THE SOUTH IN PRESIDENTIAL POLITICS:

THE END OF DEMOCRATIC HEGEMONY

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The purpose of this paper is to document and quantify the primary reasons for the gradual erosion of southern Democratic hegemony in presidential elections during the last twenty-four years. The first four chapters comprise an historical study using books, memoirs and periodicals to isolate prime factors in the shift. The final chapter deals with the results of an original survey conducted between September 30, 1971, and April 4, 1972, to assess the feelings of persons actively involved in southern politics. The results confirm and reinforce the findings of the historical study, which indicates the primary reason for changing southern allegiance has been the changing philosophy of the Democratic Party in the civil rights field.

President Truman's advocacy of civil rights legislation in 1948, for example, was the nucleus around which the Dixiecrats formed. There is evidence the Dixiecrat core helped elect General Eisenhower in 1952 and re-elect him in 1956 instead of the Democratic nominee, Adlai Stevenson. The statements of the candidates during those presidential campaigns allowed southerners to identify Eisenhower with the
attitude that the states should handle their own affairs in the civil rights field, and Stevenson with the attitude that if the states fail to act, the federal government must.

The 1960 election saw a return of southerners to the Democrats, but in that year the draw of an Eisenhower was not present and the Democratic platform plank on civil rights was no stronger than the Republicans'. In 1964 President Johnson, the Democratic incumbent, was seen as strongly favoring civil rights, compared with his Republican opponent, Barry Goldwater, whose statements had a states'-rights orientation.

In 1968 the Democratic candidate, Vice President Humphrey, had unquestionable civil rights credentials while the Republican contender, Richard Nixon, openly wooed the South with the support of former Dixiecrat Strom Thurmond. The third man in the race, Governor George Wallace of Alabama, had the image of a racist. Humphrey was able to carry only one southern state. President Nixon in office reinforced his go-slow image in the civil rights field and in 1972 had little trouble beating his Democratic challenger, George McGovern, who was considered by many as a left-wing extremist. The southern break from the Democrats was total in 1972.

The survey of elected and state party officials of both parties in the eleven southern states indicated the primary reason for the shift in voter allegiance was the policy
orientation of the Democratic Party. Of those affirming the split, 68.60 per cent believed it had occurred because of national party policies. Of those, 35.11 per cent felt the primary policy question involved was race relations. A majority of the respondents, 79.16 per cent, said the South was through with bloc voting, and an even greater majority, 87.50 per cent, thought southern experimentation with regional parties also was at an end. A sizeable proportion (35.38 per cent) of those who stated the South no longer would cast its electoral vote in a bloc believed the primary reason was a desire for a two-party system. Some 24.56 per cent, however, listed as the primary reason the belief that southerners think bloc voting now is useless to prevent national involvement in local race relations.

The evidence indicates that while the South lost its voice in the Democratic Party, it has found another in the Republican Party. The South is expected to continue its newfound allegiance to the Republicans provided the party maintains its orientation in the civil rights field. The Democratic Party could make a comeback in the South provided it can exchange its liberal image for a more moderate one.
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INTRODUCTION

The long love affair, nearly a century in duration, between the Democratic Party and the eleven states of the Old Confederacy is at an end. Victims of a shift in the national mood, southern voters within the past two decades have in increasing numbers shown less willingness to deliver their electoral votes, numbering nearly half of the total needed to elect a president in 1972, on a single platter to a single party or candidate. (See Appendix, Table I, for distribution of southern electoral votes, 1948-1972.) From 1876, when the South agreed to vote for Rutherford B. Hayes as president in exchange for the withdrawal of federal troops from Dixie, through 1944, individual southern states did not vote Republican more than twice in national elections— in 1876, 1920, and 1928. But with the exception of 1948, when the Dixiecrats split the South after bolting the Democratic National Convention following a fight over the civil rights plank of the platform, the Republicans have garnered southern electoral votes in every election from 1952 through 1972. In fact, the Democratic vote dipped to its lowest point in recent years in the presidential election of 1972, when southerners awarded what used to be their favorite party only 29.42 per cent of the combined two-party vote. (See Appendix, Table II, for
southern vote totals and percentages in presidential elections, 1948-1972.) For the first time since 1948, a major political party failed to receive any of the South's electoral votes. Only in 1972, that party was the Democratic Party.

The elections these last twenty-four years may be considered atypical, the results of divisive third-party campaigns and the candidacies of a man whom many believed to be above party and of a man whom many thought to be alien to their traditional party. But even in 1960, when none of these factors were brought into play to any significant extent, the Republicans still managed to capture three southern states (Florida, Tennessee, and Virginia) with thirty-three electoral votes. More than 45 per cent of southern voters that year cast ballots for then Vice President Richard M. Nixon, the Republican nominee.

A survey conducted among southern state party officials and elected leaders for this thesis appears to bear out the trend exhibited in the voting statistics—that the South no longer is solid Democratic. The primary reason given is, in effect, that the national Democrats have deserted the South, that southern voters in the main no longer approve of national party policies. Of course, the answer is not nearly so simple. Also involved are the increase in southern voting and shifts in southern industry and agriculture that have produced in-and out-migration. But in the minds of these respondents, the
party's national policies bear the brunt of the blame. Because they specifically were asked about it, a good proportion (24.08 per cent) of those surveyed said the national Democratic Party has lost its southern hegemony because it tends to support federal interference in local race relations.

The problem of race always has been an acute one for the South. Involved in the 1876 trade-off was a pledge of non-enforcement of the Fifteenth Amendment ensuring the right to vote of all United States citizens regardless of race, color, or previous condition of servitude. As a result, the amendment hardly was enforced until the coming of the Rooseveltian New Deal.\textsuperscript{1} Since the Civil War, southern legislatures have enacted Jim Crow laws to keep the Negro from voting and "in his place." During the latter part of the nineteenth century, from 1873 to 1883, the U. S. Supreme Court handed down decisions that emasculated the civil rights legislation designed to give equality to blacks.\textsuperscript{2} And as these barriers gradually have fallen, some southern political leaders and officials have been the most vocal in their condemnation. Some commentators would contend that the peculiar southern political institution has as its underpinning a white desire to hold


down the increasing black population. A leading scholar of southern politics has observed,

... The fundamental explanation of southern politics is that the black-belt whites succeeded in imposing their will on their states and thereby presented a solid regional front in national politics on the race issue.⁴

This is evidenced not only in the Senate and the presidential vote but in southern wheeling and dealing in recent Democratic National Conventions to influence the choice of the presidential and vice presidential nominees.

Over recent years, as race relations have become increasingly a national problem and a national concern, the South has been able to exert less influence. In the last twenty years, southern convention forces repeatedly have been routed on the Democratic Party's civil rights position. In 1968, the eleven southern states and the five border states with southern leanings were not represented on the Democratic presidential ticket for the first time since 1940,⁴ and the South failed to gain a place on the ticket again in 1972, although the two vice presidential candidates were from border states.⁵

Southern strength at Democratic National Conventions has been

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⁵ In 1944, Harry S. Truman of Missouri; 1948, Truman and Alben W. Barkley of Kentucky; 1952, John Sparkman of Alabama; 1956, Estes Kefauver of Tennessee; 1960, Lyndon Johnson of Texas, and in 1964, Johnson.

⁵ Thomas Eagleton of Missouri, chosen during the convention and later removed in favor of R. Sargent Shriver of Maryland.
dropping steadily and, in 1972, the South had its lowest percentage strength in years. In 1956, for instance, southern convention votes made up 24.34 per cent of the total. But in 1972, the eleven southern states had only 595 of 3,016 delegate votes—just 19.73 per cent. The drop can be explained partly because the South has not been electing Democrats as it once did. But also involved has been the action of national party leaders specifically designed to limit the convention influence of the South. Ten days before his death, President John F. Kennedy acted to prevent southern mischief-making at the 1964 Democratic convention. During a strategy session, which Vice President Lyndon B. Johnson of Texas did not attend, Kennedy accepted a plan that would slowly reduce the South's party strength by cutting down the number of convention seats for southern delegates.\(^6\) On the other hand, Republicans during their 1972 convention adopted rules that will increase the strength of the southern and western state delegations in 1976.

Thus the South finds itself under increasing attack from the party that once looked the other way while the region was committing its racial indiscretions. Nationwide, the Democratic Party is becoming increasingly black. An estimated 97 per cent of black voters cast ballots for then Vice President

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Hubert Humphrey in 1968. Kevin P. Phillips, who sees an "emerging Republican majority" descending over the nation, notes that as blacks take over the Democratic Party in the southern black belts, once the area of the party's traditional southern strength, whites increasingly will turn to the only major alternative—the GOP.

This paper will attempt to examine the South in presidential politics from 1876 to 1972, outlining the reasons for its long allegiance to the Democratic Party, discussing the recent trend away from the party, and analyzing the reasons why. Secondary sources—books and periodicals—have been supplemented by an original survey conducted from September 30, 1971, through April 4, 1972, to confirm the shift and a primary reason for it. The final portion of the paper will attempt to assess the meaning of the South's defection in the context of the future of American and southern politics.

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Between 1876 and 1948, there were only eleven states in the nation that did not vote Republican more than twice in presidential elections. These states—Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North and South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia—define the South. They also happen to be the states of the Old Confederacy, which seceded from the Union to touch off one of the bloodiest conflicts the nation has ever known. The bitter divisions that resulted from the Civil War still are mirrored in southern politics today.

In that seventy-two-year period, only two southern states gave their electoral votes to the Republicans twice—Florida in 1876 and 1928, and Tennessee in 1920 and 1928. Five southern states swung into the GOP column once—South Carolina and Louisiana in 1876, and North Carolina, Texas, and Virginia in 1928. Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, and Mississippi never gave a plurality to a Republican presidential candidate from 1876 through 1948.

The Solid South now is a mainstay of American political folklore, and it came into existence for one primary reason.
Until 1948, the South depended on its solidarity in presidential elections and in the Senate to prevent federal meddling in local race relations. The source of the resistance was the black belts, named more for their rich, black soil than for their large Negro population. It was there, where blacks outnumbered whites, that a real problem of politics was to keep the white minority in economic control of the black majority. By remaining strongly Democratic, the black belts could ward off the Republican interference the South had known during the days of Reconstruction. Even in 1928, when five southern states voted for Herbert Hoover, the black belts stayed Democratic. Only in 1948, after the national Democrats abandoned the black belts, did black belt whites try a different tactic—a disastrous third-party campaign behind two black belt spokesmen, Governor Strom Thurmond of South Carolina and Governor Fielding Wright of Mississippi. The South as a whole did not desert, and awarded Harry Truman seventy-eight electoral votes.

Republicans in the South

During these years in the black belts, two-party competition was out because that would have meant an appeal to the black voter in some counties and the loss of southern unity in Congress and in presidential elections. Until the mid-twentieth century, Republican enclaves in the South largely were the result of the Civil War, non-plantation areas that
had not wanted to fight for the slave-owning black belts and that later failed to follow them in voting for Democrats. It was in these upland, non-plantation, non-black parts of the South that the seeds of the Populist revolt of the 1890's found nourishing soil. The black belt whites, the townsmen, and other conservative forces against which the revolt had been directed kept control and emerged stronger than ever from these agrarian radical electoral battles. The plantation counties, fearful of the Populist trend, fought the Negro vote and, in the wake of the disillusionment brought about by the Populist defeat, were able to get enough upcountry support to adopt measures disfranchising the black. The victory, however, was close, because the upcountry yeoman, although disliking the black, suspected the black belt whites of also trying to disfranchise him. V. O. Key, Jr. commented,

In the fight against Populism and in the subsequent agitation about the place of the Negro, the black belts strengthened their position by re-enforcing the South's attachment to the Democratic Party. The raising of a fearful specter of Negro rule and the ruthless application of social pressures against those who treasonably fused with the Republicans under Populist leadership put down for decades the threat of the revival of two-party competition.¹

Thus, into the 1940's, the Republican-Democratic schism in the South was based geographically on which areas supported the North in the Civil War or the agrarian revolt of the 1890's.

¹V. O. Key, Jr., Southern Politics in State and Nation (New York, 1949), pp. 5-10.
Republicanism was most prevalent in the mountainous regions of southwestern Virginia, western North Carolina, and eastern Tennessee, brought into being by resistance to secession. Mountaineers usually had few slaves and saw little reason in fighting for the plantation owners. As Key reported:

The highland yeomanry did not want to fight a rich man's war; the Democratic Party was, or at least became, the planters' party and the war party. The Democratic Party forced the hills into The War, and for this it has never been forgiven.²

On the other hand, southern whites tended to stay away from the Republican Party because up until the time of Franklin Roosevelt it was considered the party of the black since the Reconstruction party gave blacks their first taste of political power.³ Kevin P. Phillips assessed the situation thus:

Given white apprehension of Negro political activity, the Democratic Party served the South not just as a political party but as a racial and cultural institution. For this reason, the Democratic loyalties of the deep South were immovable so long as the national Democratic Party did nothing to trespass on southern sensibilities.⁴

The trespassing was not long in coming, and with it other parties began to trespass on what had once been the Democrats' private domain.

The Revolt of 1928

Key has called the Republican Party "historically the party of emancipation, reconstruction and civil rights for

²Ibid., pp. 282-283. ³Ibid., p. 286.
Negroes." Why then did five southern states desert the Democrats for Herbert Hoover? Key indicated that it had more to do with the Democratic nominee, Al Smith, than with any problem the South might have had with the national Democrats on the race issue. Smith was a Catholic, an ally of the nation's urban areas, and an enemy of Prohibition. Hoover, on the other hand, was dry and a Protestant. The racial problem, however, did have a bearing on which southern areas went Republican and which, in spite of the repugnance of Smith's candidacy, stayed in the Democratic camp. The Democratic areas in 1928 were characterized by "ruralism, cotton-growing, plantation organization, intense Reconstruction memories . . . as well as anxieties about the racial equilibrium. . . ." The states and counties with the highest numbers of blacks remained Democratic in 1928. Those with the least numbers of blacks bolted to the Republicans. "In the black belt counties," wrote Phillips, "commitment to the Democratic Party as an instrument of white supremacy was firm enough so that anti-Catholicism made only the most minimal inroads." He offered the theory, however, that there were other reasons causing southerners to vote for Hoover. Increasing middle-class Republicanism inspired the North Carolina and Virginia Piedmont areas to turn to the GOP, he said. In Florida and

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5 Key, op. cit., p. 319. 6 Ibid., p. 329.
7 Ibid., pp. 318-319. 8 Phillips, op. cit., p. 216.
Texas, it was the growing economic Republicanism in the new resort and plains cities. Anti-Catholicism was a strong factor in Republican voting in the Gulf Coast pineywoods of Florida and in the West Texas and Tennessee Bible belts. And, he added, there was some hereditary Republican voting by transplanted northerners in urban Florida and Texas.  

The Great Depression of the 1930's knocked out the southern Republicans and the South got its feet firmly replanted in the Democratic Party. By 1938, however, southern conservatives were becoming disillusioned by some of the economic aspects of the New Deal, yet their loyalty remained unchanged as long as the Democrats made no intrusions in southern handling of racial relations. The national party's urban and labor bias also had an effect on the alienation of the southern conservatives, and World War II revived some of the mountaineer isolationism prevalent in the Civil War and World War I. But it was the trend towards desegregation that brought on the South's first flirtation with third-party politics.

Truman's Civil Rights Program--1948

Even though Harry Truman's campaign strategists in 1948 had no doubts that the South would vote Democratic, Truman

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9 Ibid., p. 195.  
10 Ibid., p. 197. 
11 Ibid., p. 217.  
12 Ibid., p. 197.  
himself had been expecting a southern split from the time he took a strong stand on civil rights and formed the Committee on Civil Rights in 1946 after hearing several accounts of anti-minority violence. In his words:

> It was a simple approach to one of the oldest problems of a democratic society, yet the leaders of "white supremacy" began at once their campaign of demagoguery to attempt to nullify my efforts to develop federal safeguards against racial discrimination.\(^{14}\)

Truman appointed his committee on civil rights on December 5, and to one biographer it "was an impressive-seeming body of industrialists and clergymen, labor leaders and educators."\(^{15}\) The chairman was C. E. Wilson, president of General Electric. There were two blacks and two women. Franklin Roosevelt, Jr. was a member. But there were no southern representatives who later became Dixiecrats. The viewpoints of the two southerners who were on the committee, Dr. Frank Graham, president of the University of North Carolina, and Mrs. M. E. Tilly of Atlanta, were considered to be liberal.

The committee that reported back on October 29, 1947, was divided, issuing majority and minority opinions and recommendations. The majority report suggested a "better and stronger" division of civil rights in the Department of

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Justice, the strengthening of some civil rights laws already passed by Congress, and the enactment of a law prohibiting lynching. It called for the creation of a fair employment practices commission (FEPC) and the abolition of Jim Crow practices in interstate commerce. Federal grants and sanctions should be used to end state-supported segregation in public services and private colleges and schools, the report said, and federal aid to housing, education, public health, and other publicly supported services and facilities should be denied to states that persisted in practicing segregation.

The minority report was predictably milder. The ending of segregation was the goal, some committee members felt, but the people of the states first should act of their own accord to take the segregation laws off the books. The application of federal sanctions was not the way to do it, especially in the case of education. Some members of the minority felt that requiring desegregation for educational grants would place education under federal control. The best way of ending segregation, they thought, was to raise the educational level, "to inculcate both the teachings of religion regarding freedom and equality as a more solid basis for genuine and lasting acceptance by the peoples of the states."\(^{16}\) Jonathan Daniels, a leading biographer of Truman, wrote that

\(^{16}\)Ibid., pp. 340-342.
Intelligent Southerners were disturbed by what seemed to them to be reckless and punitive proposals. The report was of particular service to those Southerners who were Democrats by geography and not conviction and whose ideas of freedom were as limited as their faith in a nation founded upon the premise of the promotion of the general welfare.\textsuperscript{17}

Some thought that the report of Truman's civil rights committee was just a joke, but in February, 1948, Truman delivered to Congress a message calling in part for the establishment of a permanent commission on civil rights, a joint congressional committee on civil rights, and a civil rights division of the Justice Department; the strengthening of existing civil rights statutes; the provision of federal protection from lynching; more adequate protection of the right to vote; the establishment of an FEPC to prevent unfair discrimination in employment and the prohibition of discrimination in facilities involved in interstate transportation. In his address, the President emphasized the equality of all Americans, their right to equal justice, freedom of thought, expression, and worship. Truman called for equal opportunities in jobs, housing, health care, and education. All men, he declared, should have a voice in their government, and government should protect rather than usurp the rights of the people.\textsuperscript{18}

Reaction was swift, and talk began bubbling out of the

\textsuperscript{17}Ibid., pp. 342-343.

\textsuperscript{18}Congressional Record, February 2, 1948, p. 928.
South that Truman should be denied the nomination at the upcoming national convention in Philadelphia. Governor William Tuck of Virginia castigated the President's legislative proposal as an "unwarranted assault upon the established customs and traditions of the entire Southland." For too long, he said, "the electoral vote of the South had been counted ... even before it was cast.... The people of the Southern states have been placed upon the sacrificial altar to appease racial and other minority fringe groups." "A lynching of the Constitution," railed Senator Tom Connally of Texas. "We will not take it lying down ... simply to catch a shirrtaill full of votes." Senator Richard Russell of Georgia called Truman's message an attempt to set up an "American OGPU," or secret police. Fifty-two southern congressmen criticized the President and said they could not support him in 1948. The congressional message also led to personal confrontations for Truman. Mrs. Leonard Thomas, a Democratic national committeewoman from Alabama, cornered him at a White House luncheon for the national committee's executive committee and declared, "I want to take a message back to the South. Can I tell them you're not ramming miscegenation down our throats? That you're for all the people, not just the North?" Truman, unflappable, read her the Bill of Rights and replied, "I'm

everybody's President. I take back nothing of what I propose and make no excuse for it."  

Comparatively speaking, Truman's recommendations were not all that strong. Daniels noted that Truman had ignored his committee's advice to end segregation with the threat of federal force, and that in his proposal to give the District of Columbia self-government, the President actually asked that D. C. residents have the chance to "deal with the inequities arising from segregation" themselves. The abolition of the poll tax, the anti-lynching law, and the FEPC all had been urged by Truman's predecessor, Franklin Delano Roosevelt. But Alberta Lachicotte, Strom Thurmond's biographer, called the civil rights bill "the strongest ever," "more than the South could digest in 1943, and it rose up in anger."  

There were at least two reasons for the reactions southerners had to Truman's civil rights program. The first had its roots in the Democratic National Convention of 1944 that nominated Truman to be Roosevelt's vice presidential running mate. The South was hostile to Roosevelt's labor policies in general and his vice president, Henry Wallace, in particular.  

21 Daniels, op. cit., p. 343.  
As one chronicler of the period pointed out,

South of the [Mason-Dixon] line, they had little liking for labor unions in general, and they had even less liking for the Communist-ridden unions that each year were growing politically more vociferous through the CIO's Political Action Committee. Much of their political heresy centered upon Henry Wallace, the beau ideal of the parlor pinks and the egg-heads. . . .23

There were reports that Roosevelt was told by several politicians during a "caucus" that Wallace's renomination would cause the South to bolt and would divide labor, the liberals, and the city machines.24 Coupled with this was the expectation among some party leaders that Roosevelt would not survive his fourth term, and the "talking point" to convince convention delegates to switch their support from Wallace to Truman was that they were not nominating a vice president, but a president.25 "My own intensive activities in this regard [securing the vice presidential nomination for Truman] were occasioned by my conviction that Henry Wallace was not a fit man to be President of the United States, . . ." said Edwin Pauley, national party chairman at the time. "I told them, 'You are not nominating a Vice President of the United States, but a President.!'"26 Thus, southern delegates


24 Daniels, op. cit., p. 236.

25 Steinberg, op. cit., p. 216.

26 Dayton, op. cit., p. 75.
rushed to Truman's banner to deny Wallace the renomination. When Truman made his unsurprising but vocal shift to civil rights, to the southerners it "seemed both hypocritical neo-abolitionism and political betrayal."\textsuperscript{27}

The other reason for the South's hostility to Truman's civil rights program is submerged deep in the Southern soul. "Fear of what the civil-rights program would do to the theory of white supremacy lies back of the threat of political revolt," reported one national newsmagazine. "In Southern eyes, the white-supremacy theory is facing its greatest attack in 70 years."\textsuperscript{28} Evidence this statement by Samuel Green of Atlanta, Georgia's grand dragon of the Ku Klux Klan, during a cross-burning production in Wrightsville, Georgia:

> Again you will see Yankee bayonets trying to force social and racial equality between the black and white races... If that happens there are those among you who will see blood flow in these streets. The Klan will not permit the people of this country to become a mongrel race.\textsuperscript{29}

Thus the fast-growing seeds of revolt were planted. Truman's civil rights program was the major spark that set off the conflagration that in 1948 broke up the Solid Democratic South for the first time in two decades. The immediate

\textsuperscript{27}Daniels, op. cit., p. 336.


objectives were simple—dump Truman and destroy the threat of the impending civil rights legislation. Yet some long-range strategy also was involved. The southerners, one national newsmagazine reported, thought that another depression was imminent and feared the rise of another Roosevelt. In the coming economic disaster, they saw Wallace inheriting the northern wing of the Democratic Party. The revolt, then, was seen as an attempt to get away from this wing of the party to a position where the South could operate independently.\textsuperscript{30}

Shortly after Truman's message, a delegation from the southern governors met with J. Howard McGrath, chairman of the Democratic National Committee (DNC). Present were Governors William Preston Lane, Jr. of Maryland, Thurmond, R. Gregg Cherry of North Carolina, Ben Laney of Arkansas, and Beauford H. Jester of Texas. Jack Redding, public relations director of the DNC, reported that Cherry was relaxed and joking and that Laney acted as if this was a meeting of reasonable men. But Thurmond, Redding said, "was different." "Vouchsafing no more than a formal greeting, he refused to be seated. He did not join in the pleasantries. He didn't smile, and he took a chill attitude of complete disapproval of the others who were not so partisan."\textsuperscript{31} Thurmond never sat during the meeting and finally began reading from a list


\textsuperscript{31} Redding, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 135.
of prepared questions. McGrath refused to move from what had been in the President's message. After the session ended, Cherry and Jester told reporters they were impressed with McGrath's "cordiality." Thurmond, on the other hand, said there was only one course of action left: "to take direct action which would stop the threat to the South." McGrath later told Redding that the whole situation was "hopeless."

He explained,

These people don't realize the change in the times. They see in the present situation, with Wallace already an avowed third-party candidate and with the Palestine situation hurting us so deeply, an opportunity to make us bow to their will. What is going to happen will happen to them, not to us. President Truman will be nominated, and he will be elected, elected without the Solid South and without New York!32

The rebellious southerners began to retaliate by making sure that the national Democrats would not get their nominee on the ballot in November. In Virginia, Governor Tuck offered a bill to the Virginia legislature that would keep Truman's name and the name of any other candidate off the ballot. A voter would be allowed to cast a vote only for the Democratic Party, not a particular party candidate. Electors, according to Tuck's plan, would have to support the party's nominee unless the party's state convention instructed them otherwise, giving them a specific substitute, before they voted in the Electoral College. Senator Burnet R. Maybank of South

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32 Ibid., pp. 135-137.
Carolina said that his state would do the same. In Alabama, Governor Jim Folsom remained loyal, but the state party leadership prevented Truman's name from appearing on the ballot. In Mississippi, Louisiana, and South Carolina, the Democrats were not allowed to appear on the ticket under the Democratic name and symbol, the cock, but were given a heading of their own as some sort of a third party. Redding said the DNC engaged an attorney, Bill Primm of North Carolina, to bring legal action to ensure Truman and the Democrats got on the ballot. "With the aid of local leaders who remained loyal, Primm was able to defeat the Virginia plan and to save the normal place on the ballot in most other states," Redding said.

