed better among the relatively affluent than among the poor, mainly because Humphrey as a Democrat had already made enticing promises to the poor, and they hardly felt Wallace could top these vote offers.⁴¹ As for racial justice, Samuel Lubell said:

. . . the Wallace movement may have had the useful effect of making many voters think about the consequences of their prejudices. Wallace tempted them for a while; but then in the end drew back, and Wallace's appearance contracted rather swiftly to the lower Confederacy.⁴²

This change in voter action displayed voter images of value and their change during the campaign. In the early months some were outraged because of various riots, and blamed the Negro. As months passed, deep-rooted voter attitudes caused messages from other candidates to

✓ ⁴¹"The Anatomy of the Vote," Newsweek, LXII (November 11, 1968), 35.

⁴²Schlesinger, "The 1968 Election," p. 151.

be viewed in a different light. The first impulse of the Wallace supporters was to reject the pre-offered information that Nixon and Humphrey communicated, as false. They refused to believe the personal image of the racist or segregationist Wallace which many possessed. But as they received other messages contradicting their images from friends and the mass media, they began to have doubts. Before election day they had revised their images completely or decided that although one campaign promise might be good, others would do severe damage. At this point they reacted according to their attitudes.

One such image change was evident with the selection of Curtis LeMay. At the time of selection, Wallace's popularity was at an all-time high, but soon after it showed heavy defections. Part of the blame was laid on the image of LeMay as a nuclear bomber. Many referred to the two as the "bomby twins." The message that contributed to the overthrow of Wallace's first image was given by LeMay in a news conference upon accepting the nomination. He stated he "would use any weapon we have in the arsenal if necessary," although he "did not believe we need to use nuclear weapons in Vietnam . . . If necessary, I would use any thing we could dream up to end the war."⁴³

This was the big "turning point" in the decline from the 21 per cent polling peak, for soon after many deserted the Wallace ranks with statements like the following. "He and LeMay want to blow everybody up."⁴⁴ The voter who feared riots in the streets, mass tantalization of the police, disruption of education and cities in flame, was unwilling to accept the possibility of another fear, namely the use of nuclear weapons

⁴³ The Oklahoma Daily, October 4, 1968, p. 4.

⁴⁴ "The Anatomy of the Vote," p. 35.

in Vietnam. Desertion in Wallace's camp was nothing more or less than the decision on the part of an electorate to go patiently and cautiously toward maintaining equilibrium.

In the end he received a much smaller farm, rural, and small-town vote than expected. The election also reflected a polarization of Democratic power in "liberal" and labor-union areas of the North. The labor union swing from Wallace to Humphrey was attributable in part to anti-Wallace activity by union leaders, but finally the alienated and apathetic Democrats decided it was better to support their party's ticket than to abstain or to take a gamble on Wallace. These Democrats found their images of Wallace and his movement supported by attitudes that were still anchored to the Democratic party. They were afraid of the change that Boulding discussed:

We are so accustomed to change in our society and have institutionalized it to so great an extent that we do not realize what a rare, difficult, and utterly incomprehensible phenomenon it is. Any change from settled ways of life involves a fearful plunge into the unknown. It will not be undertaken unless either there is great dissatisfaction with the existing routine or unless there is something in the society which puts a high positive value on change itself.⁴⁵

This was also true for the majority of independents, the self-styled marginal Democrats and Republicans. Voices of leaders whom they respected and admired coaxed them back into the fold. Senator Kennedy invoked the names of his late brothers and called for repudiation of Wallace's third party "for the health of our country and our future as a nation." He addressed his plea to the Wallace supporters who once supported his late brothers.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ Kenneth E. Boulding, The Image: Knowledge in Life and Society (Ann Arbor, 1956), pp. 93-94.

⁴⁶ Oklahoma City Times, October 24, 1968, p. 1.

Barry Goldwater, who stood in the same political position as Wallace only four years earlier, also joined his Republican party in urging repudiation of Wallace. In an article for National Review he said, ". . . some conservatives are thinking of expressing this judgment [sick America] by voting for George Wallace. Don't make the mistake of thinking that such a vote is going anywhere but right down a rat-hole."⁴⁷ As the fighting continues during negotiations, we might expect a decline in public approval as the public again focuses on the results of the fighting--casualties, for example--and not the tactics by which the war is being fought at the moment.⁴⁸ Richard Brody also pointed out that if ". . . dissatisfaction with the Johnson administration's Vietnam performance grows, we can expect a substantial number of Democrats to vote contrary to their basic party loyalty."⁴⁹ He insinuated that from the results of polls, "apparently party identification was still quite high, "and a change in the war situation would bring the rebellious Democrats back to vote for Humphrey. Louis Harris indicated that this occurred as a bombing halt over North Vietnam was being announced by the White House, only five days before the election. He found this had a "sizable impact" on women voters, and "the bombing halt took a great deal of the sting out of the Vietnam issue [for Humphrey]"⁵⁰

⁴⁷ Barry Goldwater, "Don't Waste a Vote on Wallace," National Review, XX (October 22, 1968), 1060.

⁴⁸ Richard A. Brody, "How the Vietnam War May Affect the Election," Trans-Action, V (October 1968), 23.

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 22.

⁵⁰ "Election Aftermath--The final Results," U. S. News, LXV (November 25, 1968), 38.

Attitude alignment of several groups made it impossible to accept or even consider George Wallace and his American Independent Party. The young and radical militants had an image that the institutions in America were organized to shut them out. The ultra-radicals believed that exclusion was inevitable in a system controlled, as they believed, by a military-industrial complex. Mark Rudd, of the Columbia Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), viewed the Vietnam War "as an inherent part of the political-economic system that dominates our country."⁵¹ As the perception of the estrangement grew more acute, many of the irrational students began to contemplate destroying the establishment through violent revolution. This group would never have considered Wallace, and consequently, constituted many of the demonstrators at the campaign rallies. With the knowledge they were helping Wallace gain votes and in the face of ejection by police, they continued to protest. One demonstrator spoke for all when he said, "You have to show that there are people against him."⁵²

The Negro race constituted another minority group which could not accept nor vote for George Wallace. They were fearful of Wallace and his racist image, and nervous about Nixon. Although they were apathetic throughout the campaign, they flocked to the polls in record numbers in some areas to give Humphrey a near-100 per cent share of the black vote.⁵³

The two-party system the majority knew and trusted so well had proven itself too many times. The voters were unwilling to sacrifice

⁵¹Schlesinger, "The 1968 Election," p. 151.

