

Free Markets and Carceral States: The Sixth Party System of America

Introduction

Franklin Delano Roosevelt is widely recognized in American political history for leading America out of the Great Depression and through WWII with the U.S. coming out of it an economically prosperous country. FDR achieved this by first proposing and then implementing his New Deal economic and social policies, which created a coalition of voters, I will refer to as the New Deal Coalition (NDC). As a result of the formation of the NDC, Democratic candidates and their policies dominated national politics between the years of 1932 and 1964, winning every presidential election apart from the moderate Dwight Eisenhower's two terms from 1953 to 1961. This thirty-year period is known as the Fifth Party System and is characterized by large economic-interventionist policies such as the New Deal and Great Society and for passing civil rights legislation. The results of these policies created a large organized labor force that, at its height would comprise a third of the American workforce, as well as the growth of many progressive initiatives such as civil rights legislation. While many scholars recognize that the Fifth Party System ended, a scholarly consensus has yet to form regarding whether a new party system has developed and taken hold of American politics.

In this paper I will demonstrate how union-busting strategies developed and refined throughout the 1930, 1940's, and 1950's led to an attitude change among the American working class that organized labor was antithetical to traditional American democracy and mitigated organized labor's ability to strike. Additionally, I will show how the rhetoric used in these anti-union campaigns later became the main political talking points of Republican and eventually Democratic candidates alike. While the campaign tactic of the Southern Strategy, first employed by Barry Goldwater and later Richard Nixon is recognized as realigning the political parties in America along racial divides following the Fifth Party System, scholars often neglect other

aspects of domestic policy such as economics and in turn hyper-focus on social policies. As part of my research, I will show that the anti-union rhetoric and propaganda that developed to break strikes and prevent collective organizing facilitated later attacks on New Deal economics. Additionally, this rhetoric attacked progress of the Civil Rights Movement, eventually culminating in the fracturing of the NDC as inflation grew, unionization came to a halt, and job growth stagnated. Thus, while the country's parties are often recognized for dividing at this time, over racialized political boundaries that concerned backlash to social policies; this party realignment also moved in lockstep with an economic policy realignment that shifted the entire political spectrum of both parties to the right. This realignment of policy values among American voters resulted in a coalition of voters that subsequently elected Ronald Reagan, George H.W. Bush, and Bill Clinton, who all ran on extremely similar platforms and who's legislative policies displayed similar results. The twenty-year period that these men held office can be characterized by laissez-faire economic policies that catered to corporate interests and created endemic economic inequality across Americas working class and lead to the death of organized labor. Furthermore, these three administrations with the help of their respective congresses, also passed major crime reform, particularly aimed at combatting the War on Drugs and that resulted in the phenomenon now known as mass incarceration, which many scholars such as Michelle Alexander have called the "New Jim Crow." This is because of its use to attack African Americans social status and how it incongruently detrimental to their communities.

The New Deal Coalition and the Formation of the Fifth Party System

Introduction

To grasp the potential idea of a Sixth Presidential Party System, one must first understand what preceded it. When Franklin Delano Roosevelt secured the democratic presidential nomination in 1932, he “pledged himself, famously to ‘a New Deal for the American people.’”¹ Following Woodrow Wilsons departure from office in 1921 the Democratic party had failed to win a presidential election leading up to 1932. However, by creating a voting bloc of traditionally unaligned voters, FDR was able to create the New Deal Coalition, paving the way for his four terms as president between 1933 and 1945. This New Deal coalition helped to create what is now known as the Fifth Party System, which allowed Democrats to dominate national politics between 1932 and 1969.² While the Fifth Party System or New Deal Party is often discussed for the legislation and policies it embraced, it also inevitably affected how American politics functioned on the national level.

The New Deal Coalition

Historians, William Domhoff and Michael Webber, recognize six main “power actors” able to influence American politics during this era:

Six recognizable networks of power participated in the conflicts concerning the origins, aftermath, and implementation of policies during the New Deal. Three of them- corporate moderates, ultraconservatives, and plantation and agribusiness owners were segments of an ownership class that was dominant in terms of its power to defeat other power networks and shape government policy to its liking... their opponents on the other side of the class divide- primarily the trade unionists and the liberals, but also the Communist Party and other leftist groups.³

¹ Daniel Scroop, *Mr. Democrat Jim Farley, the New Deal, and the Making of Modern American Politics* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2006), 53.

² Bernard Sternsher, "The Emergence of the New Deal Party System: A Problem in Historical Analysis of Voter Behavior," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 6, no. 1 (1975): 127.

³ William G. Domhoff, and Michael J. Webber, *Class and Power in the New Deal: Corporate Moderates, Southern Democrats, and the Liberal-labor Coalition* (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 2011), 31.

Furthermore, while they note that these power actors represented similar interests, they were often plagued by infighting and division, especially among the labor, liberal, and communist party groups.⁴ Although labor organizations such as the American Federation of Labor sought to organize on a much broader scale, they had not involved themselves in national politics, in fear of further dividing their members. Unions won many collective bargaining disagreements during WWI but following the war, corporations led by the National Association of Manufacturers successfully contributed to a “union-breaking campaign.” Unionized workers accounted for twenty percent of the nonagricultural workforce in 1920, but at the beginning of the New Deal that proportion had been cut in half.⁵

In 1932 the AFL held a convention that would transform the organized labor movement in America. Due to the economic depression, the AFL willingly accepted a few major changes on their political stances, one of which was abandoning “its opposition to national-level labor standards.”⁶ This created the opportunity for the AFL to become part of a larger liberal-labor coalition, if the Democratic presidential nominee included progressives in his governing coalition. Creating this liberal coalition did not come easily though. While many progressive reform organizations of the early twentieth century such as National Consumers League, pushed for child labor laws, minimum wage bills and other labor initiatives, organized labor still opposed their positions “due to its fear of government.”⁷ Rather a coalition was formed between progressive reformers and the urban Democratic political machine, who were known for their strong influence over local governments. The influence these Democratic political machinists exerted over local governments allowed them to give out patronage jobs and support labor-

⁴ Domhoff and Weber, *Class and Power in the New Deal*, 31.

⁵ Domhoff and Weber, *Class and Power in the New Deal*, 75.

⁶ Domhoff and Weber, *Class and Power in the New Deal*, 77.

⁷ Domhoff and Weber, *Class and Power in the New Deal*, 80.

oriented reforms, creating a positive relationship with organizations like the AFL. With the urban Democratic machine in the middle, a loose coalition was formed among progressive liberal reformers and organized labor.⁸

However, this New Deal coalition was not as ironclad as election results might implicate. Alan Ware notes that, “nationally, at least a third of the members of the New Deal coalition group... might [have] vote[d] Republican.”⁹ Although while the voters of the New Deal coalition didn’t always support Democratic candidates, many first-time voters such as African Americans disproportionately displayed single party support. The brilliance of FDR’s strategy was to attract voters’ at the margin. Ware asserts that the New Deal coalition was merely a continuation of preceding electoral coalitions with one major change: “urban America; it was there that many of the shifts in relative voting power occurred.”¹⁰ Although FDR was identified as representing the Democratic parties’ rural progressives, by abandoning some southern voters and embracing economic interventionist policies, he created a “new urban constituency.”¹¹ Throughout the 1930’s, FDR continued to push through legislation which would support his coalition and help it grow into the political machine that achieved four consecutive presidential election victories. This coalition of voters included white southerners, urban dwellers, union members, and those African Americans who were not disenfranchised.¹²

With the New Deal coalition formed, Democrats were able to dominate national politics between 1933 and 1969, winning every presidential election except for Dwight Eisenhower’s presidency between 1953-1961. This was done by maintaining the marginal coalition of voters

⁸ Domhoff and Weber, *Class and Power in the New Deal*, 80.

⁹ Alan Ware, *The Democratic Party Heads North, 1877-1962* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 176.

¹⁰ Ware, *The Democratic Party Heads North*, 176.

¹¹ Ware, *The Democratic Party Heads North*, 173.

¹² Ware, *The Democratic Party Heads North*, 175.

which FDR had attracted to the party in the early thirties. The National Industrial Recovery Act of 1933 and the Wagner Act of 1935 established the rights of workers and government sanctioned forms of collective bargaining which empowered unions and the working class.¹³ While subsequent administrations failed to ever support labor as much as FDR, they maintained at least a marginal amount of support from unions throughout the 1960's. Moreover, in 1941, FDR issued Executive Order 8802, which outlawed segregation in the hiring of the nations defense industry as well as their union organizations.¹⁴ Months later, FDR's attorney general, Francis Biddle, drafted Circular No. 3591 on December 12, 1941 which helped to end the outlawed yet unenforced practice of peonage.¹⁵ These pieces of legislation helped to secure the support of African Americans to the democratic party throughout the duration of the Fifth Party System. Furthermore, his Democratic successors continued to pass civil rights legislation such as the Civil Rights and Voting Rights Acts of 1964 and 1965 respectively, which would keep this base of African-American voters' part of the New Deal coalition.

The Rise of Unionization in America: Strikes and the New Deal

Introduction

During his FDR's presidency with the enactment of New Deal Legislation, the federal government attempted to provide support for and spur widespread unionization of America's workforce. FDR climaxed his famous first 100 days with the enactment of National Industrial

¹³ "The Basic Labor Laws (United States of America)," The Basic Labor Laws (United States of America) | Industrial Workers of the World, Accessed January 27, 2019, <https://www.iww.org/organize/laborlaw/Lynd/Lynd3.shtml>.

¹⁴ "Executive Order 8802: Prohibition of Discrimination in the Defense Industry (1941)," Our Documents - Executive Order 8802: Prohibition of Discrimination in the Defense Industry (1941), Accessed January 27, 2019, <https://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=false&doc=72>.

¹⁵ "Classification 50: Involuntary Servitude and Slavery," National Archives and Records Administration, Accessed January 30, 2019, <https://www.archives.gov/research/investigations/fbi/classifications/050-slavery.html>.

Recovery Act, which recognized many rights of workers, including the right to organize and bargain collectively.¹⁶ The National Labor Relations Act in 1935, popularly known as the Wagner Act, has long been heralded as the champion piece of legislation which fueled the power of unions.¹⁷ As a result of the Wagner Act organized labor was able to spur a revitalization of union membership which had been declining since the onset of the Great Depression.¹⁸ The immediate success of the Wagner Act led the constituency of the labor movement to become aligned with the Democratic Party through the New Deal Coalition, which dominated the national political landscape between 1932 and the 1964. While this alignment with the New Deal Coalition served to bolster labor organizers power during these three decades, it also aided in the eventual dismantlement of organized labor nationwide. In 1947, despite a presidential veto from Harry Truman, a Republican dominated congress passed the Labor Management Relations Act, also known as the Taft-Hartley Act which altered and greatly weakened many powers given to union organizers under the Wagner Act. Furthermore, it signaled a pathway for Republicans to regain control of the federal government following the Democratic parties' domination during the Fifth Party System. The strategy was to appeal to moderate voters who viewed organized labor and progressivism as a threat to the stability of American capitalism and democracy.

New Deal Legislation and the Power of the Strike

Strikes among organized labor have historically been extremely controversial. In 1921 the United Mine Workers faced off against West Virginia state police, a local militia, and

¹⁶ "Transcript of National Industrial Recovery Act (1933)," Our Documents - Transcript of National Industrial Recovery Act (1933), Accessed December 11, 2018, <https://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=false&doc=66&page=transcript>.

¹⁷ Wachter, Michael L. "The Striking Success of the National Labor Relations Act," Penn Law: Legal Scholarship Repository, Accessed January 4, 2018, https://scholarship.law.upenn.edu/faculty_scholarship/493/.

¹⁸ FIND JOURNAL ARTICLE WITH STATISTIC CITATION

strikebreakers in the Battle of Blair Mountain. The police and strikebreakers reacted violently to striking miners that were marching in protest, which prompted a violent response in turn from the miners.¹⁹ After days of fighting, President Harding deployed the army to disarm the striking miners and end the battle. The largest armed insurrection since the Civil War, Blair Mountain, while an outlier displays how controversial and powerful strikes had the potential to be within American society.²⁰ The importance of strikes to the organized labor movement can not be understated, simply put “few workers strike without a reasonable expectation of success, and unions do not survive if they cannot win strikes.”²¹

Many often criticize the National Industrial Recovery Act of 1933 as a policy failure that fell short of achieving its goals.²² Scholars cite poor planning and improper economic theory among the reasons as to why the NIRA failed to stimulate growth in the economy as FDR and his advisors had hoped. In “Why did the National Industrial Recover Act fail? Beaudreau argues that rather than incorrect economic theory the NIRA failed “despite being justified by structural factors...the NIRA was a policy failure, owing in large measure to its Achilles heel, namely generalizing these changes to the economy as a whole.”²³ One of these sweeping generalizations was section 7a of the act, which reads, “that employees shall have the right to organize and bargain collectively through representatives of their choosing.”²⁴ Workers responded almost

¹⁹ Ron Soodalter, "In the Battle for Blair Mountain, Coal Is Threatening to Bury Labor History," *Progressive.org*, January 31, 2018, Accessed November 10, 2018, <https://progressive.org/magazine/the-battle-over-blair-mountain-famous-labor-site/>.

²⁰ Wess Harris, "What If We Really Won the Battle of Blair Mountain," *Appalachian Heritage* 39, no. 3 (2011): 87.

²¹ Aaron Brener, Immanuel Ness, and Benjamin Day, *The Encyclopedia of Strikes in American History* (London: Routledge, 2009), 26

²² Bernard C. Beaudreau and Jason E. Taylor, "Why Did the Roosevelt Administration Think Cartels, Higher Wages, and Shorter Workweeks Would Promote Recovery from the Great Depression?" (*Independent Review*, June 22, 2018.), 1-18.

²³ Bernard C. Beaudreau, "Why Did the National Industrial Recovery Act Fail?" *European Review of Economic History* 20, no. 1 (2015): 79-101.

²⁴ NIRA FULL TEXT

immediately, and unionization numbers increased, as well as the number of protests and strikes. The 1934 West Coast Waterfront Strike began on May 9 when longshoremen who were part of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters in every West Coast port walked out.²⁵ While the strike would eventually be broken, it lasted almost two months until July 31. It also resulted in the death of two strikers. Furthermore, the Teamsters, an affiliate of the American Labor Federation, which had previously been strong in Seattle, had now become a union that represented truckers from Mexico to the Canadian border, in addition to loggers, sailors and numerous other occupations as a result of the strike.²⁶

Seeking to formalize the process of collective bargaining as well as striking, the National Labor Relations Act was drafted in 1935. Also known as the Wagner Act, its legacy continues to be debated.²⁷ Though at the time of its passage and the immediate decades that followed, the Wagner Act was perceived to be a victory, “that climaxed a century-long struggle by labor for recognition of its right to organize and bargain collectively.”²⁸ The Wagner Act addressed many issues, including outlawing company unions, defining and outlawing five unfair labor practices by employers, and established the National Labor Relations Board designed to protect the rights of workers to organize. Furthermore, it established the precedent that there can only be one exclusive bargaining representative for a unit of employees, and that said bargaining-unit would be popularly elected by union members.²⁹ Although it was immediately hailed as the saving

²⁵ Rod Palmquist, "Labor's Great War on the Seattle Waterfront: A History of the 1934 Longshore Strike," University of Washington, Accessed December 19, 2018, https://depts.washington.edu/dock/34strikehistory_intro.shtml.