Walkout at the Democratic Convention

Even though several of Truman's advisors suggested he soft-pedal the civil rights issue to keep the Dixiecrats in the party, the President put his civil rights program, which he claimed had been "shamefully distorted and misrepresented by political demagogues and press propaganda," directly into the 1948 party platform. A fight developed immediately.

Senator Francis Myers of Pennsylvania introduced what

34Redding, *op. cit.*, pp. 138-139.
Alfred Steinberg, a Truman biographer, called the "usual" civil rights plank, "designed not to offend the South or make Northern liberals feel too slighted." But practically all sides were unhappy with the first draft that came out of a subcommittee of the resolutions committee. Southerners called it unacceptable and northern liberals, claiming that even the Republicans had written a stronger one during their recent convention, called it too weak. It stated,

The Democratic party and the Democratic administrations are solely responsible for the great gains in recent years made in the continuing effort to reduce and eliminate unfair and illegal discrimination based on race, creed or color.

We have implemented our often expressed belief that racial and religious minorities had the right to live, develop and vote equally with all citizens and to share the rights guaranteed by the Constitution.

We again call on Congress to exercise full authority to the limits of its Constitutional powers to protect these rights.

The plank reported out of the resolutions committee a day later was hardly changed, editing out only the reference to the Truman Administration and even becoming more specific in reference to constitutional rights.

Moves were made on both the right and the left to amend the plank reported to the convention floor. Mayor Hubert

36 Steinberg, op. cit., p. 315.
Humphrey of Minneapolis led the forces of the Americans for Democratic Action (ADA) in introducing a minority plank asking Congress to abolish the poll tax, set up an FEPC, make lynching a federal crime, and ban segregation in the military. Perhaps calculated to anger the conservatives as much as his plan was his statement commending Truman for "his courageous stand on the issue of civil rights." The southern "states' rights" amendment was introduced the next day by former Governor Dan Moody of Texas:

The Democratic party stands for the principle that the Constitution contemplated and established a union of indestructable sovereign States and that under the Constitution the general Federal Government and the separate States have their separate fields of power and of permitted activities.

Traditionally it has been and it remains a part of the faith of the Democratic party that the Federal Government shall not encroach upon the reserved powers of the States by centralization of government or otherwise. Within the reserve powers of the States, to be exercised subject to the limitations imposed by the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments to the Constitution on the manner of their exercise, is the power to regulate and control local affairs and act in the exercise of the police power.

During the fifty-eight minute debate on the civil rights plank the race relations issue was never really tackled, The New York Times reported. Southerners said that a reaffirmation of the constitutional rights of states was necessary for the South to have confidence in and to support the party.

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39 "The Line Squall," Time, LII (July 26, 1948), 12.

The North claimed the party was 172 years behind in coming to grips with the issue of equality. The statements of southerners arguing for the states' rights amendment were rank with indications that the South would bolt the party over the civil rights issue unless concessions were made to the sovereignty of the states. Said Moody: "I have never scratched a ticket. I have never stayed away from the polls to avoid giving support. I have never bolted a convention and never intend to. My purpose here is an effort to appeal for restoration of harmony in the Democratic party." Cecil Sims, a delegate from Tennessee, proposed another states' rights amendment with the following words:

I agree with everything in the platform. I am asking only for a simple statement of reserved rights to states. Your vote will determine whether the Democratic party is to be the victor in the South. If we are defeated here today you are witnessing the dissolution of the Democratic party in the South.

In reply, Humphrey declared that "the time has come to walk out of the shadow of states' rights and into the sunlight of human rights."

In the voting that followed, the border states joined those of the North, East, and West in the drubbing given the

42 Trussell, "South Beaten." 43 Ibid.
South. Moody's states' rights plank was beaten 925-309 on a roll call vote, and only 11 of those votes in favor came from states outside the South—California, Wyoming, Colorado, Oregon, and Alaska.\textsuperscript{45} The other two southern amendments were beaten on a voice vote and, on yet another roll call, the ADA measure carried by 69 votes. "The South had been kicked in the pants, turned around and kicked in the stomach," \textit{Time} reported. "The Humphrey and Biemiller [former Congressman Andrew J. Biemiller of Wisconsin] crowd roared in triumph."\textsuperscript{46}

Not only were the southern delegations humiliated on the matter of the civil rights plank, but their attempt to find an alternative to Harry Truman as the party's nominee was a transparent failure. The Southern Governors Conference had agreed to "fight to the last ditch" any effort to nominate or elect Truman or any other candidate who had espoused equality for blacks.\textsuperscript{47} Even Senator John Sparkman of Alabama, who was to find himself on a Democratic ticket a few years later, demanded that Truman drop out of the race. "There is no use hiding our heads in the sand," he said. "People in the South are so bitter . . . that they will never accept him as a candidate. I wish very much that he would sense the situation and withdraw." For his own part, Sparkman endorsed General

\textsuperscript{45}Trussell, "South Beaten."

\textsuperscript{46}"The Line Squall," \textit{Time}, LII (July 26, 1948), 13.

\textsuperscript{47}"'Little Southern Pats,'" \textit{Time}, LI (March 22, 1948), 12.
Dwight D. Eisenhower.48 Alabama voters in a Democratic primary elected a slate of eleven electors pledged to vote against Truman or any other civil rights candidate and convention delegates apparently named in that same election mostly were against Truman and at least half planned to walk out should the platform include a civil rights plank.49

A coalition had been formed to keep the nomination from Truman. It included southerners "who disliked Truman because of his stand on racial equality," New Dealers who thought Truman was a turncoat, and the big city bosses who thought Truman would be whipped so badly that they would lose control. Members of the group hoped to rally around Eisenhower, who already had the votes of the Virginia and Georgia delegations. Governor Strom Thurmond of South Carolina told his delegates to get on the bandwagon. Organized by James Roosevelt, the Democratic state chairman of California, the coalition attempted to snare unpledged delegates and to persuade the committed ones to drop their pledges so Truman could not be nominated on the first ballot. Eisenhower, however, removed himself from consideration and the coalition found itself without a candidate.50 With the revolt having collapsed, Thurmond commented that it was not necessary to vote for the

48"President's Week," Time, LI (March 29, 1948), 22.
49"Local Skirmishes," Time, LI (May 17, 1948), 25.
50"Wake & Awakening," Time, LII (July 12, 1948), 11-12.
candidate of either major party. He expressed the possibility that the South could tie up the election in the House of Representatives and have a third person elected president. Thurmond at this point declared that the South would "go down fighting" against a president who had "stabbed us in the back" and added that the Republican nominee, Governor Thomas E. Dewey of New York, a strong backer of civil rights, "won't get a single electoral vote in the South."

Later the same day, Senator Claude Pepper of Florida announced that he would vie with Truman for the nomination, declaring that he was a supporter of equal rights, but that Truman's program was "a snare and a delusion" established for political ends that would harm those it intended to help. The South, however, finally rallied around Governor Ben Laney of Arkansas, who said that he could not support Truman for president.

Truman, with his special flair, managed to anger the southerners even more when he let it be known that he wanted Supreme Court Justice William Douglas to be his vice presidential running mate. "To Southerners," *Time* pointed out, "Douglas was a more obnoxious champion of Negro rights than

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Harry Truman ever was." Even Truman aides thought that Douglas' nomination would cause the South to bolt, but southern delegates were never given the chance to run with this issue. Douglas, afraid that he might never have the opportunity to get back on the court should he accept the nomination, withdrew his name. Truman then turned to Senator Alben Barkley of Tennessee, feeling that with his border state credentials he just might be able to patch up the differences between the North and the South.

It was on the matter of loyalty that the convention delegations from Virginia, South Carolina, and Mississippi were challenged during the convention. All three eventually were seated, but Mississippi only after a floor fight that it won by a small margin. To add to the feeling of hostility, South Carolina also was challenged because blacks allegedly were barred from participation in the party there.

The showdown came on the night following the acceptance of the platform and before the nomination. The chairman of the Alabama delegation, Handy Ellis, stood up and declared

55 W. H. Lawrence, "Barkley to be Truman Running Mate; Floor Fight Looming on Civil Rights; Convention Due to Wind Up Tonight," *The New York Times*, July 14, 1948, Sec. 1, p. 1.
56 Ibid.
that his state's eleven electors had been chosen "never to cast their vote for a Republican, never to cast their vote for Harry Truman, and never to cast their electoral vote for any candidate with a civil rights program such as adopted by this convention. . . . We cannot participate further in this convention." With that, thirteen members of the Alabama delegation, followed by the entire entourage from Mississippi waving a Confederate battle flag, walked out. Time reported that as the bolters emerged from the Philadelphia convention hall into a "pelting rainstorm . . . a thunderclap split the air." Why, a reporter asked Thurmond, were the southerners walking out over Truman's civil rights program, when the President was only following the Rooseveltian policies that the South had endorsed tacitly in an earlier platform?
"... Truman," replied Thurmond, "really means it."59

Senator Lister Hill of Alabama put alternates in his delegation's empty seats and the southerners who remained rallied around Georgia's favorite son and protest candidate, Senator Richard Russell.61 In nominating Russell, Charles J. Bloch of Georgia declared that "the South is no longer going to be the whipping boy of the Democratic party." He warned

59 Steinberg, op. cit., p. 315.
60 "The Line Squall," Time, LII (July 26, 1948), 13.
61 White, "Mississippi Bolters."
that southern voters might desert the party in November and claimed that the Democrats could not win without them. In the balloting that followed, Truman received 947-1/2 votes to Russell's 264, more than a two-thirds margin. There was no motion to make the nomination unanimous because the South would have fought it. Out of the 278 votes allotted to the 11 southern states, Truman received only 13. The southern delegations that remained gave Russell all of his votes.

The Dixiecrat Convention

Unable to work its will on the Democratic platform; challenged, and rightly so, on its loyalty; saddled with a candidate it detested, the deep South and those who sympathized with it left the party of its forefathers. According to The New York Times, some 6,000 persons representing the 11 southern states plus Oklahoma and Kentucky convened in Birmingham, Alabama, for the rump convention of the States' Rights Democratic Party. (Lachicotte, Thurmond's sympathetic biographer, estimated 7,000 persons attended representing the aforementioned states plus Maryland, Indiana, and

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62 Lawrence, "Truman, Barkley Named."


The gathering under the banner of "states' rights" was an interesting conglomeration. Senators James O. Eastland and John C. Stennis and Congressmen John Bell Williams and William P. Colmar, all of Mississippi, were there, but otherwise few representatives attended who had any real political clout. Except for the delegates from Mississippi and Alabama, most of the people there were "political outs and has-beens." Top southern leaders stayed away.

In fact, Thurmond himself had planned to miss the convention because he doubted that there was enough time to organize with hopes of accomplishing anything. But even though he had a prior engagement, the South Carolina governor agreed to go after being contacted by Laney of Arkansas, Governor Fielding Wright of Mississippi, and other southern leaders.

As soon as he arrived, delegates from Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama asked Thurmond to accept the new party's presidential nomination, which Laney already had rejected. Thurmond was given thirty minutes to make up his mind. Lachicotte quoted him on his decision to accept:

"I knew that accepting the nomination would have future political repercussions, but I had little time to make..."
up my mind, and I thought somebody ought to do some-
thing, so I finally decided to take the plunge. I
didn't know then even if my own State would support
me.69

The delegates apparently did, and nominated him unanimously
as their presidential candidate.70

The convention's guiding principle ostensibly was states' rights, but the racial overtones were apparent in comments
made during sessions and in the "Declaration of Principles"
adopted by the delegates. Thurmond kept his denunciation of
Truman and his civil rights program on a relatively high
level, saying that

President Truman has betrayed the South and we South-
erners are going to cast our votes for candidates who
are true believers in states' rights principles. For
our loyalty to the party we have been stabbed in the
back by a President who has betrayed every principle
of the Democratic party in his desire to win at any
cost.71

After the convention ended, he told a reporter for The New
York Times that his interest was in states' rights, not white
supremacy, and that he wanted to better conditions for
blacks.72 But during a speech in one of the convention ses-
sions, one delegate decried the President's civil rights
proposals as "threats to make Southerners into a mongrel,

69 Ibid., p. 43.
70 Popham, op. cit. 71 Ibid.
inferior race by forced intermingling with Negroes." Others felt that the ending of segregation would result in the mixing of the races in beauty shops and swimming pools. While the party's platform called for the "ignominous" defeat of Truman, Dewey, and other candidates who would "establish a police state" in the country, it also declared,

We stand for the segregation of the races and the racial integrity of each race; the constitutional right to choose one's associates; to accept private employment without governmental interference, and to earn one's living in any lawful way. We oppose the elimination of segregation in employment by Federal bureaucrats called for by the misnamed civil rights program. We favor home rule, local self-government and a minimum interference with individual rights.

The Democratic program, it said, "would be utterly destructive of the social, economic and political life of the Southern people, and of other localities in which there may be differences in race, creed or national origin in appreciable number."

The 1943 Campaign

Through it all, President Truman always denied that the Dixiecrats represented the true feeling of most southerners. He asserted,

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73 Popham, "Southerners Name Thurmond."
74 Ibid.
76 Ibid.
I did not discount the handicap which the loss of a "Solid South" presented as far as my chances of winning the election were concerned. I knew that it might mean the difference between victory and defeat in November. I knew, too, that if I deserted the civil liberties plank of the Democratic Party platform I could heal the breach, but I have never traded principles for votes, and I did not intend to start the practice in 1948 regardless of how it might affect the nation.\(^7\)

Truman did some campaigning in the South, especially in Texas, which was considered "the principal battleground" between the Democrats and the Dixiecrats. Texas' twenty-three electoral votes were considered by some to be crucial to the President's election. Truman's swing through Texas made him "probably . . . the first candidate of the two dominant national parties ever to make a campaign speech for the presidency in Texas."\(^8\) In other parts of the South, however, Truman was not welcome. His name was not on the ballot in Louisiana, Alabama, Mississippi, and South Carolina.\(^9\) Even in Texas his reception was not always warm. Some Texas Dixiecrats had warned Vic Messall, Truman's former Senate secretary, that the President had better not come to Texas during his whistle-stop campaign, that "they'd shoot Truman if he went down there, that no-good S.O.B. and his civil rights." Truman got his first boos in Waco when he shook hands with a black

\(^{7}\)Truman, op. cit., p. 184.

\(^{8}\)Leslie Carpenter, "Texas November Vote Looms as Vital Force in Nation's Politics," Fort Worth Evening Star-Telegram, September 12, 1948.

\(^{9}\)"The Cracking South." Time, LII (September 20, 1948), 25.
Elsewhere, Truman railed at the southern party, claiming votes for them were "wasted Democratic votes." He said: "Either the standard Republicans will buy the election or the standard Democrats will win. Other parties don't stand a chance." On his trip to Texas, however, the President stayed away from the topic of civil rights and the Dixiecrats. In El Paso, for example, he talked of the western reclamation program.

Thurmond campaigned primarily in the southern and border states. Lachicotte described the Dixiecrat strategy thus:

As far as the States' Righters were concerned, the Democrats' Truman and the Republicans' Thomas Dewey were of one ilk, and they wanted nothing to do with either. They wanted to take from Truman enough electoral votes to throw the election into the House of Representatives. There the South, they reasoned, might elect its candidate or certainly would be in a good bargaining position. It was on these hopes that the campaign was based.

The South Carolina governor, whom Time described as the southern spokesman on the black versus white issue, used the rhetoric of states' rights, denying Washington's authority to get involved in southern behavior patterns. The Dixiecrat candidate proclaimed that the anti-poll tax law "would take

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80 Steinberg, op. cit., p. 325.
81 Dayton, op. cit., p. 9.
82 "'They'll Tear You Apart,'" Time, LII (October 4, 1948), 20.
83 Lachicotte, op. cit., p. 44.
84 "Southern Revolt," Time, LII (October 11, 1948), 24.
from you the right to regulate your own elections." The anti-lynch law "would provide the opening wedge for federal control of your police powers." About the anti-segregation law he asked, "When will they learn, as the South has learned, that you cannot legislate racial harmony?" The FEPC law "would force all business and business relationships into a Washington pattern guided and enforced by a federal Gestapo." Thurmond would not deny blacks the right to an education, a job, or the vote. But at one point in the campaign, he said, "There's not enough troops in the Army to break down segregation and admit the Negro into our homes, our eating places, our swimming pools and our theaters."85

The height of racial feelings and ill-will in the South, which Thurmond either knowingly or unknowingly exploited, can be shown by the reception given former Vice President Henry Wallace during his third-party campaign. He met angry crowds, eggs, and rotten tomatoes during his swing through the South, where he insisted on traveling with his black secretary and holding integrated meetings and stopping overnight at the homes of black supporters. At one point Wallace declared, 

There is a long chain that links unknown hoodlums in North Carolina or Alabama with men in finely tailored business suits in the great financial centers of New York or Boston, men who make a dollars-and-cents profit by setting race against race in the far away South.

... If the U. S. does not get right on the segregation

85 Ibid.
problem, she will lose her position of leadership in world affairs.86

One has only to look through the periodicals of the period to discover how active was the Ku Klux Klan in the South during the presidential year of 1948.

When the campaigning was done, Truman and his running mate Barkley polled 24,104,548 votes, 49.5 per cent of the total, and carried 28 states. The GOP candidates, Thomas E. Dewey and Governor Earl Warren of California, received 21,969,625 votes, 45.1 per cent, and carried 16 states. Thurmond got 1,169,312 votes and Wallace got 1,156,856. Truman received his largest plurality, 468,460 votes, in Texas, where Thurmond had pinned his principal hopes of getting the election into the House.87 The Dixiecrats picked up 39 electoral votes in South Carolina, Mississippi, Alabama, and Louisiana. In assessing the results, Truman wrote,

The greatest achievement was winning without the extreme radicals in the party and without the Solid South. It is customary for a politician to say that he wants all the votes he can get, but I was happy and pleased to be elected to the presidency by a Democratic Party that did not depend upon either the extreme left-wing or the southern bloc. And of course I did not want the reactionary votes which went for my Republican opponent. The fundamental purpose of the campaign in 1948 was to put the Democratic Party on its own feet and to leave it intact. This was achieved.88

86 "Eggs in the Dust," Time, LII (September 13, 1948), 22.
87 Fort Worth Morning and Evening Star-Telegram, December 10, 1948.
88 Truman, op. cit., pp. 221-222.
Truman's statement that he left the party intact could be contested, because after 1948 the formerly Solid South never gave the Democrats all of its electoral votes again.

There have been some contentions that the oil interests, fearing federal takeover of the off-shore tidelands, were involved in the states' rights movement of 1948, and one source claims that oil may have had just as much bearing on the movement as racism. But the tidelands issue was not a real factor until the election of 1952, and the public comments of Dixiecrat leaders and the sources from which the states' righters gained their electoral support would seem to indicate otherwise. Most of the Dixiecrat votes came from the areas in the South that had the most Negroes—the black belts. In fact, the party's presidential and vice presidential nominees were governors of the states that had the highest proportions of blacks in the South. Thurmond got most of his votes from counties with high percentages of blacks, while black-belt counties with high percentages of whites remained the most loyal to the national ticket. These deep South voters, the backbone of the Democratic Party in earlier years, had now changed their allegiance, and Truman and civil rights seem to be the best reasons why. Even in the deep South, however, the will to revolt was not universal.


90 Key, op. cit., p. 329.
Tradition gave strength to the national ticket, and so did the feeling that the general economic program of the Democrats was more important than the party's stand on civil rights. States' rights candidates won only in the states where they were listed as Democrats, and Thurmond probably carried Alabama and Louisiana only because maneuvers placed him in the Democratic column.\footnote{Ibid., pp. 340-342.} Phillips, pointing out that Thurmond's support came from the same areas that remained loyal to the Democrats and Al Smith in 1928, contended that the Dixiecrats represented socio-economic conservatism rather than racial hatred. But he added that in the poor white counties that remained loyal in 1948, there was little of a racial problem and residents were heartily displeased with black belt opposition to New Deal and Fair Deal economic measures that the poor craved. According to Phillips,\footnote{Phillips, op. cit., pp. 217-219.}

The split which marked deep South voting in 1948 essentially pitted the white professional and business classes of the black belts and cities against the poorer voters of the overwhelmingly white counties of the foothills and coastal bayou and pineywoods peripheries of the region. In the poor white counties, there was no preoccupation with white absolutism such as characterized the black belts, nor was there any interest in furthering the anti-New Deal economic policies of the black belt and urban deep South oligarchies. More often than not, the poor white counties supported New Deal and Fair Deal economic and welfare policies.

The implication is that racial prejudice was at the core of the Dixiecrat revolt.
CHAPTER II

THE REPUBLICANS MOVE SOUTH, 1952-1956

In 1952, Samuel Lubell pointed out a trend that has had a significant effect on the previously Democratic South—the rise of an urban middle class that was mostly Republican in political sympathies and from which was coming the strongest impetus for two-party politics. This middle class, the result of increasing industrialization in the South, felt disfranchised on the national level and gerrymandered locally. National taxing and spending policies were not to its liking, but it was unable to vote against them, "since in national elections the ballots of the South do not count." The thrust, then, was to the GOP. At issue, said Lubell, was not liberalism or conservatism, but the political unification of the South with the rest of the nation. Opposed were the traditional southerners and the Dixiecrats. Allied in favor were the liberals and the urban middle class.¹

Another trend that tended to make the South more conservative was the black's migration to the North because of the economic and industrial revolution that made manual labor less necessary than ever before. Accompanying this

was the black's struggle for equality and the espousing of his cause by the Democratic Party. "The effect of the Negro drive for greater rights in the South unavoidably is to strain Democratic unity to the limit and to push the South toward coalition with the Republicans," Lubell said. Supreme Court decisions favoring the black led to a backlash among southern voters, even while politicians, ever mindful of the increasing political power of the Negro, sought out his support without being too obvious about it. On the national scene, however, race baiting still was apparent, and Lubell expected it to continue until southern political leaders decided to go from or stay in the Democratic Party. The race issue, he said, was the best "cover" for them to depart from Democratic regularity. Because of the New Deal and the national party's concern with civil rights, blacks were going into the once lily-white Democratic Party, in the process driving out southern whites. The Dixiecrats, although they needed the one-party system to keep blacks from voting, labeled the party a "nigger" party to fight the national Democratic administration. Lubell wrote in 1952:

Today's insurgent political pressures in the South stem from two different aspects of the conservative revolution--rational and economic change. Both groups of insurgents find themselves in the same plight--in disfranchising the Negro locally, they have disfranchised themselves under growing pressures to make their votes count nationally. To do so, they must bolt the Democratic ranks and make common cause with the Republicans in the North, directly or covertly.²

²Ibid., pp. 120-127.
Lubell in 1952 thought the break from the one-party system in the South would come first in the more urbanized states and in presidential voting. There also would be a transition period, which he thought was underway at the time, in which southern voters would try to defeat the Democrats nationally while retaining their grasp on the Democratic monopoly locally. His predictions were especially accurate for the presidential election year of 1952.

As in 1948, southern Democrats in 1952 wanted to insure that President Truman or someone of the same Fair Deal ilk did not receive the party's presidential nomination. As a matter of fact, southerners appeared to be more hostile to Truman personally than to his civil rights proposals, since it was felt the South could defeat them in the Senate and because southerners thought that northern pressure for civil rights had dropped with the improvement of race relations in the South.

There were several lines of thought as to tactics. Assuming that the South had no hope of nominating its own candidate at the upcoming national convention, southerners still could throw all of their support to a nominal representative, such as Senator Richard Russell of Georgia, and hope to use this leverage for maximum influence on the platform and whatever ticket finally resulted. Some leaders also

\[3\] Ibid., p. 117.
wanted a promise of southern influence in high party councils. If the results were not satisfactory, the South could take its revenge at the polls in November with one of three alternatives: supporting a third party as it had in 1948, encouraging southerners to vote for a Republican for president or to stay away from the polls entirely, or changing state laws to bar the names of presidential candidates from the ballots and listing only the names of the electors, who would be able to cast their votes for anyone they wanted. This definitely, of course, would not be Truman. Georgia state law, in fact, already had been changed for this purpose. In any event, it was hoped that the result of any of these alternatives would be to throw the election into the House of Representatives, where southern leaders thought they could veto any candidate they could not accept. With the party smashed, the southerners reasoned, they could pick up the pieces.  

Russell once again became the leader of the southern revolt against Truman. Announcing his campaign for the nomination, he declared,

I am a Jeffersonian Democrat who believes in the greatest practicable degree of local self-government. The maintenance of the rights of the states ... is our protection against that loss of individual rights.