⁵²"Wallace and His Folks," Newsweek, LXXXII (September 16, 1968), 18.

⁵³"The Anatomy of the Vote," p. 35.

for change and accept a president from a minority third-party movement. Wallace discovered he was wrong in his repeated declaration that "the rednecks" outnumbered the others. The election outcome showed few surfacing currents of revolutionary sentiment despite all the talk by militants. The country that was supposedly torn apart in spirit survived the test while the image of George Wallace carried him to defeat.

Personal Dimension

George Wallace realized at the outset of his campaign that he must create a definite personal image that would adequately blend with his ideological image. He worked hard and fast to give the country impressions he considered essential in an election year. One of his main problems, however, was overcoming the personal image he had established in the past years. He realized that a time of natural frustration called for an image of trust, competence, honor, and patriotism. This is the type of personal image he tried to convey, often without success. Although his true ideological followers had this picture of their candidate, scores of other voters received an altogether different image.

This section discusses the personal image of the candidate, George Wallace, as the electorate saw him. It is important to remember when viewing the personal dimension of the image that temporally it encompasses the past impressions, the present picture, and the imagined future impression of the individual; therefore, a candidate is concerned not only with his present image-making process, but also with reconstructing past impressions and creating favorable personality projections for the future.

The early career of George Wallace established an undesirable image which he often tried to erase with soft-spoken overtones throughout the 1968 campaign. During these years he had two interested audiences. The first was the local crowd, which consisted of fellow Alabamians. This group soon grew to encompass the Deep South. Their image of George Wallace was created and fed by the mass media. The second group, a national audience, received their first impression of Wallace through symbols of the mass media as he stood in the schoolhouse door in 1963. For many in both the local and national audiences, Wallace became a topic of dinner-table conversation and barbershop gossip. The image became stabilized through the years as the Governor occasionally created headlines to keep his name before the public.

As he set out on his march to the White House in February, 1968, he re-established his position in the Deep South and then began creating a new image for the nation. His third-party movement was "a movement of the people." He addressed his bid for voters to "the little fellow" and emphasized the theme: "Can a former truck driver who is married to a former dime-store clerk and whose father was a plain dirt farmer be elected President of the United States? The answer is--yes."⁵⁴

He sought the support of the "little fellow," the average man on the street, the textile and steel mill employee, the barber and beautician, and the town policeman. Many of these accepted the Wallace challenge because they identified with him. He was the little guy, the "small fry" in each of them that still rebelled against established laws and old politics. His movement symbolized their distrust and concern for

⁵⁴"A New Look at Wallace," p. 57.

America's decaying standards, but primarily, he was their leader, a champion of the oppressed who went forth in battle for them. He attacked the position of the powerful establishment that had aroused the fears and anxieties of many. When those in power fought back he was subdued for a time by their tactics and superior weapons, but his faithful followers knew he would once again attack the fortresses of the mighty and in the end defeat their enemies, winning a great victory for the common people, the "little fellow."⁵⁵

As their great leader, Wallace was quite capable of waging a political, social, and moral battle. In his early youth he had acquired the title of "a fighter." Those who loved and admired him hung affectionate nicknames on him: "The little Judge," acquired from his early fights with federal judges and "The Barbour Bantam," from his earlier ringside days. To this group he was their "ideal man," and they reacted to him with total involvement and identification.

Those who had no affection for Wallace tagged him differently. He started as a Southern rebel to overthrow not only the two-party system but the nation's established form of law and order. This image was adjusted in relation to both parties as "the spoiler," after President Johnson's withdrawal from the campaign. The image of Wallace openly defying a court order to integrate a public school was vivid. They saw him as a defender not of individual rights, but of states rights. When he denounced "Big Government," it was not the unlimited, arbitrary power of the state being denounced, but the centralization. They felt he desired to place this same unlimited, arbitrary power in the hands of fifty small governments.

⁵⁵Ibid.

Their image was a man whose appeal elicited fear and insecurity from the minds of a frustrated, bewildered, and angered audience. The people could sense that something was terribly wrong in their country, and they knew something should be done about it, but they had no idea what to do. In his identity he interjected a tone of violence and hate. Robert Sherrill emphasizes this by observing: "Talking violence, he is a man whom violence follows and whom others expect to breed violence and to perish violently."⁵⁶ Chester, Hodgson, and Page also support this claim: "Wallace took a good deal of care to avoid actual incitement to violence. . . . Nevertheless, the flavor of Wallace's language was unmistakably violent."⁵⁷ In his rallies he often transferred his personal image of hate into the audience by using hecklers as scapgoats.

One such example was recorded by Walter Goodman at the Fort Wayne, Indiana, rally. The dissenter was a well-built, clean-shaven youth who stood his ground with his sign raised high. Whenever Wallace began to speak the youth cried he was a liar, a dirty racist, and should go back to Alabama. Goodman in his article for Dissent, November, 1968, explained the audience reaction.

Here was the enemy, and despite mollifying words from the candidate, voices began yelling back, "Sit down and shut up!" At one point hundreds of people on the main floor were on their feet, shaking fists at the lone protestor and screaming "OUT! OUT! OUT!" For those moments the hatred was electric. There were several attempts to grab the cardboard sign from his hands, and a couple of men with battery in their eyes were held off by uniformed guards. Finally, after the youth still holding his now ragged cardboard as high as his arms would reach, walked down the center aisle and took a seat close to the platform, Wallace

⁵⁶ Sherrill, p. 313.