²⁶ "Strikes & Unions," University of Washington, Accessed November 13, 2018, http://depts.washington.edu/depress/strikes_unions.shtml.

²⁷ Daniel J. B. Mitchell, "Inflation, Unemployment, and the Wagner Act: A Critical Reappraisal," *Stanford Law Review* 38, no. 4 (1986): 1065- 1095.

²⁸ Joseph Rayback. *A History of American Labor* (New York: Free Press, 1966), 304.

²⁹ "29 U.S. Code § 159 - Representatives and Elections," Legal Information Institute, Accessed January 12, 2019, <https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/29/159>.

grace to organized labor, in “As Long as There Survives: Contemplating the Wagner Act after Eighty Years”, Joseph McCartin critically analyses the tenets of the Wagner Act and how its political interpretations evolved throughout the latter half of the 21st century. McCartin writes that, “in the 1950’s and 60’s when organized labor was flourishing, scholars tended to uncritically celebrate the act.”³⁰ However, by the 1970’s, the unfettered positive interpretation of the act came into question. In the journal *Radical America* historians James Green and Staughton Lynd began to question if the Wagner Act had supported the militancy of the organized labor movement’s strike efforts or if it had been the other way around. By the end of the decade, Green and Lynd’s interpretations diverged. In *World of the Worker* by Green in 1980, he asserted that the Wagner Act was “the most radical labor legislation ever enacted” and “encouraged worker militancy by demonstrating that the New Deal congress would protect and defend workers.”³¹ Lynd on the other hand offered a more skeptical viewpoint of the Act suggesting that “the Wagner Act was used to undermine a militant, democratic and rank-and-file-led `alternative unionism` in favor of a top-down form of bureaucratic industrial unionism”.³²

Nonetheless, in the fourteen-year period between the passage of the Wagner Act in 1933 and the Taft-Hartley Act in 1947 unionization rates and membership numbers increased. Data tables provided by Irving Bernstein from his article *The Growth of American Unions*, displays this growth. Between 1934 and 1936 unions membership grew modestly with a total number of roughly 3.6 million unionized workers growing to about 4.1 million.³³ This modest growth can be accredited to the Wagner Act as well as prior legislation which sought to empower workers

³⁰ Joseph A. McCartin. "As Long as There Survives: Contemplating the Wagner Act after Eighty Years." *Labor: Studies in Working-Class History of the Americas*, no.1 (May 1, 2017): 24.

³¹ McCartin, "As Long as There Survives," 25.

³² McCartin, "As Long as There Survives," 24.

³³ Irving Bernstein, "The Growth of American Unions, 1945–1960," *Labor History* 2, no. 2 (1961): 301-18.

such as the National Industrial Recover Act (1933). In 1937 the Wagner Act's constitutionality was challenged in the supreme court case *National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) v Jones & Laughlin Steel Corporation*, which was brought about as a result of sit-down strikers' refusal to work. The court ruled 5-4 in favor of the NLRB with Chief Justice Hughes writing, "That it is a fundamental right. Employees have as clear a right to organize and select their representatives for lawful purposes as the respondent has to organize its business and select its own officers and agents."³⁴ Following this ruling, unionizations rates grew dramatically. Between 1936 and 1937 America's 4.1 million unionized workers had increased their ranks to a total of approximately 6.3 million, representing a 55% increase from the preceding year. By the end of 1947 the total number of union members nationwide hovered around 14 million people. Perhaps most telling is that in 1935 unionized workers represented less than 7% of the civilian labor force nationwide, but by the end of the Wagner era 23.5% or almost one fourth of all civilian laborers were part of a labor union.³⁵

The power of this New Deal legislation was that it now put the onus on managers and business owners to negotiate with laborers or face a strike without government protection. Despite the changing attitude among the government and public that collective bargaining was a right every American worker had, businesses were still in denial. This meant that although collective bargaining was now sanctioned and formalized by the government, strikes were still common. Following the federal governments protection of the Wagner Act's constitutionality in 1937, it seemed as if strikes were to become a mainstay of American labor relations. In the 1930's the phenomena of staging sit-down strikes spread like wildfire across America's

³⁴ "National Labor Relations Board v. Jones & Laughlin Steel Corp.," Legal Information Institute, Accessed February 21, 2019, <https://www.law.cornell.edu/supremecourt/text/301/1>.

³⁵ Bernstein, "The Growth of American Unions," 309-10.

unionized workforce.³⁶ In 1934 unionized workers occupied the General Tire factory in Akron, Ohio. A subsequent series of sit-down strikes propagated throughout the Akron rubber industry, with more than sixty “occupations” staged in a two-year period.³⁷ Although it wasn’t until the end of 1936, about a year and a half after the passage of the Wagner Act, that sit-downs spread to the auto and steel industries. By the time the Supreme Court had ruled on *NLRB vs Jones* in April of 1937 sit-downs were pervasive throughout many industrialized cities:

The sit-downs involved every conceivable type of worker—kitchen and laundry workers in the Israel-Zion Hospital in Brooklyn, pencil makers, janitors, dog catchers, newspaper pressman, sailors, tobacco workers, Woolworth girls, rug weavers, hotel and restaurant employees, pie bakers, watchmakers, garbage collectors, Western Union messengers, opticians, and lumbermen.³⁸

The sit-down wave peaked in March of 1937, with more than 165,000 workers from 170 different occupations participating in strikes. Sit-down strikes effectiveness hinged on the ability of a small number of workers to completely halt an entire building or industries operations. Role or skill specialization within industrialized units meant that an organized group of about a dozen strikers could cease production by sitting down and refusing to work. Additionally, the workers often seized control of factory spaces or machinery. However sit-down strikes seldom involved the destruction of property or violence that was present at demonstrations, such as the Waterfront Strike.³⁹ The peaceable nature of these strikes easily garnered support from what were already pro-labor elected officials in both federal and state governments. Regarding a sit-down strike staged at a General Motors plant in Flint Michigan, Governor Murphy refused to enforce injunctions requiring sit-downers to evacuate the plant and even had the National Guard

³⁶ Brenner, Ness, and Day, *Encyclopedia of Strikes*, 208.

³⁷ Brenner, Ness, and Day, *Encyclopedia of Strikes*, 208.

³⁸ Brenner, Ness, and Day, *Encyclopedia of Strikes*, 209.

³⁹ Brenner, Ness, and Day, *Encyclopedia of Strikes*, 209.

surround the plant to protect strikers from any outside attacks.⁴⁰ Notably, one U.S congressman would be quoted stating that Murphy, “supported mob rule with troops.”⁴¹ The authors of the *Encyclopedia of Strikes* emphasize that Murphy’s intervention or lack thereof was the simple most important aspect to the strikes success.⁴²

Although following the sit-down waves peak, in March and early April of 1936, the effectiveness and frequency of sit-downs dramatically decreased. The death of this form of strike, like Blair Mountain and Waterfront, was the result of state and government intervention. While the sit-downs reached nationwide epidemic proportions, the Supreme Court forced state governments to abide by the Wagner Act and seek reconciliation with striking workers. However, at the peak of the strike wave, state legislators as well as congress began to voice their frustration with the continued sit-downs, “early in 1937 legislation to outlaw the sit-down strike was being considered in Alabama and Vermont.”⁴³ Across the nation, state legislatures were looking for ways to outright ban the sit-down, and “restore private property rights at the point of a gun,” by using police intervention to eject workers from plants and arrest them upon request of the owner.⁴⁴ Even Governor Murphy of Michigan began using police violence to break up strikes, following GM’s loss to strikers in Flint. A United Auto Workers activist at the time referring to this change in attitude from the government was quoted as saying, “In early April, the Detroit police began a ‘get tough’ on crime campaign and started ousting sit-down strikers.”⁴⁵ By 1939, the sit-down strike had all but disappeared from the American workplace when the Supreme Court ruled in the *NLRB vs Fansteel Metallurgical Corp.* making their

⁴⁰ Brenner, Ness, and Day, *Encyclopedia of Strikes*, 210.

⁴¹ Brenner, Ness, and Day, *Encyclopedia of Strikes*, 210.

⁴² Brenner, Ness, and Day, *Encyclopedia of Strikes*, 210.

⁴³ Brenner, Ness, and Day, *Encyclopedia of Strikes*, 210.

⁴⁴ Brenner, Ness, and Day, *Encyclopedia of Strikes*, 211.

⁴⁵ Brenner, Ness, and Day, *Encyclopedia of Strikes*, 211.

practice effectively illegal. Nevertheless, just as the Waterfront Strikes had been successful in spreading unionization among workers of different industries, the sit-downs had driven a rise in union representation as well. For example, after their successful sit-down strike against GM, the UAW's membership rose from 88,000 to almost 400,000 in a little more than six months.⁴⁶ However, the political attitudes Americans held about organized labor were about to undergo a large transformation during the years of WWII and the era that followed.

The Decline of the Fifth Party System and the Formation of the Southern

Strategy: 1945-1968

Truman and Fractures in the New Deal Coalition

When Harry Truman began his campaign for presidency in 1948, he only had a 37% approval rating after inheriting the office of president from FDR, who had died in April of 1945.⁴⁷ Nonetheless Truman beat out Republican candidate Thomas Dewey, securing one of the greatest election upsets in modern history. Dewey had been projected to win in virtually every poll and Truman famously displayed a picture of the Chicago Daily Tribune which read "Dewey Defeats Truman" that had been printed before the election results were even announced.⁴⁸ Dewey, like FDR, was Governor of New York prior to running for president. Critical of the New Deal, Dewey was also known as a progressive.⁴⁹ Dewey's running mate was Earl Warren, Governor of California and future Chief Justice of the Supreme Court who would go on to rule in

⁴⁶ Brenner, Ness, and Day, *Encyclopedia of Strikes*, 207.

⁴⁷ "Gallup Brain: Strom Thurmond and the 1948 Election," Gallup.com, last modified December 17, 2002, Accessed January 28, 2019, <https://news.gallup.com/poll/7444/gallup-brain-strom-thurmond-1948-election.aspx>.

⁴⁸ "Looking Back at the Truman Beats Dewey Upset," National Constitution Center, Accessed January 26, 2019, <https://constitutioncenter.org/blog/behind-the-biggest-upset-in-presidential-history-truman-beats-dewey/>.

⁴⁹ Alonzo Hamby, "Harry S. Truman: Campaigns and Elections," Miller Center, July 28, 2017, Accessed December 28, 2018. <https://millercenter.org/president/truman/campaigns-and-elections>.

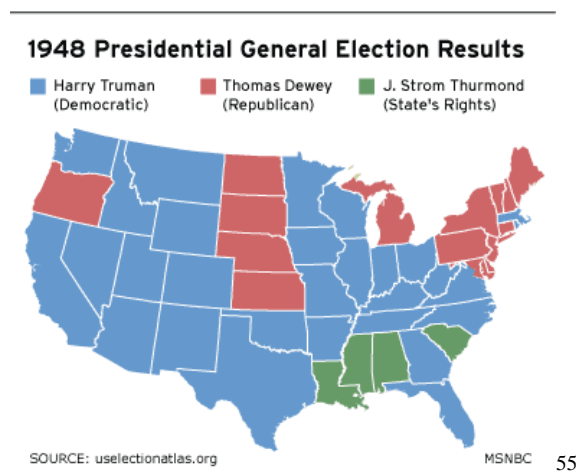
favor of integration in *Brown v. Board of Ed.* (1954), Dewey's campaign represented the Republican's attack upon the urban democratic machine which had helped form the New Deal coalition. Truman overcame this and achieved victory by relying on a familiar strategy, supporting organized labor and progressive voters, particularly African-Americans. Although he couldn't prevent the Taft-Hartley Act from passing through congress with bipartisan support in 1947, Truman had vetoed the bill displaying that he would continue to support the labor movement. On the campaign trail Truman made numerous "whistle stops" across the nation delivering speeches from the rear of the presidential train, beginning "with a Labor Day speech to a large union crowd in Detroit."⁵⁰ However, for many progressives and labor voters in the Democratic Party his actions weren't enough and in December of 1947 Henry Wallace announced his campaign for presidency as a third-party candidate under the Progressive Party.⁵¹ The Democratic base divided further in 1948 over the issue of civil rights. The Americans for Democratic Action, a pro-civil rights organization won a plank at the Democratic National Convention in 1948, causing an uproar among southern Democrats. As Professor Alonzo Hamby recounts "the entire Mississippi delegation and half of the Alabama delegation walked out of the convention. The southerners that remained did so only to vote against Truman's nomination."⁵² In the following months southern Democrats also nominated their own third-party candidate for the presidential election Strom Thurmond, who represented the States Rights Party. Although he failed to gain much traction outside of the south, Thurmond secured thirty-nine electoral college votes and displayed to Republican strategists that many white southern voters

⁵⁰ Hamby, "Harry S. Truman: Campaigns and Elections."

⁵¹ Alex Ross, "Uncommon Man," *The New Yorker*, last modified June 19, 2017, Accessed December 29, 2018, <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2013/10/14/uncommon-man>.

⁵² Hamby, "Harry S. Truman: Campaigns and Elections."

support of the Democratic Party was eroding.⁵³ While the Democrats and Truman secured a presidential victory in 1948 the base of southern whites Democrats, union members, urban industrialists and African-Americans was clearly under attack. Gallup reports that Truman beat Dewey by “one of the smallest margins ever.”⁵⁴ Furthermore Truman became the first Democratic president to be elected without the support of the south and Dewey won almost all of the north-east states showing that the Democrats hold over the northern urban industrialist base was weakening.



Eisenhower to LBJ: Exposing the Fragility of the New Deal Coalition

When Dwight Eisenhower announced his campaign for presidency in 1952 many were surprised, not by his political aspirations, but the party which he announced his ticket under. Prior to 1952 many had the false notion that Eisenhower may be a Democrat. The New York Times revealed that even Truman had asked Eisenhower to run for president in 1948, offering to

⁵³ "Gallup Brain: Strom Thurmond and the 1948 Election."

⁵⁴ "Gallup Brain: Strom Thurmond and the 1948 Election."

⁵⁵ Tom Curry, "How Truman Defied the Odds in 1948," NBCNews, last modified September 12, 2008, Accessed December 29, 2018, http://www.nbcnews.com/id/26661213/ns/politics-decision_08/t/how-truman-defied-odds/#.XKAPNaBKUk.

be his vice-president and running mate.⁵⁶ Although he ran as a Republican, and fiercely criticized Truman on the campaign trail, Eisenhower supported many of the liberal positions of his Democratic opponent Adlai Stevenson. Eisenhower publicly supported New Deal legislation and vowed “not to turn the clock back ever,” perhaps best evidence of this is Henry Wallace’s endorsement of Eisenhower over Stevenson.⁵⁷ Additionally, Stevenson and Eisenhower shared similar views regarding the civil rights movement, a quote provided by Winston Du of the Vanderbilt Historical Review, has a commentator at the time stating, “Eisenhower says he’s for integration but gradually. Stevenson says he’s for integration but moderately.”⁵⁸ From a domestic policy standpoint both candidates seemed to completely align along a slightly progressive consensus toward issues such as labor and civil rights.