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and liberties which has always followed undue central-
ization of authority.5

It was thought that Russell, should a deadlock develop at the
convention, could switch a bloc of some 300 votes to the
candidate who could promise the most to the South.6 His
candidacy was given further luster by his defeat of Senator
Estes Kefauver of Tennessee in the Florida primary by a vote
of 357,072 to 281,162.7

Truman cooled the southern fire somewhat by announcing
that he would not be a candidate for re-election, but some
leaders in the South, including Governors James F. Byrnes
of South Carolina, Allan Shivers of Texas, Herman Talmadge
of Georgia, and Fuller Warren of Florida, said they would bolt
the party if a Truman critic was not nominated. They favored
Russell, but preferring to stay in the party, he refused to
lead a Dixiecrat-style movement.8

The 1952 Democratic Convention

At the Chicago Democratic convention in 1952, three
issues affecting the South clashed and intertwined: the
presidential nomination itself, southern party loyalty, and
the platform plank on civil rights.

5"South in the Saddle," Newsweek, XXXIX (March 10, 1952),
27.

6Ibid.


8"Lining Up," Newsweek, XL (July 14, 1952), 24.
Seeking the nomination, either overtly or covertly, were Governor Averell Harriman of New York, Kefauver of Tennessee, Russell of Georgia, and Governor Adlai Stevenson of Illinois. Harriman had a strategy that he hoped would capture the convention for the Fair Deal: write a platform plank on civil rights that the South could not accept and force a walkout. Incidentally, the move would strengthen his support among northern minority groups and deflate the primary argument that Stevenson was needed as a compromise candidate. The Fair Dealers, it was reported, no longer felt they needed the South to win presidential elections and that minority votes from the North were more important.

In response to the implied threat of southerners to bolt the 1952 convention as they had the one in 1948, the convention required southern delegates to pledge their loyalty to the upcoming ticket or give up their seats. By a voice vote it was stipulated that no delegate would be seated unless he agreed to do everything possible to see that the nominees of the convention were placed at the top of the ballot in his state. Jonathan Daniels of North Carolina and Senator Spessard Holland of Florida offered a compromise, declaring that the convention's consensus was that the only honorable course for delegates would be to support the convention's


majority decisions. But the compromise failed. Even moderate southerners believed the pledge was provocative, and some of them thought that the laws and party rules in some of their states would prevent them from taking such an oath. Most southerners considered the loyalty issue as the next thing to reading them out of the party.

Senator Hubert Humphrey of Minnesota, a Kefauver supporter, had joined forces with Harriman and his lieutenant, Senator Herbert H. Lehman of New York, to fight for the loyalty pledge, a strong civil rights plank, and the seating of "loyal" delegates. Of particular interest were the delegations from Texas and Mississippi. Maury Maverick, a former representative, was leading the challenge to the Texas delegation, headed by Governor Shivers. Maverick claimed that Shivers would support General Dwight D. Eisenhower, recently nominated for president by the Republican National Convention, should the Democrats place a strong civil rights plank in the platform. The issue was much the same concerning


the Mississippi delegation. In spite of the fight put up by the Fair Dealers, the credentials committee voted thirty-six to thirteen to seat Texas and thirty-three to seventeen to seat Mississippi. The pledge, however, was adopted, although Truman defused the issue somewhat by insisting that the credentials committee "reinterpret" the pledge as not contradicting "the existing law of the state . . . nor . . . the instructions of the state Democratic governing bodies."

The end result was that southerners were required to sign a pledge that they would see that the nominees of the convention were listed under the Democratic column on state ballots. They were not required to pledge their loyalty to the individual nominees. Nevertheless, the South Carolina, Louisiana, and Virginia delegations refused to sign the pledge and were stripped of their sixty-four convention votes. No one, however, attempted to have them removed from the convention floor. In a later compromise, the voting rights of the three states were restored, apparently because Stevenson,

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15 "All-Important Texas," Newsweek, XL (July 28, 1952), 21.
18 Lawrence, "North-South Compromise Drawn."
then in control, sought unity.  

Stuart Gerry Brown, a Stevenson biographer, said that there were denials that Stevenson had anything to do with the compromise, but Brown was sure that it was in line with the governor's wishes. "From the moment of his nomination a few days later," Brown wrote, "his policy as leader of the party was consistently in favor of party unity on the best terms obtainable for civil rights." The resolution of the loyalty issue, another biographer said, made Stevenson the compromise candidate of the North and the South.

The civil rights plank also turned out to be a compromise, calling for action on civil rights throughout the nation on the individual, local, state, and federal levels. The specifics, however, were left up to Congress. The platform plank urged equal political rights, educational opportunity, economic advancement, and decent living conditions for all American citizens. It favored federal legislation for equal employment opportunities, security of person,

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and equal participation in political rights. "We also favor legislation to perfect existing Federal civil rights statutes and to strengthen the administrative machinery for the protection of civil rights."\textsuperscript{24} In contrast, the Republican civil rights plank declared that the states are mainly responsible for guaranteeing civil rights. It stated,

\begin{quote}
We believe that it is the primary responsibility of each state to order and control its own domestic institutions, and this power, reserved to the states, is essential to the maintenance of our Federal Republic. However, we believe that the Federal Government should take supplemental action within its constitutional jurisdiction to oppose discrimination against race, religion or national origin.\textsuperscript{25}
\end{quote}

The GOP convention, however, pledged federal action on lynching and poll taxes.\textsuperscript{26}

Once the Democratic convention got down to the business of choosing its nominee, Humphrey was ready to go with Stevenson, whom he termed a good liberal. He argued that the liberals had better get behind the governor or the South would put him over. Harriman and Kefauver withdrew after the second ballot, and Stevenson was nominated on the third.\textsuperscript{27} After the nomination, Stevenson, Truman, Speaker Sam Rayburn, and Frank McKinney, chairman of the Democratic National

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{24}The New York Times, July 24, 1952, Sec. 1, p. 16.
\item \textsuperscript{25}The New York Times, July 10, 1952, Sec. 1, p. 24.
\item \textsuperscript{26}"Promises and Portents: How the Platforms Compare," Newsweek, XL (August 4, 1952), 27.
\item \textsuperscript{27}"The Civil Warriors," Newsweek, XL (August 4, 1952), 19.
\end{itemize}
Committee, met backstage at the convention hall to deliberate on a vice presidential nominee. Vice President Alben Barkley was discarded. Rayburn refused. Truman and McKinney, with Rayburn's support, opposed Kefauver. Russell was considered unacceptable to the New and Fair Dealers. Rayburn favored Senator A. S. "Mike" Monroney of Oklahoma over Senator John Sparkman of Alabama, but he was outvoted. The group of four settled on Sparkman, reportedly since it was thought he would be a stronger candidate than Monroney because of his southern background and his longer Senate record. The New York Times reported that the Alabama senator was chosen because he was least likely to upset the North or the South.

Sparkman's candidacy, however, was not universally acclaimed. Harriman and Kefauver thought that Sparkman would weaken the party's chances in key states such as Michigan, Minnesota, and New York. Representative Adam Clayton Powell of New York and several other black delegates walked out while


29Kenneth S. Davis, A Prophet in His Own Country: The Triumphs and Defeats of Adlai E. Stevenson (Garden City, N. Y., 1957), p. 408.


the balloting on the vice presidential nominee was in progress,\textsuperscript{33} saying later that Sparkman's nomination would make it impossible for him and other blacks to campaign for the national ticket. Another black convention delegate, Assemblyman W. Byron Rumford of Berkeley, California, had these comments:

While he is a liberal in the Southern sense, we cannot see things the same way. It is going to be difficult. It seems to me that we from the North and the West should have been the ones who fought the "loyalty pledge" in the early stages of the convention instead of the Southerners.\textsuperscript{34}

Senator Lehman of New York, who called Sparkman "in all respects except possibly one a real fighting liberal," urged the vice presidential nominee to embrace the civil rights plank of the platform without reservation unless he wanted to weaken the ticket in New York.\textsuperscript{35}

After the convention, the Democrats thought that victory was within their grasp if the party could unite. One national newsmagazine reported that both minorities and southerners gave ground on civil rights. The South had several things to gain. If the Democrats became a minority party, the South would lose power in Congress. Then, too, there was concern that the federal cornucopia, which had lavished billions of

\textsuperscript{33}White, "Sparkman Chosen."


\textsuperscript{35}\textit{Ibid.}
dollars on the South during the New and Fair Deals, might close up under Republican rule. Besides, racial tension was easing in the South because of higher educational standards among both races and the black dispersion.\textsuperscript{36} Eisenhower, on the other hand, was disheartened by what happened at the Democratic convention. Since there was no Dixiecrat revolt, an acceptance of the civil rights plank, and the nomination of a southerner for vice president, Eisenhower thought the South would be hard to crack. But he also had hopes that these same factors would help loosen black votes in the North, and aides urged him to emphasize civil rights.\textsuperscript{37} Such, however, was not to be. Eisenhower managed to stay out of controversy on the civil rights question, and at least one of Stevenson's biographers thought that Eisenhower's aloofness captured him the electoral votes of four southern states.\textsuperscript{38}

The 1952 Campaign---Equal Rights

Actually, the candidates' positions on questions important to the South were clear. Eisenhower even before he was nominated was critical of a compulsory federal Fair Employment Practices Commission (FEPC). But he promised his "unalterable


\textsuperscript{37}"From Now Till November," \textit{Newsweek, XL} (August 11, 1952), 21.

\textsuperscript{38}Brown, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 78.
support of fairness and equality among all types of American citizens." He continued,

I believe that insofar as the Federal Government has any influence or any constitutional authority in this field, all of its means, all of its expenditures, all of its policies should adhere firmly and without any kind of equivocation to that principle....

Eisenhower thought that it was up to the states to handle discrimination. "I do not believe that we can cure all of the evils of men's hearts by law," he said on one occasion.

The general's three trips into the South in 1952 were successful, but not noted for strong statements on civil rights. In September, Eisenhower skipped through four southern states in 36 hours, traveling some 3,590 miles while asking the South to rebel against the Democratic Party. But he avoided civil rights, touching on race relations only gingerly in one sentence out of six speeches.

During a subsequent trip into the South, Eisenhower was quoted as saying that "neither at home nor in the eyes of the world can America risk the weakness that inevitably results when any group of our people are ranked--politically or economically--as second-class citizens." His audience in


41 "Eisenhower's Tour of Dixie Rouses Enthusiasm . . . Will It Win Him Enough Votes to Split South?" Newsweek, XL (September 15, 1952), 26-27.
Columbia, South Carolina, enthusiastic up to that point, made no response. Eisenhower only managed to lose southern votes when he said he wanted to end segregation in the nation's capital and put a black in his cabinet, providing he could find one who was qualified.

Stevenson, too, thought that the states should enact their own fair employment practices law. But his position was that "if the states are unwilling or unable, then I presume there is no alternative to having the Federal government do so." The Democratic candidate took a moderate, conciliatory attitude towards the South, while at the same time coming down hard against discrimination. During a speech in Richmond, Virginia, Stevenson declared his support for the Democratic civil rights plank. But he added,

I reject as contemptible the reckless assertions that the South is a prison in which half the people are prisoners and the other half are wardens. I view with scorn those who hurl charges that the South—or any group of Americans—is wedded to wrong and incapable of right. For this itself is an expression of prejudice compounded with hatred, a poisonous doctrine for which, I hope, there will never be room in our country.

Stevenson said that as long as man "remains a little lower than the angels" there would be racial and religious

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42 "Different This Year," Time, LX (October 13, 1952), 23.
43 "The Key States," Newsweek, XL (September 29, 1952), 31.
45 Cochran, op. cit., pp. 222-223.
prejudice. The South's problem had been compounded because the minority there is so large, and he pointed out that sometimes people forget the strides the South had made during the last ten years towards equal treatment. "But I do not attempt to justify the unjustifiable, whether it is anti-Negroism in one place, anti-Semitism in another—or for that matter, anti-Southernism in many places," he said. "And neither can I justify self-righteousness anywhere." 46

The 1952 Campaign—Tidelands Oil

Another issue writ large in the minds of southerners in 1952 was the tidelands oil issue. Truman in 1945 had issued an executive order claiming that the federal government had jurisdiction over the oil in the continental shelf submerged just outside the three-mile territorial limits. 47 The United States Supreme Court had ruled in 1947 that the federal government "has paramount rights in and power over that belt, an incident to which is full dominion over the resources of the soil under that water area, including oil." 48 In 1950, after violations, the court twice upheld its decision. 49

46 Ibid.

47 Executive Order 9633, September 28, 1945, 10 Federal Register, 12305.


In May, 1952, the oil lobbies managed to get through Congress a joint resolution giving the tidelands to the adjoining states, but Truman vetoed the resolution. "It would have been a gift to three states at the expense of the other forty-five," the President declared. "It would be the height of folly" for the government to give away the continental shelf and then repurchase it at "stiff prices" for the military. Congress could not override the veto, and some southern Democrats started to work to ensure that the next president would not feel the same way.

Even before the national political conventions in 1952, H. J. "Jack" Porter, head of the Eisenhower for President Club of Texas, wrote the general to determine his attitude on the question. "... I agree with the principle that federal ownership in this case, as in others, is one that is calculated to bring about steady progress toward centralized ownership and control," Eisenhower replied, "a trend which I have bitterly opposed." Eisenhower contended that it was a matter of states' rights.

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Stevenson, on the other hand, was not as receptive. At one point, "a powerful Texas Democrat" visited the Illinois governor in his Springfield office seeking Stevenson's support of private ownership of the offshore oil rights. This would help Stevenson, the caller said, in "a key southern state." The conference lasted two hours. The Texan came out unsmiling. Stevenson was grinning. The governor was asked what had been worked out and Stevenson replied that nothing had been worked out. "I just tried to make him see that a man doesn't try to be President just to give away the resources of the American people," he said. "I don't know whether I convinced him. Anyway, I may have given him something to think about." Stevenson had not convinced Governor Allan Shivers of Texas, the man who had come to see him. When Shivers returned to his home state, he declared, "I could not vote for Stevenson." He called Stevenson's stands on oil and civil rights "unacceptable." The unhappy Texas Democratic leadership did more than just talk. A splinter group, the Texas Democratic Party, cross-filed the GOP national nominees on the general election ballot under its own name, and chose as electors the same persons named by


55 "Everybody's Happy," Newsweek, XL (September 1, 1952), 19.
the Republicans at their state convention. Thus, Texas Democrats could vote for Eisenhower without having to vote Republican. The state Democratic convention did put Stevenson at the head of the regular Democratic ticket because they thought it was the "fair and honorable" thing to do. But the state Democratic leadership urged all Texas Democrats and state officials to work and vote for Eisenhower.56 Some observers credit Eisenhower's Texas victory to the work of the Democrats for Eisenhower, led by Shivers and Attorney General Price Daniel with the support of the State Democratic Executive Committee.57 Truman, however, having heard of the alleged deal between the Republicans and the tidelands states, had the last word. On January 16, 1953, just four days before Eisenhower's inauguration, the President issued an executive order reserving the continental shelf as an oil reserve for the Navy.58

In 1952, the Republicans got their first southern electoral votes since 1928 and garnered 48.24 per cent of the total 8.5 million votes, a dramatic increase from the 26.92 per cent vote total the party received in 1948. (See Appendix, Table II.) Even though the Republicans managed

57 Fort Worth Morning Star-Telegram, November 5, 1952.
58 Executive Order 10426, January 16, 1953, 18 Federal Register, 405.
to win four southern states (Texas, Tennessee, Florida, and Virginia), Adlai Stevenson still polled 51.76 per cent of the vote and carried seven states.

The 1952 election demonstrated that the old-time Dixiecrats still were displeased with the Democratic Party despite convention concessions that made 1952 a more pleasant experience than 1948. In the die-hard Dixiecrat states of South Carolina, Louisiana, and Mississippi, Eisenhower picked up vote percentages of 49, 47, and 40 per cent respectively. His support in the deep South came from the same areas as did Thurmond's and Smith's—the black belts and the cities. The rural deep South, however, where there were fewer blacks, was not as enthusiastic. Regionally speaking, the general's biggest support came from the outer South, where he picked up his only southern electoral votes, and this was mostly because of urban vote gains and a combination of Dixiecrat votes with the area's traditional Republican electorate. The Democrats continued to carry the outer South black belts, where racial feeling was not as strong. Thus, where the race issue was important, southern Democrats went with the Republicans in 1952, while elsewhere Democrats stayed with their party unless influenced by other issues, such as tidelands oil. The vote pattern was similar to Thurmond's in 1948.

In the South, 3.3 million more people voted in 1952 than in 1948, but the sizeable Republican increases were not attributable to this fact alone. In the South, as in the rest of the nation, Dwight Eisenhower's margin of victory came from the 1948 Democrat (or Dixiecrat). The 1952 candidates drew most of their support from loyal partisans who had voted for the same party in 1948. Each party added to its core vote a good number of new voters and a smaller number of young voters. Each party got votes from persons voting for minor parties in 1948. Some observers said,

The coup de grâce was administered to the hopes of the Democratic Party, however, by the addition to the Republican total of a substantial number of erstwhile Democrats. Had these 1948 Democrats stayed with Stevenson in 1952, General Eisenhower would not have gone to the White House.60

Campbell, Gurin, and Miller managed to put together a portrait of the southern voter through their surveys of the 1952 electorate. In general, they all had some ties to the Democratic Party that had dominated southern presidential elections in the past. Southern Eisenhower voters were more likely to split their tickets than southern Stevenson voters—only 26 per cent of presidential Republicans voted a straight ticket in the South as compared with 93 per cent

60 Angus Campbell, Gerald Gurin, and Warren E. Miller, *The Voter Decides* (Evanston, Ill., 1954), p. 17. The South for the purpose of their survey was defined as Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, Florida, South Carolina, North Carolina, Tennessee, Kentucky, Virginia, West Virginia, and Maryland.
of the presidential Democrats. Southerners, compared with persons residing in other parts of the nation, were more often identified with the Democrats and were more likely to consider themselves strong party identifiers and less likely to call themselves independents. In attitudes towards the two presidential candidates, southerners were not as clearly favorable to Eisenhower and less of them were interested in the candidates as individuals than were respondents in the northern part of the nation. Neither group, North or South, had an over-all party bias on its attitudes.

Campbell, Gurin, and Miller also rated voters on their issue, candidate, and party orientation and found that new Democrats in the South resembled regular Democrats in all three criteria, although the new Democrats tended to be weaker party identifiers than the Democratic regulars. Candidate orientation seemed to have little to do with a new voter becoming a Democrat. New Republicans also had the same attitudes towards Eisenhower and toward the issues as did GOP regulars, and both had a strong Republican bias. "Only a relatively weak attachment to the Democratic Party, held by a large minority of the new Republicans, stood as a barrier separating them from the Republican regulars of the South," the authors wrote. Southern switchers made up 43 per cent of the total 1952 GOP southern vote, compared to

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21 per cent in the North. "These new-found supporters of the Republican presidential candidate still carried the marks of their earlier allegiance to the Democrats," they said. Most of them maintained their identification with the Democrats and only a few of them would call themselves "weak" Republicans. But on issue and candidate partisanship, they were almost as Republican as the Republican regulars.63 This was atypical of switchers as a whole. It appeared that the voter realignment Lubell had predicted was beginning to take place in the South, and one of the primary factors was Eisenhower's general states' rights bias. What was changing was not the opinions of southern voters, but the attitudes of the two major parties.

The 1952 southern Republican inroads brought up the question in 1956 of just how permanent the GOP gains might be. Some believed that southern Democrats might just have been showing discontent with the rest of their party, and some Republicans, caught up in the insecurity of whether or not Eisenhower would run again after his 1955 heart attack, were concerned that only the President could make the southern gains good again in 1956. At any rate, the GOP vote in 1952 had disorganized the Democrats in the South.64

In 1956, the Democrats were split between the northern

63 Ibid., p. 172.

and western liberal wing, exercising power through the Democratic National Committee, and the southern conservative wing, maintaining leverage through its congressional seniority. The biggest point of contention was civil rights, even though the question did not surface on an issue-oriented poll conducted by the committee.

The 1956 Primary Campaign

Stevenson, Kefauver, and Governor Averell Harriman of New York were the three announced candidates for the Democratic nomination. Stevenson had planned to stay out of the primary campaigns, but the Tennessee senator forced him to enter eight. Kefauver was hoping to show that he had strength in all parts of the country, including the South, and entered fourteen primaries. The senator might have had good grass roots support, having whipped Stevenson in New Hampshire and, surprisingly, in Minnesota, but Kefauver apparently had little support among the party leaders and organization. Southerners reportedly did not like Kefauver's unsouthern stand on civil rights (he had refused to sign the so-called Southern Manifesto against the Supreme Court's 1954 desegregation ruling). Northerners reportedly did not like him because of a crime-and-politics investigation that hurt some innocent Democrats along with the guilty. All of them thought Kefauver did not do his share of the work and went off on headline-making investigations. Harriman's strategy
depended on Kefauver knocking Stevenson out of the race. With Kefauver unable to win the nomination on his own, the New York governor was hopeful he might be able to pick it up as a dark horse candidate.\textsuperscript{65} 

The Florida primary, the only one Kefauver contested with Stevenson in the South, was important because of its southern location; its date, just before the important California primary, and its number of delegate votes, twenty-eight. In it, Stevenson reportedly was labeled as a compromiser on civil rights and desegregation, and Harriman planned to use that information to his advantage in the North, where he wanted to pose as an unequivocator on civil rights. Turnout was not too high. A runoff primary for governor failed to come off because one of the six candidates won the first primary, in which the chief issue was integration. The state also had gone for Eisenhower in 1952 and many voters figured the same thing would happen in 1956.

Along with discussion of other issues, Kefauver and Stevenson said the Supreme Court integration ruling should be complied with as the law of the land. The matter came up again when former Governor Millard Caldwell in the largely segregationist Florida Panhandle called Kefauver "an integrationist" and "a sycophant of the Negro vote." Stevenson, sitting on the platform, claimed he had not heard the remarks

\textsuperscript{65}Ibid., pp. 32-46.
and disclaimed any responsibility for them, although he failed to refute them. Kefauver charged that Stevenson should have denounced the statement and that he had to share some of the liability. In the Florida primary balloting, Stevenson won by a narrow majority, leaving the nomination contest up to the voters of California.  

The race issue also was present in California, where Kefauver implied and his manager stated that Stevenson supporters had an understanding with the state's rabid segregationists. F. Joseph Donohue, Kefauver's campaign manager, said,

The fact is that a vote for Stevenson is a vote for Eastland, Talmadge, Ellender and other white supremacy boys because the Stevenson bosses in Chicago have agreed to let them continue to control their political machines in their home states, while their hand-picked boy, Paul Butler [the Democratic national chairman], stays in power.  

The implications were made during a civil rights rally before a predominantly black audience. Stevenson, who had backing on his civil rights position from Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt and former Representative Helen Gahagan Douglas of California, refused to answer the accusations. Stevenson won the California primary by a landslide and was put in front in the race for the Democratic nomination. He picked up the unenthusiastic support of southern Democrats who liked him

66 Whitman, op. cit., pp. 139-140.

67 Thomson and Shattuck, op. cit., p. 64.
better than Kefauver. On July 31, Kefauver withdrew and asked that his supporters back Stevenson.

Harriman, who did not officially enter the race until June, 1956, said he was for the liberal principles of Roosevelt and Truman, but he, too, tried to woo the South. Governor Raymond Gary of Oklahoma told a Denver, Colorado, meeting that Harriman believed in the Golden Rule on civil rights: "... If you leave people alone to work out this problem on a local level they will do it." The New York governor later agreed with the statement, although earlier he had claimed to be a zealot against discrimination and had accused Stevenson of being a moderate on civil rights. Like his opponent, Harriman tried to walk a center line on civil rights in the hopes of attracting both southern whites and blacks.68

The civil rights issue had been inflamed by the 1954 Supreme Court ruling that declared that separate but equal school systems that segregated the races were unconstitutional.69 The decision quite naturally raised the ire of most of the southern leadership. Senator Strom Thurmond of South Carolina and Senator Harry Byrd of Virginia drew up the so-called Southern Manifesto in 1956. This document declared that the court's ruling would be resisted by all

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68Ibid., pp. 66-67.
legal means. Although some considered the statement useless, nearly all members of the southern congressional bloc signed it, nineteen senators and eighty-one congressmen. Those who failed to do so, Thurmond's biographer commented, had trouble getting re-elected.70

Kefauver and Harriman took an unequivocal stand on the Supreme Court decision, but Stevenson was hurt by what some considered to be his moderation and vacillation. Speaking before a black group in California in February, 1956, he opposed the use of federal troops to force compliance with the ruling and an amendment to a school-aid bill that would cut off federal funds to segregated schools. Gradualism is necessary to handle a century-old problem, Stevenson stated, although he added that the task should be undertaken at "all reasonable speed," a phrase the black leadership disliked.71 Some of the blacks groaned, but Stevenson continued that poor schools were one of the major causes of racial discrimination and that he did not favor keeping them poor. The North and the South had to live together, he commented, and he asked for patience and understanding. He suggested January 1, 1963, the centennial date of the Emancipation Proclamation, as the target date for completion of school integration.

71Davis, A Prophet in His Own Country, pp. 470-471.
Someone from New York sent him a campaign contribution with a note attached—"to be cashed in 1963." Stevenson was caught in the middle of the civil rights dilemma. He needed a majority of convention delegates to be renominated, and he could have them by ignoring the South and concentrating on the other sections of the nation. But once getting the nomination, he would have to have all the Democratic votes he could get from every geographic region, as well as large amounts of independent votes, if he was to have any hope of unseating a popular President. Northern Democrats were telling him to rely on the North for both renomination and election with the claim that a popular civil rights stand might get enough votes to offset the losses in the South. Such a tactic, however, might split the party of which Stevenson theoretically was the leader. One biographer wrote,

To be free to win the nomination by taking the popular civil rights stand in the North, and to plot his strategy for the election in the same way, he would have to abdicate his party leadership. Yet since the Democratic party, as a national party, contained within itself the segregation issue which the next President would have to face, to give up his leadership in order to smooth the way to the Presidency would, Stevenson was convinced, disqualify him for office.  