⁵⁷ Chester, Hodgson and Page, p. 283.

had the police escort him out of the auditorium. He left peacefully to cheers, howls, and catcalls, and the speech proceeded, but the memory of this protesting student and his kind hung over the rest of the evening like an unexorcisable spirit at a revival meeting. . . . His hated image ran through Wallace's speech, not only in the form of the unwashed demonstrators . . . but in the form of the bureaucrats . . . [and] the guideline writers with pointy heads.⁵⁸

Theodore White also sensed the impression of hate in Wallace's image. "The Wallace campaign, as it developed, made decent people ashamed to stand with George Wallace; it degraded their sense of themselves as Americans because it gave them no other cause but hate."⁵⁹

Harry Bruce, in his article for Saturday Night, November, 1968, drew an analogy between Hitler and Wallace over the hate aspect, ". . . it's interesting that, during terribly troubled times, both men used effective oratory to give people targets of hate. Hitler also exploited the shame felt over a lost war, the love of a glorious and mystical national past, and the promise of resurrected national strength."⁶⁰ Millions of Americans are ashamed or confused over Vietnam, yearning for the imagined simple virtues of a glorious and mystical national past, eager to hear in the demand for law and order the promise of resurrected national strength.

A majority of those uninfluenced by Wallace regarded the man as being supported by the "right-wing" movement. His support of Barry Goldwater in 1964, and his aid from the Ku Klux Klan while running and serving as Governor, added to this image. Wallace undoubtedly had the

✓ ⁵⁸Walter Goodman, "George Wallace on the Stump," Dissent, XV (November-December, 1968), 489.

⁵⁹White, p. 350.

⁶⁰Bruce, p. 20.

following of many right-wingers during 1968. Robert Shelton, the Klan Imperial Wizard and high czar stated, "We made him Governor and we must make him President."⁶¹ J. B. Stoner, the leader of the anti-Semitic, anti-Negro National States Rights Party, also endorsed Wallace. "Our slogan is the same as in 1964. Governor George C. Wallace--Last Chance for the White Vote."⁶² Other right-wing movements also reportedly followed in his footsteps. Among these were the White Citizens Council, John Birch Society, Liberty Lobby, Law Enforcement Group, Americans for the Preservation of the White Race, Minutemen, American Nazi Party, Christian Crusade, and We the People. Of all these groups Wallace repudiated only the American Nazi Party.⁶³

Many who feared Wallace's affiliation with the "right-wing" were reminded of the phenomenon of Joseph McCarthy and his "Communist conspiracy." An article in Atlantic, November, 1968, discusses the comparison.

Wallace, for all that he is, a chauvinistic "rightist," does not hawk war loudly--Joe McCarthy didn't either. Both were shrewd in disassociating the unpopularity of war from their rantings, and both arrived on a war-weary scene. They pursued a line of little resistance: the conjuring up of conspiracy.⁶⁴

Throughout the campaign many debated if Wallace was "liberal" or "conservative." While his rhetoric resounded with fiscal conservatism, his past record and image gave a different light to his person. During his period in the Alabama legislature he was one of the most liberal

⁶¹ Quoted by Sherrill, p. 352. ⁶² Ibid.

✓ ⁶³ James Silver, "An Ex-Mississippian's Reflections on Wallace," The New Republic, CLIX (October 19, 1968), 18.

⁶⁴ "Campaign 1968," p. 14.

members. Representative Paul Findley (Republican), from Illinois, charged Wallace with being a fiscal liberal in a House speech on October 3, 1968. He quoted the Congressional Quarterly reporting that during Wallace's four-year term, 1963-1967, the state spent more money than under any preceding Governor. The Quarterly quoted a member of congress as saying: "He's a fiscal liberal if I ever saw one. . . . He doesn't turn down a nickel of federal matching funds on anything."⁶⁵

When one examines Wallace's ideological stance he finds the position involved spending more money and not less. An editorial in the Oklahoma City Times, October 25, 1968, indicated his plan included an increase in Social Security benefits at once and expansion of Medicare dramatically. He would also "push for full employment with a warmed-over WPA." The editorial concluded: "Some voters apparently listen to Wallace's racial stand and interpret that as conservatism, but his programs--past, present and future--bear marked resemblance to the New, Fair and other Deals."⁶⁶

In many ways Wallace's personal image was ambiguous. He orated to audiences on issues without the public knowing where he stood. In the campaign everything was simplified; in "The Speech" things were always reduced to simple terms, but this was only an overshadowing image that covered up what was really there--racism. Although Wallace contended he was not racist, few politicians took as strong a stand against the civil rights movement, and he took few steps to change what

⁶⁵ Paul Findley, quoted, "The Life of George Wallace," U. S. News, LXV (October 28, 1968), 46.

⁶⁶ Oklahoma City Times, October 25, 1968, p. 42.

he admitted was a widely held view that he was racist.⁶⁷ One very conservative magazine supporting Wallace admitted he was a segregationist.

Wallace's stand has been remarkably consistent throughout the years in which he has been nationally in the public eye. He is generally labeled, by his foes, as a "racist" and "segregationist." He is not a "racist," but he is a "segregationist." Wallace plays down his segregationist views outside of the South, knowing that he is going to win points that way.⁶⁸

White did not distinguish between the terms "racist" and "segregationist," but bitterly defined Wallace as the former.

George Wallace was an unabashed racist. . . . was and is a racist. He believed, and believes now, that black people are biologically and genetically an inferior species of the human race. He believes that segregation best preserves the values of both black and white races. . . . For him, Negroes have a particular way of life with which whites should not interfere; nor should whites permit Negroes to interfere with their ways of life. . . . "You must be careful," said a Southern reporter, "to make clear that Wallace isn't a hater. He doesn't hate Negroes. He's a segregationist, not a lyncher."⁶⁹

This "racist image" undoubtedly cost Wallace many votes in the end. But White calls attention to the 4.1 million supporters of Wallace, "Despite all the influences of the media, all the pressure of their labor leaders, all the blunders and incompetence of the Wallace campaign, they had voted racist."⁷⁰

Sherrill gives an interesting picture of the followers who did adopt the "racist" image, "His popularity became increasingly tumultuous, more open, adulatory, almost religious. Like the followers of Mohammed, those who 'Stand up for Alabama' believe that anyone who

⁶⁷"Wallace Stirs Them Up," p. 36.

⁶⁸Susan L. M. Huck, "Mr. Wallace--A Hard Look at the Candidate," American Opinion, XI (September, 1968), 38.

⁶⁹White, p. 345.