Eisenhower capitalized on this consensus by ignoring Stevenson all together and accusing the Truman administration as well as the Democratic Party of being corrupt and failing to fight communism.⁵⁹ With a Republican controlled congress, investigations into the Truman administration for corruption carried on continuously throughout the election, and although most investigations involved very minor issues, they contributed to Eisenhower’s claim that the Democratic Party was corrupt. Corruption also became a central part of Eisenhower’s campaign when his running mate Richard Nixon was accused of using campaign funds on personal purchases. However, these allegations helped boost Eisenhower’s campaign. To address the allegations Nixon delivered his, “Checkers speech” where he accused communist sympathizers of running a smear campaign against him. He went further and claimed Democratic candidates

⁵⁶ "Truman Wrote of '48 Offer to Eisenhower," The New York Times last modified July 11, 2003. Accessed December 30, 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2003/07/11/us/truman-wrote-of-48-offer-to-eisenhower.html?fta=y>.

⁵⁷ Winston Du, "Eisenhower's Campaign and the Election of 1952," Vanderbilt Historical Review, last modified January 11, 2019, Accessed December 31, 2018. <http://vanderbilthistoricalreview.com/eisenhowers-campaign/>.

⁵⁸ Du, "Eisenhower's Campaign and the Election of 1952."

⁵⁹ Du, "Eisenhower's Campaign and the Election of 1952."

were guilty of the very crimes he himself was accused of, demanding that Stevenson and his running mate release “a complete financial statement... [if] they have nothing to hide.”⁶⁰ Nixon’s speech was met “with an outpouring of support,” and Eisenhower went on to win the election by a landslide with 55% of the popular vote.⁶¹ Notably, Eisenhower did exceptionally well among the south and in the electoral college. He won Virginia, Florida, Tennessee, and Texas as well as 442 electoral votes against Stevenson’s 89.⁶²



Facing Stevenson again in 1956, Eisenhower cruised to another term in office with ease, securing Louisiana along with the rest of the southern states which had supported him in 1952. Furthermore, after his use of the National Guard to enforce integration, African Americans... voted in larger proportion for the President than for any Republican candidate since Herbert Hoover.”⁶⁴ Throughout Eisenhower’s tenure in office organized labors political power greatly declined as union leaders became associated with communism and corruption and continued to be hindered by the Taft-Hartley Act in collective bargaining disagreements. Although total union membership continued to climb, as a percent of employed workers, union membership peaked in

⁶⁰ Du, "Eisenhower's Campaign and the Election of 1952."

⁶¹ Chester J. Pach, "Dwight D. Eisenhower: Campaigns and Elections," Miller Center, last modified July 25, 2017, Accessed December 28, 2018, <https://millercenter.org/president/eisenhower/campaigns-and-elections>.

⁶² Pach, "Dwight D. Eisenhower: Campaigns and Elections."

⁶³ "Voting America: Presidential Elections 1840-2008," University of Richmond, Accessed January 10, 2018, <http://dsl.richmond.edu/voting/indelections.php?year=1952>.

⁶⁴ Pach, "Dwight D. Eisenhower: Campaigns and Elections."

1954 at 34% of all wage and salary workers.⁶⁵ In 1957 the United States Select Committee on Improper Activities in Labor and Management also known as the McClellan Committee was formed by the senate. With Robert Kennedy serving as the committee's chief counsel, the organization fiercely investigated labor leaders, such as President of the Teamsters, Jimmy Hoffa who had been accused of creating fake unions to gain control of the organization. Although Hoffa would escape charges in the 1950's Kennedy's continued investigations of his actions and created a rift between an already eroding labor base within the Democratic Party.⁶⁶ Before Eisenhower left office in 1959, with bi-partisan support congress once again passed a bill which hampered union power, the Landrum-Griffin Act.⁶⁷



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John F. Kennedy, like every Democratic candidate since 1933, made promises to labor organizers and unions. Although the difference between JFK and FDR's promises made to unions are monumental. Rather than promising to increase the power of unions through legislation, JFK's campaign pamphlets espoused messages such as: "Senator Kennedy, as a member of the Senate Rackets Committee with his brother Bob, as its Chief Counsel, has battled

⁶⁵ Gerald Mayer, "Union Membership Trends in the United States," *Congressional Research Service*, (2004): 12; Drew DeSilver, "American Unions Membership Declines as Public Support Fluctuates," Pew Research Center, last modified February 20, 2014, Accessed February 17, 2019. <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2014/02/20/for-american-unions-membership-trails-far-behind-public-support/>.

⁶⁶ "Hoffa Convicted on Use of Funds: Faces 20 Years," *The New York Times*, last modified July 27, 1964, Accessed December 17, 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/1964/07/27/archives/hoffa-convicted-on-use-of-funds-faces-20-years-he-and-6-others-are.html>.

⁶⁷ "Landrum-Griffin Act." United Auto Workers, Accessed December 11, 2018, <https://uaw.org/landrum-griffin-act/>.

⁶⁸ "Voting America: Presidential Elections."

relentlessly to free American labor and management from the grip of racketeers, hoodlums, and union busters.”⁶⁹ Though it promised to support union members it also implied an inherent corrupt element surrounded unions. Furthermore, as a result of Robert Kennedys battles with Hoffa in the 1950’s, the Teamsters were expelled by the AFL-CIO in 1957, and endorsed Nixon for president.⁷⁰ Though it would be twenty years before organized labors mass decline, its functional significance as part of the New Deal coalition would officially end in 1960.

JFK was able to make up for this fracture of the Democratic voting base by winning back other parts of Fifth Party constituents that had previously been stolen by Eisenhower and Thurmond. After defeating his opponent Lyndon B. Johnson, a Senator from Texas at the Democratic National Convention and winning the Democratic nomination, JFK invited LBJ to be his running mate.⁷¹ An apparent attempt at courting back southern Democrats lost during Truman’s administration. Additionally, JFK sought African-Americans’ support which had been won by Eisenhower in his second round of elections. After Martin Luther King was arrested in Atlanta, JFK put great pressure on state and local governments to release him. Regarding the actions that led to King’s arrest JFK praised him and stated that he “exhibited moral courage of a high order.”⁷² By securing these two parts of the Democratic voting bloc, JFK was able to win the election by a very slim margin. JFK beat Nixon by a popular vote count of roughly 120,000

⁶⁹ “John F. Kennedy for President 1960 Campaign Brochure,” 4President Corporation, Accessed December 24, 2018, <http://www.4president.org/brochures/jfk1960brochure.htm>.

⁷⁰ James R. Dickenson, "Teamsters, GOP Forged Increasingly Close Links," *The Washington Post*, last modified July 25, 1985, Accessed December 24, 2018, https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/1985/07/25/teamsters-gop-forged-increasingly-close-links/87eee847-76f3-45cf-b64b-3a783c5f3503/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.d632118e9628.

⁷¹ Marc J. Silverstone, "John F. Kennedy: Campaigns and Elections," Miller Center, last modified April 10, 2018, Accessed December 28, 2018, <https://millercenter.org/president/kennedy/campaigns-and-elections>.

⁷² "Statement on Presidential Endorsement," *The Martin Luther King, Jr., Research and Education Institute*, Accessed December 29, 2018, <https://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/king-papers/documents/statement-presidential-endorsement>.

Goldwater ran on a much less moderate platform. In his acceptance speech of the nomination for president at the Republican National Convention, Goldwater stated, “extremism in the defense of liberty is no vice.”⁷⁷ Professor Kent Germany asserts that as little as one-fifth of the Republican voter base approved of his nomination, pushing many moderates to vote for LBJ.⁷⁸ The election of 1964 ended as a landslide, with LBJ winning by the “widest margin of popular votes in American history,” and securing a 10 to 1 advantage in the electoral college.⁷⁹



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Post WWII: The Intersection of Racial Politics and the Decline of Organized Labor

WWII: Integrating Workforces

Prior to WWII industrial jobs, and subsequently union membership, was reserved for mainly white males. One of the many reasons for this was that in the beginning of 20th century while the population of black Americans was heavily concentrated in the South, unionized industrial jobs were concentrated in Northern urban areas. Although by 1910 a large exodus of African-Americans immigrating from the South to Northern urban centers began. The first Great

⁷⁷ “Goldwater’s 1964 Acceptance Speech,” The Washington Post Archives, Accessed December 31, 2018, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/politics/daily/may98/goldwaterspeech.htm>.

⁷⁸ Kent Germany, “Lyndon B. Johnson: Campaigns and Elections,” Miller Center, last modified July 18, 2017, Accessed December 28, 2018. <https://millercenter.org/president/lbjohnson/campaigns-and-elections>.

⁷⁹ Germany, “Lyndon B. Johnson.”

⁸⁰ “Voting America: Presidential Elections.”

Migration took place between 1910 and 1940. The census reports that the largest demographic change of this time took place in Gary, Indiana, where prior to 1910 blacks represented just 2.3% of the population, and by 1940 black residents comprised 18.3% of Gary's population.⁸¹ As important as this first migration was in establishing black communities' roots in numerous north-eastern cities, the Second Great Migration proved to draw a much larger portion of black Americans from the rural south and brought them to cities across the United States. This included areas in the Mid-West, West Coast, and even southern cities such as Houston. The greatest demographic change that occurred during this mass exodus was in Newark, New Jersey where prior to 1940 the proportion of black citizens was 10.6%, and by 1970 this number would rise to 54.2%.⁸² Aside from geographic barriers, African-Americans also faced numerous other societal hurdles that often barred their entry into unionized workforces.

Douglas A. Blackmon outlines in "Slavery by Another Name: The Re-Enslavement of Black Americans from the Civil War to World War II," how prior to the 1940s many southern African-Americans were effectively re-enslaved through the practices of convict leasing, sharecropping, and peonage.⁸³ While many of these issues would remain unaddressed until WWII, in 1867 congress passed the Peonage Act which outlawed the practice of "voluntary or involuntary service or labor of any persons... in liquidation of any debt or obligation."⁸⁴ Nonetheless, peonage continued to be a tool of coercing forced labor from African Americans throughout the nineteenth century and into the 1940s. Although, FDR's presidency marked the

⁸¹ "The Great Migration, 1910 to 1970," U.S. Census Bureau, last modified March 01, 1994, Accessed December 8, 2018, <https://www.census.gov/dataviz/visualizations/020/>.

⁸² "The Great Migration."

⁸³ Douglas A. Blackmon, *Slavery by Another Name: The Re-enslavement of Black People in America from the Civil War to World War II* (New York: Anchor, 2008).

⁸⁴ "Anti-Peonage Act of 1867," Statutes and Stories, Accessed March 21, 2019, http://www.statutesandstories.com/blog_html/peonage-act-of-1876/.

end of peonage as it had been previously practiced. On December 9, 1941, just two days after Pearl Harbor, Roosevelt's Attorney General, Francis Biddle, issued Circular No. 3591. Biddle's intention was to refocus the scope of trials concerning peonage, focusing on the element of involuntary servitude rather than debt and to urge the Department of Justice to prosecute these cases using civil rights law.⁸⁵ Additionally, as America prepared for total war against the Axis Powers, men and women of all races were conscribed into the military and sought out for industrial jobs to produce for the total war effort. Albeit the military and much of the America's industrial workforce remained highly segregated. Seeking a remedy for the situation, civil rights activists lead by A. Phillip Randolph and other African-American political leaders began organizing a "March on Washington" in 1941 to protest racial discrimination.⁸⁶ To avoid international embarrassment and domestic unrest during wartime, Roosevelt issued Executive Order 8802 on July 25, 1941.⁸⁷ Falling short of desegregating the military, the executive order guaranteed government protection from "discrimination in the employment of workers in defense industries or Government because of race, creed, color, or national origin... it is the duty of employers and of labor organizations." Widely recognized as forcing integration on business owners and managers, Order 8802 also placed the burden of ending discrimination among union leaders.

As WWII progressed large amounts of Americans were conscribed into military service. The National WWII Museum reports that by 1945, over twelve million Americans were enlisted with the armed services. However, of those twelve million-armed service members, less than one

⁸⁵ Risa Goluboff, "The Thirteenth Amendment in Historical Perspective," *Journal of Constitutional Law* 11, no. 5 (2009): 1457.

⁸⁶ "A. Philip Randolph | ACS," American Constitution Society, last modified March 29, 2018, Accessed January 16, 2019, <https://www.acslaw.org/acsblog/a-philip-randolph/>.

⁸⁷ "Executive Order 8802: Prohibition of Discrimination in the Defense Industry (1941)." Our Documents.gov, Accessed February 5, 2018, <https://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=false&doc=72#>.

million, approximately 900,000, were African-American.⁸⁸ With white Americans comprising much of the military, minority groups such as African Americans and women had the chance to supplant themselves into the industrialized workforce. With the Roosevelt administration effectively ending formalized peonage and outlawing segregation among defense contractors and unions, coupled with the diaspora of the Great Migration, African Americans now had the opportunity to gain employment in a skilled, unionized trade. By the end of the decade the proportion of black males classified as semi-skilled workers rose from 12.6% to 21% percent, and the proportion in manufacturing industries grew from 16% to 23%.⁸⁹

Though integration of African-Americans into skilled positions and labor unions was met with mixed reactions amongst union leaders and members. The United Electrical Radio and Machine Workers (UE) was hailed as a union on the forefront of integration during WWII. However, in “Communist Unions and Racism,” Donald Critchlow outlines the much messier legacy of the UE. Although the UE supported organizations such as the Committee to Abolish the Poll Tax, the NAACP and others, “conventional resolutions that passed regarding the integration of blacks into the union failed to be implemented on neither national or local levels.”⁹⁰ Leading Critchlow to the conclusion that the UE’s commitment to racial equality tended to be “little more than popular front rhetoric.”⁹¹ Going forward integration or rather fear of integration of workforces among moderate and conservative Americans, coupled with a fear

⁸⁸ "Research Starters: US Military by the Numbers." The National WWII Museum, Accessed March 26, 2019, <https://www.nationalww2museum.org/students-teachers/student-resources/research-starters/research-starters-us-military-numbers>.

⁸⁹ William J. Collins, "Race, Roosevelt, and Wartime Production: Fair Employment in World War II Labor Markets," *American Economic Review* 91, no. 1 (2001): 272.

⁹⁰ Critchlow, Donald T. "Communist Unions and Racism: A Comparative Study of the Responses of United Electrical Radio and Machine Workers and the National Maritime Union to the Black Question during World War II." *Labor History* 17, no. 2 (1976): 231.

⁹¹ Critchlow, "Communist Unions," 232.

of communism contributed to the fall of organized labor's strike power and its progressive agenda.

Operation Dixie and the Backlash to Wartime Progress

Prior to WWII much of the economy of the southern U.S. was agrarian based and lacked behind other parts of the country in industrialization. However, by the 1950's, "a modern industrial economy was built over an old agriculture-based society [in the south]. The long-term results of these changes were the transformation of the southern economy, [and] the development of the Sun Belt."⁹² While this small scale industrial revolution is often attributed to the wartime investment in industry and infrastructure, it has been proven to be a result of a much longer economic transformation beginning with the New Deal.⁹³ Although wartime industries had employed many laborers in the south, following the war much of the economy had returned to industries present before the war such as textile production. Rather, the democratic south had embraced many New Deal policies and capitalized on war time investment. As a result, "from 1939 to 1954, the South and Southwest exceeded the national averages in nonfarm employment increases while the old manufacturing region in the Northeast fell well below those averages."⁹⁴ The more progressive of the two major union federations in America, The Congress of Industrial Organizations moved swiftly to establish a coordinated effort to unionize America's growing southern industrial workforce. This initiative was known as Operation Dixie and it would be a

⁹² Robert Lewis, "World War II Manufacturing and the Postwar Southern Economy," *The Journal of Southern History* 73, no. 4 (2007): 838.