Some of Stevenson's supporters, nevertheless, were unhappy with his moderate stance, and one commentator thought that Stevenson asked of blacks more patience than they could have been expected to possess.


Eisenhower tried to float above the issue. Asked once what he thought about the Supreme Court decision, he said that it did not make any difference what he thought about it. The court said what the Constitution was and he had sworn to uphold the Constitution. Another time a reporter asked the President what he thought of the action of four southern legislatures repudiating the decision, and what the federal government should do to enforce it. The President replied,

Well, of course, you have asked a very vast question that is filled with argument on both sides. You have raised the question of states' rights versus Federal power; you have particularly brought up the question whether the Supreme Court is the last word we have in the interpretation of our Constitution. Now, this is what I say: there are adequate legal means of determining all of these factors. The Supreme Court has issued its own operational directives and delegated power to the district courts.

I expect that we are going to make progress, and the Supreme Court itself said it does not expect revolutionary action suddenly executed.

We will make progress, and I am not going to attempt to tell them how it is going to be done. Privately the President criticized the court decision. He once told Emmet John Hughes,

I am convinced that the Supreme Court decision set back progress in the South at least fifteen years. . . . It's all very well to talk about school integration—you may be also talking about social disintegration. Feelings are deep on this, especially where children are involved. . . . We can't demand perfection in these moral questions. . . . And the fellow who tells me that you can do these things by force is just plain nuts.

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74 Davis, *A Prophet in His Own Country*, p. 471.

75 Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 94.

76 Cochran, *op. cit.*, p. 270.
Just before the Democratic convention, southerners put out the word that they might bolt over civil rights. Governor Timmerman of South Carolina arranged a preconvention caucus that was not adjourned so it could be re-opened after the convention. The threat was that the South would again defect from the party if the proper stand on civil rights and integration was not taken. During the formative stages of the caucus, Kefauver withdrew; Stevenson became stronger, and southern party loyalists had shown their strength. Strategy was adopted but not divulged, and the caucus wound up by saying that a platform acceptable to the South and the nation could be written, stressing the need for mutual recognition of the states' problems and political necessities. Observers concluded that moderate southerners had gained control.  

The 1956 Democratic Convention

At the convention, civil rights was much the big issue. Most of the testimony and argument in the pre-convention platform hearings supported the northern liberal integrationist view, providing little real possibility of patching up the differences. Civil rights even figured in foreign policy discussions as George Wallace, then a judge, wanted to know why foreign opinion had to dictate to the alteration

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77 Thomson and Shattuck, op. cit., p. 71.
of "long established institutions" at home. Belford Lawson of Washington, D. C., commented that racial practices in the United States had evil effects abroad. The issue also provided an undercurrent on the hearings on social welfare and veterans. The chairman named a preliminary drafting sub-committee composed chiefly of "southerners or of persons from other sections regarded by southerners as 'reasonable.'"  

Southerners were concerned about what former President Truman might tell the platform committee about civil rights, but in the end he opted for unity, saying the planks on civil rights in the 1948 and 1952 platforms were adequate. He failed to endorse the ultra-liberal northern demand that the Supreme Court integration decision be recognized explicitly and supported.

The southern representatives on the platform committee, who met and prepared at daily hotel room caucuses, were patient in public and reiterated their demands that the platform not mention the 1954 and subsequent Supreme Court rulings on integration. Their public statements were limited and they kept their wrath private, hoping ultimately to come up with a solution that would find favor, or at least tolerance, in their home districts. At the end of the hearings, heartened by Truman's moderation, they were hopeful for a

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78 Ibid., pp. 94-98.  
79 Brown, op. cit., p. 103.
favorable outcome. The northern liberals also had a strategy, planning to use the platform committee and the convention sessions to put on a drive for an unequivocable civil rights plank. They did not intend, however, to insist on it to the point of producing a split. With favorable arrangements before the platform committee, giving them most of the time, the liberals were allowed to present a record and provide symbolic representation for the groups and the causes in which they believed.

Although the platform committee leaders sought moderation, civil rights proponents tried divisive tactics. Leonard Woodcock, then vice president of the United Auto Workers, noted that the South was not the only region in the country worth catering to. The party, he continued, also had to win in the North, and civil rights was an issue there, too. A proper stand would build up voters in states with important senatorial races. For the South, Governor Timmerman of South Carolina denied that the party had to woo black voters with strong civil rights planks and pro-integration arguments. In 1952, he noted, such a plank had not ensured success and even lost four southern states for the Democrats. Segregation, the governor declared, is best for black and white, and he claimed the Democrats might lose the South if the proper stand was not taken.\textsuperscript{80}

\textsuperscript{80}Thomson and Shattuck, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 103-109.
With the civil rights plank headed for the floor and a fight, platform committee chairman John W. McCormack allotted twenty minutes for the majority report and ten minutes for the minority. Governor Marvin Griffin wanted time to state the southern viewpoint, but McCormack refused. "Hell, no," he reportedly told Griffin. "We need all our time to fight the boys who are trying to make the plank tougher." Griffin replied, "Thank you, John. I'll just tell the boys that Yankee sonofabitch wouldn't give me any time." In the meantime, some liberals and conservatives were trying to come up with a plank that would not split the party, one that would remain silent on the Supreme Court decision. Supporting that proposal were Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt, Senator Lyndon Johnson of Texas, and former President Truman.  

Northern liberals, in part hoping to find more support for the pending floor fight over civil rights, challenged the seating of two southern delegations--one from Mississippi, headed by Governor J. P. Coleman, and one from South Carolina, headed by Timmerman. Also involved were northern hopes to punish the states for party disloyalty and to seat delegates more inclined to fight for the party's eventual nominees.


The leader of the contesting Mississippi delegation, the Reverend Charles G. Hamilton, chairman of the True Democratic Party of Mississippi, pointed out that Coleman's delegation had been pro-Eisenhower in 1952 and that one member still was working for the President. He also reminded the decision makers that Mississippi had defected in 1948. But Senator Hubert H. Humphrey of Minnesota and Governor John S. Battle of Virginia, who had opposed each other on the loyalty question in 1952, this time urged the rules committee to adopt a "good faith" rule. In another show of unity, the credentials committee voted fifty-two to two to seat the Mississippi and South Carolina delegations. The good faith rule did not require delegates to sign a loyalty oath and assumed that all the delegates were faithful delegates. National committee-men and state organizations were given the responsibility of making sure that the party nominees got on state ballots.

The regular delegations seated included Senators James Eastland and John Stennis of Mississippi and turncoat Strom Thurmond of South Carolina.

As the time for platform approval drew near, the northern liberals began lining up state delegations to petition for a roll call vote. They needed a majority of the delegates from eight states. Earlier, the drafting committee had voted out

a compromise plank after defeating a Harriman proposal by a vote of sixteen to one. The compromise draft was approved twelve to five with southerners voting against it in a bloc. After the entire committee adopted the compromise, the Georgia delegation caucused and decided to vote against the platform and against "any amendment that would further challenge the southern way of life and the principles of the Democratic Party." After some difficulty, the northerners managed to get enough platform committee members together to introduce a minority civil rights plank very similar to the majority version. Meanwhile, convention leaders took time to read other planks in hopes of delaying the civil rights fight until after most of the television audience had gone to bed. It came at 12:43 a.m. John McCormack of Massachusetts read the majority plank and moved adoption of the platform. Robert Short of Minnesota offered the minority plank. There was half an hour of debate, the northern liberals followed by the moderates, none of whom were southerners. A surprise witness was former President Truman, who urged unity and the adoption of the majority report. Speaker Sam Rayburn of Texas put the minority report to a voice vote and declared that the noes had it. The proposed platform passed on a second voice vote. Rayburn damped southern enthusiasm by asking that flags offensive to anyone in the chamber not be displayed. There were some charges that
Rayburn had been unfair. In its final effect, the platform unity, being a victory for the Stevenson forces of compromise and moderation, more or less put Harriman out of business.\textsuperscript{85} The plank that was approved denounced discrimination but failed to endorse the Supreme Court decision, saying only that it "brought consequences of vast importance." The party was pledged to continue its efforts to end discrimination in employment, personal security, voting, and education. The plank decried "all proposals for the use of force to interfere with the orderly determination of these matters by the court."\textsuperscript{86} The GOP civil rights plank approved about a week later was a compromise that was considered an administration concession to southern delegates, who were worried that a stronger plank might endanger southern House and Senate seats. But nevertheless, the Republican platform supported the 1954 desegregation ruling. It stated,

\begin{quote}
The Republican party accepts the decision of the United States Supreme Court that racial discrimination in publicly supported schools must be progressively eliminated. We concur in the conclusion of the Supreme Court that its decision directing school desegregation should be accomplished with "all deliberate speed" locally through Federal District Courts. The implementation order of the Supreme Court recognizes the complex and acutely emotional problems created by its
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{85}Thomson and Shattuck, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 145-149.

decision in certain sections of our country where racial patterns have been developed in accordance with prior and longstanding decisions of the same tribunal.

We believe that true progress can be attained through intelligent study, understanding, education and goodwill. Use of force or violence by any group or agency will tend only to worsen the many problems inherent in the situation. This progress must be encouraged and the work of the courts supported in every legal manner by all branches of the Federal Government to the end that the constitutional ideal of equality before the law, regardless of race, creed or color, will be steadily achieved.\(^3\)

The party also pledged to make every effort to get the President's six-point civil rights program through Congress.\(^3\)

Stevenson won the nomination on the first ballot with 905-1/2 of the convention's 1,372 votes. He received less than half of the 334 votes allotted the southern delegations for a total of 159, the remainder going to favorite sons.

After Stevenson's victory, Kefauver began working for the vice presidential nomination, which Stevenson threw open to the convention. The Tennessee senator, however, was anathema to some southerners, who preferred Senator Hubert Humphrey of Minnesota or Senator John F. Kennedy of Massachusetts.

During the open convention balloting, Kennedy surged strongly on the second ballot, mostly with the support of the South. But when Senator Albert Gore of Tennessee released his votes to Kefauver, the Kennedy forces were lost.\(^3\)


\(^3\) The New York Times, August 21, 1956, Sec. 1, p. 15.

\(^3\) Thomson and Shattuck, op. cit., pp. 154-161.
The 1956 Presidential Campaign

As the campaign began, the Democrats decided to concentrate on re-winning the states they had won in 1952 and the fourteen states where the GOP had won small victories, including Tennessee, Texas, and Florida. All told, victories in these 23 states would give Stevenson 270 electoral votes, four more than the 266 needed to win. The Stevenson-Kefauver Democrats, however, had to take special pains in those portions of the South that were disaffected by Kefauver's presence on the ticket and unhappy with the national party's platform stand on civil rights. The threat of a southern bolt, however, pretty well dissipated after the GOP convention and what some South Carolinians described as the Republicans' harsh stand on civil rights. Also staying in were Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi. One team of observers reported,

Regional leaders thus saw their way clear, in these states as well as in Virginia, North Carolina, Alabama and Louisiana, to a flexible and not wholly unpalatable political solution. They would be willing to condone a certain amount of flexibility of campaign talk on civil rights in the North, provided it was not too rough—i.e., that it did not go beyond the Republican position and thus make it impossible for them to keep their local organizations in line. As for Democratic leaders in the North, they had a tactic that was compatible with the southern line of action: quietly to point out to Negro voters in the North that a vote for the Republican candidate in northern states was a vote for candidates who probably would go along with Eastland.90

Stevenson moved early to make his civil rights position stronger than his party's platform. In his acceptance speech,

90 Ibid., pp. 228-230.
he had said,

> In substituting realism and persuasion for the extreme of force or nullification, our party has preserved its effectiveness, it has avoided a sectional crisis, and it has contributed to our national unity as only a national party could.

As President it would be my purpose to press on in accordance with our platform toward the fuller freedom for all our citizens which is at once our party's pledge and the old American promise.91

In a later speech, Stevenson went beyond the platform. He declared,

> The new America means to me an America in which every man and woman and child enjoys equally and without regard to race or religion the freedoms of conscience, belief, expression and opportunity. The Supreme Court decision on the desegregation of the public schools gave new emphasis to a traditional American principle. That decision is the law of the land.92

The President, he said, is responsible for creating a climate in which civil rights gains could be made. The Democratic nominee implied that Eisenhower had failed to do so.

On October 11, the President did say that he intended to uphold the Constitution, whether or not he agreed "with every single phrase" of it. The President, he said, swears to uphold the entire Constitution. Any pronouncement that he would uphold a particular part of it or a particular court decision might be taken to mean that he was not as willing to uphold all the other parts of it.93 The following day, Eisenhower declared that the country "won't be easy with its conscience"

91 Brown, op. cit., p. 104.
92 Thomson and Shattuck, op. cit., p. 233.
93 Ibid., p. 278.
until everybody has the equality and opportunity "visualized by the Constitution." But he failed to mention the court ruling.94

In November, Eisenhower and the Republicans picked up one more southern state, Louisiana, than they had captured in 1952, even though their percentage of the actual vote total rose only slightly, from 48.24 per cent in 1952 to 48.84 per cent in 1956. (See Appendix, Table II.) What hurt Stevenson was more than a 4 per cent drop between 1952 and 1956. For the first time in at least three decades the Democratic vote total in the South—4.1 million—dropped below that of the Republicans—4.2 million. About 3.5 million blacks went to the polls and made up about 5.6 per cent of the total 61.6 million. Stevenson took about 2.1 to 2.3 million of the black votes, but Eisenhower made "modest" gains among northern blacks and "spectacular" gains among southern blacks, less than a million of whom went to the polls. One observer team theorized,

One explanation offered for these results is that in areas where the Negroes had found scope and status within the Democratic Party, the Republican inroads were small (the northern cities); but where the Negroes were frozen out and the Democratic leaders opposed civil rights, desegregation and other reforms sought by Negroes, the inroads were large.95

The GOP, in fact, claimed that black votes won them Tennessee

94 Brown, op. cit., p. 105.

95 Thomson and Shattuck, op. cit., pp. 352-353.
and Louisiana. Eisenhower support in the black belt sagged somewhat because of the 1954 Supreme Court desegregation ruling, which racists blamed on Chief Justice Earl Warren, an Eisenhower appointee and a Republican. Only the emerging black vote kept the outer South black belts in Texas and Arkansas up to the Republican vote totals of 1952 while the GOP vote declined in other black belts of the outer South. At the end of Eisenhower's administration, the black belts of Mississippi, South Carolina, Alabama, and Louisiana were neither Republican nor Democratic. "For the most part," Phillips said, "they looked to States' Rights electors, hoping against hope to exert anti-civil rights leverage on the two major parties." Other black belts and the predominantly white counties in the deep South still voted overwhelmingly Democratic, as did the black belts of the outer South. Much of the growing Republican strength in the deep South, Phillips said, was in the cities, "where industry and commerce were breeding sentiments akin to those of middle-class Republicanism elsewhere in the nation."\(^{96}\)

In Texas, observers felt that Eisenhower's victory was a personal one. No other Republican candidates won on a statewide race. Shivers, as he had in 1952, led the Democrats for Eisenhower, but this year he did not have the help of Price Daniel, the successful gubernatorial candidate.

\(^{96}\) Phillips, op. cit., pp. 221-222.
Daniel lined up with Senate Majority Leader Lyndon Johnson and House Speaker Sam Rayburn, who campaigned for the Democratic ticket. Johnson later blamed the loss of Texas on the Middle East situation. "In a moment of peril, the American people voted to back up their President and demonstrate to the world that America is united," Johnson said. "Every other issue faded into insignificance."97

Throughout the South, however, it was Eisenhower's moderate approach to civil rights and racial problems that helped him win southern whites without alienating blacks. "He campaigned in Dixie on the basis that civil rights problems should be solved on a state and local basis wherever possible," a newspaper dispatch said. "Stevenson told the South the Supreme Court decision was right and deserved support."98

With essentially the same candidates running in 1952 and 1956, one could expect the campaign tactics to be much the same. The Republican thrust on the issues of most importance to southerners was one of local control and states' rights. Eisenhower indicated, but did not flatly state, that he would enforce the Supreme Court ruling on desegregation, to which the South reacted with the so-called Southern Manifesto and the doctrine of "interposition"—a statement

97 Fort Worth Morning Star-Telegram, November 7, 1956.
98 Ibid., November 8, 1956.
by four southern legislatures that the court ruling did not apply to those states. Stevenson, on the other hand, supported the ruling, although as a sop to the South he admitted that such a radical change would take some time. The vote totals of 1952 were colored by the tidelands and loyalty issues, which Democrats managed to overcome in 1956. As noted earlier, the international situation had some impact on the 1956 election. But playing a significant part in both elections was the issue pushing the South even farther from its traditional party—the issue of race.
CHAPTER III

SMALL ADVANCE, SMALL RETREAT, 1960-1964

In 1960, under the leadership of John Kennedy, the Democrats recovered somewhat in the South, managing to win a miniscule majority (50.49 per cent) of the southern voters and limiting the Republicans to only thirty-three southern electoral votes, less than half of the sixty-seven they picked up four years earlier. (See Appendix.)

Kennedy was interested in the South for several reasons—he wanted to show his appreciation for southern help in his unsuccessful race for the vice presidential nomination in 1956 and to show that his Catholicism would not frighten southern voters away. Nevertheless, he knew the problem he would have with the civil rights issue because he had endorsed the 1954 Supreme Court desegregation ruling. Accordingly, when Kennedy spoke in the South, he spoke primarily to university audiences and to non-political groups to ensure that he would not have to face segregated crowds. In spite of his precautions, his mail from the South and editorials in southern newspapers began to turn against him.1 Kennedy's brother, Bobby, however, was popular in the South because of his work

in "busting up" labor rackets, and he was able to snare speaking engagements throughout the region. Accordingly, Bobby got the job of making his brother palatable to southerners.\(^2\)

Although Kennedy wanted the support of the South, he also wanted to be the liberal candidate. One of his biographers, Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., recorded Kennedy's thoughts in May, 1960, about the help he needed from a former Democratic nominee, Adlai Stevenson: "He is the essential ingredient in my combination. I don't want to have to go hat-in-hand to all those southerners, but I'll have to do that if I can't get the votes from the North. . . . I want to be nominated by the liberals."\(^3\) A month later, the Massachusetts senator was linked even closer with the liberal civil rights view when a group of liberals, tired of waiting for Stevenson to announce his candidacy, switched to Kennedy by issuing a statement that contained this comment: "He [Kennedy] has assured us that he favors pledging the Democratic Party to Congressional and Executive action in support of the Supreme Court's desegregation decisions and to whatever measures may prove necessary to make voting a reality for all citizens."\(^4\)

\(^2\)Ibid., p. 119.


\(^4\)Ibid., p. 29.
Senator Lyndon Johnson of Texas was the first representative of the southern whites to be considered seriously for president. The Texas senator had made race relations openly discussable in the Senate but, nevertheless, Kennedy tried to portray him as the southern candidate, and to do this had to stop Johnson in his drive to capture the delegations of the Rocky Mountain states. Johnson in his memoirs said that it was Speaker Sam Rayburn of Texas and Philip Graham, publisher of The Washington Post, who urged him to contest Kennedy for the nomination to show that the party was diversified. If Kennedy got the nomination without a fight, Johnson said Rayburn reasoned, it might imply that the Democrats were controlled by Catholic bosses and hurt the party in the general election. Rayburn believed that Vice President Richard Nixon, the GOP's heir-apparent, had impugned his patriotism at one time and did not want Nixon to win under any circumstances. Thus, Johnson said, he "reluctantly" announced his candidacy.

The 1960 Democratic Convention

The stress on unity that had been so evident at the Democratic conventions of 1952 and 1956 obviously was gone from that of 1960. While there was little talk of loyalty

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pledges, the convention came up with the strongest civil rights plank ever. There were three major provisions in the proposal before the drafting committee that southerners were unable to accept. One called for laws authorizing the Attorney General of the United States to go to court over denials of individual civil rights. Another was a proposal to make the Civil Rights Commission a permanent organization. The third would give the party's tacit, if not specific, approval to the sit-in demonstrations. The southerners, however, were afraid to push against the proposals too hard, fearing that they might hurt Johnson's candidacy. Others decided that he did not have enough of a chance to worry about and thought they ought to go ahead and fight the plank on the floor, for the record if nothing else.  

The platform committee, over southern protests, approved the plank sixty-six votes to twenty-four, with fourteen absent. Southern representatives said they would not be bound by the plank and declared they would introduce a minority report. Nine states joined in the protest, led by Senators Sam J. Ervin, Jr., of North Carolina and James O. Eastland of Mississippi. Besides the proposals listed above, the southerners also were unhappy with several other provisions. The plank called for every school district covered by the 1954 desegregation ruling to submit an integration

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plan by 1963, something quite similar to Stevenson's suggestion of four years before. There was a call for federal legislation to establish a federal fair employment practices commission (FEPC) and for a Democratic administration to support any necessary action to end literacy tests and poll taxes as requirements for voting. "The time has come," the platform proposal read, "to assure equal access for Americans to all areas of community life, including school rooms, jobs, housing and public facilities."^8

The southern minority report, of course, hinged on the issues of states' rights and the division of powers between the federal and state governments in the Constitution. The report noted that the South had been the backbone of the Democratic Party and had supported it even when no one else had. "Increasingly," the report pointed out, "the loyalty of the people of the South to their party has been repaid with scolding and derision, pretending to invoke the Constitution of the United States." The South, it declared, was the object of "a campaign of studied vilification."^9

Many of the provisions of the majority plank, the southerners said, were part of a "calculated effort which is

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being made by the radicals of both political parties to drive the South from the Democratic Party." The majority was attempting to institute "government-endorsed social equality," the minority said. "We the undersigned are here to say that the states of the South will not be bribed with 'technical and financial assistance,' held out as bait in this platform, into sacrificing their children upon the altar of political expediency." The statement continued,

Will the delegates to this convention lead their party to defeat with the halter of a platform framed upon the insistence of a racial wing of our party—a platform pleading our party to the support of legislation which not twice but three times has been rejected by this very party?10

The plank, however, was approved by voice vote over the southern protest.11

Kennedy had let it be known that he was in full agreement with the civil rights plank the convention eventually approved. Before campaign workers went out on their delegate-catching assignments, brother Bobby gave them the following pep talk:

We have the best civil rights plank the Democratic party has ever had. I want you fellows to make it clear to your delegations that the Kennedy forces are unequivocally in favor of this plank and that we want it passed


Thus, civil rights was one of Kennedy's obvious weak points with the South. Another one, not quite so obvious, was his Catholicism.

The evidence about religious prejudice was on record. In 1956, Look had conducted a survey in the southern states to discover what effect a Catholic on the Democratic ticket of that year would have in those states. More than half of the Democratic officials replying thought it would be a handicap in their states. Only three replied that it would help. Again, in 1959 several Southern Baptist state conventions approved similar statements that Catholics should not be elected President and that religion should not be a campaign issue. Kennedy, then, knew he needed help in the South during the coming campaign and, after winning the nomination on the first ballot, turned to the man he had just defeated--Lyndon Johnson.

Labor men were concerned about the move, concerned that Johnson would alienate the black vote in the North. The

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12 Schlesinger, op. cit., p. 34.
13 Sorenson, op. cit., p. 82.
14 Ibid., p. 110.
southern wing was equally concerned, and also divided. One faction told Johnson not to accept, that it would be treasonable to the Old South for him to run on a ticket of civil rights and Catholicism. The other faction told him to accept, that the South needed a voice in the executive branch.  

Johnson recalled that he first turned Kennedy down, saying that he liked his present job as Senate majority leader. Besides, Johnson told Kennedy, he had assured Rayburn that he would not accept the vice presidency. Kennedy, Johnson said, had to convince Rayburn that without Johnson on the ticket the Democrats would lose the South, ensuring a Nixon victory. Rayburn, Johnson said, advised him to jump aboard.  

Actually, the Kennedy people would have preferred a liberal from the Midwest, such as Senator Hubert H. Humphrey of Minnesota. But Humphrey had come out for Stevenson, and Johnson had several things going for him. In the words of one Kennedy biographer, Kennedy simply thought that Johnson was "the next best qualified man to be President." Theodore C. Sorenson continued,

As runner-up in the Presidential balloting (409 votes compared to Kennedy's 806), as leader of the party in the Senate, as candidate of the area most opposed to Kennedy, as spokesman for a large state that would be

16 Johnson, op. cit., p. 92.
difficult for Kennedy to carry, Johnson was the strongest potential running mate and the logical man to be given "first refusal" on the job.\(^{18}\)

Besides, noted Schlesinger, Kennedy did not think Johnson would accept the offer.\(^{19}\)

But the Texas senator decided to take the job. "I felt that it offered opportunities that I had really never had before in either ... the House or the Senate," Johnson was quoted as saying. ". . . I had no right to say that I would refuse to serve in any capacity."\(^{20}\) Schlesinger suggested there were other reasons. He pointed out that the role of the Senate majority leader might be different and less powerful under Kennedy or Nixon, who would become the Republican presidential nominee, than under a passive president such as Dwight Eisenhower. Johnson, Schlesinger added, also wanted to lose his regional identification and thought that the vice presidency might be the way to do it. He might also have thought of taking the office to help lead the South back into the Democratic Party and the ways of the nation, instead of having southern leaders wasting their time defending lost causes and the past.\(^{21}\)

While some southern leaders were unhappy about Johnson's decision to take the slot, others were glad he did. He was

\(^{18}\) Sorenson, op. cit., pp. 163-164.