⁷⁰Ibid., p. 369.

falls in battle against the 'pointed heads and social engineers of Washington' will go straight to a segregated paradise."⁷¹

The majority of those that finally voted for Wallace did so, in part, because of his stand on "race." True, Wallace did believe in segregation, but many also had one final image of the man. They saw him as a segregationist second, a demagogue first.⁷²

Of all the presidential candidates, in the fall of 1968 only Wallace could be called charismatic. He often presented this image under the veil of a demagogue. His campaign in every way fits the description of a charismatic leader presented in Chapter II. Consider the campaign, which was perhaps the most amateurishly organized drive of any serious candidate that had been mounted in modern American history. Many cities had no Wallace headquarters while others had several, and all were competing for funds and attention. Nor had any of the members of his staff had previous experience in national politics.⁷³

Wallace untraditionally defied the two-party system, raising the specter that no one would be elected President. Many who knew him best described him as "a consummate demagogue who tells the people exactly what he believes most of them want to hear and does not hesitate to reverse his position on any question if he thinks it will mean more votes."⁷⁴

⁷¹ Sherrill, p. 306.

⁷² Chester, Hodgson and Page, p. 269.

⁷³ "Wallace's Army: The Coalition of Frustration," Time, XCII (October 18, 1968), 15.

⁷⁴ Oklahoma City Times, October 29, 1968, p. 24.

Wallace made excellent use of charismatic terms. In many speeches he emphasized the word "freedom." This had been a key term for the Civil Rights Movement, but Wallace employed the word in a different light. He implied that citizens must be free to use their own property as they saw fit.⁷⁵ Other charismatic terms described by Lawrence W. Rosenfield as "god-terms" were "states' rights," "local government," "good people," and "law and order."⁷⁶

His charisma evolved as a result of social and ideological circumstances. These included the daily tensions of racial conflict and the threat of atomic holocaust. The frustrating Vietnam War and the weakening anchors of the political system also were influential; however, he was ultimately destroyed by ineffective use of the media which helped to create his image. Toward the end, his personal and ideological images diminished as his publicity increased.

George Wallace presented both an ideological and personal image to the electorate in the 1968 presidential campaign. These images were accepted by over a million American voters and rejected by the rest. Among the personal images projected were "supporter of the little fellow," "hate monger," "right winger," "liberal," "conservative," "racist," "segregationalist," and finally, "charismatic demagogue."

The public has a "public image" of each presidential candidate, which influences their vote. This "image" really becomes more important than the actual personality of the candidate because it continues

⁷⁵J. J. Makay, "George C. Wallace: Southern Spokesman with a Northern Audience," Central States Speech Journal (Fall 1968), p. 206.

⁷⁶Lawrence W. Rosenfield, "George Wallace Plays Rosemary's Baby," The Quarterly Journal of Speech, LV (February, 1969), 37.

influencing the people when the candidate is bodily absent from their midst. If the public can accept the image, they buy it, enjoy it, and identify with it. Several million purchased the public image of George Wallace. Many others perhaps would have accepted it if it had been presented more convincingly. This is discussed in the next section, which deals primarily with the technical aspects of the 1968 campaign.

Technical Dimension

The presidential campaign of 1968 was dominated by the new electronic media. Various studies have indicated that the Nixon campaign was organized in a manner which utilized the media fully, unlike the campaigns of Humphrey and especially Wallace, which were poorly organized. This section examines the technical aspect of the image-building process via the media in the campaign of George Wallace and offers suggestions how this dimension contributed to his loss. References and comparisons are made to Nixon's campaign since it demonstrated the theory postulated in Chapter II.

A Campaign of Pseudo-Events

All politicians use pseudo-events to their advantage in moderate numbers, but Wallace employed considerably large numbers. The most obvious was the campaign rally and its repetitious pattern. Every aspect of the event was designed to stimulate a patriotic mood in the audience. Country band music relaxed the crowd and gave the "Wallace Girls" (who were discreetly combed, lightly lipsticked, and with hemlines just above the knees) time to pass the plastic contribution buckets and "pledge of support" fund-raiser pamphlets. Outside the meeting hall

other workers sold Wallace hats, buttons, ties, bumper stickers, car tags, posters, and banners. Literature included The Wallace Story, a biography by Wallace's campaign manager, Bill Jones, and "The Wallace Record Newspaper" which included excerpts from his speeches, favorable polls, and pictures of past rallies.

Before Wallace spoke, the national anthem was sung, invocation pronounced, the Lord's Prayer recited, and "God Bless America" reverently vocalized. This emotionally high point in the rally often produced patriotic tears, and helped in circulating the image Wallace portrayed of "The Patriotic American."⁷⁷

✓ The speech, almost a repetition of the one which won him the Governorship of Alabama, was also a pseudo-event. He added to and took away from it according to the audience response. As Jules Loh said, "The evocative line is carefully honed and made a part of the script. The audience response then becomes predictable, as though orchestrated with a flourish of a rhetorical baton."⁷⁸

Early in the campaign his speech made an incidental reference to tax-exempt foundations. The response was mildly favorable, so he started naming the foundations--Rockefeller, Carnegie, and Ford. When the applause increased he decided to tax those foundations, so ". . . maybe they would quit recommending so-called welfare schemes that we taxpayers have to pay for."⁷⁹ With the applause even better, he delivered his final attack, ". . . those multibillion dollar tax-exempt foundations with their big ideas about paying people not to work and not to burn

⁷⁷ Fort Worth Star-Telegram, October 20, 1968, Sec. A, p. 7.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

down the country."⁸⁰ This time the applause became deafening, and the crowd rose to its feet. In the same fashion his promise to station troops in Washington "five feet apart with three-foot bayonets" became "three feet apart with five-foot bayonets."⁸¹

This process also worked in reverse. To early audiences he declared, ". . . if I become president and some anarchist lies down in front of my automobile . . . it's going to be the last automobile he lies down in front of."⁸² When his image began tarnishing with accusations of advocating street violence, he defensively claimed he had been misquoted, and altered the line to read, ". . . it's going to be the last automobile he will ever want to lie down in front of."⁸³

Many images of politicians, especially those that become celebrities, are differentiated mainly by trivia of personality. This was especially true of Wallace's vocabulary and southern drawl. His oratory was full of humorous mispronunciations, colloquialisms, and colorful coinages of words which had the effect of ridiculing "those over-educated ivory-tower folks who look down their noses at you and me and call us rednecks, peckerwoods, peapickers and crackers."⁸⁴

Another rally factor which Wallace adeptly used to his own "image making" advantage was the hecklers. They appeared at almost every meeting and added variety to the otherwise canned and mundane speech. During the speech they raised placards which read RACIST GO HOME, WALLACE IS ROSEMARY'S BABY, SHOULD A MADMAN

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Chester, Hodgson, and Page, p. 283.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Fort Worth Star-Telegram, October 20, 1968, Sec. A, p. 7.