⁹³ Lewis, "World War II Manufacturing," 838- 866; Ken, and Elizabeth A. Fones-Wolf, "The Wages of the Problem South," In *Struggle for the Soul of the Postwar South: White Evangelical Protestants and Operation Dixie* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2015), 11-32.

⁹⁴ Ken and Elizabeth A. Fones-Wolf, *Struggle for the Soul of the Postwar South: White Evangelical Protestants and Operation Dixie* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2015), 89

fatal blow to the CIO as well as the advancement of organized labor's progressive agenda in American politics.

Prior to Operation Dixie, unionizing efforts were met with backlash from many business owners and managers in the south, like labor organizing efforts across the rest of the country. What was unique about southern responses to unionization though, was its religious aspect. As the Fones-Wolf's explain in chapter 4 of their book "Struggle for the Soul of the Post War South: White Evangelical Protestants and Operation Dixie", "religion, especially evangelical Protestantism, was a crucial part of the fabric of the informal employer-employee relations that existed in southern workplaces."⁹⁵ However, in places like Waco, Texas, at the Hammond Laundry-Cleaning Machine Company, when workers began to organize collectively "'one of the first things the union did' after winning 'was to eliminate the Monday morning [devotional] assembly.'"⁹⁶ William Hammond the business owner was enraged and immediately wanted to close his entire business, but was assured by his lawyers that if he forced a strike, he could threaten to replace the workers and obtain a more satisfactory contract.⁹⁷ This pattern of collective bargaining or rather non-bargaining was pervasive and successful throughout much of the south during WWII. Primarily because of a no-strike pledge made by America's union leaders that was to last throughout the war.⁹⁸

But in 1945 the Southern States Industrial Council went on the offensive with two new objectives. The first was to prevent the Fair Employment Practices Act, which they feared would increase the wages of black workers. The second and most important was the outlawing of closed

⁹⁵ Fones-Wolf, *Struggle*, 88.

⁹⁶ Fones-Wolf, *Struggle*, 88.

⁹⁷ Fones-Wolf, *Struggle*, 88.

⁹⁸ Brenner, Ness, and Taylor, *Encyclopedia of Strikes*, 216.

shops, which forced business owners to negotiate with unions.⁹⁹ To achieve these goals southern planters and industrialists cooperated to thwart the efforts of organized labor while attracting laborers and industry to the south,

[Planters and industrialists feared] that enticing northern factories often brought unions who were key components of the liberal coalition in the Democratic Party... Consequently, Delta planters were the backbone of both segregation and right-to-work legislation. If they could successfully tap and combine fears of external threats to free-enterprise capitalism and white supremacy, they could create an industrial prosperity that would help them maintain political and social control.¹⁰⁰

Despite their racist motivations, the Fones-Wolfs note that what scared southern Christians industrialists, planters, and workers the most was the “apparent link between the growth of CIO unions and the Soviet Union.”¹⁰¹ In the years that directly followed WWII, southern industrialists inextricably linked “evangelicalism and free-enterprise capitalism”, while going on the attack publicizing and broadcasting campaigns that linked labor, progressives, communism and ungodliness together.¹⁰² By 1946 when Operation Dixie launched in the south, not only were many southerners indifferent to the efforts of northern labor organizers, they were poised to repel them.

On May 18, 1946, Rev. A. A. Haggard “launched into a tirade” when speaking to a group of 250 people in Tennessee: “Communism, he said had made ‘definite plans to take over America this year, using ‘organized labor and the Negroes’ ... [and that] ‘all fundamentalist preachers are first on the communist death list.’”¹⁰³ Though, this speech served only as an introduction to another Reverend, Clarence Garret, who went on to defend white supremacy and

⁹⁹ Fones-Wolf, *Struggle*, 91.

¹⁰⁰ Fones-Wolf, *Struggle*, 92.

¹⁰¹ Fones-Wolf, *Struggle*, 92.

¹⁰² Ken and Elizabeth A. Fones-Wolf, “Constructing a Christian Free Enterprise,” In, *Struggle for the Soul of the Postwar South: White Evangelical Protestants and Operation Dixie*, (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2015), 86-112.

¹⁰³ Fones-Wolf, *Struggle*, 179.

the Klan while accusing “communists preaching social equality,” of causing race riots.¹⁰⁴ The CIO tried to combat this image by using religious liaisons to drive up support for labor organization in the south. However, even when it would clearly harm the organizing drive, these leaders defended their organizational stance against Jim Crow resulting in southerners deriding them for being communist.¹⁰⁵ Furthermore, not even those laborers who were already represented by CIO organizations in the south favored integration. When union leaders ordered the Alabama Dry Dock and Shipbuilding Company to promote twelve black men to skilled positions, four thousand whites rioted, forcing blacks off the shipyard.¹⁰⁶ Moreover the AFL, launched a countercampaign and organizing drive among the growing industrial sector of the south. Realizing that claims of communism and being pro-civil rights could hurt the CIO’s organizing drive, the AFL presented themselves as a lesser evil to southern business owners and laborers. They accused the CIO of seeking racial equality, allowing blacks who were communists into their ranks and told southern industrialists that they would be fighting for their life against communist forces.¹⁰⁷ The liberal labor policies which had fostered union growth in northern cities was diametrically opposed to what working class white southerners thought America should be at the time. The inability or unwillingness of CIO to completely break from communism, coupled with its leaders embrace of progressive policies, specifically civil rights had fatal effects.

At the end of Operation Dixie “southern unions still had only about half the union density rate of the North. Equally devastating for the CIO, the AFL had more than three times

¹⁰⁴ Fones-Wolf, *Struggle*, 179.

¹⁰⁵ Fones-Wolf, *Struggle*, 182.

¹⁰⁶ Fones-Wolf, *Struggle*, 182.

¹⁰⁷ Fones-Wolf, *Struggle*, 196.

the number of CIO southern members.”¹⁰⁸ Rather than Operation Dixie succeeding in creating an integrated, progressive, and unionized southern work force, it drove a wedge further between elements of organized labor, African Americans, southern Democrats and moderate Americans.. Moreover, Operation Dixie unified southern planters, industrialists, and white Christians, predominately Evangelical Protestants against progressive New Deal policies in favor of decentralized government and free enterprise. The Fones-Wolfs put it most simply,

A business community distraught by the growing power of unionism and government regulations found anticommunism a convenient tool to roll back the New Deal. Even the labor movement contributed. In the AFL, some leaders despised the challenged raised by the CIO and its willingness to incorporate leftists...In fact, the Red Scare within the labor movement preceded the phenomenon known as McCarthyism by a number of years. By the war's end, the nation-and the South-was ready for an all out crusade against communism.¹⁰⁹

The Fall of the Organized Labor Movement: How Progress and the New Deal Became Antithetical to American Values

Introduction

While some today credit the fall of organized labor in America to a shift in the economy, away from manufacturing to service-based positions, the data indicates otherwise.¹¹⁰ In “Accounting for the Decline in Union Membership, 1950-1980” Dickens and Leonard compiled data from four major sources, NLRB annual reports, the biennial survey of U.S. unions by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, and AFL and AFL-CIO convention proceeding and employment figures from the 1982 Economic Report of the President. The purpose of doing so, was to trace

¹⁰⁸ Fones-Wolf, *Struggle*, 207.

¹⁰⁹ Fones-Wolf, *Struggle*, 193.

¹¹⁰ Aparna Mathur and Mark J. Perry, "Counterpoint: Unions Are Irrelevant." American Enterprise Institute, last modified September 1, 2017, Accessed December 30, 2018, <http://www.aei.org/publication/counterpoint-unions-are-irrelevant/>.

the percentage of decline among union membership and its relation to three specific factors: the decline in unions organizing activity, the decline in their rate of success in NLRB elections and economic causes, such as the supposed loss of unionized job opportunities. The conclusion of their study showed that while a combination of factors contributed to the decline in union membership,

the argument that the decline in organizing activity and success is due to a drying up of organizing opportunities resulting from the decline of highly unionized industries, cannot explain why the proportion of the work force organized within those industries fell during the years when employment in those industries was growing.¹¹¹

Furthermore, while they recognized that all factors, except decertification's accounted for a substantial part of the decline, they also contend that "low rates could be explained by a decreased willingness on the part of workers to join unions... due, in turn, to attitudinal changes or to an increase in management resistance."¹¹²

The Anti-Operation Dixie Ideology: Anti-Unionism Outside of the South

Organized labor's relationship or association with communism had many immediate negative effects. Following their fragmentation in the 1930s, and prior to their remarriage of the 1950's, the AFL and CIO represented America's two largest organizations of unionized workers. Founded in 1935, the CIO was originally intended to be a subsidiary of the AFL. However, the relationship to its parent organization quickly soured, causing their split. The reason for their dissolution was because CIO leadership tended to be much more progressive than its AFL counterparts. The CIO unions were responsible for organizing many of the sit-down strikes of the 1930's including the strike at the General Motors plant in Flint Michigan. Furthermore, in

¹¹¹ William T. Dickens and Jonathan S. Leonard, "Accounting for the Decline in Union Membership, 1950-1980," *Industrial and Labor Relations Review* 38, no. 3 (1985): 323-34.

¹¹² Dickens and Leonard. "Accounting," 323-34.

1941 the CIO released an ambiguous statement that supported the AFL's no strike pledge but fell short of committing to it.¹¹³ This progressivism also crossed racial lines as the CIO primarily in the 1940's and 50's sought to attract Black Americans to their ranks.¹¹⁴ As Stepan-Norris and Zeitlin put it, “

The CIO united the country's working men and women, of all creeds, colors, and nationalities, under a single banner – a broad banner, not of “trade” or “craft” but of “class.” In sum, the CIO “transformed American politics” by reconfiguring the nexus among the working class, civil society, and the state.¹¹⁵

The problem was that although the CIO had largely disavowed communism and expelled its Marxist leaders following 1947, the organization and by extension the labor movement continued to be associated with communism.¹¹⁶

The threat of communism and fascism frightened the American public to an extreme degree. In 1938 the House of Representatives created the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) to investigate activities thought to be subversive to American democracy. Operating during the era known as McCarthyism it had no formal affiliation to senator McCarthy and his investigations.¹¹⁷ Rather with Democratic representative Edward J. Hart serving as its first chairman, HUAC had bipartisan support. Testifying before the Dies Committee which was the predecessor to HUAC, the AFL Metal Trades president John Frey provided a list of 283

¹¹³ "This Week in History: Labor Pledges No Strikes during WW II," People's World.org, last modified December 12, 2016, Accessed December 14, 2018. <https://www.peoplesworld.org/article/this-week-in-history-labor-pledges-no-strikes-during-ww-ii/>.

¹¹⁴ William P Jones, "Black Workers and the CIOs Turn Toward Racial Liberalism: Operation Dixie and the North Carolina Lumber Industry, 1946–1953," *Labor History*, no. 3 (2000): 279-306.

¹¹⁵ Judith Stepan-Norris and Maurice Zeitlin, *Left Out: Reds and Americas Industrial Unions* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 2.

¹¹⁶ Steve Rosswurm, "The Wondrous Tale of an FBI Bug: What It Tells Us About Communism, Anti-Communism, and the CIO Leadership," *American Communist History* 2, no. 1 (2003): 3-20.

¹¹⁷ "McCarthyism and the Red Scare." Miller Center, last modified January 19, 2018, Accessed February 10, 2019, <https://millercenter.org/the-presidency/educational-resources/age-of-eisenhower/mccarthyism-red-scare>.

communists operating within the CIO's organization.¹¹⁸ The CIO responded and at their 1946 convention they disavowed communism and removed the autonomy that individual union organizations within the CIO had been utilizing to further communist goals.¹¹⁹ Between 1949-50 the CIO went even further and expelled eleven affiliated unions for their alleged support of the communist party, resulting in a loss of between 500,000 to 1,000,000 union members.¹²⁰ Aside from the outright expulsion of many organizations and members, the communist label that would become attached to the CIO would sabotage its ability to attract new members and unions.

Southern planters and industrialists used many tactics to combat the CIO which left their religious activists with the decision to choose between two options, "fighting communism or supporting a strong, interracial union."¹²¹ Anti-labor forces had successfully linked evangelicalism with free enterprise, and anti-progressivism. And this rhetoric resonated and stifled the CIO in urban places such as Louisville, which were outside of the Deep South. In 1948, Local 236, a federation of a few unions in Kentucky, lead the local Progressive Party Movement and Henry Wallace's third-party campaign for president.¹²² Wallace's support stemmed almost entirely from black union members, while white Local 236 members resisted Wallace because of media claims he was communist.¹²³ For supporting Wallace, Local 236 was expelled from the CIO and John Ramsay, a CIO organizer, attempted to convince International Harvester that the United Auto Workers of the CIO would offer a better union contract. Ramsay did so by winning support from local Protestant ministers whom he had convinced that Local

¹¹⁸ James R. Prickett, "Some Aspects of the Communist Controversy in the CIO," *Science & Society* 33, no. 3 (1969): 299.

¹¹⁹ Prickett, "Aspects," 301.

¹²⁰ Prickett, "Aspects," 302.

¹²¹ Fones-Wolf, *Struggle*, 200.

¹²² Fones-Wolf, *Struggle*, 199.

¹²³ Fones-Wolf, *Struggle*, 199.

236 “[was] representative of Godless Communism.” However, ironically 236 overcame this opposition and won representation of the plant by convincing the Baptist FE members that the CIO who was supported by anticommunist Association of Catholic Trade Unionists would oppress their religious rights.¹²⁴ Even when the CIO attempted to adopt the tactics of its enemies it could not escape the entanglement of communism, civil rights, and religion that created great fear that unions were going to constrict the rights of Americans. The outright failure of Operation Dixie drastically altered how the nation viewed labor and liberalism. Companies from other parts of America could threaten organized workers with relocation to the unionized south. Many industries moved their operations to the south at this time and “eroded pro-labor sentiments in the North as well as the South.”¹²⁵ Ultimately Operation Dixie would fatally stagnate the CIO’s growth and expend much of its resources causing it’s eventual collapse and remarriage to the more conservative AFL in 1955.¹²⁶ Finally, “If southern workers were the exception when Operation Dixie began they were the norm by the time of Ronald Reagan’s presidency.

However, Southern planters and industrialists weren’t the first corporate powers developing strategies to defeat unionization and strikes in America. In 1936 the Remington Rand Company of upstate New York developed the “Mohawk Valley Formula,”

The formula was a self-conscious effort to reformulate strikebreaking for a post-NLRA era. It replaced violence as the central tool in the strikebreaking arsenal with propaganda aimed at discrediting the union, appeals to workers to return to work and creating a citizens committee composed of community elites to vociferously insist on the importance of returning to work. [It] acknowledged the essentially political nature of strikes and provide strategies that employers could use to mold public opinion, transform community awareness, and undermine the confidence of workers in their union and their ability to act collectively.¹²⁷

¹²⁴ Fones-Wolf, *Struggle*, 199.

¹²⁵ Fones-Wolf, *Struggle*, 209.

¹²⁶ "AFL-CIO Merger Agreement." SAGE Journals, Accessed February 7, 2018, <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/001979395500900113?journalCode=ilra>.

¹²⁷ Brenner, Ness, and Taylor, *Encyclopedia of Strikes*, 69.