\(^{19}\) Schlesinger, op. cit., p. 45.

\(^{20}\) Sorenson, op. cit., p. 165.

Protestant, and had made sure that the civil rights bills he pushed through the Senate were not as strong as the liberals had wanted them. The southerners hoped that Johnson would be able to soften the Democratic stand on civil rights.  

The 1960 Republican Convention

At the GOP convention, conservative Republicans were advising that the party could carry the South if the platform's civil rights plank was just a little more restrained than the Democrats'. With the South, the Republicans hoped to forge a new national majority, in effect trading northern blacks for southern whites. The original draft of the civil rights plank was moderate, failing to declare support for black sit-ins at southern lunch counters and avoiding a promise to secure blacks equal employment opportunities by federal intervention. Nixon, however, instead of deciding to take the South with the platform committee's civil rights stand, opted for adopting Governor Nelson Rockefeller's more liberal one.  

Nixon's desires were forged during a private meeting with the New York governor, and the platform committee, which had worked long and hard on their civil rights plank, refused to go along. Northern and southern conservatives churned out

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22"Why the Big Surprise," Newsweek, LVI (July 25, 1960), 22.

a proposal that neither Nixon nor Rockefeller could accept. It endorsed equal rights in jobs, voting, and education without listing the specific items that the two party leaders wanted. Neither did the draft give specific support to legislation authorizing the government to seek injunctions in school integration cases. There was approval voiced for court desegregation orders and for the use of the 1960 civil rights act to prevent obstruction of such orders. Literacy tests as a voter qualification were decried, but the draft said nothing about the poll tax. Nixon, however, was able to get his way and the platform committee reversed its stand by a vote of fifty-six to twenty-eight and revised the plank so Nixon could live with it. Southerners, who had come to the convention hoping to open up the South for the GOP, were appalled at Nixon's wishes. They were claiming that Nixon had traded a chance to get southern electoral votes for a chance to get them from New York.

The new Republican civil rights plank included

--A call for legislation enabling persons to waive a literacy test if they had a sixth-grade education.

--A provision allowing the U. S. Attorney General to bring desegregation suits.

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--A call for legislation prohibiting the exclusion of blacks from labor unions unless the unions "promptly eradicate" discrimination.

--A statement of "opposition to the use of Federal funds for the continuation of segregated community facilities."

The plank also contained criticism of the Democrats' call for integration plans by 1963. It stated,

Slow-moving school districts could construe [this] as a three-year moratorium during which progress would cease. We believe that each of the pending court actions should proceed as the Supreme Court has directed and that in no district should there be any such delay.26

The 1960 Campaign

Kennedy had planned to campaign in the South to counter what he thought Nixon might do. But with Johnson on the Democratic ticket, the presidential nominee could leave the South and Southwest to his running mate and concentrate on the East and the Far West. Both were expected to be available for campaigning in the Midwest.27 Kennedy avoided the Deep South, appearing in Arkansas only once and not at all in Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana. Johnson, who was able to bring pressure on southern political leaders who might not otherwise have supported the ticket, brought Kennedy's story to


27"Kennedy--The Formula for Victory?" Newsweek, LVI (July 25, 1960), 24-25.
these states. Sorenson described Johnson's importance:

... The entire South depended considerably on Johnson. ... Campaigning as the grandson of a Confederate soldier and as a more hard-hitting partisan than previously, the Majority Leader whistle-stopped through Dixie decrying the religious issue, deriding Nixon's experience, detailing Republican shortcomings, warning of the dangers of divided government, praising Kennedy, mixing in a few homely Texas stories, reminiscing about his kinship with each state and refusing to back down on civil rights.²⁸

Before Johnson's nomination, Nixon had planned to make a strong campaign in the South. Soon after the Democratic convention, however, Nixon was conducting polls to see what effect Johnson's candidacy had on the South. Nixon's plans could be revised, but he did not want to give up the South without a fight.²⁹ Johnson's nomination also had an effect on Nixon's choice for a running mate. The Vice President had wanted Governor Rockefeller of New York, but Rockefeller refused to accept. Midwestern Republicans suggested Senator Thruston B. Morton of Kentucky, believing the GOP national chairman would help the party pick up votes in the South. But when Kennedy named Johnson, Nixon people feared the South was lost to the GOP and decided that Nixon needed to stress the foreign policy issue to catch votes outside the South. Thus the Republicans chose United Nations Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge.³⁰

²⁸Sorenson, op. cit., p. 187.
²⁹"Nixon--The Formula for Victory?" Newsweek, LVI (July 25, 1960), 23.
Nixon opened his campaign in the Old South August 26 in Atlanta, Georgia. He noted that Democrats normally do not campaign for the presidency in Georgia and thought it was time for a change, that the Democrats should not take the South for granted and that the Republicans should not give it up by default. Nixon urged southerners to vote for the man, not the party. The issues, he explained, were peace without surrender and domestic problems that should be solved at home. Southerners, Nixon declared, would vote Republican not because they were deserting the Democratic Party but because the Democratic Party had deserted them. Nixon already had made his decision, by accepting Rockefeller's civil rights plank, to go after the northeastern black vote. With his reception in the South, he wanted to try for the southern white vote, too.31

Nevertheless, Nixon let it be known that he supported his party's platform. His audience in Greensboro, North Carolina, the town where the sit-in movement had started earlier in the year, met with a cold response Nixon's stated support of such demonstrations. But they cheered when he added, "I recognize that law alone is not the answer to the civil-rights problem."32 In October, Nixon visited Memphis, Tennessee, and got a good reaction when he declared, "Let's

31 White, op. cit., pp. 304-311.
make our country the shining example for all the world to see of equality for all." 33

Kennedy, on the other hand, staked his civil rights stand in speeches to non-southern audiences. During his first full week of speeches, the Democratic candidate noted that the burden of civil rights falls heavier on the President than on Congress. He said,

The next President must exert the great moral and educational force of his office to help bring equal access to public facilities, from churches to lunch counters, and to support the right of every American to stand up for his rights, even if on occasion he must sit down for them. For only the President, not the Senate and not the House and not the Supreme Court, can create the understanding and tolerance necessary as the spokesman for all the American people. 34

One of Kennedy's problems in the South and other parts of the country was his Catholicism, an issue he met head-on during an address to the Greater Houston Ministerial Association after a day of Texas barnstorming September 12. In effect, Kennedy said that if there was any conflict between his personal beliefs and the requirements of the office of the Presidency, he would resign. 35 Nevertheless, Kennedy still was viewed by all of the southern governors but Luther Hodges of North Carolina with "a range of emotions that ran from


34 "Kennedy's Liberal Promises," Time, LXXVI (September 19, 1960), 23.

resigned apathy to whispered hostility." Kennedy's performance during the televised debates with Nixon impressed them, however, and during a conference they sent him a telegram of congratulations, now willing to commit their political organizations to his election.36

Throughout the campaign, said Theodore H. White, Nixon was plagued by a philosophical weakness, a "lack of an overall structure of thought" that many times made him break under pressure and appear indecisive.37 This was evidenced by a crisis that appeared during the final days of the campaign.

Dr. Martin Luther King was arrested October 19 with fifty-two other blacks during a sit-in in the restaurant of an Atlanta department store. Five days later, all of the other persons arrested were released, but King, because of a technicality, was held in jail and sentenced to four months of hard labor at the Georgia state penitentiary, from which, it was feared, he might not emerge alive.38 On the day of the sentencing, Judge Lawrence E. Walsh, a Republican deputy attorney general, drafted a statement supporting an application for King's release and sent one copy to Eisenhower and another to Nixon's traveling campaign headquarters in Ohio. Neither acted, even though Nixon at Chicago had

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36 Ibid., p. 330.  
37 Ibid., pp. 354-355.  
38 Ibid., pp. 361-362.
decided to go after the black vote. White commented,

Only now, apparently he felt it quite possible that Texas, South Carolina and Louisiana might all be won by him with the white vote and he did not wish to offend that vote. So he did not act--there was no whole philosophy of politics to instruct him.\textsuperscript{39}

There were other reports, however, that Nixon actually had asked the White House to have the Justice Department determine if any of King's constitutional rights had been violated during the arrest, but it was done quietly. Kennedy campaigners reportedly made the most of Nixon's "silence" by distributing to voters in the South photographs of the Vice President posing with blacks, noting that he had been a member of and a contributor to the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People for the last decade.\textsuperscript{40}

Kennedy did take action to intervene immediately in the case, even though earlier he had been told by at least three southern governors that he could write off the South if he got involved enough in southern affairs to endorse or support the civil rights leader. The suggestion was passed along, and accepted by the candidate without any further consultation, that Kennedy call Mrs. King and assure her of his concern and interest and, if necessary, his help. Kennedy's brother Bobby went even further and called the judge who had sentenced King to plead for his release.

\textsuperscript{39}Ibid., pp. 355-356.

Shortly thereafter, King was set free on bail pending appeal and, "in the Negro community, the Kennedy intervention rang like a carillon." White ranked Kennedy's act as one of the most crucial in the last part of the campaign, pointing out that the number of black voters supporting Kennedy in Illinois, Michigan, and South Carolina provided the margin by which the Democrats won those states.41

The Democratic candidate had some trouble with certain members of his party in the South while his candidacy was on the upsurge with others. Georgia Democrats, for example, during a primary election authorized their twelve presidential electors to vote for whomever they chose, regardless of whether it was for the nominees of their party.42 Governor Orval E. Faubus was placed on the ballots of Arkansas and Florida by the States' Rights Party. Mississippi had eight free electors that year, and six of the Alabama Democratic electors were not pledged to the Kennedy-Johnson ticket. In Virginia, the Committee for Constitutional Government tried to put the names of Senators Harry F. Byrd and Barry Goldwater on its presidential ballots, but both men asked to be left off. The committee substituted the name of C. Benton Coiner, a Virginia businessman.43 Later in October, however,

42Fort Worth Morning Star-Telegram, September 15, 1960.
43Bascom N. Timmons, "Others in Race for President," Fort Worth Morning Star-Telegram, October 7, 1960.
there were indications from some southern political leaders that the television debates had shifted support from Nixon to Kennedy. A nationally known correspondent listed several factors for the upsurge: the civil rights planks of both parties were virtually the same; blacks were beginning to identify with Kennedy as a minority, a Roman Catholic; Nixon did not have the personal appeal of an Eisenhower, which had helped some Democrats perform the distasteful task of voting Republican in the last two presidential elections; and the Democrats, possibly for the first time, were really campaigning in the South.44

In November, the Democrats won seven southern states, losing three to the Republicans and one, Mississippi, to a slate of independent electors who, with seven others from Oklahoma and Alabama, voted for Senator Harry F. Byrd of Virginia. But in 10 of the 11 southern states--Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North and South Carolina, Texas, and Virginia--Kennedy received a plurality of only 530,693 votes out of nearly 8.9 million cast. It was in these states that Nixon made his "greatest and most significant" gains. Only in Oklahoma, Tennessee, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, and South Carolina did Nixon outrun the totals racked up by Eisenhower in 1956.45

45 White, op. cit., pp. 392-394.
Vice President carried Virginia and Florida with margins almost as large as Eisenhower's.

Nixon might have appealed to the small-town southerner more than Kennedy did, but the Republican's biggest margins were piled up in Dallas, Houston, Birmingham, Atlanta, and their suburbs. The Mississippi and Louisiana black belts cast ballots for independent electors. The South Carolina black belt voted for Nixon. The Alabama black belt was divided between Republican and Democratic electors, of whom some of the latter were pledged to Byrd. The black belts in Georgia and in the outer South voted for Kennedy. Thus most of the areas of high racial feeling forsook the Democrats. The GOP gained in the Florida and Tennessee black belts but lost ground in those of Arkansas and Texas, where black voting was going up. Throughout the deep South, however, blacks were not voting yet in large numbers and had little effect on the outcome.  

Kevin P. Phillips also claimed there was little anti-Catholic voting in the South in 1960. He contended that Nixon did take Tennessee because of anti-Catholic prejudice, but lost Louisiana because French Catholics went for Kennedy. Johnson's vice presidential candidacy and a large Mexican-American vote (presumably Catholic) was responsible for Texas'...
return to the Democratic fold, Phillips said. Even though Nixon won in the cities in the deep South, his urban vote in Virginia, North Carolina, Texas, and Florida was down. The only trend towards the GOP in the South between 1956 and 1960, Phillips said, was in the deep South and black belt counties of the outer South. "In large measure," he said, "Nixon's strides were attributable to growing southern suspicion of the social and civil rights policies of the national Democratic Party."  

White noticed two forces working on the South to loosen its ties to the Democrats—disgust with the corrupt political machines of the cities and racial tension. "... The southern white," he said, "knows himself bound to a Democratic Party that, in the North, is increasingly responsive to Negro pressure for intervention in domestic southern affairs."  

He said,

[There is a] growing disaffection of the southern element of the Democratic coalition, the growing yearning of many southerners for a new home in a states'-rights Republican Party, their repudiation of the general purposes of the Democratic Party that expresses itself in the profound alienation of southern congressmen from the artificial Democratic majority in the House of Representatives.  

Yet, White commented, a force in the other direction is the fact that southerners "know by memory of defeat and occupation

48 White, op. cit., p. 403.
how powerful an instrument of action is the American federal government and . . . seek to retain a veto power always within it."\textsuperscript{50}

White, after the 1960 election, said southern disaffection offered the GOP a strategic advantage it had not had since the time of Franklin Roosevelt, and Nixon's success, he said, demonstrated its permanentness. White added,

It can be organized, at its highest level, within the new cities of the South, by creating leadership out of the white-collar suburbanites and businessmen; or it can be organized generally out of racial fear, by a forthright Republican abandonment of all seeking of Negro votes in the North. This second course can only envision a new and triple alliance between the Midwest farm belt, the racists of the Old South and those political forces in the northern suburbs that more and more seek to exclude Negroes from their neighborhoods and segregate them in the old core cities.\textsuperscript{51}

In 1964, the GOP took the second alternative.

\textbf{Racism in Conservative Clothing--1964}

The highway that led through the Triple Underpass and past the Texas School Book Depository in Dallas was the beginning of Kennedy's 1964 campaign trail. The Democratic administration's popularity was slipping in the South--scuttled by the Bay of Pigs invasion, civil rights, and fiscal policy. Throughout the nation, Kennedy was getting low ratings in the polls and he and everyone else were worried about his re-election. Not only did the President want to raise campaign money, hopefully several hundred thousand

\textsuperscript{50}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 405. \hfill \textsuperscript{51}\textit{Ibid.}, pp. 403-404.
dollars, for the debt-ridden Democratic National Committee, but he wanted to pave the way for a 1964 Democratic victory in Texas, which he knew he needed if he was going to win.

One purpose of the trip was to bring together the state's warring political leaders, Governor John Connally and Senator Ralph Yarborough. "The trip was Presidential politics, pure and simple," said Lyndon Johnson in his memoirs. "It was the opening effort of the 1964 campaign. And it was going beautifully."

But for Kennedy, the campaign of 1964 ended in Dallas.

Kennedy's assassination, while having a drastic effect on the Democratic National Convention of 1964, probably did little in connection with the emergence of Senator Barry Goldwater of Arizona as the Republican candidate. Goldwater was able to capture the GOP nomination with a large measure of southern support, drawn to him because of his conservative views and because of his vote against the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The South, said White, was in revolt against its past, driven by industry and the growth of the cities where a new middle class looked with disgust on the rednecks of the old-style Democratic Party. The middle class of the cities, educated and white, felt nothing but contempt for the courthouse gang that had dominated southern politics by promising

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53 Johnson, op. cit., p. 7.
to keep the black in line. The GOP had been trying to gain control of this rising middle class ever since 1957, when the then national party chairman, Meade Alcorn, launched Operation Dixie. Goldwater, the rallying point, was able to do it in 1964.\textsuperscript{54}

The Arizona senator, in fact, had several states wrapped up even before he took over the movement. In South Carolina, the official GOP state committee passed a resolution reconstituting itself organically and simultaneously as the state Draft Goldwater committee. Goldwater at the time thought his opponent would be Kennedy and that he would carry the South and West in a liberal-conservative battle.\textsuperscript{55} Early unofficial campaigners quietly garnered convention delegates in southern and other states throughout the country, planning to bind together the westerners, the southerners, and the midwestern Taft conservatives.\textsuperscript{56}

Goldwater had voted against the 1964 civil rights bill and against cloture to stop debate on it in the Senate, and it was those votes that thrust Governor William W. Scranton of Pennsylvania into his futile bid for the nomination. Actually, Goldwater had voted against the bill out of conviction. At one point during the 1964 campaign he explained his vote as follows: "No person, whether government official

\textsuperscript{54}White, The Making of the President 1964, pp. 166-167.

\textsuperscript{55}Ibid., pp. 119-120.

\textsuperscript{56}Ibid., pp. 162-166.
or private citizen, should violate the rights of some in order to further the rights of others. We are being asked to destroy the rights of some under the false banner of promoting the 'civil rights' of others." But Scranton thought that if Goldwater won the nomination, the Republican Party could become a party of the segregationists.\[58\]

The 1964 GOP Convention—Conservative Takeover

The Arizona senator spent a lot of time during the convention explaining his position on civil rights. In one statement to the Illinois delegation, he said,

I will accept the civil rights plank of the platform, and as President will uphold and enforce the civil rights law. As President, I would want an Attorney General who would enforce the law. My Attorney General would uphold the law or I would get another one.\[59\]

Goldwater added that he thought segregation is "foolishness in these times, just as anti-Semitism or anti-Catholicism are foolish. We just can't afford these prejudices at this time." Scranton attempted to woo some of Goldwater's delegates away from him by taking a modified states' rights stand. He told members of the Georgia delegation,

Of course we Republicans believe that the states should exercise maximum responsibilities. But we also believe

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58White, The Making of the President 1964, pp. 189-190.

in federal responsibility. We believe that the honorable doctrine of states' rights should not be used to set South against North, to set East against West, to set black man against white man.\textsuperscript{60}

Scranton also tried to fight Goldwater on the platform and rules fronts. The document drafted by the platform committee pledged "full implementation and faithful execution" of the civil rights law. But later the civil rights plank included a statement opposing "federally sponsored inverse discrimination, whether by the shifting of jobs or the abandonment of neighborhood schools for reasons of race."

One of Scranton's troops, Joseph F. Carlino, speaker of the New York State Assembly, tried to toughen the plank by inserting an amendment that would make the voting section of the civil rights act applicable to state as well as federal elections and that would broaden the executive order against discrimination in federally aided housing. But Carlino's proposal was defeated by sixty-eight votes to thirty.\textsuperscript{61}

Goldwater also appeared before the platform committee and declared that if elected President he would not attempt to have the civil rights act repealed even though he thought portions of it were unconstitutional. He added that he would do more in the civil rights field than just enforce

\textsuperscript{60}"Still in There Fighting," \textit{Time}, LXXXIV (July 10, 1964), 22.

the 1964 law. Goldwater stated:

I think the legislative branch has now spoken for the majority of the party—the majority of the American people—and while I didn't agree and I represented the minority, I stand with the majority, and just as Harry Truman did when he vetoed the Taft-Hartley Act: he later used it six times even though he didn't like it.62

Scranton also wanted a rules change that would bar any delegate chosen as a result of racial discrimination. The story was making the rounds that a black delegate from Tennessee, George W. Lee, 67, of Memphis, had been excluded from the state's delegation in 1964 because of his race. Lee had attended every Republican convention since 1940 and had seconded the nomination of Senator Robert A. Taft of Ohio during the 1952 convention. Scranton's proposed rule change was shouted down by the delegates, and his people claimed the incident showed that Goldwater was against civil rights and ready to force his views on the convention.63

On the convention floor, some delegates again tried to amend the civil rights plank. A substitute would have called for expansion of the civil rights division of the Justice Department, laws to implement the 1954 desegregation ruling and applying voting guarantees to state elections as well as federal, and including a "statement of pride" in Republicans

62"Back With the Old Barry," Time, LXXXIV (July 17, 1964), 21.

who supported the 1964 Civil Rights Act as Goldwater had not. The proposal urged "the elimination of discrimination in employment" and "positive action to promote truly open competition in the job market and to assure that the Federal-state manpower training programs and vocational education courses are in fact benefiting all citizens eligible for such assistance." Another provision would have asked for state and local efforts to protect constitutional guarantees and for action in education, housing, unemployment, and public accommodations. The substitute plank was defeated by a vote of 897 to 409, with delegates from 26 states and territories solidly voting against it.\(^\text{64}\)

Meanwhile, black convention delegates and alternates issued a statement questioning Goldwater's fitness to be President. The statement said, in part,

> We have no confidence in his ability to enforce the new law fairly and without prejudice. . . . We cannot see how an Attorney General appointed by a President who believes that the law is unconstitutional could go into court and effectively insist that the law is constitutional.\(^\text{65}\)

The blacks said they would return home and work to build a party that truly reflects the proper thoughts on civil rights.

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"We shall work," the statement said, "to oust those who are attempting to make the party of Lincoln a machine for dispensing discord and racial conflict."  

All of the maneuvering, however, had little effect. Goldwater went into the convention with 300 southern delegate votes, nearly half of the 655 needed to nominate, in his grasp, and he won on the first ballot. In his acceptance speech, Goldwater referred to President Johnson as the "biggest faker" in the country. "He opposed civil rights until this year," Goldwater shouted. "Let them make an issue of it. I'll recite the thousands of words he has spoken down the years against abolishing the poll tax and F.E.P.C. He's the phoniest individual who ever came around."  

Goldwater's nomination knocked one man out of the race besides his immediate Republican contenders—Governor George C. Wallace of Alabama, whose vote forays in the North were described as "the most toxic kind of racism." His third-party campaign had been expected to take votes away from the Republicans, ensuring Johnson's election.  

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66 Ibid.  
67 White, The Making of the President 1964, p. 168.  
governor had done surprisingly well in his campaign, claiming victories in the Wisconsin and Indiana primaries. In the Wisconsin primary, which the Associated Press termed "the nation's first public vote on the civil rights bill now before the Senate," Wallace was getting 20 per cent of the vote.70 A Johnson stand-in in that primary, Governor John Reynolds, declared that Wallace's total demonstrated "that we have a lot of people in Wisconsin who are prejudiced. But that's not new." Wallace eventually garnered 25 per cent of the vote by running against the pending civil rights legislation. John Byrnes, the GOP favorite son in that race, claimed that Wallace's vote primarily was anti-Reynolds and anti-Johnson and had little significance in connection with civil rights.71 In the Indiana primary, Wallace claimed that his total there was a victory for states' rights, a view termed "wishful thinking" by Governor Matthew E. Welsh, the Johnson stand-in who won the primary.72 With Goldwater's nomination, however, Wallace supporters began to flock to the Republican candidate, and the governor eventually withdrew.73

70 Fort Worth Morning Star-Telegram, April 8, 1964.
71 Austin Wehrwein, "Wallace 'Victory' Stuns Midwest," Fort Worth Morning Star-Telegram, April 9, 1964.
72 Fort Worth Morning Star-Telegram, May 6, 1964.
73 "I Was the Instrument," Time, LXXXIV (July 31, 1964), 19.
Johnson and the 1964 Nomination

Johnson had considered not seeking election to his own term of office and wrote a statement saying he would not run the day after the Democratic National Convention opened, even though his press secretary, George Reedy, felt that would give the country to Goldwater. Johnson figured that either Hubert Humphrey or Bobby Kennedy would get the nomination and that either would have a better chance as president than he would. "I just don't think a white southerner is a man to unite this nation in this hour," he told staffer Walter Jenkins. Behind this lay a belief that he had expressed often during his life. While agonizing over whether to run again in 1964, Johnson in his memoirs explained some of his reasoning:

The burden of national unity rests heaviest on one man, the President. And I did not believe, any more than I ever had, that the nation would unite indefinitely behind any southerner. One reason the country could not rally behind a southern President, I was convinced, was that the metropolitan press of the eastern seaboard would never permit it. My experience in office had confirmed this reaction. I was not thinking just of the derisive articles about my style, my clothes, my manner, my accent and my family--although I admit I received enough of that kind of treatment in my first few months as President to last a lifetime. I was also thinking of a more deep-seated and far-reaching attitude--a disdain for the South that seems to be woven into the fabric of northern experience. This is a subject that deserves a more profound exploration than I can give it here--a subject that has never been sufficiently examined. Perhaps it all stems from the deep-rooted bitterness engendered by civil strife over a hundred years ago, for emotional cliches outlast all others and the southern cliche is perhaps the most emotional of all. Perhaps someday new understanding will cause this bias to disappear from our national life. I hope so, but it is with us still. To my mind, these attitudes
represent an automatic reflex, unconscious or deliberate, on the part of opinion molders of the North and East in the press and television.74

Once Johnson "reluctantly" decided to offer himself again to the American electorate, for fear of being accused of running out and hurting the country, carrying the South was in his mind. He told Bobby Kennedy that he would not be a good choice for vice president because the ticket needed as much appeal in the middle western and border states as possible, and it needed to stir up as little adverse reaction in the South, where Goldwater was expected to be the strongest, as possible.75 Instead, Johnson selected Senator Hubert Humphrey of Minnesota, whom White called one of the greatest champions of black rights in history.76

The major civil rights problem at the National Democratic Convention involved the seating of delegates. The credentials committee voted to seat unpledged Alabama delegates who would agree to support the convention nominees. But most of the delegates refused, and committee chairman David L. Lawrence said that they would not be seated if they did not sign. There was another challenge over the seating of the regular Mississippi delegation by a group calling itself the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party. They claimed that

76 White, The Making of the President 1964, p. 284.
blacks had been systematically excluded from party activity in the state, including the selection of delegates.\textsuperscript{77}

The Alabama regulars, in spite of Lawrence's statement, took their seats anyway. There was no attempt to remove them from the floor of the convention until the night of the nomination. The sergeant-at-arms had the seats occupied and only allowed those delegates who had signed the pledge to sit. The others walked out of the convention.\textsuperscript{78}

On the Mississippi controversy, Johnson submitted a compromise. He suggested the Mississippi regulars be seated if they would sign the pledge. Freedom Democrats would be seated, but would have no voting rights. The call of the 1968 convention would be changed to make clear that the party in each state must be open to every registered voter without regard to race and that if not the delegation from that state would not be seated at the next convention.\textsuperscript{79}

The convention voted overwhelmingly to accept the Johnson compromise, seating the all-white Mississippi delegation and two of the challengers. But the regulars rejected the compromise and bolted the convention. Three agreed to sign

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the pledge and were seated. The Freedom Democrats also rejected the compromise, but two members, Aaron Henry, a black, and the Reverend Edwin King, a white, took seats with the Alaska delegation as delegates at large.