HAVE A-BOMBS, or KILL FOR PEACE. When the demonstrations seemed to be getting out of hand Wallace called for police action. This gave him opportunity to demonstrate to his audience the method he would use in handling the "law and order" problem if elected president.⁸⁵ The event was also used to stabilize the mood for the remainder of the speech, as it was found in the last section under his image of hate.

The image of a politician is actually a pseudo-event in itself and spawns other pseudo-events. Every press announcement or advertisement released leads to another event, whether it be a rally, speech, or television appearance. Wallace utilized three of these methods extensively.

The first event was an ordinary press conference which resulted in a newspaper article. An example of this is taken from the Dallas Morning News, and referred to an upcoming fund-raising dinner in that city. The announcement also mentioned that Wallace "may reveal the name of his vice-presidential running mate during [that visit]."⁸⁶

The second type was a newspaper advertisement in the form of a public opinion poll that showed Wallace winning by a "landslide." These were labeled as "polls you haven't been told about," and implied that Wallace was actually winning across America, and that the established polls were incorrect. However, close examination revealed that the polls were inadequately sampled and taken in small rural cities, with private newspaper reporters conducting the surveys. Many of these were undoubtedly conservative papers such as newspapers from Rusk County, Texas, (East

⁸⁵ Goodman, p. 489.

⁸⁶ Dallas Morning News, September 12, 1968, p. 1.

Texas) and the Daytona Beach, Florida, area, where "Wallace wins 65 per cent of the vote."⁸⁷

The third type announcement was merely a newspaper listing of Wallace broadcasting times and channels on television. Most of these announcements also asked for contributions.⁸⁸

All politicians today make use of pseudo-events in their image-building process. George Wallace in the 1968 presidential election campaign was very adept at this and gained considerable recognition and status because of the events. His constant quarrels with the press and pollsters could be categorized as pseudo-events; however, the events are being discussed separately in this section. His attitude about the press as friend and foe and its importance in creating and destroying his public image will be viewed in the following section.

George Wallace and the Press

Press as a friend and foe. -- Wallace had many arguments with the press during the 1968 campaign and on occasions called them enemies. As all other political candidates, he had his few, friendly papers. This fact is indicative of his large popularity in the South. Lord Windlesham in Communication and Political Power, noted, that during the May 1963, Birmingham, Alabama, race riots, the Birmingham News kept all mention of the incidents off the front page. Ironically, reports issued from Birmingham made the front pages of papers throughout the world. Windlesham discusses this problem and its importance in viewing the South's conservative attitude by saying:

⁸⁷ Dallas Morning News, November 4, 1968, Sec. A. p. 12.

⁸⁸ Daily Oklahoman, October 24, 1968, p. 34.

The real blockage has been not in preventing specific information from being printed, but in preventing the emergence of any alternative opinion on racial matters capable of commanding respect. The traditional view has been reflected in the traditional press. The liberal view has had no competitive press to be reflected in. The result of this lack of commercially competitive situation has been the lack of a situation in which ideas can compete. Even if there were a sizable number of people in a town holding liberal opinions inclining towards integration, if there was no communications medium to bring them together they would not know it.⁸⁹

Additional information proves Wallace did have support from the South's press, especially the press of Alabama. The Birmingham News again distorted the facts on June 12, 1963, the day following Wallace's "school-house door stand." The paper headlined its report "Kennedy Neglects Local Laws," and followed this up with another article on page one, "President Lectures Nation on 'Rights'."⁹⁰ This action by the local press also affected the television medium. Of the two television stations in Alabama, one gave up its affiliation with CBS after the court actions, and the other, an NBC affiliate, was owned by the Birmingham News.⁹¹ Alabama also forced both the New York Times and CBS News out of the state for a period of over one year, and during that time neither service could obtain first-hand information.

Press as an enemy. -- Granted, the former Governor had conservative followers in the press, but he also had enemies, and these often gave him reason for complaint to the public. But like his other pseudo-events, he turned this action into votes. In the early stages of the campaign many newspapers, especially those in the North, played down their

⁸⁹ Lord Windlesham, Communication and Political Power (London, 1966), p. 205.

⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 209.

⁹¹ Ibid., p. 210.

coverage of Wallace, as a deliberate policy. This "silent treatment" by the newspaper media had to cease because the decisive polls rose from nine per cent in April to 21 per cent in September. He could no longer be ignored.⁹²

The press suddenly began to overcompensate for its previous lack of interest, and covered all of Wallace's rallies. This over publicity caused a reverse effect, because his image was coming through too clear. He was becoming a "news piece" or a "novelty" that made good copy. Newspapermen and television interviewers everywhere were seeking him out to see who could relay to the public his most reckless utterances. Wallace soon had the feeling he peaked too soon, for it seemed that increased publicity resulted in a decline of his image. This new media reaction precipitated a radical reformation of his personal, political image, and his behavior changed accordingly. However, it was too late; his popularity in the polls had started diminishing already.

Several factors contributed to this. First, as it was noted earlier in the "Ideological Dimension" section of this chapter, an end-of-campaign drive by Humphrey and his forces made a considerable impact upon the voters. Secondly, Wallace attempted to change his strategy which resulted in a loss of votes. Last, but not least, he did not make proper use of the mass media during the election which prevented his image from crystallizing in the minds of the electorate.

⁹² Archibald and Helen Crossley, pp. 12-13.