Although violence was mentioned as part of the Mohawk Valley Formula, it called for the business to establish a large police force “to intimidate strikers...[and] who would be trained to respond harshly to unlawful assemblies, inciting to riot, and disorderly conduct.”¹²⁸ Despite the dissemination of this strategy to other business owners and managers, the strategy did little to stymie strikes during the wave of sit-downs in 1936-1937 and proved to be relatively ineffective again in the postwar strike wave of 1946-47. However, a key similarity arose from the Mohawk Valley Strategy that was also prevalent during the south’s opposition to Operation Dixie.

Opposition to the Closed Shop: The Bridge Between North and South

I previously explored the racist and anti-communist messages that were used to link southern Christianity to free enterprise by southern industrialists and planters during the postwar period of Operation Dixie. One of the core aspects of free enterprise espoused by the Southern States Industrial Council was the “dangers of central planning and ‘government by bureaucratic direction.’”¹²⁹ Furthermore, the SSIC warned southern Christians that the institution to fear was not “big business but rather ‘Big Government backed by Big Labor,’” and the “key to social salvation...[was] not in organized movements.”¹³⁰

During WWII FDR established a National War Labor Board to discourage strikes and find quick, peaceful solutions to labor disputes. One result of this was that the NWLB granted “maintenance of membership” awards which forced employers to recognize unions as their employee’s collective bargaining apparatus.¹³¹ Nonetheless many southern companies chose to ignore board orders throughout the war. In 1943 an organization known as the Christian

¹²⁸ Brenner, Ness, and Taylor, *Encyclopedia of Strikes*, 69.

¹²⁹ Fones-Wolf, *Struggle*, 100.

¹³⁰ Fones-Wolf, *Struggle*, 100.

¹³¹ Fones-Wolf, *Struggle*, 91.

Americans successfully lobbied Arkansas's state legislature to pass an "antil-labor violence" measure."¹³² The following year the group began a campaign in Arkansas to amend the state constitution and outlaw closed, agency, and union shops, otherwise known as a right-to-work amendment. Despite heavy opposition, the amendment eventually passed through the legislature and soon after Florida, Arizona, and Nebraska all followed with their own right-to-work amendments before 1947.¹³³ Perhaps seeing the successful take down of Operation Dixie and the thwarting of labor's power in the south, inspired the "Mohawk Valley" anti-labor forces to lobby in the north as well, because in 1947 the bipartisan passage of the Taft-Hartley Act outlawed closed shops across the nation.¹³⁴ Between 1947 and 1980, 15 more states outlawed union and agency shops with their own right-to-work laws.

The Slow Death of the Strike: The Taft-Hartley ACT

Following WWII, the no-strike-for-the-duration pledge, that had been made by organized labor following ended abruptly. Subsequently another strike wave swept across the nation between 1946-1947. The number of strikes was not higher than those during the war, but their "length and mass were of a completely different character"¹³⁵ In the eighteen-month period between the end of the war and the passage of the Taft-Hartley Act, some 7 million workers engaged in prolonged strikes resulting in the loss of about 144 million work days.¹³⁶ Additionally, strikes were now not only garnering national attention but having effects on interstate commerce as well. In 1946 CIO strikes brought together unionized workers from

¹³² Fones-Wolf, *Struggle*, 91.

¹³³ "Right To Work States Timeline." National Right To Work Committee, Accessed November 27, 2018, <https://nrtwc.org/facts/state-right-to-work-timeline-2016/>.

¹³⁴ "Taft Hartley Act Text," Government Programs – Laws.com, Accessed November 18, 2018, <https://government-programs.laws.com/taft-hartley-act-text>.

¹³⁵ Brenner, Ness, and Taylor, *Encyclopedia of Strikes*, 216.

¹³⁶ Brenner, Ness, and Taylor, *Encyclopedia of Strikes*, 216.

several different industries shutting down operations at GE, GM, U.S. Steel, Armour & Company, and entire industries. Markedly these strikes brought together the entire union and were bereft of much inner conflict such as leader against ranks and white against black as was common and in other pre and postwar strikes.¹³⁷ Another contrast between these strikes and those of the past were that they involved little violence on both sides. Similarly, to the sit-down strikes, many strikes that occurred during the 1946-47 strike wave were originally met with public support. But as the strikes progressed and civilian life was disrupted the political and social tide quickly turned against the strikers. The strike wave of 1946-1947 was unique in other respects as well, primarily regarding the negotiations between workers and companies. Strikes of this era were fought over primarily one issue, wages.¹³⁸ When autoworkers at GM demanded a pay increase, the company lamented that it wouldn't be possible without raising prices. Organizers responded by demanding that GM "open the books" to provide proof.¹³⁹ GM refused and rather than pressure the company, Truman conducted fact finding missions into each industry to make pay increase recommendations. The result of this was "during the steel strike in January and February 1946, the fact finders came to the conclusion that 18½ cents was what the companies could afford to pay if steel prices were allowed to rise by \$5.00 a ton."¹⁴⁰ This subsequently set a precedent where companies were able to pit workers and consumers against one another. Also, GM along with the rest of the business community would begin to assert their position that unions had no place interfering in management matters such as prices, profits and organization of work, limiting organized labor's sphere of influence.

¹³⁷ Brenner, Ness, and Taylor, *Encyclopedia of Strikes*, 217.

¹³⁸ Brenner, Ness, and Taylor, *Encyclopedia of Strikes*, 216.

¹³⁹ Brenner, Ness, and Taylor, *Encyclopedia of Strikes*, 218-19.

¹⁴⁰ Brenner, Ness, and Taylor, *Encyclopedia of Strike*, 219.

Passed in 1947 by a partisan congressional effort, the Taft-Hartley Act was dubbed the “Slave Labor Law” by organized labor leaders and was a direct response to the 1946-47 strike wave.¹⁴¹ The 1947 Act directly attacked much of the bargaining power given to unions in the Wagner Act. Most notably, Taft-Hartley outlawed closed shops or contractual agreements that required an employer to hire only labor union members, permitted states to pass right-to-work laws and gave employers the right to disseminate information opposing unions. Additionally, the bill outlawed secondary strikes and required union leaders to file affidavits disavowing communism.¹⁴² Regardless of the implications of the Taft-Hartley Act, unionization rates didn’t immediately decrease. Rather in the years directly following 1947 unionization continued to increase, although at a much more modest rate than before. Bernstein’s data shows that between 1947 and 1953 the total number of unionized laborers increased from just above 14 million to 17 million nationwide.¹⁴³

However, immediately following the Taft-Hartley Act organized labor felt the diminishment of their power. An archived version of the National Labor Relations Board website reports that, “During the 12-year administration of the Wagner Act, unions won victories in over 80% of representation elections. But in that first year after passage of the Taft-Hartley Act unions won around 70% of representation elections conducted by the agency.”¹⁴⁴ After 1954 the proportion of private sector workers began to slowly decline. Nevertheless, the decade of the 1950’s experienced more strikes than any other decade of the century.¹⁴⁵ Postwar industrial unions, felt empowered by New Deal legislation and for most workers, striking no longer

¹⁴¹ Nelson Lichstein, “Taft-Hartley: A Slave-Labor Law,” *Catholic University Law Review* 47, no. 3 (1998): 764.

¹⁴² “Taft Hartley Act Text.”

¹⁴³ Bernstein. “The Growth of American Unions,” 303.

¹⁴⁴ “History & Photos,” National Labor Relations Board, Accessed January 11, 2019. <https://web.archive.org/web/20110127001825/http://www.nlr.gov/75th/1959landrumgriffinact.html>.

¹⁴⁵ Brenner, Ness, and Taylor, *Encyclopedia of Strikes*, 70.

appeared to be a dangerous, illegal threat to the economic order. However just as New Deal legislation had limited employers' actions against strikes during the 30's and 40's, the Taft-Hartley Act limited actions that strikers could take in future decades. Companies such as GE used these new limitations against striking workers. During the strike wave of 1945 and 1946 strikers seized access to the company's plants preventing everyone, including management from entering. In response Lemuel Boulware, a GE executive adopted many tenets of the Mohawk Valley Strategy and anti-Operation Dixie movement to mitigate future strikes. Boulware,

“developed tough negotiation strategies designed to undermine the union, making it appear collective action could obtain nothing. He balanced [that] with a daily propaganda barrage... sending the message that the company, not the union, was the source of any benefit in their lives.”¹⁴⁶

This strategy prevented strikes against GE in the 1950's from having the same effect that the 1946-47 lockouts did and allowed Boulware to contain strikes to small scale demonstrations. Although in 1960 it appeared a major strike among GE's workers was fermenting. However, in the months leading up to it Boulware and GE asserted that it would accept a long strike versus agreeing to a settlement. Notably, “managers sent letters to the homes of employees telling them that company would protect their *right to work* (emphasis mine).”¹⁴⁷ Once the strike began the company funded the broadcast of local and national advertisements, contacted clergy and sought out community authorities to condemn the strike. The result of Boulware and GE's campaign was the end of the strike after just two weeks.¹⁴⁸

To add insult to injury in 1959 a bipartisan effort of congress led to the passage of the Landrum-Griffin Act, which was supported by the moderate Eisenhower.¹⁴⁹ The 1959 Act

¹⁴⁶ Brenner, Ness, and Taylor, *Encyclopedia of Strikes*, 70.

¹⁴⁷ Brenner, Ness, and Taylor, *Encyclopedia of Strikes*, 70.

¹⁴⁸ Brenner, Ness, and Taylor, *Encyclopedia of Strikes*, 70.

¹⁴⁹ "National Labor Relations Board," NLRB.gov, Accessed February 10, 2019, <https://www.nlr.gov/about-nlr/who-we-are/our-history/1959-landrum-griffin-act>.

provided a section titled Bill of Rights of Members of Labor Organizations. While this could be perceived to be empowering labor organizers, its inclusion in the law, along with statements such as “Congress further finds, from recent investigations in the labor and management fields, that there have been a number of instances of breach of trust, corruption, disregard of the rights of individual employees and failure to observe standards of responsibility,” points to a more sinister explanation.¹⁵⁰ Most of Congress and subsequently their constituencies, now felt that unions were an institutional threat to personal rights and liberties and that the government needed to protect workers from them. Coupled with their inability to achieve successful results from striking and the shift in public attitude towards organizing efforts, organized labor’s ability to grow was stifled. Between 1950 and 1980, the proportion of the private workforce that was unionized began to steadily decline. In 1954, the proportion of private sector workers who were union members reached an all-time high of 39.2%, however by 1980 this number dwindled to 23.6%.¹⁵¹ Numbers provided by the Bureau of Labor Statistics in 1983 indicate that there were a total of 17.7 million union workers nationwide¹⁵², an increase of only 700,000 unionized workers in a period of 30 years. Yet organized labor refused to be deterred and between 1950 and 1975 the Department of Labor statistics documented between 250 and 400 large strikes per year.

The 1960’s represented a turning point in how strikes and organized labor would be recognized across the nation. As both Civil Rights protests and large strikes by organized labor began to make national news, these organizations started coalescing. In 1968 Memphis sanitation workers went on strike protesting low wages and racial discrimination. Although the sanitation workers weren’t formally unionized one of their demands was the “recognition of the American

¹⁵⁰ “Landrum-Griffin Act.”

¹⁵¹ Dickens and Leonard, “Accounting,” 323-34.

¹⁵² Janice Bellace, “American Unions And The Economy — The Unheard Voice Of A Shrinking Sector,” *The Singapore Economic Review* 59, no. 04 (2014): 3-4.

Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees,” which the city of Memphis had refused to bargain with.¹⁵³ Immediately the black community of Memphis who had similar complaints and experiences, rallied around the sanitation workers. However, the “business community, city press, and the majority of the white population,” sided with Memphis Mayor Henry Loeb against the strike.¹⁵⁴ Memphis sanitation workers received a boost of support though when Martin Luther King Jr. began supporting the strike and giving speeches on behalf of the strikers as part of his Poor People’s Campaign. “In defiance of court prohibition to lead other marches,” King returned to Memphis and delivered his “I’ve Been to the Mountaintop” speech, which would be the final speech of his life.¹⁵⁵ The wave of riots that followed King’s assassination would set the stage for a wave of illegal wildcat strikes in the 1970’s.

The wildcat strikes that characterized the late 1960’s and early 70’s displayed the complete dismantlement and ineffectiveness of organized labor at the time. The “contractual system of shop-floor representation did not address workers problems at the point of production,” and wage increases were becoming unobtainable without agreeing to increases in prices of the commodities the workers were producing. The end of the 1960’s “coincided with a slowdown of the economy and a number of union concessions on wages and benefits.” Corporations effective neutering of the strike during the 40’s and 50’s meant that by the late 60’s most unions were legitimately no longer an institution able to provide benefit to the worker and union members responses reflected this. During this period, the wave of strikes that came about was not just unsanctioned by union leadership, rather it was a strike against union leadership as well as management.¹⁵⁶ Time and time again members of the United Auto Workers, United Mine

¹⁵³ Brenner, Ness, and Taylor, *Encyclopedia of Strikes*, 231.

¹⁵⁴ Brenner, Ness, and Taylor, *Encyclopedia of Strikes*, 231.

¹⁵⁵ Brenner, Ness, and Taylor, *Encyclopedia of Strikes*, 232.

¹⁵⁶ Brenner, Ness, and Taylor, *Encyclopedia of Strikes*, 232.

Workers of America, The Teamsters and others, fled their respective unions to start a counter-organization.¹⁵⁷ In the first half of the 1970's union members revealed a new militancy against unions themselves¹⁵⁸, no longer were unions simply divided among issues of communism, progressivism and civil rights, large union federations could no longer convince their most loyal members and factions that remaining a part of them enhanced their bargaining power or offered economic benefits.

There is possibly no better example of this than the coal miners' unions during the 1970's. In 1970, Lou Antal was nominated the first president of the Miners for Democracy, however union members quickly challenged the results. In 1972 Antal was removed from his position after a federal court uncovered voter fraud in the election.¹⁵⁹ Subsequently more than 400 delegates from the MFD and other miners' unions met to discuss who would be chosen as candidates for the next set of elections. There was little consensus among the delegates except for the agreement that "no hunkies (central and eastern Europeans) and no blacks" would be chosen as candidates.¹⁶⁰ The MFD's candidate was Arnold Miller, who would eventually win the election. Miller and the MFD's platform included "an overhaul of union administration, democratic elections in all districts... a new contract increasing pensions and benefits, and a six-hour work day."¹⁶¹ Although Miller was viewed as a rank-and-file candidate that union members could get behind, after the election he quickly tarnished this image. In November of 1977 he attempted to expel all communists from the United Mine Workers.¹⁶² Furthermore, when he began negotiating a new contract in 1978, the union's bargaining council was unhappy with it

¹⁵⁷ Brenner, Ness, and Taylor, *Encyclopedia of Strikes*, 232-234.

¹⁵⁸ Brenner, Ness, and Taylor, *Encyclopedia of Strikes*, 233.

¹⁵⁹ Brenner, Ness, and Taylor, *Encyclopedia of Strikes*, 475.

¹⁶⁰ Brenner, Ness, and Taylor, *Encyclopedia of Strikes*, 475.

¹⁶¹ Brenner, Ness, and Taylor, *Encyclopedia of Strikes*, 475.