The three regular Mississippi delegates did not stay at the convention for long, leaving the hall after a scuffle. About a score of the Freedom Democrats moved in and took seats on the floor after the credentials report was approved. Convention officials ejected one of them, but the rest eventually were allowed to remain without voting status.

In explaining the Mississippi bolt, Jack H. Pittman of Hattiesburg told a New York Times reporter that the pledge was "a blind oath" and that the Freedom Democratic Party was "an outside pressure group, which represents no one but itself." Pittman declared, "The Mississippi Democratic delegation did not leave the National Democratic party. It left us."80

The convention gave Johnson a civil rights plank that declared that the civil rights act "deserves and requires full observance by every American and fair, effective enforcement if there is any default." The statement reportedly pleased leaders of both North and South. As a sop to the so-called "white back-lash," however, the platform rejected

racial quotas in employment and other areas and opposed "preferential practices" for handling the effects of prejudice. The platform also proclaimed that "lawless disregard for the rights of others is wrong—whether used to deny equal rights or to obtain equal rights." It continued, "We cannot tolerate violence anywhere in our land—North, South, East or West. Resort to lawlessness is anarchy and must be opposed by the Government and all thoughtful citizens."  

The Campaign of 1964

The Republican candidate had many things working against him during the campaign—his stand on the use of tactical nuclear weapons in the field, his attacks on federal paternalism, bureaucracy, and Social Security. On civil rights, both Johnson and Goldwater had agreed not to exploit the race riots during the campaign and both of them held to it. But Goldwater's speeches were reported as having subtle overtones of racial tensions. Kicking off his campaign in Prescott, Arizona, Goldwater touched on the idea that there was some sort of national sickness that the Republicans somehow could cure. He especially hit at "lawlessness" in the streets during that year of race riots. "Those who break the law are accorded more consideration than those who try to enforce

the law. . . . Our wives, all women, feel unsafe on the streets." Newsweek claimed that "the allusion to racial tensions was plain."\(^{82}\) In Minneapolis, Minnesota, the Republican candidate again spoke on crime in the streets, this time linking it to the social views of liberal Democrats. "If it is entirely proper for government to take from some to give to others," he said, "then won't some be led to believe that they can rightfully take from anyone who has more than they?" Goldwater also contended that the civil rights act "has incited hatreds."\(^{83}\)

A poll conducted for Newsweek by Louis Harris indicated in September that 60 per cent of all southerners would support Goldwater over Johnson on the civil rights issue alone, although both candidates had attempted to shy away from it. Goldwater, the poll indicated, was the candidate most favored by businessmen and executives and by men over 50 years of age, a group that the magazine called "the hard core of segregationist sentiment."\(^{84}\)

Goldwater and Johnson each made only one speech specifically about civil rights, and the contrasts in the two

\(^{82}\)"They're Off: The Long Hot Campaign," Newsweek, LXIV (September 14, 1964), 20.

\(^{83}\)"Tick-Tock of the Campaign Clock," Newsweek, LXIV (September 21, 1964), 30.

speeches were remarkable. Goldwater in Chicago on October 16 said that the purpose of society is freedom, not only to those who want to mingle with the races, but also the freedom of those who do not wish to associate. He declared,

It is wrong to erect legal barriers against either side of this freedom. . . . One thing that will surely poison and embitter our relations with each other is the idea that some pre-determined bureaucratic schedule of equality—and, worst of all, a schedule based on the concept of race—must be imposed. . . . That way lies destruction.85

Johnson made his major civil rights address in New Orleans, Louisiana, even though his staff had advised him to stay away from that issue. Before making the trip, he was given a memorandum that said "the less said about civil rights the better." His prepared speech made only one minor reference to the subject: "If we are to heal our history and make this nation whole, prosperity must know no Mason-Dixon line and opportunity must know no color line." But speaking off the cuff a week before Goldwater made his statement, the President said,

Whatever your views are, we have a Constitution and we have a Bill of Rights, and we have the law of the land, and two-thirds of the Democrats in the Senate voted for it and three-fourths of the Republicans. I signed it, I am going to enforce it, and I am going to observe it, and I think that any man that is worthy of the high office of President is going to do the same.86

Another Newsweek poll published in October showed what effect Goldwater's campaign had had on his image. Some 62 per cent of those surveyed said they thought the Republican candidate, if elected, would use federal troops to halt any further rioting. Another 73 per cent, however, said they doubted that he would use federal power to desegregate. "Thus," the magazine commented, "despite his studied avoidance of the issue in a frontal way, the senator has come to be known as the 'go-slow' candidate in civil rights."

Goldwater across the nation took only six states in November, his home state of Arizona and five states of the deep South, Mississippi, Alabama, Louisiana, South Carolina, and Georgia. But throughout the South, Goldwater ran nearly as well as Johnson. The Arizona senator received nearly 6 million votes, 48.70 per cent, to Johnson's nearly 6.1 million, which was 49.59 per cent of the votes cast in the South (see Appendix, Table II). Johnson received 81 southern electoral votes to Goldwater's 47, which bettered Nixon's accomplishment in 1960 (see Appendix, Table I). In those states that Goldwater won, "unquestionably, race was the dominant issue," said White, and he was seconded by several other commentators of varying partisan persuasion. His triumph in the South seemed to be "mostly on the voters'"


88 White, The Making of the President 1964, p. 452.
belief that he would slow the Negro revolution—a stance which now seems to have little future in U. S. politics," Time reported.  

Goldwater's platform was "propagandized as barely disguised racism in the deep South vein," said Phillips, and it won him the deep South and cost him the rest of the country, including the outer South states of Texas, Arkansas, Tennessee, North Carolina, Virginia, and Florida.

Goldwater won mostly where Thurmond did in 1948, but most of his decline came from a strong Democratic trend, both white and black, in the cities. Goldwater lost black GOP support from 1956 and 1960. In Florida, his alleged opposition to Social Security cost him dearly. In Texas, Florida, North Carolina, Virginia, and Tennessee, Phillips said, it was not just minority trending that damaged Goldwater's chances but the apprehensions of a large group of basically conservative Republicans. Computer checks in 100 counties that had a large black population but a small black voter registration showed that Goldwater got about two-thirds of the vote. Goldwater's black belt support, however, was not consistent. It was only in the deep South


90Phillips, op. cit., pp. 204-205.

91Fort Worth Morning Star-Telegram, November 5, 1964.
black belts, not those of the outer South, that Goldwater got the same strong white support as the Dixiecrats and the pre-1948 Democrats. The GOP, however, did not do as well with other whites in the deep South, although the conservatives predominated over the blacks and the upcountry whites in the five deep South states. Between 1960 and 1964, the GOP vote declined in the cities and the non-black belt counties in the outer South, but rose in the cities and rural counties in the deep South, a repudiation, Phillips said, of the theory that the modern urban South had rejected Goldwater. "Regionalism--the cleavage between the deep South and the outer South--rather than urbanism was the principal denominator of the 1964 presidential voting pattern in Dixie," he said. Goldwater's candidacy, however, was a failure throughout the whole South, and the GOP tossed out its flirtation with black belt psychology and returned to its long-time outer South strategy, Phillips added. 92

The 1964 election brought to the fore the power of the southern black electorate. Vernon E. Jordan, Jr., who in 1968 was director of the voter education project of the Southern Regional Council, said that Arkansas, Florida, Tennessee, and Virginia would have gone to Goldwater if it had not been for black voters. Only in Texas of the eleven southern states did Johnson get a majority of white votes.

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he said. In the five states that Goldwater carried, black registration lagged behind the regional average. Racism was "a controlling factor" in the South in 1964, he added. Jordan stated:

Johnson and Goldwater offered two distinct views on the race question, and the issue therefore caused mass defections of previously Democratic white voters to Goldwater, and previously Republican black voters to Johnson.93

The election years of 1960 and 1964 helped to make permanent the split in the Democratic Party. Thousands of southern voters returned to the party in 1960, in spite of its strong civil rights plank, when the draw of an Eisenhower was no longer there and the Republicans were about as firm on civil rights as the Democrats. But in 1964, even with a southern President, the old Dixiecrats could not stay in a party which was responsible for the most far-reaching civil rights legislation ever. Goldwater, with his conservative, states' rights orientation, offered what old-time southern Democrats of the black belts used to receive from the Democratic Party.

93Vernon E. Jordan, Jr., "New Game in Dixie," The Nation, CCVII (October 21, 1968), 397.
The years of 1968 and 1972 were the worst ever during the past quarter of a century for the Democratic Party in the South. In 1968, Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey was only able to muster 30.95 per cent of the vote against a strong Republican challenge by Richard Nixon and a demagogic third-party campaign by Governor George Wallace of Alabama, both of whom received more southern votes than did the Democratic standard-bearer. Humphrey was only able to carry one state, Texas, while Nixon and Wallace split the other ten. For Senator George McGovern of South Dakota, the presidential election of 1972 was even more disastrous. A liberal Democrat, McGovern garnered only 29.42 per cent of the southern vote total and lost every southern state as President Nixon swept to one of the greatest electoral victories in American history (see Appendix). The Democratic dominance of the South was at an end.

The Nixon Comeback and the Southern Strategy

Nixon, who had taken a strong stand on civil rights in 1960 until the siren song of the South caused him to deviate, managed to keep clear of the wreckage of the 1964 campaign.
He indirectly criticized the party's deep South strategy of that year. In May, 1965, he wrote,

> The Republican opportunity in the South is a golden one; but Republicans must not go prospecting for the fool's gold of racist votes. Southern Republicans must not climb aboard the sinking ship of racial injustice. They should let Southern Democrats sink with it, as they have sailed with it.

> Any Republican victory that would come of courting racists, black or white, would be a defeat for our future in the South, and our party in the nation. It would be a battle won in a lost cause.

> The Democratic party in the South has ridden to power for a century on an annual tide of racist oratory. The Democratic party is the party which runs with the hounds in the North and the hares in the South.

> The Republicans, as the South's party of the future, should reject this hypocritical policy of the past.

> On this issue, it is time for both Republicans and Democrats to stop talking of what is smart politically, and start talking of what is right morally.  

Yet Nixon, hoping to make his political comeback in 1968, failed to take his own advice. While not being overtly racist, Nixon allowed "his once strong civil-rights image to be blurred and scrambled" in his attempt to capture the South from the Democrats and George Wallace.  

It was after the Oregon presidential primary, in which Nixon defeated Governor Ronald Reagan of California, his only Republican challenger for the southern vote, that Nixon met with southern leaders in Atlanta, Georgia, about support at the upcoming national convention. Peter O'Donnell of Texas,

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chairman of that state's Republican Party, presided over the meeting, which was attended by Senator Strom Thurmond of South Carolina, now a Republican, and Senator John Tower of Texas.

Concerning civil rights, Nixon told the southerners that the Supreme Court's all-deliberate-speed doctrine of school integration needed reconsideration and that the court balance had been tipped too far from the strict-constructionist interpretation of the Constitution that Nixon espoused. Busing for the purpose of achieving racial balance is wrong, the GOP hopeful asserted, but, on the other hand, federal funds should be withheld from segregated school districts. In this group, he added, he did not include school districts that were tardy in responding to bureaucratically ordained black-white ratios. Nixon assured Thurmond that southerners would be "in" on decisions and that southerners would be consulted on Nixon's choices for vice president and the Cabinet, although Thurmond had demanded no veto power. Nixon did not agree to campaign heavily in the South—he thought Mississippi and Alabama already were lost—but he would stump in the border states. The southerners said they wanted some of their people in the administration, even while admitting that some of them would have to be Democrats. When Nixon left the meeting, asserted Theodore H. White, his nomination was secure and the Reagan move blunted.3

In the more jaundiced view of some southern political writers, the meeting between Thurmond and Nixon resulted in nothing less than a political deal. Two of them wrote,

The essential Nixon bargain was simply this: If I'm President of the United States, I'll find a way to ease up on the federal pressures forcing school desegregation— or any other kind of desegregation. Whatever the exact words or phrasing, this was how the Nixon commitment was understood by Thurmond and other Southern GOP strategists.4

At the Republican National Convention in 1968, Tower and Thurmond helped to hold the southern delegation in line for Nixon against the threat of Reagan and Governor Nelson Rockefeller of New York. Barry Goldwater, whose deep South strategy had failed across the country four years earlier, talked with southern delegates in his suite. Tower and Thurmond took them for boat rides along the Miami coastline. The message southern delegates were given was similar, with only the names changed, to the one Nixon would give southern voters in the fall—the contest was between Rockefeller and Nixon, and any erosion to Reagan would only help the New York governor win the nomination.5

For their part, the Reagan and Rockefeller camps tried to pry southern delegates away from the former vice president by spreading the word that, if nominated, Nixon would choose a liberal running mate, such as Mayor John Lindsay of


New York or Governor Mark O. Hatfield of Oregon. When Thurmond reported the problem to his chief, Nixon assured him that he would not force anyone on the South. To reinforce the statement, Nixon told one southern caucus, "I am not going to take, I can assure you, anybody for the Vice-Presidency that is going to divide this party." His general line to the South was that under his administration the region would not become "a whipping boy" and that he would not attempt to "ram anything down your throats." Nixon was able to convince them that his administration would be conservative on civil rights and that his campaign would counter anything mounted by George Wallace. As one *New York Times* staffer reported, many deep South delegates "received the clear impression from Mr. Nixon and his workers that he agreed with them on the prime issues of civil rights, the proper role of the courts and a non-permissive posture of law enforcement."

Nixon reportedly made the following points with southern delegates:

--- He was against busing to achieve racial balance.

--- He wanted judges appointed who would interpret the law and not legislate.


—He supported the open housing legislation although he rather would have left the problem to state and local governments. He wanted to have the issue handled so it would not divide the party.

—He was for an amendment to the 1965 Voting Rights Act permitting southern states to set up non-discriminatory literacy tests as a prerequisite to voting.®

Former Governor William Scranton of Pennsylvania, who had tried unsuccessfully to stop Goldwater in 1964, submitted a proposal to the rules committee, which the committee adopted, that prohibited discrimination because of race in party affairs and told state committees to take "positive action" to get a wider base of membership. There had been some complaints that year that the party was "lily-white," and some accusations, that Louisiana and Florida had discriminated against blacks in choosing their delegations, actually found their way into federal court.® The lily-white complaints seemed well-founded. One observer reported that there were only four black southerners attending the convention as delegates that year, compared with 381 black delegates and alternates at the Democratic National Convention.


in Chicago later that summer. For a platform plank on civil rights, the committee gave Nixon one that pledged the party to attack the "root causes of poverty and eradicate racism, hatred and violence." Without Nixon's southern support, he could not have been nominated on the first ballot. His victory was based on Illinois, many of the smaller states of the West and Middle West and especially on the South and the border states. Not counting Arkansas, Nixon picked up 298 votes from 14 southern and border states, 45 per cent of what he needed for the nomination. "Thus," commented one national newsmagazine, "Nixon's determination [is] to keep the South happy." This, presumably, Nixon did during a late night meeting with governors and congressional leaders following his nomination. Thurmond and Goldwater, who were there, opposed putting Lindsay on the ticket and vetoed Senator Charles Percy of Illinois. Some of the southerners said they wanted Reagan, but his lieutenant governor, Robert Finch of California, said he would not accept. Neither would the northerners go along with him.

The choice was narrowed to Governor Spiro Agnew of Maryland or Governor John Volpe of Massachusetts. Agnew was chosen because he was the more impressive of the two men whom no one had anything against.14

Many of the convention delegates thought that Agnew's selection gave the ticket a southern orientation. Although Agnew had been elected governor of Maryland as a racial moderate, he had since come out strongly against street violence and black militancy. Racial discrimination, he said after his nomination, "must be eliminated no matter whom that upsets." But "anarchy and rioting," he continued, have "no constructive purposes in a constitutional republic."15

The Democratic Crown Passes

On the Democratic side, the campaign structure for President Johnson was being put into gear, with former Governor Terry Sanford of North Carolina in charge as campaign manager, when Johnson surprised the nation by announcing that he would not stand for re-election.16 The word came following announcement of a bombing halt in Vietnam, and Johnson later gave his reasons in his memoirs:


16White, op. cit., p. 148.
By renouncing my candidacy, I expressed a fervent wish that problems that had resisted solution would now yield to resolution. I wanted Hanoi to know that Lyndon Johnson was not using this new move toward peace as a bid for personal political gain... Those who doubted me and disliked me, those who had fought my struggle to achieve justice for men and women who had for so long suffered injustice, might now be willing to adjust their rigid views and seek to fashion a workable formula for peace in the streets. Members of Congress who had believed that my crusade for the tax bill was linked to personal politics rather than an attempt to defeat inflation might reassess their motives, soften their antagonism, and turn this urgent piece of legislation—so vital to the nation's and the world's needs—into law. Perhaps now that I was not a candidate commentators in the press and television might regard issues and efforts more objectively, instead of concentrating on criticism and cynical speculation.17

For his successor, Johnson settled on his vice president, Hubert H. Humphrey of Minnesota, and, as a result, may have insured his party's loss at the polls in November.

The Democrats at their national convention in Chicago continued the campaign that President Kennedy had begun in 1963 to erode the power of the southern delegations. The issue this time was the unit rule, which allowed states to cast all of their delegate votes for the candidate who had the majority of the delegation's support, a rule by which small states in the South and the rest of the nation could keep their strength from dissipating in split votes. Humphrey was caught in the middle between the southern and liberal forces on the question. He had promised Governor John

Connally of Texas, head of that state's delegation, that he would support the continuation of the unit rule. But, bending under liberal pressure, the Vice President broke his promise, and outraged southern delegates threatened to bolt the convention and run President Johnson as an alternative. Humphrey only was able to placate them by promising strong support of Johnson's conduct of the Vietnam war. During the voting on the rule, spokesmen for the Texas delegation declared that the unit provision should be continued at least for the 1968 convention since some of the states thought it would be operable when they chose their convention delegates. The only states actually using the rule were Alaska, Arkansas, Georgia, Kansas, Louisiana, Missouri, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Texas. But the convention abolished the unit rule by a voice vote. Actually, Humphrey would have been satisfied if the unit rule's demise had not taken effect until 1972 to mollify his southern supporters, but the convention would have none of it.

As in conventions past, the southern delegates also ran into trouble with credentials challenges. Working under the 1964 convention's prohibition of racism in the selection of

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delegates, the convention barred the regular Mississippi delegation and split the Georgia delegation between the regulars and those supporting Senator Eugene McCarthy of Minnesota, who was running for president and against the Vietnam war. The regulars of Georgia were led by that state's governor, Lester Maddox, who had made history of sorts when, as a restaurant owner, he had threatened to bar blacks from his establishment by force in spite of the federal public accommodations law. An insurgent group, led by black State Representative Julian Bond, contended that the regular delegation had been selected improperly, containing only seven blacks. Maddox promised a floor fight, while some of the moderate to liberal members of the regular delegation were prepared to defy the Georgia governor and take their seats.

Other challenges also arose over the Alabama, North Carolina, Texas, and Washington delegations. The North Carolina challengers wanted more blacks and "Democrats" to be included in their delegation, and the Texas challengers wanted more blacks, liberals, and Mexican-Americans. But all of these challenges failed in the credentials committee. The committee did require the Alabama regulars to sign a "disclaimer of disloyalty," and replaced those who refused with members of the challengers' delegation. Twenty of the fifty

\footnote{White, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 342.}
regular members refused to sign the oath, which would have pledged them not to support another party's presidential candidate in the fall. The New York Times reported that all of those who refused to sign supported Governor Wallace.\textsuperscript{22} The convention later approved the seating of the Texas delegation by a vote of 1,368 to 955 in what was reported to be a test of strength between the pro- and anti-administration forces which the former won. Despite the credentials committee ruling, however, the convention also seated the Georgia regulars, turning down a motion to give the seats to Bond's insurgents by a vote of 1,413 to 1,041-1/2.\textsuperscript{23}

Although the southerners managed to work their way on the seating of challenged delegations, they had to accept a relatively stiff platform plank on civil rights. As reported out by the platform committee, the plank pledged the party to implementing the recommendations of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders and "wipe out, once and for all, the stain of racial discrimination from our national life." The plank pledged "effective and impartial enforcement" of the Civil Rights Acts of 1964 and 1968 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. If inadequate, the plank said,


the Democrats would propose new laws. They also planned to seek the strengthening of the enforcement provisions of the section of the law prohibiting discrimination in employment. Other portions of the platform contained help for other ethnic minorities--the Mexican-Americans and the Indians. For the law-and-order people, there was a section aimed at the rioters, pledging the Democrats to hold accountable anyone who broke the law.²⁴

Humphrey won the nomination with a large amount of southern support, although he failed to give them much in return. He reportedly did nothing with a list of seven vice presidential candidates acceptable to the South that southern delegates had handed him before his running mate's selection.²⁵ White, however, said southern delegates, led by Connally, were able to veto Governor Richard Hughes of New Jersey for the vice presidential slot on the ticket. Humphrey chose Senator Edmund Muskie of Maine instead.²⁶

Unlike their Republican counterparts, southern delegates to the Democratic convention must have left with a sour taste in their mouths. In the opinion of a New York Times reporter, rules changes approved during the 1968 convention had the

²⁵ "Survival at the Stockyards," Time, XCII (September 6, 1968), 15.
²⁶ White, op. cit., p. 378.
effect of "drumming out the bigots and beckoning to the young." The convention put itself on record that state delegations in which blacks and Mexican-Americans were not represented would have trouble getting seated and that no longer would Democratic conventions allow the votes of dissenters and minorities to be overwhelmed by the unit rule. James H. Gray, state party chairman from Georgia, observed, "The white conservative vote in the South is not wanted by the present leaders of the Democratic party. They don't want us. I guess we are going to have to go home and make some other arrangements."27

Wallace in 1968

The "other arrangements" for some added up to Nixon and for others added up to Wallace. Wallace was described by Newsweek as "the unspoken issue" in the 1968 campaign. The newsmagazine had this to say about the Alabama governor's campaign:

For whatever else his extraordinary third-party escapade accomplishes, Wallace has in effect succeeded in making race a legitimate issue in a Presidential campaign--and backlash a legitimate recourse. The language, of course, is considerably more polite and less direct than that. "We're not talking about race," he insists innocently at every stop, and, sure enough, there is nary a Nigra in the new Wallace demonology. Yet there is no mistaking the import of his running attack on the bureaucrats, the revolutionaries, the pseudo-intellectuals and the guideline writers--all of

whom have in common a hand in promoting the cause of the Negro. And hardly anyone in Wallace's audiences misses the point. "I like his stand on law and order," a Baltimore cabby says. "You know—the niggers." 28

Later, perhaps more considered, judgment by political analysts did little to dispel the racial nature of Wallace's appeal, something the candidate repeatedly had to deny during his campaign. 29

The Nixon strategists considered Wallace a threat to the anti-administration monopoly that Nixon, just by being a member of the alternative major party, seemed to have. Thus, most of Nixon's major campaign decisions were made with Wallace in mind. "The essentials of the strategy went something like this," reported the Ripon Society in its analysis of the 1968 campaign, "give as many positive signals as possible to the potential Wallace voter and avoid giving negative signals to everyone else." The appeal was not racist, the society said, although the GOP candidate did allow the aforementioned "blurring and scrambling" of his civil rights position. The "positive signals" also included Nixon's failure to mention justice when talking of law and order; his pugnaciousness on foreign policy, and his attempt "to project the impression of toughness and no-nonsense, of a willingness to crack down on whatever targets he could find


29 Fort Worth Morning Star-Telegram, November 6, 1968.
for America's frustrations. Nixon had what *Time* referred to as a "yes-but" campaign style. The former vice president would come out in favor of the 1954 Supreme Court school desegregation ruling, but in opposition to any federal dictation to local school boards that would make integration happen. Civil order, he would say, cannot happen without social justice, but his opponent, Hubert Humphrey, is naive on crime.