Wallace's Role in the "New Politics"

A new face in the middle of a campaign. --Gene Wyckoff stated in The Image Candidates, "Upon occasion . . . a candidate can be so strikingly characterized by other media prior to his exposure on television that personable appearance and demeanor added up to naught."⁹³ ✓ This was especially characteristic of George Wallace's appearance on television after his popularity started to fall. Through the "hot" medium of the newspaper he communicated beautifully, but as a "hot" orator over a "cool" television medium he failed. Rosenfield describes the character of the man on television. "He startled a public unaccustomed to stump-oratory ferocity, even as his anti-aggressor stance diminished his persuasive potential. For a nation conditioned to the banal rationality of television news interviews, the Wallace act was almost sensuous."⁹⁴

He forgot that the spoken word was more emotional than the written word because it carried not only meaning, but the emotional characteristics of the speaker. Wallace projected a negative type emotion. As White stated, "The media, trying to document the Wallace campaign in words and pictures, began to spread the image of a man not mastering disorder in the nation, but provoking it where he went."⁹⁵ This was evidenced by resultant headlines, "Clashes Mar Wallace Rally in Detroit," "Fights Break Out as Hecklers Disrupt Wallace Rally in Texas," and "Tennessee Mob Beats Boy Who Sassed Wallace."⁹⁶

✓ ⁹³Gene Wyckoff, The Image Candidates (New York, 1968), p. 150.

⁹⁴Rosenfield, p. 41.

⁹⁵White, p. 364.

⁹⁶Ibid.

The selection of LeMay added to the "hotness" of his campaign. Even LeMay's first press conference as a vice-presidential running mate stimulated fear. As one reporter remarked: "No scene was more telling of the fear of LeMay than that which took place October 3 in Pittsburgh. LeMay--just introduced by Wallace--faced the press and talked about the use of nuclear weapons as Wallace tugged nervously at the general's sleeve in an obvious effort to 'tone down' the remarks."⁹⁷

The "proper" image of a presidential candidate evokes emotion from his electorate and ultimately endorses him. Defining the word "proper" is a politician's tedious but necessary game. At this task Wallace failed because supporters re-evaluated his image and organization and found it wanting. White again points out what resulted:

As media made clear the cold Wallace message, stripping "folksiness" from him, those who could not accept the label "racist" for themselves grew--and voters who thought Wallace a "racist" rose from 40 to 51 to 59 to 67 per cent; in harmony, those who thought of him as an "extremist" rose from 51 to 56 to 62 to 69. Conversely, from his September high, Wallace began to drop--from 21 to 18 to 16 to 13.⁹⁸

The public continued hearing the "hot" oratory of Wallace who accused the national press of treating him unkindly because its members were "liberal left-wingers." After his speech at Madison Square Garden, he criticized the news media and said: "[the media] would rather talk about the police and the few pickets but they don't intend to let people know what you're saying."⁹⁹ He also lambasted the polls declaring them "liars . . . trying to rig the election and interfere with

⁹⁷Oklahoma City Times, November 7, 1968, editorial page.

⁹⁸White, p. 364.

⁹⁹Oklahoma City Times, October 25, 1968, p. 8.

the voters rights to cast their vote in accordance with their true thoughts or convictions."¹⁰⁰ He assured his supporters would elect him because the polls "have been wrong before and are wrong again."

Wallace changed images in the middle of a political game which honors constancy and predictability. He failed to gain the public's trust in this area, but he also refused to acknowledge new facets of the political game. His failure to understand and manipulate the characteristics and tools of the "New Politics" and its electronic media made his defeat inevitable. This final section examines the game rules of the "New Politics" and how Wallace participated and lost.

What to do with the "New Politics". -- Certain interesting aspects of the "New Politics" were demonstrated in the 1968 race. In White's discussion of the media, he uncovers an important fact about George Wallace's campaign.

George Wallace never understood the national press or national television; wiser counsel than the country boys who attend him might have polished or presented him better; wiser planning might have made his last six weeks' effort less of a circus. Constructive thought might have given him just a touch of that dignity which every American, no matter how primitive, seeks in a President.¹⁰¹

The use of amateur management and its effects on the campaign were certain. Wallace's professional cadre was limited to long-time personal aides whose loyalty was reliable. As popularity grew it became apparent the group was too small to run a national presidential campaign. But Wallace, who seemed to distrust strangers, refused to recruit new

¹⁰⁰ Dallas Morning News, October 29, 1968, p. 1.

¹⁰¹ White, p. 366.

people. He operated the media without the guidance of communication specialists' expertise. Wyckoff pointed out the importance of having adequately trained men. "When an image specialist works with a top man, he must work directly with that man . . . The specialist is, after all, putting words into the candidate's mouth that must sound natural."¹⁰² Nixon and Humphrey both used this technique and had public relation firms handle their image making process. Wallace worked alone and his media spokesmen were not as qualified as Nixon and Humphrey's experts.

Wyckoff also stressed the importance of the material used on television: ". . . something about image material that I have never forgotten, namely, that you cannot mix it with unstaged direct-to-camera material on the same program without making the direct-to-camera speakers seem more dull and pedestrian than they might be."¹⁰³ The two leading candidates did not follow this pattern but Wallace did. His commercials and programs mixed filmed shots from his rallies and the candidate's direct-to-camera conversations. Consequently, he looked rather unpolished in some of the homely five-minute films. At times he apparently seemed dreadfully tired and sick of the sound of his own voice.

Nixon's campaign in 1968 was a phenomenon of the "New Politics" compared to that of George Wallace. The American Party in effect represented an attempt to utilize the old style campaign (1900 Century or early 20th Century) during the latter part of the 20th Century. Wallace traveled the countryside "stumping" and trying to visit every state;

¹⁰² Wyckoff, p. 39.

¹⁰³ Ibid., pp. 28-29.

Nixon carefully booked a campaign that would not fatigue him but would provide maximum use of television and a wide latitude to his staff. He covered only 31 of the 50 states.¹⁰⁴

White Wallace traveled alone with his unprofessional Alabama friends, Nixon turned to media specialists. His "partners became students of media politics especially attuned to the impact of television upon contemporary attitudes. They discarded political fashions of a quitter past, and they built their case upon cues provided by Nixon himself."¹⁰⁵

Nixon jammed prime time with television announcements and always presented these in a cool, relaxed, and conversational tone. Wallace, on the other hand, was "hot" and lambasted all segments of society. An article in the Daily Oklahoman, aptly describes the scene:

In a time when the public is demanding "coolness" from its politicians, old fashioned "hot" politicians like [Wallace] and Humphrey--noisy, fast-talking, fervent--fail utterly to make contact with the public. . . . According to McLuhanesque politics what is said is not nearly so important as how it is said.¹⁰⁶

In his book, Six Crises, Nixon describes his convictions regarding the medium of television.