¹⁶² Brenner, Ness, and Taylor, *Encyclopedia of Strikes*, 475.

and rejected the first two proposals that Miller offered. Since Millers election, wildcat strikes had been common among the mine workers and in 1978, Carter attempted to impose sanctions against the striking miners as part of his power under the Taft-Hartley Act.¹⁶³ Although most of the miners chose to ignore Carter and continued their demonstrations. After more than three months of striking the miners agreed to a contract that gave them a slight wage increase, increased pensions benefits but reduced their health benefits.¹⁶⁴ The contract failed to negotiate any advances in the area of mine safety which was the MFD's foremost platform issue entering into negotiations. Moreover, while the workers were participating in wildcat strikes, "Miller openly discouraged and blocked the distribution of strike relief funds until the miners returned to work."¹⁶⁵ One of the keys to the Mohawk Valley Strategy was "enticing workers to return to work, through the creation of an employees committee loyal to the boss."¹⁶⁶ For the UMW's of the 70's it appeared they had limited choices. Acquiesce to managements demands and accept concessions, return to work and attempt to bargain in a process that had already failed them or participate in unsanctioned wild-cat strikes that offered limited disruptive power and were not supported by the union's leadership. These results fell directly into line with what had made Operation Dixie such a success. Sow discord among union members and convince them that bargaining directly with management rather than as a union, was in their best interest.

¹⁶³ Brenner, Ness, and Taylor, *Encyclopedia of Strikes*, 476.

¹⁶⁴ Brenner, Ness, and Taylor, *Encyclopedia of Strikes*, 476.

¹⁶⁵ Brenner, Ness, and Taylor, *Encyclopedia of Strikes*, 476.

¹⁶⁶ Brenner, Ness, and Taylor, *Encyclopedia of Strikes*, 69.

The Southern Strategy and Silent Majority: Creating a Republican Voting Bloc

Barry Goldwater: The Most Influential Loser in American Political History

While it appears, Goldwater was trounced in national elections, his assurgency to the Republican nomination and success in the south during the 1964 election cannot be ignored. Although the ideas he championed such as opposition to the Civil Rights Act and much of the New Deals progressive policies fell on deaf ears, his reason for opposing them would eventually move to the forefront of the Republican Party's political agenda. Referencing states and business owners' rights he appealed to southern voters by claiming New Deal legislation represented an overreach of federal government power.¹⁶⁷ Additionally Goldwater, criticized LBJ for continuing the Vietnam War stating in a speech along the campaign trail, "the war against crime is the only needed war," and cited statistics claiming that since the Kennedy-Johnson administration took office crime had "climbed five times faster than the population."¹⁶⁸ The reasons he gave for this rise in crime were twofold. First, he criticized the Supreme Courts interpretation of cases that he said displayed, "an obsessive concern,"¹⁶⁹ with the rights of defendants. Secondly, he criticized the federal government even further. Claiming that the states had no power to fight crime and that he would "propose a constitutional amendment 'to give back to the states those powers absolutely need for fair and efficient administration of criminal law.'"¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁷ "Barry Goldwater for President 1964 Campaign Brochure," 4President Corporation, Accessed December 16, 2018, <http://www.4president.org/brochures/goldwater1964brochure.htm>.

¹⁶⁸ Richard H. Rovere. "The Goldwater Campaign," The New Yorker, last modified June 18, 2017, Accessed January 19, 2019, <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/1964/10/03/the-campaign-goldwater>.

¹⁶⁹ Rovere. "The Goldwater Campaign."

¹⁷⁰ Rovere. "The Goldwater Campaign."

Goldwater's campaign strategy had three lasting consequences, it paved the way for a new electoral strategy for Republican candidates, the Southern Strategy. Furthermore, it brought Ronald Reagan to the national spotlight. On behalf of Goldwater, Reagan gave his now famous "A Time for Choosing" speech endorsing the Republican candidate's presidency. In this speech, Reagan spoke disdainfully regarding the increasing strength of the centralized federal government stating, "Senator Clark of Pennsylvania... defines liberalism as 'meeting the material needs of the masses though the full power of centralized government...' this was the very thing the Founding Fathers sought to minimize."¹⁷¹ One of the main forms of perceived overreach Reagan attacked was the federal governments intervention into the free market. Knowledgeable of the urban and rural divide between party constituencies Reagan masterfully outlined this argument using the farming industry:

Every responsible farmer and farm organization has repeatedly asked the government to free the farm economy, but how -- who are farmers to know what's best for them? The wheat farmers voted against a wheat program. The government passed it anyway. Now the price of bread goes up; the price of wheat to the farmer goes down.¹⁷²

Because of his foresight into the abstract ways that Republicans could attack both the New Deal and Civil Rights legislation, as well as his participation in Reagans ascent to head of the Republican party, Goldwater is the most influential loser in American political history. Lastly, his campaign began the public outcry at the rise of crime during this period and pushed the Democrats to respond accordingly with harsh legislative measures, rather than appear weak. The legislative War on Crime wouldn't begin until LBJ's second term as president, when the failed efforts of the Vietnam War were becoming increasingly unpopular. Given Goldwater's campaign

¹⁷¹ Michael E. Eidenmuller, "Ronald Reagan -- A Time for Choosing," American Rhetoric.com, Accessed December 29, 2018, <https://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/ronaldreaganatimeforchoosing.htm>.

¹⁷² Eidenmuller, "Ronald Reagan."

rhetoric, it is possible LBJ felt the need to respond or risk becoming even more unpopular with the American public.

Nixons “New” Federalism and the Policy Realignment of National Politics

Going into 1968, LBJ had successfully passed both the Civil Rights Bill of 1964 and Voting Rights Act of 1965. Additionally, as part of his Great Society initiative LBJ had extended New Deal policies to combat a War on Poverty and worked to pass the Social Security Amendments of 1965 which created both Medicare and Medicaid. However, his unwavering support for the Vietnam War had split the Democratic party and he was becoming increasingly unpopular.¹⁷³ A staunch anti-war opponent Eugene McCarthy beat LBJ in the New Hampshire primary prompting the incumbent president to drop out of the race for reelection.¹⁷⁴ From that point on the Democratic primary was a battle between anti-war candidate Democrat Eugene McCarthy, the progressive Bobby Kennedy and vice-president Hubert Humphrey. However, in June of 1968, just months after Martin Luther King’s assassination, Bobby Kennedy was also killed by an assassin. Prior to his death, Kennedy had delivered a speech to a large black crowd, where he announced Kings death, praised his legacy and urged all Americans to work together for progress.¹⁷⁵ With Kennedy’s assassination the African-American and progressive voter bloc was once again splintered unsure who to support in the Democratic primary. At the Chicago Democratic convention Humphrey secured the nomination but that same night a riot started outside the convention hall, prompting anti-war protestors to clash with the police.¹⁷⁶ Nixon

¹⁷³ Ken Hughes, "Richard Nixon: Campaigns and Elections," Miller Center, last modified March 30, 2018, Accessed December 29, 2018, <https://millercenter.org/president/nixon/campaigns-and-elections>.

¹⁷⁴ Hughes, "Richard Nixon."

¹⁷⁵ "Indianapolis, 1968: Bobby Kennedy, Martin Luther King and a Historic Call for Peace." YouTube, last modified March 29, 2018, Accessed December 4, 2018, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A2kWIa8wSC0>.

¹⁷⁶ Hughes, "Richard Nixon."

would seize this opportunity to criticize the chaos that many perceived the Democrats to be sponsoring. A few days later, traveling along the same street that the riot happened, Nixon delivered a speech where he stated, “This is a nation of laws as Abraham Lincoln has said. No one is above the law and were going to enforce the law and Americans should remember that if we’re going to have law and order.”¹⁷⁷ Humphrey’s connection to LBJ and numerous public standoffs between his supporters painted the candidate in a bad light and portrayed the Democratic base to be chaotic and unorganized. At his first campus rally at Kent State University, Humphrey chastised campus activists stating, “Any student that has the get up and go to make trouble for a university president, ought to have enough courage... to go on out and help a poor kid get a break in life.”¹⁷⁸ A few minutes later a large group of Kent State students, many of whom were black, silently walked out on Humphrey’s speech. Campaign aide Van Dyk was quoted as saying “the only thing being covered by the media are demonstrations and disruptions. Were not getting through with our own message.”¹⁷⁹ On the same night of the riot at the Democratic National Convention, Humphreys, possibly trying to attract voters from Nixon’s base gave a speech where he stated,

I say most respectfully, particularly to some who have spoken before, the answer lies in reasoned, effective action by state, local, and federal authority. The answer does not lie in an attack on our courts, our laws, or our Attorney General. We do not want a police state, but we need a state of law and order. And neither mob violence nor police brutality have any place in America.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁷ Peskyleb. "Nixon Capitalizes on Chicago DNC Protest 1968." YouTube. May 21, 2012. Accessed February 11, 2018. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XQ8qHRVNKUw>.

¹⁷⁸ "Hubert H. Humphrey." APM Reports.com, Recordings, Accessed December 28, 2018, <https://features.apmreports.org/arw/campaign68/e1.html>.

¹⁷⁹ "Hubert H. Humphrey."

¹⁸⁰ "A New Day for America," 4President Corporation, Accessed December 31, 2018, <http://www.4president.org/speeches/1968/hhh1968acceptance.htm>.

Humphrey's speech did little to attract voters from the Republican base and further alienated anti-war protestors, members of the civil rights movement and union members, who all utilized public demonstrations to obtain their goals.

Another contributor to the splintering of the Democratic party was third-party candidate George Wallace. Denouncing both Democrats and Republicans while espousing "segregation now, segregation forever," Wallace aimed to gain the support of white "backlash voters" who were against the civil rights movement. Although Wallace's campaign imploded upon itself in the final months of the election, his message resonated so much with racist southern white voters that he remained a viable enough candidate to secure 13% of the popular vote and five southern state's electoral college votes, eliminating any chance Humphrey had at winning and obliterating the traditional New Deal Coalition.¹⁸¹

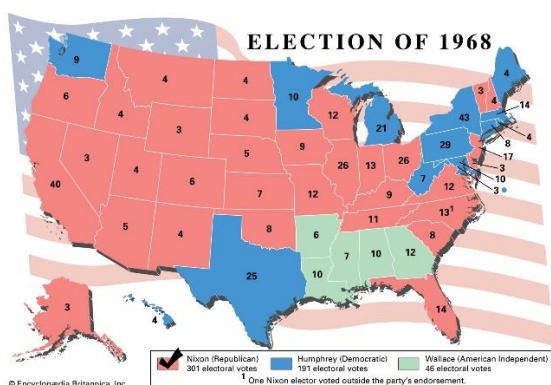
Meanwhile, a veteran to presidential campaigning, Nixon began securing the endorsement of prominent Republican leaders including Goldwater, Thurmond and Reagan.¹⁸² Smelling blood in the water, Nixon made the war in Vietnam a centerpiece of his election. However, Nixon capitalized on another political tide that had been rising for years, law and order. Of the six issues Nixon chose to address on his official campaign brochure, two of them were "Rising Crime," and "Progress with Order." Along with "Winning the Peace," two other main issues his campaign promised to address were reminiscent of Goldwater: "Runaway Government," and "False Promises."¹⁸³ Zeroing in on the strikes of organized labor and the protests of the civil rights movement Nixon's brochure asserted that "dissent is a necessary

¹⁸¹ "Voting America Presidential Elections."

¹⁸² Hughes, "Richard Nixon."

¹⁸³ "Richard Nixon for President 1968 Campaign Brochure" 4President Corporation, Accessed January 1, 2019, <http://www.4president.org/brochures/1968/nixon1968brochure.htm>.

ingredient of change. But in a system of government that provides for peaceful change... there is no cause that justifies rule by mob instead of by reason.”¹⁸⁴ Although he was aware of Wallace’s likely victory among southern states, Nixon hoped to appeal to party-line Republicans and what he would later call the silent-majority or moderate Americans voters who feared radical social change and public demonstration.¹⁸⁵ While Nixon appeared confident in this strategy it nearly brought him his third loss in presidential elections. Although the Democratic party had been greatly divided and polls projected Nixon with a large lead, on election day he secured just 43% of the popular vote defeating Humphreys by less than 1%.¹⁸⁶ The following electoral map displays that while Nixon failed to secure southern white voters from Wallace’s base, as well as the north east urban Democrats from Humphreys, he was able to appeal to almost the entirety of moderate American voters across the rest of the U.S. securing the electorate in 33 states.



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More important than his original bid for the presidency in 1968 was Nixon’s 1972 campaign for reelection. After Wallace was shot in an assassination attempt and forced to drop out just prior to voting day, 1972 was the first election in many years that didn’t feature a

¹⁸⁴ “Richard Nixon for President 1968.”

¹⁸⁵ “‘Silent Majority’ Speech,” CSPAN, Accessed January 2, 2019. <https://www.c-span.org/video/?153819-1/silent-majority-speech>.

¹⁸⁶ Hughes, “Richard Nixon.”

¹⁸⁷ “United States Presidential Election of 1968,” Encyclopedia Britannica, last modified October 29, 2018, Accessed January 3, 2019, <https://www.britannica.com/event/United-States-presidential-election-of-1968>.

prominent third-party candidate. Furthermore, without Wallace's presence, white southerners now had a choice to make. Return to the Democratic party, which they felt had abandoned them over civil rights and big government programs or join the Republican voter base to form a new voting coalition based on states' rights and free enterprise. Nixon had demonstrated in his first term that he would utilize states rights to attack the civil rights movement as Wallace had promised:

Soon after Nixon's inauguration the Department of Health, Education and Welfare reversed the policies it had followed since 1965 by requesting a slowdown under desegregation guidelines in South Carolina and Mississippi...Second, during his first year in office Nixon nominated to the Supreme Court two federal appeals judges who were southern conservatives:[including] Clement F Haynsworth, a respected jurist from South Carolina whose decisions had angered organized labor and black civil rights organizations.¹⁸⁸

Additionally, while Nixon was unable to win over white southern Democrats in 1964, he promoted similar states' rights and law and order rhetoric to George Wallace. In 1968, while on the campaign trail, Wallace asserted that both parties had "supported a complete take-over of your schools by the federal government," to a crowd in Baton Rouge.¹⁸⁹ On Nixon's campaign brochure of 1968 under the issue of "Runaway Government," he lamented that "If I were to pick one major issue in this 1968 election in which the candidates have a basic disagreement it is with regard to the role of government."¹⁹⁰ Taking into consideration Nixon's subsequent actions against the integration of schools in the south, his similarities with Wallace were clear to voters in 1972. Nixon's rhetorical attacks on the African American population didn't end with states rights though. At the end of 1968 "Gallup polls indicated that 81% of respondents agreed with

¹⁸⁸ Graham, Hugh Davis. "Richard Nixon and Civil Rights: Explaining an Enigma." *Presidential Quarterly Studies* 26, no. 1 (1996). 94.

¹⁸⁹ Lyman, Brian. "'Stand up for America' – George Wallace's Chaotic, Prophetic Campaign." *USA Today*. August 16, 2018. Accessed November 25, 2018. <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation-now/1968-project/2018/08/16/stand-up-america-george-wallaces-chaotic-prophetic-campaign/961043002/>.