In the North, Nixon favored "order with progress," but in Houston and Charlotte, North Carolina, it was law and order. In North Carolina, Nixon at one point declared that he would not withhold federal funds from school systems that discriminate on racial grounds. He later had to "explain" his position when speaking in Anaheim, California, saying that what he meant was that federal funds should not be used to specifically promote integration. In accordance with the 1964 Civil Rights Act, the Republican said, school systems still practicing segregation would be denied government money.

Nixon, however, issued directives that his men should not try to out-do Wallace, but instead would argue that a vote for Wallace, who could not possibly win a nation-wide

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contest, actually was a vote for the integrationist Humphrey. The idea, the Ripon Society said, "was to give the South a choice by appearing to offer an echo." The Republicans in the region publicized Nixon's promises to the southern convention delegates—his favoring of the freedom of choice method of desegregating the schools, appointment of strict constructionists to the Supreme Court, more flexibility on the state and local level on open housing. With Nixon, Republicans argued, the South could regain its national prominence that had been lost under the Democrats. An added boost to his candidacy was the support of former Dixiecrat Strom Thurmond, who was credited with helping Nixon win South Carolina. "Help Strom Elect Nixon" is what the buttons and bumper stickers were saying.

The Democratic Strategy

Humphrey, for his part, rejected the tested Democratic formula that had put Democrats in the White House for twenty-eight of the last thirty-six years, crossing off the southern and border states as firm prospects and pinning his hopes on a northern strategy aimed at labor and minority groups in the big city states. Part of his thinking was based on the hope

33 White, op. cit., pp. 410-411.
34 The Ripon Society, op. cit., p. 250.
35 Fort Worth Morning Star-Telegram, November 3, 1968.
that Wallace would divide the Republican vote. He told audiences in Louisville, Kentucky, that he had not sold his soul for the nomination and that he stood for human equality. But Humphrey's campaign, White reported, for all practical purposes had no theme but the joy of politics and the hope of pulling together the party's old coalition of immigrants and their children in the big city ethnic blocs, union workingmen, the intellectuals, and the southern rural machines that were afraid of the blacks. The Democrats began to coalesce behind Humphrey during the closing days of the campaign, but in the South it was too late to do him much good. Texas was the only state of the eleven in the South that Humphrey took, and that with a plurality of only 41.1 percent. The other states in the region split evenly between Nixon and Wallace in a grand repudiation of the past Democratic leadership.

The election of 1968 marked the first time that the "Negro-phobe deep South" and the "modern outer South" abandoned the Democratic Party simultaneously. Kevin P. Phillips reported that Nixon drew most of his support from the traditionally Republican mountain areas, the Piedmont

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region, and the white middle-class urban and suburban areas of the outer South. Wallace's support, on the other hand, came from the deep South and the black belts of the outer South. On the Democratic side, Phillips said, Humphrey managed to get only 20 per cent of the white southern vote, most of it from "substantial white backing in Jewish sections of Miami and Atlanta, Gulf Coast Texas, unionized mining counties in western Virginia and some brass-collar Democratic rural counties in central Texas." The deep South black belts were strongest for Humphrey because of their large number of newly registered blacks. But the effects of the northern migration, Phillips asserted, put blacks in the minority and most deep South whites, some 90 to 95 per cent, voted against the Democratic nominee. It is easy to see which party and candidate was perceived to be the most sympathetic to the black man.

The Nixon and Wallace voters are alike in that their votes were anti-Democratic, but there is some question whether or not they were similar in other ways. The Wallacites and Nixonites of 1968, said Samuel Lubell, "represent two clashing streams of southern life, culturally, economically and historically." The Republican movement, he pointed out, has been among "the expanding, business-minded middle class in the cities, the well-educated and generally respected

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39 Ibid., pp. 206-207. 40 Ibid., pp. 210-212.
management types." The Wallacites "have been among the bossed, often ridiculed as 'rednecks' and 'crackers.'" Lubell cited a survey that pointed up a general difference in racial attitudes held by Wallace and Nixon supporters. The Nixon people generally were in favor of racial advances, and a majority favored blacks being able to vote, to work with whites, attend the same schools and churches, sit anywhere on local buses, eat in the same restaurants, and stay in the same hotels. But Wallacites were not so much in favor of racial advancement, Lubell said, and a smaller percentage of Wallace supporters than Nixon supporters were in favor of Negroes being allowed to do some of the things listed above. Not even a majority of Wallace supporters thought that blacks should be allowed to attend the same schools and churches as whites, eat in the same restaurants, and stay at the same hotels. Lubell declared that a third of all Wallacites would repeal all civil rights laws and put the black "back into his place," but a more encouraging two-thirds felt that things have gone too far to reverse. "A relaxation of federal enforcement would increase the proportion of those who would turn back the racial clock," Lubell stated. Both Nixon and Wallace supporters disliked busing, he pointed out, confirming "the fact that white

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southerners generally are still not reconciled to much more than token desegregation.\textsuperscript{42} 

There has been much debate concerning the effect of the Wallace campaign on the outcome of the 1968 election. Angus Campbell theorized that Wallace's vote primarily was a protest vote and a renunciation of the Democratic administration. Without him on the ballot in each of the fifty states, Campbell reasoned, a large percentage of his vote would have gone to Nixon.\textsuperscript{43} But there were other contentions that Wallace actually helped Nixon win. An Associated Press analysis conceded that the areas Wallace took in the South earlier had been considered strong for Nixon. But with only forty-six electoral votes, Wallace's total, at stake, this would not have helped Nixon appreciably. What counted was that the Wallace vote in California, Illinois, New Jersey, Ohio, and Wisconsin might largely have come from blue collar workers whom otherwise Humphrey could have been expected to capture. The Wallace vote, therefore, might have taken away just enough from Humphrey in these states to give their electoral votes to Nixon. At least, Democratic Party leaders in California, Illinois, and New Jersey attributed Humphrey's loss in those states to the Alabama governor.\textsuperscript{44}

\textsuperscript{42}Ibid., pp. 176-177. 
\textsuperscript{43}Angus Campbell, "How We Voted--and Why," The Nation, CCVII (November 25, 1968), 550-553. 
\textsuperscript{44}Fort Worth Evening Star-Telegram, November 7, 1968.
What hurt Wallace was his image as an extremist and a racist, in spite of all he tried to do to escape it. Richard M. Scammon and Ben J. Wattenberg declared,

... A good part of the Wallace drop-off was likely due to the fact that as the campaign drew to a close, Wallace was increasingly perceived as a regional candidate, a racist candidate, an extremist candidate, and one who would not handle the law-and-order problem effectively. Wallace, in short, went over the far side of the social issue—if the American people want order and an end to discombobulation, they do not want it from a man perceived as an extremist or a racist.45

Lubell contended that Wallace's blunt talk allowed voters to display their opposition to an extremist racial policy, and they turned to him because he was outspoken, because he upbraided the establishment, and because they wanted to talk back to the politicians and let off steam. Others used him because they did not like the Humphrey or Nixon stand on the Vietnam war. The bulk of Wallace voters, Lubell declared, were attracted to him because of race. Those who switched to Humphrey did so because they wanted to keep Nixon out of the White House, and those who switched to Nixon did so to keep Humphrey out of the White House. "Those who stuck with him," said Lubell, "were usually quite intense in their hostility against both Negroes and Republicans."46

Scammon and Wattenberg summed up the significance of the 1968 election. "When it became increasingly clear that

46Lubell, op. cit., pp. 70-84.
Democratic presidential candidates would invariably and inevitably be 'liberals' who did not reflect southern conservative views on race, as well as other issues, the South began its bolt," they said. The erosion had covered some twenty years, "but it was 1968 that drove the last nail into the coffin."\(^47\)

1972--Republican Dominance in the South

After Nixon's success in 1968, Scammon and Wattenberg said that there were some in the Republican Party who advised "that success lies in moving to the right, toward a Southern Strategy, toward capitalizing on antiblack feelings, toward capturing the Wallace vote to build 'an emerging Republican majority.'" The election analysts warned that such a course could be disastrous and that there was little chance that Republicans again might embark on the same path as the party had in 1964. It was more likely, they contended, that the Democrats would destroy themselves by moving too far to the left.\(^48\) Scammon and Wattenberg were right about the principal cause of George McGovern's defeat in 1972, but there was a darker side to Nixon's overwhelming victory that had as much effect on the outcome in the South.

It might have made no difference who the Democrats had nominated in 1972, unless it had been George Wallace, as far

\(^47\) Scammon and Wattenberg, op. cit., pp. 175-176.

\(^48\) Ibid., p. 280.
as the South was concerned. According to Lubell, the South was locked up for Nixon by early 1970 because of Supreme Court rulings that there would be no more delay in school desegregation. Nixon's decision to ask the court to delay desegregation of thirty-three Mississippi school districts, plus the attacks on that decision by blacks and northern liberals, put the President in a good light among southern whites.49

Reg Murphy and Hal Gulliver, two southern newsmen, said that Nixon had withdrawn the support of the presidency that Johnson had given to equal rights and justice for blacks. Some observers, they reported, had seen a slowdown or an actual reversal of progress in the desegregation field during Nixon's first year in office.50 Southern Republicans supposedly rid the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare's southern regional office of several administrators who were strong in their enforcement of civil rights laws. One of them, Paul Rilling, head of the regional civil rights division office, was quoted as saying that the administration tended "to support those seeking delay or abandonment of executive action to end segregated education in the South."51 Murphy and Gulliver observed,


50Murphy and Gulliver, op. cit., pp. 22-23.

51Ibid., pp. 25-38.
The Nixon administration posture on school desegregation was, indeed, a matter of vacillation and moral failure, especially in Mr. Nixon's first full year in the White House. It was also, unfortunately perhaps from the Republican point of view, a visibly cynical political approach aimed at wooing southern segregationists. Perhaps most noticeable at a national level was the manner in which both Mr. Nixon and Vice President Spiro Agnew carefully refrained from lending the weight of their offices to any firm stand on school desegregation as a moral issue.  

Nixon came out in favor of the neighborhood school concept and a minimum of busing and freedom of choice. Each label, Lubell contended, "corresponds to the political needs of the two main divisions of the white South." He continued:

In the pro-Wallace rural areas, where there are no sharp patterns of residential segregation, "freedom of choice" is the favored means of evading integration. In the cities, where Nixon's political strength lies, the "neighborhood school" can be easily managed to limit integration to little more than a token basis.

In spite of all this, there were some indications that the Democrats could make a comeback in the South. Nixon's so-called southern strategy supposedly had collapsed during the 1970 bi-election, and Newsweek reported the rise of a "new Democratic generation" in the South, "fresh, pragmatic, untrammeled for the most part by the old Kennedy or Johnson or Humphrey labels, indebted to coalitions of moderate whites and re-enfranchised blacks." The effort the Republicans put out to capture the South for itself forever only served to

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52 Ibid., p. 39.
galvanize the Democratic Party, making it form stable, permanent organizations rather than the earlier coalitions that had lived and died with the candidacy of one man. According to another newsmagazine,

The time when the Republican Party can reap big gains merely on a protest vote against the Democrats is over. As a live issue, integration is fast losing its potency. Translated into politics, this means the momentum of the Republican Party is slowing down.  

Any advantage the Democrats might have had in the South ended with the national convention of 1972 and the nomination of McGovern. In the unprecedented rejection of the Democratic Party in the South in 1972, the party's liberal stance on race relations, busing, and school desegregation undoubtedly played a part. But there is no question that the generally conservative South had other reasons for denying its vote to a liberal candidate whose bungling of the vice presidential nomination, unconsidered proposals, and backtracking on issues contributed to his overwhelming defeat by a president who had little personal appeal. Nevertheless, the racial question did have a part in the South Dakota senator's defeat in the South and the rest of the nation.

Busing and Race in 1972

The majority plank on busing approved at the Democratic convention called busing one of several tools of desegregation

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and declared that "it must continue to be available according to Supreme Court decisions to eliminate legally imposed segregation and improve the quality of education for all children." Senator Hubert Humphrey of Minnesota, who had challenged McGovern for the nomination, offered a compromise that would have put the convention in opposition to "massive or cross-district busing" and the busing of children to "schools of lesser quality." A proposal to prohibit busing to desegregate the schools entirely was made by Governor George Wallace of Alabama, who had been a major contender for the nomination until wounded and partially paralyzed by a would-be assassin during the pre-convention campaign. Humphrey's and Wallace's proposals were rejected by the McGovern-packed convention.  

The effect the busing issue was making in the 1972 election year could be seen in the outcome of several presidential primaries conducted around the nation. The Associated Press contended that Wallace's opposition to busing helped him mightily when he won 42 per cent of the vote in the Florida primary against six other candidates. In that same election, 74 per cent of the persons voting on the issue approved a constitutional amendment that would prohibit busing. A typical Wallace statement was reported as follows:


57 Fort Worth Morning Star-Telegram, March 16, 1972.
Now, on this busing. I said many years ago, if we don't stop the Federal takeover of the schools there'd be chaos. Well, what've we got? Chaos. This thing they've come up with of busing little children to schools is the most asinine, atrocious, callous thing I've ever heard of in the whole history of the United States. Why, when President Nixon was in China, so I hear, he and Mao Tse-Tung spent half their time talking about busing and I hear Mao Tse-Tung told him, "Well, over here in China, if we take a notion to bus 'em, we bus 'em, whether they like it or not." Well, Mr. Nixon could have told him that we do about the same thing over here.\(^58\)

Newsweek stated,

There is no racism in the words, but with a man of George Wallace's reputation, the race issue lurks unspoken wherever he is present. He is so indelibly imprinted on the public mind as a champion of resistance to black equality that some Americans will always love him and some will always hate him on the strength of that alone, regardless of what he may do or say.\(^59\)

Wallace also picked up good proportions of the vote in the presidential primaries in Indiana,\(^60\) Tennessee,\(^61\) North Carolina,\(^62\) and Michigan and Maryland,\(^63\) all of which involved the busing issue to some extent.

In contrast to the Democratic position, President Nixon's stand on busing was well known. In addition, the Republican platform declared that the party "strongly oppose[s] the use

\(^{58}\) "They Have to Listen Now," Newsweek, LXXIX (March 27, 1972), 24.

\(^{59}\) Ibid.

\(^{60}\) Fort Worth Morning Star-Telegram, May 3, 1972.

\(^{61}\) Fort Worth Morning Star-Telegram, May 5, 1972.

\(^{62}\) Fort Worth Morning Star-Telegram, May 7, 1972.

\(^{63}\) Fort Worth Morning Star-Telegram, May 18, 1972.
of housing or community development programs to impose arbitrary housing patterns on unwilling communities." The Democrats had said they would expand aid to rebuild the cities, which could have the effect of dispersing blacks.\(^{64}\)

A poll that was released before President Nixon was renominated at the GOP convention turned out to be an accurate prediction of what Nixon would do to McGovern in the South. The poll showed Nixon leading the Democratic nominees by 64 per cent to 25 per cent, the widest divergence of any region in the country.\(^{65}\)

Race unquestionably was an issue in the election. In October, *Time* reported that in a specially conducted poll 38 per cent of the respondents said that too much attention was being paid to minorities, while only 21 per cent thought that minority problems were getting too little attention. Some 24 per cent thought that the minority problem was being handled about right. Of those in the first category, 75 per cent were Nixon voters.\(^{66}\) After the election, *Time* noted that many people blamed the economic pinch the country was in at the time on welfare programs that supposedly did too much for

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\(^{66}\)"George McGovern Returns to 'Go,'" *Time*, C (October 23, 1972), 35.
minorities, rather than putting the blame on the war or defense spending. Nixon, the magazine reported, capitalized on this feeling with his criticism of the "welfare ethic," which in Time's opinion was to the 1972 election what "law and order" was to the election of 1968.67

Nixon's southern vote total in 1972 was 10,273,060 compared with McGovern's tally of 4,282,908. Newsweek estimated that the President took between 90 and 95 per cent of the votes that went to Wallace in the southern primaries.68

The post-mortems on the election generally followed the theme that McGovern, for the South and the nation, was not the man to lead America during the early years of the 1970's. Senator Robert C. Byrd of West Virginia, the Democratic majority whip, declared,

Busing was a greater force than many people believed. Rightly or wrongly, a lot of the people associated the Democrats as being for busing, for amnesty [for draft dodgers], for bigger welfare programs and so on, and they associated Mr. Nixon as being against these things. In many instances--especially in the South--that hurt.69

Sam Nunn of Georgia, a newly elected Democratic senator, was asked why he thought Nixon swept the South. He replied,


I think it was anti-McGovern—not as a person, but as a philosophy. I'd say McGovern's philosophy in the minds of the people, was an extreme, far-left philosophy. People are very much opposed to his proposals. I think it was just strictly that. 70

McGovern himself indicated the election might have hinged on the attempt to assassinate Wallace. He declared that the largest single factor in his defeat was the ability of the President to get the votes that otherwise would have gone to Wallace had he been in the race as a third-party candidate. If Wallace had run, said McGovern, "we would have had a far different result. . . . What we now have is a country presided over by a President who has married the Republican Party to the Wallace people." 71 In any case, the Democrats were not expected to wrest the country away from the Republicans for the foreseeable future. 72

70 Ibid., p. 66.
CHAPTER V

ISSUES AND ANSWERS

Since 1948, the South has become increasingly less likely to cast its presidential vote for the candidates of the Democratic Party. There have been some moderately good years during that period for the Democrats in the South and, beginning with 1968, some disastrous ones. As much of the material in the preceding chapters has indicated, the national Democratic Party has become aligned with a liberal attitude towards civil rights and the black man and has continuously attempted to force that attitude on the party leaders in the South. The party has made concessions—"lily-white" delegations from the South have been seated at all but the most recent conventions. There is little likelihood that they will be seated in the future. Platforms have not been as strongly worded in the civil rights field as northern liberals would have wished. But there is a "floor" to civil rights promises, a basic minimum, that both parties now have to accept and which may not even now be acceptable to many southerners. The political fact is that there are more votes to be gained by courting blacks in the North than by wooing whites in the South, and as long as the national Democratic Party has an eastern orientation, philosophically
that orientation can be expected to be liberal in the civil rights field. Writing after the 1968 election, Richard M. Scammon and Ben J. Wattenberg had this to say about the Democratic loss in the South:

In the case of the South the basic issue has been racial, although the other pressures of the Social Issue have also been present. John Kennedy could still take half of the southern vote in 1960, when it was Dwight Eisenhower who had sent the troops to Little Rock. But when the Sixties came, when it was John Kennedy who sent the troops to Oxford, Miss.; when in 1968 Lyndon Johnson, after passing the civil rights and voting rights bills, could call a group of black lawyers, in honesty, "soul brothers," the marriage between the Democrats and the South was sundered— and sundered as far ahead as the psephological eye can see.¹

As Scammon and Wattenberg indicated, the racial question has not been the only issue that has parted the Democratic Party from the South. In 1952, there was tidelands oil. Twenty years later, there was "peace with honor" and amnesty for those who had refused to serve in the Vietnam war. There have been rioters and revolutionaries and hippies. But southern leaders might have been able to swallow all of their unhappiness on these secondary grounds had it not been for the threat to their control represented by the national party stance on civil rights. If, as was said earlier, there is a "floor" to civil rights that both parties must accept and which many southerners may not be able to accept, why would the South support either major party and not continue the

regional, third-party strategy of the past? It is because there is one party which, under its leadership in the early 1970's, has indicated that it will accept the bare minimum in civil rights progress. The South has been given a voice in that party, a voice it has lost over recent years in the Democratic Party. The South is not likely to still that voice for the states' rights oratory of a regional party. It is likely to go Republican, as it did in 1972.

What Professional Politicians Say

In an attempt to assess the feeling of people actually involved in southern politics, a survey was conducted among elected representatives and state party officials of both parties in the eleven southern states between September 30, 1971, and April 4, 1972. Two-page questionnaires (reproduced in the Appendix) were mailed to 206 individuals. Responses came from 78, of which 72, or 34.95 per cent, were usable. This figure consisted of effective replies from 24 of 105 U. S. House members (22.85 per cent), five of 22 U. S. Senate members (22.73 per cent), four of 11 governors (36.36 per cent), 15 of 23 state party chairmen (65.22 per cent), and 24 of 45 national committee members (53.33 per cent).²

²One house seat at the time the questionnaires were mailed was listed as vacant, dropping the total from the expected 106. An extra questionnaire was mailed to state party chairmen to compensate for the resignation of Dr. Elmer Baum of Texas and his replacement by Roy Orr. (Only the latter replied.) Forty-five instead of 44 questionnaires were mailed to state national committee members because on different lists there were two names listed for one position.
The survey sought to determine the answers to the following questions:

--"Is the South breaking away from its earlier solid allegiance to the Democratic Party in presidential politics?"

--"Will the South continue to cast its presidential vote in a bloc?"

--"Can the South find a home in either of the two major political parties?"

--"Are the South's regional social and economic interests such that the region needs its own party and will rely on its solidarity in presidential elections and the Congress to fulfill its desires?"

The survey also asked respondents reasons for their "yes" or "no" answers on the first two questions. The general results of the opinion survey are summarized in Table I.

There was little disagreement that the South is no longer Democratic for the purpose of electing presidents, but there was disagreement when the respondents were asked to cite the reason or reasons for the shift in voter alignment. Four choices were listed on the questionnaire. They were:

--"Voter opposition to national party interference in local race relations."

--"Voter opposition to other national party policies."

--"Voter desire for a two-party system in the South."

--"Other."
**TABLE I**

**THE SOUTH IN PRESIDENTIAL POLITICS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Questions</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is South breaking away from Democratic Party in presidential politics?</td>
<td>95.13%</td>
<td>4.86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will South continue to cast presidential vote in bloc?*</td>
<td>19.44%</td>
<td>79.16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can South find home in either of two major political parties?**</td>
<td>81.94%</td>
<td>13.88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does South need regional party?***</td>
<td>4.16%</td>
<td>87.50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*This question was not answered by 1.39 per cent of the respondents.

**This question was not answered by 4.16 per cent of the respondents.

***This question was not answered by 8.33 per cent of the respondents.
The results, broken down by the party allegiance of the respondents, are listed in Table II.

**TABLE II**

WHY THE SOUTH HAS BROKEN FROM THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY IN PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons Given by Respondents</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Demo</th>
<th>GOP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Opposes interference in local race relations</td>
<td>24.08%</td>
<td>33.82%</td>
<td>11.12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opposes other party policies</td>
<td>44.52%</td>
<td>44.26%</td>
<td>45.96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desires two-party system</td>
<td>19.21%</td>
<td>14.41%</td>
<td>25.24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>12.16%</td>
<td>7.46%</td>
<td>17.66%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A healthy plurality gave as the reason for the southern revolt opposition to party policies other than those on race relations. Nevertheless, close to a quarter of those surveyed thought the defection had something to do with Democratic interference in local race relations. A smaller percentage said that southern voters no longer were voting as solidly Democratic as they had in the past because of a desire for a two-party system in the South. More than 12 per cent of those replying listed "other" reasons for the party shift, and were not always specific.

There is an interesting divergence in opinion seen here that could be caused by party affiliation. Democrats were
more likely than Republicans to blame the split on national party interference in local race relations. The Republicans, as could be expected, were more likely than Democrats to suppose that southern voters finally had "come to their senses" and were opting for a two-party system. Alienation by "other" party policies, however, was blamed by nearly half of both groups.

Only Democrats, 9.45 per cent of the thirty-seven who responded, thought that the South still is loyal to the Democratic Party. Nearly half of that minority, 42.85 per cent, listed reasons other than those provided in the questionnaire for this alleged continuing loyalty. The choices were,

--"Voter desire to present a solid front in presidential politics so electoral votes can be traded for support of a federal hands-off policy in local race relations."

--"Voter desire to present a solid front in presidential politics so electoral votes can be traded for federal support of southern wishes in other regional issues."

--"Voter approval of the national party program."

--"Other."

Congressman Thomas N. Downing of Virginia, a Republican, credited "holdover anti-Republicanism." A Democratic national committeewoman who asked to remain anonymous noted

---Questionnaire from Congressman Thomas N. Downing of Virginia, November 1, 1971.
that "the South is still a comparatively underdeveloped section of the nation. The basic economic interests of a majority still lie with the Democratic Party." Only 28.57 percent reasoned that there is a voter desire to present a solid front to trade electoral votes for federal support of southern wishes in regional issues other than local race relations. None attributed it to the racially-oriented choice. Perhaps even more significantly, none said the expected southern loyalty would be due to "voter approval of the national party program."

Democrats, with nearly a century of mostly one-party rule behind them, were more likely than Republicans to predict the South would continue to vote in a bloc, but these were in a minority. More than 70 percent of the Democrats and more than 87 percent of the Republicans responding thought that the day of the Solid South, for any party, is over. Respondents were given the following choices to explain why:

"Southern race relations are now harmonious enough that the fear of federal intervention in local race relations is no longer strong enough to necessitate bloc electoral voting to prevent it."

---

4 Questionnaire from a Democratic national committeewoman, October 5, 1971. Name withheld by request.

5 Only three persons thought the South was still loyal to the Democratic Party. Some of them split their answers as to why and one failed to indicate his reasoning.
"Southerners have given up trying to prevent federal intervention in local race relations and thus no longer need to cast their electoral votes in a bloc."