I believe that I spent too much time in the last campaign on substance and too little time on appearance; I paid too much attention to what I was going to say and too little to how I would look. Again, what must be recognized is that television has increasingly become the medium through which the great majority of the voters get their news and develop their impressions of the candidates. There are, of course, millions of people who still rely primarily on newspapers and magazines in making up their minds on how they will vote. But the fact remains, one bad camera angle on television can have far more effect on the election outcome than

✓¹⁰⁴,"The Real Dick Nixon Stands Up," Newsweek, LXXII (November 4, 1968), p. 28.

¹⁰⁵Oklahoma City Times, November 7, 1968, Editorial page.

¹⁰⁶Daily Oklahoman, November 8, 1968, p. 8.

a major mistake in writing a speech which is then picked up and criticized by columnists and editorial writers. I do not mean to suggest that what a candidate says is not important; in a presidential election, in particular, it should be all-important. What I do mean to say is that where votes are concerned, a paraphrase of what Mr. Khrushchev claims is an "ancient Russian proverb" could not be more controlling: "one TV picture is worth ten thousand words."¹⁰⁷

The culminating events for the campaign took place on election eve when all three candidates took their final plea to the national audience. Nixon and Humphrey presented two of the "coolest" political programs the nation had seen. They were simultaneous, two-hour telethons that reached an estimated 48 million Americans. Neither man made speeches nor promises, but presented a "talk-session." The mood was relaxing and the vocabulary restrained. The final attacks upon their foes were colorless. They were both sincere and friendly and articulated a common touch.

Wallace also presented a final appeal. Instead of listening to, hearing about, and reflecting upon the views of the voters on major public issues, he made the mistake of thinking he had to educate and reinform the audience. The 30 minute program consisted of introductions to his family and that of General LeMay, scenes from campaign rallies, and a final segment that roamed over the following topics:

- (1) We must wind up the war and bring our soldiers home.
- (2) Nixon and Humphrey failed to solve our ills while they held the office of vice-president.
- (3) Wallace can win as evidenced by assorted radio and newspaper polls.
- (4) The pollsters want Establishment candidates to win.
- (5) Smears on Curtis LeMay are resented.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁷Richard M. Nixon, Six Crises (New York, 1968), p. 457.

¹⁰⁸Paid Political broadcast, NBC, October 27, 1968, Rosenfield, p. 39.

Wallace in the end was much too frank on the issues as he came over a "cool" medium with a "hot" message. The final results showed the most effective politician on television was "cool" and relaxed. He found some of his supporters tired of hearing him "tell it like it is," and the majority could not accept his ideological and personal images. He did not use the media sensibly but projected a "hot" image of "hate and fear." The voters were looking for a man whose image conveyed progressiveness, responsibility, and trustworthiness. By election day the electorate was convinced that he was "trigger-happy," "a nigger-hater," very backward, and far too conservative and irresponsible.

An ironic event took place on the night of November 5, 1968, George Wallace, who had traveled the length and breadth of America to project the image of a true Presidential candidate, stood virtually by himself. Of an expected 50,000 election night ralliers, only 5,000 showed up. His political image could not have been bleaker, and a newspaperman replied, "He seems so all alone."

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

The primary purpose of this study was to analyze and determine the effect of George C. Wallace's image in the 1968 presidential campaign and election. This purpose necessitated a two-fold approach. First, a theoretical construct was developed to answer three questions about the image and ultimately, how this image served as a tool in the 1968 elections. These questions included: (1) What is the nature of the "image?" (2) What is the role of the "image" in politics? and (3) How is the "image" created? The second portion of the approach was an application of the theoretical construct to the ideological, personal, and technical dimensions of George Wallace's image.

The "image" as defined by this author is the personal, subjective interpretation of man's real and imagined world. The "image" construct developed in this study was drawn from theories of Walter Lippmann, Kenneth E. Boulding, and Daniel J. Borstin. Even though they defined the image differently, all three approaches are related because they involve processes of perception, cognition, interpretation, reaction, and attitude-attitude change. The theories are especially complimentary of one another when viewing public images in an election. Boulding felt an image was a product of all past experience and subjective knowledge. Being multi-dimensional it was subject to change and various interpretations. Lippmann viewed the image as an oversimplified picture of the world as man expects it to be in relation to his predispositions.

Boorstin approached the image differently with an ethical connotation. He theorized that the image was an ethical ideal toward which man should seek to attain. In Chapter I various means were discussed whereby such images could be altered to fit political goals.

The "image" of a political candidate belongs to the individual perceiver and is transformed into a public image when shared by the public. This public image is the main concern of all politicians in an election. They are not only concerned with its conception, formation, interpretation, and influence, but also with those elements which change it. Especially influential are the dimensions of time and space. The former regulates images by events in the past, present, and future so the meaning of a given image is altered by time. In addition, spacial images are a function of the perceived distance between a person's position and that of the position or person he was reacting to. Examples of this concept were cited in Chapter I and serve to illustrate how images of candidates are related to time and space.

Those voters who are not ego-involved with issues or have not yet formed a firm political image of a candidate are susceptible to politicians and rhetoricians who strive to create favorable images of the contesting candidates or parties. In this age of electronics and technological advancement, the mass, "hot" and "cool," media including radio, national television, printed page, pseudo-events, and countless other media, are extensions of our nervous system and serve as the main implements for public image creation. Older means of communication such as political meetings, rallies, telephone canvassing, and local newspaper propaganda are still employed, but the image is farther

reaching, longer lasting, and more effective when modern mass media are utilized.