¹⁹⁰ "Richard Nixon for President 1968."

the statement that ‘law and order has broken down this country,’ and the majority blamed ‘negroes who starts riots’ and ‘communists’.”¹⁹¹ In 1968 Nixon aired a televised ad showing police clashing with protestors and declared that “we shall have order in the United States.”¹⁹² Additionally, Nixon spoke about the topic of law and order numerous times while campaigning in 1968, devoting 17 speeches to the topic.¹⁹³

Just seven months after his inauguration in 1964, Nixon gave a speech where he called for a form of “New Federalism” to sweep across the nation.¹⁹⁴ Echoing the 1960 talking points of Goldwater, Nixon criticized the New Deal and LBJ’s Great Society for over encumbering the Federal Government with bureaucracy, making it inefficient, and draining too much of the working classes money in taxes. While few of Nixon’s “New Federalism” initiatives came to fruition its legacy remained in its influence on the opinion of the white working class of America and ability to realign these voters to the Republican party. As Leonard Robbins explains in “The Plot That Succeeded: The New Federalism as Policy Realignment,” “[New Federalism] succeeded in bringing the Great Society into disrepute and the idea it symbolized.”¹⁹⁵ The results of Nixon’s two-fold, silent-majority and southern strategy base capturing platform displayed to Republicans the potential strength of this new moderate voting coalition. As Joseph A. Aistrup explains in, “The Southern Strategy Revisited: Republican Top Down Advancement in the South,” “The Goldwater Southern Strategy was merely an attempt to attract states rights voters to

¹⁹¹ Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* (New York: New Press, 2012), 46.

¹⁹² "1968 Nixon Law and Order," YouTube, last modified September 26, 2016, Accessed November 5, 2018, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cEdtwQ8OguY>.

¹⁹³ Alexander, *The New Jim Crow*, 46.

¹⁹⁴ "Richard Nixon and New Federalism," CSPAN, Accessed December 23, 2018, <https://www.c-span.org/video/?301677-1/richard-nixon-federalism>.

¹⁹⁵ Leonard Robbins, "The Plot That Succeeded: The New Federalism as Policy Realignment," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 10, no. 1 (1980): 99-106.

the Republican party. In the Nixon years, the Southern Strategy evolved, melding economic conservatives with states' rights advocates."¹⁹⁶ New Federalism struck a chord with the Silent Majority of Americans, and while Nixon was unable to bring about party realignment as many moderate voters once again voted for Carter in 1976, he effectively "brought about policy realignment."¹⁹⁷ The best demonstration of the effect that New Federalism had on realigning policy attitudes is of the American public is evident in the language Nixon used during his memoirs when speaking on New Federalism. Nixon no longer referred to his moderate voter base as the silent majority. Rather when explaining his reason behind his New Federalism initiatives he stated, "Now I planned to give the expression to more conservative values and beliefs of the New Majority throughout the country."¹⁹⁸

In the years that followed, much of the American public thought negatively of large Federal government programs. A 1976 survey revealed that 75% of the population believed the federal government wastes a lot of money.¹⁹⁹ Furthermore, the power among the large base of historically moderate voters had shifted. Prior to Nixon, liberal leaning progressives were on the offensive with the support of moderate Americans, but after his 1964 election the national rhetoric had shifted in the favor of right-wing moderates against the left. Writing in 1980 Robbins stated that "Today, conservatives speak of the inherent weakness of government- especially national government- as an agency for the solution of social problems. Liberals by and large are not vigorously or effectively contesting this view."²⁰⁰ The success of Nixon's campaign strategy and subsequent policy initiatives was evident. In 1964 he secured 60% of the popular vote and

¹⁹⁶ Joseph A. Airstup, *The Southern Strategy Revisited Republican Top-Down Advancement in the South* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2015), 5.

¹⁹⁷ Robbins, "The Plot," 104.

¹⁹⁸ Robbins, "The Plot," 104.

¹⁹⁹ Robbins, "The Plot," 104.

²⁰⁰ Robbins, "The Plot," 104.

became the first Republican candidate to sweep the south since the New Deal. Winning 520 Electoral College votes, he also secured the majority of votes in 49 states leaving only Massachusetts to his challenger, George McGovern. Nixon failed to serve the entirety of his second term however and in 1974 he was forced to pen his resignation amid the escalation of the Watergate Scandal, coming just a year after his running mate Spiro Agnew plead no contest to felony tax evasion. The fallout from the Watergate Scandal meant that “Nixon was not able to bring about a party realignment in which the Republican Party became a New Majority.”²⁰¹ Rollins also claims that party realignment was first diminished because of his perception that Nixon ran an independent campaign in 1972. However, there’s no evidence of a strong Republican primary contender to Nixon or that he had less than full support from his party. Perhaps Reagans presidential victory was too recent for Rollins to see that these policies would become the future of the Republican Party.



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Jimmy Carter: The Death of Progressive American Liberalism

The backlash to Nixon’s resignation and the corruption of his administration helped to push moderate voters back into the camp of Jimmy Carter prior to the 1978 presidential election. To make matters worse, in 1974 one month after taking over the office of president, Gerald Ford

²⁰¹ Robbins, "The Plot," 104.

²⁰² "Voting America Presidential Elections."

pardoned Nixon. This proved to be a terminal mistake, as 1976 polling showed that at least 55% of Americans believed that Ford had not acted in a just manner.²⁰³ Although corruption and scandal had plagued the Nixon administration, Ford still had an approval rating of 71% when he took office. But polls following the pardon indicated an initial 21 point drop to 50% in 1974 and by January of 1975 his approval rating hovered around 37% percent.²⁰⁴

Before Ford could do battle with Carter though, he first had to secure the nomination and approval of his party. In 1976 Ronald Reagan, Governor of California and part of the Goldwater camp of Republican ideology announced his bid for the Republican nomination. Ford and Reagan traded victories in early state primaries, but Ford was able to use his office to court Republican delegates support by offering patronage position within his cabinet and publicly supporting them in state elections. Ford won his parties' nomination by a mere sixty delegate votes.²⁰⁵ Shortly after, Ford's vice-president Nelson Rockefeller announced he would not seek a full term in 1976 allowing Ford to select a new running mate. Ford announced Bob Dole, a Senator from Kansas and like Carter, a peanut farmer, as his running mate. Although Reagan endorsed Ford's decision, calling for party unity in the upcoming elections, many Republicans were embittered over Ford's political maneuvering to secure his nomination.²⁰⁶ Conservatives in Texas and Florida refused to back Dole, and in California 87 delegates abstained, overall 378 votes were cast in protest of Dole's confirmation.²⁰⁷ The public backlash to the Nixon

²⁰³ "Americans Grew to Accept Nixon's Pardon," Gallup, last modified May 21, 2001, Accessed December 29, 2018, <https://news.gallup.com/poll/3157/americans-grew-accept-nixons-pardon.aspx>.

²⁰⁴ "Americans Grew to Accept Nixon's Pardon."

²⁰⁵ John R. Greene, "Gerald Ford: Campaigns and Elections," Miller Center, last modified July 17, 2017, Accessed December 1, 2018, <https://millercenter.org/president/ford/campaigns-and-elections>.

²⁰⁶ Greene, "Gerald Ford."

²⁰⁷ R. W. Apple, "Ford Picks Senator Dole as Running Mate," The New York Times, last modified August 20, 1976, Accessed December 11, 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/1976/08/20/archives/ford-picks-senator-dole-as-running-mate-says-he-wants-debate-and.html>.

administrations corruption, and division over the direction of the party fractured the moderate voting bloc which had secured Nixon's easy victory in 1972.

Jimmy Carter's success in the 1972 election relied upon securing votes from the traditional New Deal Coalition of Democratic voters, northern industrialists and southern Democrats. As a little-known governor from Georgia, when Carter announced his campaign many viewed him as an outsider who would never secure the party's nomination.²⁰⁸ This outsider status served to bolster Carter's campaign as time passed though. His perceived distance from the federal government allowed him to escape any association to the Nixon Administration's corruption and the divisive Vietnam War agenda that had plagued LBJ.²⁰⁹ Furthermore, as a state governor from the south, it was hard to draw connections between Carter and the New Deal federal programs which southern and moderate Americans had become so outspokenly against.

Carter sought to reconstruct the various elements of the New Deal coalition. Most notably Carter made great efforts at once again courting union support to the Democratic party. In 1976 Carter had many personal meetings with the leadership of the United Auto Workers, a union which Professor Martin Halpern asserts "[was] perhaps the leading embodiment of the liberal politics of the New Deal order."²¹⁰ Eventually Carter would gain endorsements from numerous leaders of the UAW, in addition to the release of union funds to be spent on his campaigns behalf. However after the election, support from Carter's alliance with labor almost immediately came into question during his first weeks in office, "AFL-CIO Secretary Treasurer Lane

²⁰⁸ Robert A. Strong, "Jimmy Carter: Campaigns and Elections," Miller Center, last modified July 17, 2017, Accessed December 28, 2018, <https://millercenter.org/president/carter/campaigns-and-elections>.

²⁰⁹ Strong, "Jimmy Carter."

²¹⁰ Martin Halpern, "Jimmy Carter and the UAW: Failure of an Alliance," *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, no. 3 (1996), 755.

Kirkland charged that Carter was failing to keep his promises to working people.”²¹¹

Additionally, Carter failed to pass the 1977 Labor Law Reform Act which would have repealed part of the Taft-Hartley Act. Rather than continue the fight for labor reform, Carter continued to make lukewarm comments regarding labor throughout the rest of his presidency offering little support or condemnation. As a result, the UAW supported Ted Kennedy in the Democratic primary of 1980. Halpern concludes that the UAW and labor could have done nothing more to support Carter, who had shown little effort to further their goals during his presidency and quotes Taylor Dark’s “Organized Labor and the Carter Administration” to say that, “New Deal liberalism... had decayed beyond an easy or forthright repair.”²¹²

Gaining the support of southern Democrats proved to be a much simpler task for Carter. At the most fundamental level, Ford was a part of the federal government, serving as the representative for Michigan’s fifth district prior to his ascension to the presidency. Meanwhile Carter was an obscure state governor from the deep south of Georgia. In stark contrast from LBJ, who had responded to being called a southerner by stating “I don’t know the word ‘Southerner.’ I don’t know the word ‘South.’ I think of myself as a national leader not a Southern leader,” Carter presented himself as a “Southerner and an American.”²¹³ Carter didn’t stop there though, he was wise to seize upon the growing anti-federal government rhetoric touted by Republicans and in one such instance had opposed court ordered busing in his home state of Georgia.²¹⁴ Carter was adept at playing both sides of the Democratic base in the south though. In 1970, while

²¹¹ Halpern, "Jimmy Carter," 756.

²¹² Halpern, "Jimmy Carter," 756.

²¹³ David D Lee, "The South and the American Mainstream: The Election of Jimmy Carter." *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* 61, no. 1 (1977), 7.

²¹⁴ B. Drummond Ayres Jr. Special To The New York Times. "1976 Surprise: Carter Is Running Well." The New York Times. December 26, 1975. Accessed December 27, 2018. <https://www.nytimes.com/1975/12/26/archives/1976-surprise-carter-is-running-well-carter-is-running-well-for.html>.

campaigning for governor, he touted segregationist governor Lester Maddox as “the essence of the Democratic Party,” and then weeks later stated, “I say to you quite frankly that the time for racial discrimination is over.”²¹⁵ Although Carter tried to make his presidential platform appear less racist than his gubernatorial campaigns, he still offered few assurances to black voters. Notably, his official campaign brochure of 1976 failed to mention African-Americans or the civil rights movement a single time.²¹⁶ Nonetheless, Carter was able to ride off the coattails of the legislation passed by previous Democrats and secured 83% of the African American vote.²¹⁷ Furthermore, he received a substantial margin of union support winning 62% of the votes coming from union households. Carter would be the last Democratic presidential candidate to secure the key players of FDR’s New Deal Coalition, as well as defeat ‘Goldwater Republicans’ at their own game by winning 53% of the moderate vote and garnering considerably more support from the working class.²¹⁸

The realignment of the public’s attitude toward policy that was achieved by Nixon, and the economic recession Carter’s administration inherited, left the president with a tough decision to make. Since the Great Depression, a major component of the New Deal and by extension the Great Societies economic initiatives was achieving full employment, which required an “activist government.”²¹⁹ However as Carl Biven notes in his book, “Jimmy Carter’s Economy: Policy in an Age of Limits,” the 1970’s were the decade of “Great Inflation.”²²⁰ Combatting inflation

²¹⁵ B. Drummond Ayres Jr, "1976 Surprise: Carter Is Running Well," The New York Times, last modified December 26, 1975, Accessed 27, 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/1975/12/26/archives/1976-surprise-carter-is-running-well-carter-is-running-well-for.html>.

²¹⁶ “Jimmy Carter for President 1976 Campaign Brochure,” 4President Corporation, Accessed December 27, 2018, <http://www.4president.org/brochures/1976/carter1976brochure.htm>.

²¹⁷ "How Groups Voted in 1976," Roper Center for Public Opinion Research, Accessed January 2, 2019, <https://ropercenter.cornell.edu/how-groups-voted-1976>.

²¹⁸ "How Groups Voted in 1976."

²¹⁹ Carl Biven, *Jimmy Carter's Economy: Policy in an Age of Limits* (University of North Carolina Press, 2003), Preface.

²²⁰ Biven, *Jimmy Carter's Economy*, Preface.

required a completely different form of economic policy and initiatives, including the control of public spending, limiting the growth of government, and restricting expansion of the welfare state. Carter made price stability the top priority of his administration and effectively “reversed the traditional position of Democrats.”²²¹ Describing this phenomenon, Biven states, “Carter understood better than most Democrats the need for rethinking the party’s traditional priorities and moving toward the political center.”²²² Nonetheless the results of Carter’s economic policies to fix the American economy weren’t apparent at the end of his first term and heading into the 1980 election he was widely unpopular.²²³

Overall Carter’s campaign and first term proved to be extremely lackluster. On the heels of Nixon’s resignation, Ford’s widely unpopular pardon of Nixon, and the division within the Republican Party, Carter still only managed to secure 50% of the popular vote. Furthermore, while his populist campaign did lure a small majority of moderate voters, Carter damaged the already dwindling relationship between organized labor and the Democratic Party. Additionally, he alienated many African-Americans by ignoring them and utilizing racially charged messages to pander to southern white voters. Finally, he gave in to the attacks Republicans had been lobbing at the New Deal since its inception, criticizing the power of the federal government and espousing state and corporate rights while running for president. In doing so Carter’s administration validated almost all the popular criticisms of the politics that were characteristic of the Fifth Party and New Deal Coalition. Carter signaled the death of the progressive Democratic party dominated Fifth Party System and made way for the Sixth Party System.

²²¹ Biven, *Jimmy Carter’s Economy*, Preface.

²²² Biven, *Jimmy Carter’s Economy*, Preface.

²²³ “Presidential Approval Ratings -- Gallup Historical Statistics and Trends,” Gallup, Accessed December 14, 2018, <https://news.gallup.com/poll/116677/presidential-approval-ratings-gallup-historical-statistics-trends.aspx>.