"Voter desire for the competitive good government that results from a viable two-party system."

"Other."

Table III shows the split in reasoning.

### TABLE III

**WHY THE SOUTH NO LONGER WILL CAST ITS PRESIDENTIAL VOTE IN A BLOC**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons Given by Respondents</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Demo</th>
<th>GOP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not necessary because of harmonious race relations</td>
<td>7.29%</td>
<td>8.96%</td>
<td>6.31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not necessary because southerners have given up trying to prevent federal meddling in local race relations</td>
<td>24.56%</td>
<td>35.88%</td>
<td>16.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voters want competitive good government resulting from viable two-party system</td>
<td>35.38%</td>
<td>26.92%</td>
<td>45.41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>27.49%</td>
<td>20.50%</td>
<td>28.72%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Some 5.26 per cent of the respondents failed to indicate a reason.

As can be seen, Democrats were more than twice as likely as Republicans to say the South's vote would split from its old bloc pattern because southerners have given up trying to prevent federal intervention in local race relations. A
plurality of Republicans credited voter desire for a two-party system for the trend away from bloc presidential voting.

For those respondents who thought the South would continue in its solid ways, choices were provided in the questionnaire so they could indicate which of three parties would be the beneficiary of the South's vote. The three choices included the American Independent Party (AIP) of Governor George Wallace of Alabama, who at the time of the survey had not been wounded and effectively removed, perhaps for all time, from presidential contention. Table IV summarizes the results.

**TABLE IV**

**BENEFICIARY OF CONTINUED SOUTHERN BLOC VOTING***

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Demo</th>
<th>GOP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Democratic Party</td>
<td>46.42%</td>
<td>65.00%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republican Party</td>
<td>14.28%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>50.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIP</td>
<td>25.00%</td>
<td>15.00%</td>
<td>50.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>7.14%</td>
<td>10.00%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Some 7.14 per cent of those affirming continued bloc voting failed to indicate a beneficiary.

These respondents also were asked why this bloc vote would be deposited in the way they indicated and were given the following choices:
"The party has a policy, either stated or implied, of non-intervention in local race relations."

"Other party policies."

"Other."

Table V displays their answers.

**TABLE V**

**WHY POLITICAL PARTIES WOULD RECEIVE A SOUTHERN BLOC VOTE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons Given by Respondents</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Demo</th>
<th>GOP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Party has hands-off policy in local race relations</td>
<td>14.28%</td>
<td>10.00%</td>
<td>25.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other party policies</td>
<td>28.57%</td>
<td>30.00%</td>
<td>25.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>21.42%</td>
<td>10.00%</td>
<td>50.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A large percentage, 35.71 per cent, of those who thought the South would continue bloc voting failed to indicate why its support would go to one of the choices listed. The response percentages tabulated above should be considered with that fact in mind. The reader should also be mindful of the fact that some respondents declared that this so-called "bloc" vote would be split between two or more parties, an indication that there would not be much of a bloc vote at all.

Of the ten Democrats who said continued bloc voting would favor their party, three said it was because southern
voters approve of party policies other than those involving civil rights, and five failed to answer. Mrs. Paul S. Derian, national Democratic committeewoman from Mississippi, said the Democrats would capture the South's bloc of votes because President Nixon is "lacking." She continued, "A different Republican might've lassoed them." Representative W. R. Poage, a Texas Democrat, said the South's bloc vote would go to the Democrats and Wallace, presumably in 1972. His reasoning: Both parties have "a policy, either stated or implied, of non-intervention in local race relations." 

Two Republicans and a Democrat saw the South going to Wallace, at least in 1972. Robert J. Shaw of Georgia, state GOP chairman, came to the same conclusion as Poage. A Republican national committeewoman who asked to remain anonymous said the South would become Wallace country because of party policies other than race and because "the South doesn't see much difference in [the] two major parties." The Democrat who predicted Wallace failed to give a

---

6 Questionnaire from Mrs. Paul S. Derian of Mississippi, Democratic national committeewoman, October 8, 1971.

7 Questionnaire from Congressman W. R. Poage of Texas, October 27, 1971.

8 Questionnaire from Robert J. Shaw of Georgia, state Republican chairman, October 15, 1971.

9 Questionnaire from a Republican national committeewoman, October 19, 1971. Name withheld by request.
reason. The two Republicans who said the South would go with their party listed different reasons. Warren B. French, Jr., Virginia state GOP chairman, said it was because of the South's economic interest, implying that the Republicans would come closest to the "southern philosophy." Congressman James M. Collins of Texas said it was because the South now is interested in having a two-party system, although he added that the "South thinks like Republicans." The 1972 election proved all but French and Collins wrong.

Concerning the final two questions, there was little significant difference between Democrats and Republicans. Table VI summarizes the results of the questionnaire's third major concern.

It can be noted from this table that Democrats were three times as likely as Republicans to reject both major parties as a possible home for the South in later years. A statement by Arthur C. Watson, Louisiana state Democratic chairman, typifies this die-hard attitude:

Both of the major political parties have used the South as a whipping boy for many years. This is particularly true of the Democratic Party. I have been to several National Conventions and in each case the

---

10 Questionnaire from Mrs. Marjorie C. Thurman of Georgia, Democratic national committeewoman, October 7, 1971.

11 Questionnaire from Warren B. French, Jr., of Virginia, state Republican chairman, October 7, 1971.

12 Questionnaire from Congressman James M. Collins of Texas, October 27, 1971.
TABLE VI
CAN THE SOUTH FIND A HOME IN THE TWO MAJOR POLITICAL PARTIES?*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Democrats</td>
<td>78.37%</td>
<td>18.91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republicans</td>
<td>87.87%</td>
<td>6.06%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Respondents</td>
<td>81.94%</td>
<td>13.88%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Some 4.16 per cent of the respondents failed to answer this question.

South was treated as a stepchild. Personally, I am thoroughly fed up with it. The South has succeeded in electing the Democratic candidate for President over many years, but now that the Negro vote is brought into prominence, the candidates for President decide to kick the South in the teeth in order to get the Democratic Negro votes in New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, etc.

In our state, there is no problem with Negroes voting. We are happy to see them vote and we have no difficulties. We do resent, however, the national candidates for the Democratic nomination for President screaming and bellowing about the Negro vote and how we in the South do not treat the Negroes fairly, etc. To me, this is utterly ridiculous. It is simply a means of getting national attention through the news media, TV, etc.

George Wallace is not the man to do it. If, however, we had a dynamic Southern leader that had guts enough to part with the Democratic Party, I do think we could start a third party in the South that could control about eleven or twelve States. If I were ten or fifteen years younger, I would try it myself. I am too old, unfortunately.

Meanwhile, the best the South can do is try to work within the framework of the Democratic Party and attempt to do the best we can toward influencing the selection of the nominees for President and for Vice-President. At least we would like to have somebody who is halfway reasonable and not a wild-eyed liberal.13

The nominees Watson got in 1972 were George McGovern and Sargent Shriver.

Table VII summarizes the results of the questionnaire's fourth major concern.

TABLE VII

DOES THE SOUTH NEED A REGIONAL PARTY?*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Democrats</td>
<td>5.40%</td>
<td>83.78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republicans</td>
<td>3.03%</td>
<td>90.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Respondents</td>
<td>4.16%</td>
<td>87.50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Some 8.33 per cent of the respondents failed to answer this question.

The survey also turned up some interesting differences of opinion between state party officials--national committee members and state party chairmen--and elected officials--senators, congressmen and governors. A majority of both classes, greater than 94 per cent, thought the South had broken with the Democratic Party, but each class, as shown in Table VII, emphasized different reasons. State party officials were slightly more than likely to say that a wish for a two-party system was responsible for the southern defection from the Democrats. Elected officials, on the other hand, were more likely by more than 11 percentage
points to blame the shift on national party policies other than race. Nearly one out of every four members from each group attributed the trend to national party meddling in local race relations.

The two classes also were in general agreement that the South no longer would cast its presidential vote in a bloc for the candidate of one party. Of the elected officials, 81.81 per cent were of that opinion, compared with 76.92 per cent of the state party officials. But, as shown in Table IX, members of each group differed remarkably as to why the South no longer could be expected to be solid.

As can be seen from the table, more than 42 per cent of the state party officials said the voters wanted the good government resulting from a viable two-party system. Only 29 per


**TABLE IX**

WHY THE SOUTH NO LONGER WILL CAST ITS PRESIDENTIAL VOTE IN A BLOC--ELECTED AND PARTY OFFICIALS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons Given by Respondents</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Elected*</th>
<th>Party**</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not necessary because of harmonious race relations</td>
<td>7.29%</td>
<td>12.33%</td>
<td>2.76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not necessary because southerners have given up trying to prevent federal meddling in local race relations</td>
<td>24.56%</td>
<td>27.14%</td>
<td>22.23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voters want competitive good government resulting from viable two-party system</td>
<td>35.38%</td>
<td>29.00%</td>
<td>42.23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>27.49%</td>
<td>27.77%</td>
<td>26.10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Some 3.70 per cent failed to indicate reasoning.

**Some 6.66 per cent failed to indicate reasoning.

cent of the elected officials, although a plurality, listed that reason. Almost as many, 27.14 per cent, thought the South was tired of trying to prevent federal intervention in local race relations, and a slightly higher percentage, 27.77 per cent, listed reasons different from those on the questionnaire. Somewhat more than 12 per cent of the elected officials said that southern race relations were so harmonious now that southerners no longer were worried about federal intervention and thus had no more need of bloc voting. Only 2.76 per cent of the state party officials agreed.
Conclusions

What emerges from the survey most clearly is that in the minds of these respondents who are active participants in the political process, the primary reason for the southern breakaway from the Democratic Party is related to national party policy, not any desire on the part of the southern voter for a two-party system. When percentages for the two policy-related choices listed on the questionnaire are combined, it is found that 68.60 per cent of those who confirmed the defection decided that the split was policy-oriented. Of that 68.60 per cent, some 35.11 per cent felt the primary policy question involved was race relations. One Texas Democratic congressman, who lost his seat in the 1972 election, called it "discriminatory enforcement practices." A Republican congressman from Tennessee declared that "I do not think the dissolution of the 'Solid South' can be attributed to any one factor in southern politics. Rather, I believe a number of political and socio-economic changes have tended to lead to a trend toward two-party politics." Nevertheless, the congressman, who asked that his name be withheld, indicated race relations was the primary cause. He continued,

... I think a great deal of the success of the G.O.P. in the South in recent years has been voter perception

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14 Questionnaire from a Texas Democratic congressman, November 5, 1971, since defeated for re-election. Name withheld by request.
of the dominant position in the Democratic Party. Correctly or not, the average Southern voter identifies the Democratic Party as the party of the liberal, on domestic issues, including racial relations, and foreign policy. The pro civil rights stance the Democratic leadership has taken has definitely hastened the emergence of the two-party system in the South. Issues other than race—defense policy and military preparedness, welfare, government spending—while not as important in leading to Democratic defection, are definitely a factor.15

Another respondent, whose questionnaire was mailed from Washington, D. C., but was otherwise unidentified, warned,

Do not make the mistake of overlooking the importance of racial fears in the South; e.g., school busing issue. We in the South will find many noble sounding motives to obscure the real source of voter appeal (racism). President Nixon knows this and caters to it. Next time, it may be a Democrat.16

Some, however, would deny this. J. Drake Edens, Jr., a Republican national committeeman from South Carolina, declared,

You are, like many other people, incorrectly polarized on the race issue alone. The South is very much like the rest of the nation today. That is, we are interested in the same issues and areas of concern that other Americans are. We are now a full-fledged two-party region in presidential elections and are rapidly moving in that direction regarding other federal, state and local elections.17

Mrs. John A. Cauble of Georgia, a national Republican committeewoman, declared that there has been a philosophical shift.

She wrote,

---

15 Statement by a Tennessee Republican congressman, October 13, 1971. Name withheld by request.

16 Questionnaire received October 26, 1971, with a Washington, D. C., postmark. No other identification.

17 Statement by J. Drake Edens, Jr., of South Carolina, Republican national committeeman, October 7, 1971.
The average Southern voter is philosophically more in tune with the National Republican Party than with the National Democratic Party. However, he refuses to acknowledge this due to hang-ups left over from carpet-bagging days and the 1929 depression. He votes according to his emotions rather than his knowledge, which he doesn't have anyhow. The average Southern voter distrusts both national parties. Typically, many voters tell me that they voted for Goldwater, but, in almost the same breath, tell me that they have never voted for a Republican.

This thread, a feeling of near-total voter alienation from the policies of the national Democratic Party, runs through the entire survey. Most of those who say the South has left the Democrats do so on policy-related grounds. And of the few who do not see any defection, who say that the South will continue to vote Democratic, not one says it will happen because the voter approves of the national party program. The only hint that southern voters favor national party policies is from the handful of Democrats who believe the South will continue to vote for Democrats because of party policies other than racial or because southern voters identify the party with a policy of non-intervention in local race relations.

Of the respondents who say that bloc voting is at an end, the largest proportion (35.38 per cent) believe that the desire for the good government inherent in a two-party system will perpetuate the split. But it is discouraging to note that as many as 24.56 per cent feel that a new bloc will not

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18Statement by Mrs. John A. Cauble of Georgia, Republican national committeewoman, October 9, 1971.
form only because southerners think that bloc voting now is useless in preventing national involvement in local race relations. Perhaps even more discouraging is that only 7.29 per cent think that southern race relations are harmonious enough to make any federal intervention in local affairs unlikely.

The historical evidence and the opinions of scholars in the field, cited earlier, indicate that the South became solid in presidential voting because of the political problem of keeping a white southern minority in economic and political control of a black southern majority. Political history since 1948, the opinions of scholars in the field and the foregoing survey results indicate that as the Democratic Party turned away from the policies that once attracted the South, the South turned away from the party.

It should be noted that at least one respondent thought that the whole idea of the Solid South was a myth, something that arose in American political folklore only because the Republicans failed to challenge it and thus helped to perpetuate it. United States Representative Henry B. Gonzalez, a Texas Democrat, wrote;

My general feeling is that the "solid South" was as much a myth as anything else. Originally, it might have been possible for a few years after the Civil War for no Republican to win in a fair election. But the truth is that Southern elections were not fair; the "solid South" was built as much on disenfranchising laws as it was on any regional feelings.
Once Negroes and large numbers of the poor were disenfranchised, it would have been very difficult for anyone to mount a meaningful challenge in a Southern state. Moreover, after a few tries the Republicans just abandoned the effort, and that only added to the power of the "solid South" myth.

After the turn of the century, the disenfranchising laws, the restrictive campaign practices and the Republican abandonment of the South—all acted to institutionalize the myth. The Depression made it impossible for anyone to vote Republican and maintain any respectability, almost from that day to this, and prolonged the myth.

But once the "solid South" myth was challenged it crumbled. The Dixiecrats showed the way. And the failure of the Dixiecrats showed as nothing else ever could the hollowness of the myth, and the weakness of the third-party idea. Stripped to its essentials, the whole "solid South" movement was a third-party idea, and third-party ideas work only in very special circumstances. Offhand, I'd say that this revelation destroyed the myth once and for all, though it was years before the Republicans realized what had happened.

It was only a matter of time until the disenfranchising laws fell, and after that the field was open to reform. The Republicans continue to fail for the same reason they always have—they offer no real alternatives, and indeed stand more for the "old South" than for the new. The Whig types who created the "solid South" moved into the Republican party, and should safely maintain the Southern States for the Democrats. As for the Wallaceites, they may win—but chances are no one will care, for the South can no more dictate terms today than it could in 1948. Wallace might well drop his rooster symbol and take up the bull moose.  

The big question mark in the South is what happens next. Where does the South go from here? The Democrats had their chance in 1972 and either failed to see what they had to do to capture the South or failed to do it. What was necessary was nothing less than the co-opting of George Wallace. There

is no question that he has a racist appeal. There also is no question that some of the points he raised were legitimate concerns of many voters in this country—busing, taxes, defense, foreign policy. Most third-party movements in the past have been co-opted by one or both of the two major parties. Wallace could have been the means by which the Democratic Party could have returned to the middle ground from a position that was seen by many voters in the South and the rest of the nation as extremist. Wallace probably could have gone to the national convention with more delegates, more power from the primaries, had he not been shot. He might have had enough force to push the party away from its extreme leftist leanings. But the assassination attempt removed the Alabama governor from the list of viable candidates for the nomination. As a result, Nixon had to do nothing to win the South or any other region of the country from McGovern but to let McGovern campaign.

The liberal faction of the Democratic Party is not expected to stay in command. Robert Strauss of Dallas, who returned a questionnaire as Texas' Democratic national committeeman, said the South broke away from the party of its fathers because of a "general dissatisfaction with liberalism of Democratic Party." As the party's new national chairman, 

20 Questionnaire from Robert Strauss of Texas, former Democratic national committeeman, October 5, 1971.
Strauss can be expected to change that general liberal outlook, at least to a certain extent. Unless the party moves somewhat towards the right, it cannot hope to recapture its former southern hegemony.

There is some feeling that the Democratic Party is not doomed in the South. This hopeful assessment was issued by the 1972 Democratic vice presidential candidate, R. Sargent Shriver, during a personal interview before the November election. He said;

Well, I think our party can have a very strong position in the South, and I think it can have it with the white people in the South and with the black people in the South. It can have it with the richer people in the South as well as with the poor whites, as they call them, in the South. Because the policies of the Democratic Party have got to be national policies. They can't be regional policies. Our policies in economics is [sic] that we should have an expansionist economic policy. That means that we should have a growing gross national product and that we should have more and more productive capacity in all parts of the country. There is no reason why the South and the Democratic Party should become estranged, because as the South grows, it grows more and more like the rest of the country. And as it grows more and more like the rest of the country there's going to be more diversity of opinion in the South, I don't think that's harmful. I think that's good.21

There is a question, however, whether or not the South is growing more like the rest of the country. Samuel Lubell, following the 1968 election and the Wallace third-party campaign, contended that the North is becoming politically more

21 Interview with R. Sargent Shriver, 1972 Democratic vice presidential nominee, October 25, 1972, en route from Denton, Texas, to Dallas.
like the South, where politics "have always revolved around this struggle of race and economics, over whether the workers and poorer farmers would find common economic interests with the blacks or be divided by race."  

Kevin P. Phillips, also writing after the 1968 election, predicted that most southern whites eventually would go into the Republican Party. He listed several reasons:

---In the deep South black belts, blacks are taking over the Democratic Party, which will have the effect of pushing whites into the only major alternative, the GOP.

---White resolve to fight a hopeless rearguard action against equal rights for blacks is shrinking in the face of the inevitable.

---The philosophical orientation of the national Democratic Party makes the Republican Party look preferable.

---The opinion making upper-middle classes of the urban deep South already are turning to the Republican Party.

Phillips also noted that with the GOP winning Tennessee, North Carolina, and Florida in 1968, a social, cultural and political net has been thrown around the deep South. He wrote,

The gathering Republicanism of the outer South virtually dictates the coming alignment of the deep South.


For national political reasons, the Republican Party cannot go to the deep South, but for all the above-mentioned reasons, the deep South must soon go to the national GOP. That is what happened in 1972.

The future in the South, however, belongs to the party and the candidate who can appeal to it most. Nixon's southern appeal has been proven, but he cannot run for another term. There are more liberal forces within his party that may attempt to purge his record of vacillation on civil rights in the coming years. Thus there is no guarantee that the Republican candidate in 1976 will be any more palatable to the South than the standard-bearer of the Democratic Party. This far in advance, the Democratic leader appears to be Senator Edward Kennedy of Massachusetts, if for no other reason than the lack of other attractive candidates. There are also the following, admittedly fantastical, similarities in recent history. In 1945 and 1963, a Democratic president died in office and a vice president was sworn in. Both vice presidents ran and were elected to a term of their own, but refused to run for a second. In the ensuing election, a Republican, who held office for two terms, was elected. Then, in 1960, the Republican's vice president, Richard Nixon, ran for the Presidency and was defeated by a Kennedy. If the parallel is carried into 1976, Vice President Spiro Agnew would run for the Presidency and be defeated by a Kennedy.
In many ways, the South's future in presidential elections depends, too, upon what happens in the field of civil rights and on a lot of if's. If the busing controversy can be cleared up, if neighborhoods can be integrated, if a whole way of life can be thrown on the trashheap of history, the South may enjoy a two-party system on the presidential level. As of 1972, the South still was solid. Mrs. Paul S. Derian of Mississippi, a Democratic national committeewoman, came up with an appropriate simile. Writing of 1972, she said,

The South stands on another brink, another chance to shed racism and work in its own interests for remedies to its terrible problems of poverty and unemployment. It's like a long-run soap opera--will the South beat the Race issue this time? So far, it's always been, no.\textsuperscript{25}

The question, at least for the near future, still is open.

\textsuperscript{25}Derian, op. cit.
APPENDIX

TABLE I

SOUTHERN DISTRIBUTION OF ELECTORAL VOTE
1948-1972

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>GOP</th>
<th>DEMO</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1948</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>78 (7)*</td>
<td>39 (SR-4)**</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1952</td>
<td>57 (4)</td>
<td>71 (7)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>67 (5)</td>
<td>60 (6)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>33 (3)</td>
<td>81 (7)</td>
<td>14 (1)</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td>47 (5)</td>
<td>81 (6)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>57 (5)</td>
<td>25 (1)</td>
<td>46 (AIP-5)***</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>130 (11)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Number of southern states carried by party.

**SR--States Rights Party (Dixiecrats).

***AIP--American Independent Party.

### TABLE II

**SOUTHERN VOTE TOTALS AND PERCENTAGES**  
**PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS, 1948-1972**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Tot. S. Vote</th>
<th>GOP</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Demo.</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1948</td>
<td>5,215,364</td>
<td>1,382,969</td>
<td>26.92</td>
<td>2,630,937</td>
<td>50.00</td>
<td>1,201,458</td>
<td>23.08</td>
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<tr>
<td>1952</td>
<td>8,553,711</td>
<td>4,113,525</td>
<td>48.24</td>
<td>4,428,163</td>
<td>51.76</td>
<td>12,023</td>
<td>0.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>8,623,223</td>
<td>4,218,468</td>
<td>48.84</td>
<td>4,118,737</td>
<td>47.67</td>
<td>286,018</td>
<td>3.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>10,271,890</td>
<td>4,723,364</td>
<td>45.63</td>
<td>5,184,750</td>
<td>50.49</td>
<td>363,776</td>
<td>3.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td>12,312,285</td>
<td>5,993,384</td>
<td>48.70</td>
<td>6,097,011</td>
<td>49.59</td>
<td>221,890</td>
<td>1.79</td>
</tr>
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<td>1968</td>
<td>14,803,716</td>
<td>5,122,657</td>
<td>34.59</td>
<td>4,578,323</td>
<td>30.95</td>
<td>5,080,325*</td>
<td>34.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>14,555,986</td>
<td>10,273,060</td>
<td>70.58</td>
<td>4,282,908</td>
<td>29.42</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*American Independent Party

QUESTIONNAIRE

The questions listed below are based on conclusions made by a group of southerners after conducting a three-year study of southern politics in the late 1940's. They found that

1) Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North and South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia voted for Republican presidential candidates only twice in elections from 1876 to 1944, inclusively;

2) No other state in the Union presented this picture of one-party dominance in presidential elections, and

3) Electoral vote solidarity was one weapon by which the South sought to defend itself from federal intervention in local race relations.

The first two conclusions are matters of fact, but the third is subjective. My concern is not whether the last conclusion was valid at the time it was made, but whether or not it is valid now.

Please check the appropriate answer.

1. Is the South breaking away from its earlier solid allegiance to the Democratic Party in presidential politics? Yes _____ No _____

a. If yes, which of the following best describes why?

   (1) Voter opposition to national party interference in local race relations. ____

   (2) Voter opposition to other national party policies. ______

   (3) Voter desire for a two-party system in the South. ______

   (4) Other (please comment). ____________________________

b. If no, which of the following best describes why?

   (1) Voter desire to present a solid front in presidential politics so electoral votes can be traded for support of a federal hands-off policy in local race relations. _____
(2) Voter desire to present a solid front in presidential politics so electoral votes can be traded for federal support of southern wishes in other regional issues. 

(3) Voter approval of the national party program.

(4) Other (please comment).

2. Will the South continue to cast its presidential vote in a bloc? Yes ___ No ___

a. If yes, where will its support go?
   (1) The Democratic Party. ___
   (2) The Republican Party. ___
   (3) The American Independent Party of George Wallace. ___
   (4) Other (please comment). _______________________

Which of the following best describes why?
   (1) The party has a policy, either stated or implied, of non-intervention in local race relations. ___
   (2) Other party policies. ___
   (3) Other (please comment). _______________________

b. If no, which of the following best describes why?
   (1) Southern race relations are now harmonious enough that the fear of federal intervention in local race relations is no longer strong enough to necessitate bloc electoral voting to prevent it. ___
   (2) Southerners have given up trying to prevent federal intervention in local race relations and thus no longer need to cast their electoral votes in a bloc. ___
   (3) Voter desire for the competitive good government that results from a viable two-party system. ___
   (4) Other (please comment). ______________________
3. Can the South find a home in either of the two major political parties? Yes ____ No ____

4. Are the South's regional social and economic interests such that the region needs its own party and will rely on its solidarity in presidential elections and the Congress to fulfill its desires? Yes ____ No ____
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