Marshall McLuhan has been unofficially tagged as the father of mass media and insists that effectiveness of communication is contingent upon the basic understanding of its media. In this regard, he proposes three main theses in his Understanding Media and The Medium is the Message. First, the media of communication are extensions of the human personality and exert comparable influence. Secondly, media can be divided into "hot" and "cool." The hot media convey direct information to an individual with his participation at a low level. Communication with a "cool" media involves extensive participation of the recipient. Consequently, a candidate who communicates a vehement political message over a "cool" television is committing political suicide because the medium cannot contain the message. Likewise, it is unadvisable to project a cool message over a "hot" medium such as radio. This leads to the third principle which says the medium is the message, or the medium, by itself, does something to an individual apart from what the message is able to do.

The advent of mass media has ushered another dimension in the political arena called "The New Politics." So strong is the influence of the new media that political audiences even resent remnants of the old political establishment. Accompanying the new system and changing attitudes is the creation of stronger charisma politicians. They imply a break with legal and traditional continuity, challenge established order and customary restraints, overturn institutions, and appeal to new concepts of human relationships. A charismatic leader's influence is

greater outside a political grouping and usually emerges in an atmosphere of crisis or frustration. His charismatic jargon and demagogic rhetoric heighten the audience's emotional involvement and sometimes create quasi-religious attitudes. From all indications in Chapter I, it can be inferred that Wallace possessed such characteristics and created similar mass-audience participation during the 1968 presidential campaign.

Since politicians are products of their images and the image is a creation of the message, they tend to remake themselves in the image others have of them. In this respect, the "New Politics" has furnished another tool in the pseudo-event or false event intended to be deceiving. In an effort to make news of a candidate for a demanding public, reporters often create news when none is available. The alert politician employs pseudo-events to create the desired image by playing on the attitudes of the voter about himself, society, the political party system, and the politician.

The year 1968 recorded insurmountable political conflict. President Johnson had been unable to resolve the problems, and there was a general tendency for the public to move right in reaction to his liberal politics. The Democrats and Republicans were extremely divided yet somewhat united in reaction to the present Administration's politics and practices. This left a prime spot for Wallace wherein he emerged between the two parties and began playing both ends against one another on the political continuum saying there was no actual difference between the two parties. He hurriedly seized upon the opportunity and offered the public a third choice, The American Independent Party.

The political climate was tense, and Wallace realized he needed to project a definite and favorable ideological and personal image in order to form a new coalition of the discontented and disaffected citizens. His ideological image would contain justification and explanation of his political actions and a basis for making decisions. This image served as a nucleus for the campaign issues such as law and order, Vietnam, crime, states' rights, arms control, and forced integration were the most influential. The states' rights and crime issues contributed most to the personal image. Wallace assumed a "conservative" stance on all issues, therefore, it forced Humphrey and Nixon to move to the right of their natural positions on the political spectrum in order to comply with voter attitudes reacting against Johnson's liberalism. As a result, the entire voting populace leaned more heavily toward the right than would have occurred if Wallace had not been in the race.

Attitudes of large segments of the electorate were firm on the racial issues and Wallace's supporters, augmented by the so-called white backlash, included Northern right-wingers, middle-class conservatives and independents, and white blue-collar working Democrats. These segments represented 21 per cent of a popularity poll which, if allowed to continue, may have put the Electoral College in a deadlock allowing no candidate to receive a majority vote--depending on their distribution in the states. This issue of forced-integration caused his positive image to soar, especially in his appeal to the "soul of the South."

Ideologically speaking, Wallace's popularity as reflected in the national polls, peaked then fell to 13.5 per cent in the final results.

He did carry five Southern states and some minority groups scattered throughout the nation. The bulk of his earlier popularity, however, came from marginal Democrats who in the end returned to their party or supported Nixon because they were not firmly committed to Wallace, his party, and his positions. Instead of voting for an ultra-conservative they settled for a more moderate conservative, Nixon, or voted the party-ticket and supported Humphrey.

The development of Wallace's personal image was somewhat related to his ideological image. He drew his greatest support from the South which could identify with both his beliefs and his personal style. The nation was aware of the Governor because of his "school house door" stand and began forming a personal image of the man. At first his presence was ignored in political circles, but when he established the American Independent Party in 50 states and gained support in the polls, political contenders began to worry. Although many responded to his ideological and personal images, the upswing in support was shortlived because the people were not firmly convinced that he was the man for the job.

In many ways Wallace's image corresponded to the theories purported by Lippmann and Boulding in the theoretical construct of Chapter I. Lippmann stated the image in a person's mind was stereotyped and oversimplified to find identity in his world. Wallace allowed voters to have this imple image. He repeatedly referred to the "simple solutions" of bureaucratic problems in his demagogy rhetoric. He allowed the voter to blame Washington for any complication of governmental matters. Boulding suggested the image was a product of all past

experience and knowledge. To the electorate Wallace's past represented a lone "fighter" who stood for what he believed with no compromise. Boorstin theorized that man possess an image which is an ethical ideal that was not yet attained. In attaining this ideal, man may manipulate the intervening images and control his environment and perception. Wallace accomplished the first portion of this image—building process by offering the American people a utopian union free of wars, poverty, and riots where law and order would prevail. Many of the voters responded favorably to these goals. Wallace failed to control, however, his intervening images via the use of the proper mass media. As a result, the ideological or dream image collapsed, and with it the personal image fell. He was no longer a noble fighter but a menacing rebel who promoted emotional contagion and demagogic policies.

George C. Wallace was the "wrong man" saying the "wrong thing" in the "wrong way." He failed to understand modern media, and it destroyed him when it could have been a political tool. His television rhetoric represented a "hot" evangelistic message over a "cool" medium. The press also caused a decline in his ideological and personal images because he fed them "hot" issues too soon, too fast which eventually tired the public of his campaign. He also chose to ignore the "New Politics," and failed to secure experts to advise him of proper approaches. Of course, he was news, and the media eventually began covering him, but his image was a negative one. Now he was provoking disorder instead of mastering it. Nixon himself carefully documented the change in his own personal image when he employed the "New Politics." It physically transferred him to the White House, Even down

to the last telecast, Wallace preached to the voters; he never seemed to listen. As a result, he was transported back from the national public eye to the South with a broken dream, a tarnished image, and a mangled American Independent Party. He returned as he came--alone.

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