The Sixth Party System: Elections and Platforms

The Dismantlement of the New Deal Coalition

The Sixth Party System came about after the dismantlement of the NDC and the merging of two historically disparate voter bases southern Democrats and working-class “silent majority” moderate Americans. Dismantlement of the NDC involved attacking its most politically active and ardent supporters, organized labor, African Americans and Southern Democrats. There were two significant consequences of the NDC’s dismantlement. One was to rob the NDC’s constituents of their ability to fight corporate and government interests to enact popular change. The other was to realign the southern white voter base that had staunchly supported Democrats throughout the late 19th and early 20th century and capture its fervent support. These voters had abandoned the Democratic Party over their passage and staunch support of the civil rights legislation which enfranchised blacks across the nation, particularly in the south. The campaign of Goldwater in 1964 and the Nixon administration between 1968 and 1974 appealed to these voters by criticizing the federal government, for apparently exceeding or overstepping its power with civil rights and New Deal legislation. In doing so, Nixon and Carter opposed measures such

²²⁴ "Voting America Presidential Elections."

as court ordered busing of African-American students to white schools, under the guise of states' rights. A consequence of the adaptation of this strategy was the need to attack the power of progressive and civil rights activists' ability to influence politics. This manifested in an attack on public demonstrations in any form, including protests and strikes, often utilized by liberal leaning anti-war activists, the civil rights movement and organized labor. This tough on crime stance subsequently shifted its focus toward drugs and violent crime which was perceived as a major problem in America beginning in the 1960's and throughout the remainder of the twentieth century.

The second group realigned to become part of the Sixth Party System's voting base was moderate middle-class American voters, otherwise known as the silent majority or eventually the Reagan Coalition.²²⁵ This moderate voting group feared the rapid change America had undergone during the Fifth Party System and the large amount of unrest in society, however they were much more concerned with economics. The New Deal was implemented to repair the economy following the Great Depression. One of the results of New Deal policies was a large growth in organized labor's membership and it's bargaining power or control over the American marketplace. Like the civil rights demonstrators of the 1950's and 1960's, organized labor had utilized civil disobedience or striking to progress much of its goals. However, as the Cold War moved to the forefront of American's minds, organized labor began to be associated with communism and the radical progress they stood for did not appeal to many Americans. Subsequently strikes were branded as anti-democratic, and almost all forms of striking became illegal. Many well-known labor leaders were either ousted as communist or investigated for different types of corruption signaling the end of public support for unions. As unions failed to

²²⁵ James A. Reichley, "The Reagan Coalition," *The Brookings Review* 1, no. 2 (1982): 6-9.

grow throughout the 1950's and 60's the American economy continued to expand. However, as wages, job opportunities, and the economy became stagnant and inflation ran rampant, Sixth Party candidates offered a fix for the economy: decentralization and deregulation. Not only had unions become too strong but so had the federal governments control over the economy and American businesses. If the expenditure of the federal government's bureaucracy was cut, the economy deregulated, and American businesses given their rightful control of the market, jobs and wages could increase. These fiscal policies enticed many silent majority voters during Nixon's 1968 campaign and victory but came entirely into fruition under Reagan.

The 1980 Presidential Election: A Turning Point

The 1980 presidential election was between incumbent president Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan. Carter was unpopular as a president and during his first term the American economy was experiencing stagflation.²²⁶ As the economy failed to grow and create new jobs, Americans felt their purchasing power decrease as the dollar's value inflated. Though law and order remained a component of candidate's platforms, economics remained the main issue Americans used to decide their vote.²²⁷

Reagans campaign seized upon the rhetoric and ideals that had been steadily building among the Republican voter base, attacking federal bureaucracy, empowering state governments, controlling crime and fixing the economy. Fueled by Nixon's policy realignment and the post-New Deal demographic changes, Reagan won in a landslide against Carter winning the votes of

²²⁶ J. F. Li and Z. X. Lin, "Social Benefit Expenditures and Stagflation: Evidence from the United States." *Applied Economics* 48, no. 55 (2016): 5340-347.

²²⁷ Biven, *Jimmy Carter's Economy*, 2.

many “‘Reagan Democrats’, whose parents had been the backbone of FDR’s coalition.”²²⁸

Having narrowly lost to Ford in the 1976 primaries, Reagan defeated six other candidates in the 1980 Republican primaries. His main competitor was the Director of the CIA George Bush, who conceded defeat as Reagan won, securing the votes of more than 1,000 delegates across the country.²²⁹ The Democratic primary was not as clear-cut or gracious though, rather it was the final nail in the coffin for the Democratic party. During his first term as president, Carter “took the country and the Democrats in a more conservative direction, especially on fiscal issues.”²³⁰ His opponent Ted Kennedy on the other hand, represented the traditional progressive base of liberal New Deal Democrats.

The 1980 Democratic Primary

Carter was widely unpopular at the end of his first term and American’s, Republican and Democrat viewed his presidency as a crisis of leadership. Prior to the election, Carters vice-president Walter Mondale held his first televised press conference where he uninspiringly asserted that “Carter’s political future was not doomed,” and was forced to field questions of whether Carter would even seek reelection.²³¹ Furthermore polls at the time showed that Kennedy was a two-to-one favorite to earn the party’s nomination over Carter.²³² Inheriting the legacy of his families name, Kennedy had been viewed as a potential Democratic candidate for president since 1968. In 1970 many Democrats and political consultants viewed Kennedy as

²²⁸ Gil Troy, *The Reagan Revolution: A Very Short Introduction*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2009), 39.

²²⁹ Bill Peterson, "Bush Ends 2-Year Quest, Concedes '80 Republican Nomination to Reagan," *The Washington Post*, last modified May 27, 1980, Accessed December 7, 2018, https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/1980/05/27/bush-ends-2-year-quest-concedes-80-republican-nomination-to-reagan/cb34c445-b892-4fc6-a859-a83810509077/?utm_term=.8218a666add5.

²³⁰ John Ward, *Camelot's End: Kennedy vs. Carter and the Fight That Broke the Democratic Party* (Grand Central Publishing, 2019), 4.

²³¹ Ward, *Camelot's End*, 6.

²³² Ward, *Camelot's End*, 6.

“the only visible candidate at present’, who could unite the party’s establishment wing and its liberal McGovernite wing.”²³³ Kennedy had been an early supporter of Carter and his economic policies and admittedly his policy wasn’t radically different from the incumbent president. The Democratic voting groups he represented though were diametrically opposed to Carter’s. Kennedy’s campaign revealed traditional liberals and moderate voters’ general “malaise” regarding Carter and what he currently represented as the leader of the Democratic Party. Kennedy’s 1980 campaign brochure best demonstrates this idea stating that,

We must not permit the dream of social progress to be shattered by those whose promises have failed. We cannot permit the Democratic Party to remain captive to those who have been so confused about its ideals. I am committed to this campaign because I am committed to those ideals. Courage and Choice What did candidate Carter promise for New York? And what did President Carter deliver? In 1976, Republican President Gerald Ford told New York City: "drop dead." In the years since, President Carter has, in effect, told New York: "Die slowly."²³⁴

Although Kennedy would go on to lose the Democratic primary, he failed to concede his loss. and continued to campaign long after it was clear that Carter had secured the number of delegates needed to win the nomination. His long and protracted run for the nomination meant that both Kennedy and Reagan simultaneously criticized the leadership of Carter’s administration, validating the concerns of Republicans and alienating the Democratic voters who were unhappy with Carter. When Kennedy finally conceded to Carter in 1980 he gave a speech stating that he would continue to “care deeply about the ideals of the Democratic party, where the party stands... [and] to speak to the [Democratic National] convention about the economic concerns that have been at the heart of my campaign.”²³⁵ By the time Carter would go on to campaign for

²³³ Ward, *Camelot's End*, 92.

²³⁴ “Edward 'Ted' Kennedy for President 1980 Campaign Brochure,” 4President Corporation, Accessed February 1, 2019, <http://www.4president.org/brochures/tedkenedy1980brochure.htm>.

²³⁵ “Ted Kennedy Acknowledges He Won't Win 1980 Democratic Nomination,” YouTube, last modified May 19, 2016, Accessed February 1, 2019, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C59jvbFNp2E>.

reelection, he had to embrace a “difficult job, to bring the Democrats together.”²³⁶ John Ward states simply in his book, “*Camelots End, Kennedy vs Carter and the Fight that Broke the Democratic Party*,” during the primary “the Democrats plunged into civil war.”²³⁷

New Republicanism: The Reagan Coalition

Reagans presidential campaign of 1980 was a breath of fresh air for many Americans. Rather than commit to an all out offensive against Carter’s administration, Reagan was much more tactful and asked the American public to ask themselves a simple question, “Are you better off than you were four years ago?”²³⁸ And in the same speech stated, “All of this can be cured and all of this can be solved... I know that the economic program that I have proposed for this nation, in the next few years can resolve many of the problems that trouble us today.”²³⁹ At a time when the Democratic party was in major disarray and the country was suffering from ongoing economic downturns, Reagan presented himself as an answer to America’s problems. His 1980 campaign slogan was simply “lets make America great again.”²⁴⁰

Reagans message along the 1980 campaign trail was simple, to reduce government funding, reduce federal government programs and bureaucracy, and to give the power back to the states. From day one, his campaign targeted the Democratic voter base. His first campaign speech was delivered on Labor Day in Hudson County, New Jersey. Speaking at Liberty State Park, Reagan told the crowd,

²³⁶ Ward, *Camelot's End*, 283.

²³⁷ Ward, *Camelot's End*, 18.

²³⁸ "Are You Better Off," YouTube, last modified March 03, 2011, Accessed February 1, 2019, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8EvFQLhqWPQ>.

²³⁹ “Are You Better Off.”

²⁴⁰ “Ronald Reagan for President 1980 Campaign Brochure,” 4President Corporation, Accessed February 5, 2019, <http://www.4president.org/brochures/reagan1980brochure1.htm>.

Hudson County is the home of Democrats in such great numbers...and I hope a lot are here. As a matter of fact, I'm the first Republican candidate to come here since 1968...I'm here because it is the home of Democrats, because I believe today, that in this country there are millions of Democrats who are unhappy with the way things are, as all the rest of us are.²⁴¹

The most telling evidence of how Reagan and the policies he represented realigned the American voter base, was his visit to Mississippi to speak at the Neshoba County Fair. Many in Reagans campaign believed that attending this fair would be the death of Reagans campaign, because it would paint him as just another Republican not interested in supporting the ideas of the urban north. Reagan understood better than anyone though, when he agreed to attend rather than create discord among voters, he knew it could display how seemingly universal his message had become. In his speech to the fair-goers he touted states' rights, stating that "I believe there are programs like that, programs like education and others, that should be turned back to the states."²⁴² He went on,

I believe in people doing as much as they can for themselves at the community level and at the private level. And I believe that we've distorted the balance of our government by giving powers that were never intended in the constitution to that federal establishment. I'm going to devote myself to trying to reorder those priorities and to restore to the states and local communities those functions.²⁴³

Reagan also dedicated most of his speech to criticizing the federal governments control over the economy and wasted no time criticizing the New Deal, "We've had the New Deal, and then Harry Truman gave us the Fair Deal, and now we have a misdeal."²⁴⁴ Expanding upon that he stated, "I'm going to try also to change federal regulations in the tax structure that has made this once powerful industrial giant in this land and in the world now with a lower rate of productivity

²⁴¹ Michael E. Eidenmuller, "Ronald Reagan - Labor Day Speech at Liberty State Park," American Rhetoric, Accessed February 4, 2019, <https://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/ronaldreaganlibertypark.htm>.

²⁴² "Transcript of Ronald Reagan's 1980 Neshoba County Fair Speech," The Neshoba Democrat - Philadelphia, Mississippi, Accessed February 3, 2019, <http://neshobademocrat.com/Content/NEWS/News/Article/Transcript-of-Ronald-Reagan-s-1980-Neshoba-County-Fair-speech/2/297/15599>.

²⁴³ "Transcript of Ronald Reagan's 1980 Neshoba County Fair Speech."

²⁴⁴ "Transcript of Ronald Reagan's 1980 Neshoba County Fair Speech."

that any of the other industrial nations, with a lower rate of savings and investment on the part of our people and put us back where we belong.”²⁴⁵ As proof of this Reagan cited his welfare reform as Governor of California,

when we reformed welfare, I know that one of the great tragedies of welfare in America today, and I don’t believe stereotype after what we did, of people in need who are there simply because they prefer to be there. We found the overwhelming majority would like nothing better than to be out, with jobs for the future... The trouble is, again, that bureaucracy has them so economically trapped, that there is no way they can get away.²⁴⁶

The most significant sentiment from this speech however comes from his interactions with the crowd. Reagan said, “I know that speaking at this crowd, I’m speaking to about 90% Democrats,” to which the crowd resoundingly shouted back “NO!” Reagan responded back “I just meant by party affiliation; I didn’t mean how you feel now. I was a Democrat most of my life myself. But then I decided there were things that needed to be changed.”²⁴⁷

It’s important to note, that for all the economic promises Reagan made to the American public, he also ran on a campaign of law and order. And as Alexander states,

In his campaign for presidency, Reagan mastered the ‘excision of the language of race from the conservative public discourse’ and thus built on the success of earlier conservatives who developed a strategy of exploiting racial hostility or resentment for political gain without making explicit references to race. Condemning ‘welfare queens’ and criminal ‘predators’ he rode into office with the strong support of disaffected whites – poor and working-class whites who felt betrayed by the Democratic Party’s embrace of the Civil Rights Agenda.²⁴⁸

One story Reagan repeatedly told while campaigning was of a Chicago welfare queen who had a tax-free income of 150,000 dollars as a result of the New Deal government assistance programs. As Alexander explains, “‘welfare queen’ became a not-so-subtle code for ‘lazy, greedy, black

²⁴⁵ “Transcript of Ronald Reagan's 1980 Neshoba County Fair Speech.”

²⁴⁶ “Transcript of Ronald Reagan's 1980 Neshoba County Fair Speech.”

²⁴⁷ “1980 - Ronald Reagan - Neshoba County Fair,” Dailymotion Video, last modified December 02, 2015, Accessed February 11, 2019, <https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x3gkerm>.

²⁴⁸ Alexander, *The New Jim Crow*, 48.

ghetto mother.”²⁴⁹ Furthermore, she outlines how these racialized economic appeals were commonly accompanied by tough on crime and law and order rhetoric, which depicted criminals as “human predators.”²⁵⁰

Reagans message resonated with many Americans, Republican, Democrat, and Independents. In 1980 he secured a much larger proportion of his parties votes than Carter, 87% of Republicans cast their vote for him while only 67% supported the incumbent president. Moreover, Reagan received 56% of independents votes while Carter received 31%. Of the voters who identified themselves as holding a moderate political philosophy, Reagan received a marginal majority of the vote, 49% to Carters 43%. Additionally, more voters were willing to cross ideological lines in favor of Reagan, who received 28% of the votes from those who identified as Liberals, whereas Carter received just 23% of Conservatives votes.²⁵¹ Approximately 22% of previously Democratic voters abandoned the party at this time in favor of Reagan., 33% of that group explicitly stated it was because “Democrats were moving too fast,” in regard to civil rights.²⁵² As FDR had done during the Great Depression, Reagan used his promises to fix America’s looming financial crisis to effectively realign voters and create a new coalition that would help him retain a marginal majority of voters. In total Reagan received 51% of the popular vote compared to Carter who yielded just 41% of Americans votes. Further, with this coalition Reagan won an overwhelming majority of the electoral college with 489 votes

²⁴⁹ Alexander, *The New Jim Crow*, 50.

²⁵⁰ Alexander, *The New Jim Crow*, 50.

²⁵¹ "How Groups Voted in 1980," Roper Center for Public Opinion Research, Accessed February 2, 2019, <https://ropercenter.cornell.edu/how-groups-voted-1980>.

²⁵² Alexander, *The New Jim Crow*, 50.

compared to 49 in favor of Carter, who became the first incumbent president to lose an election since FDR defeated Herbert Hoover in 1932.²⁵³



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As I previously stated, Reagan won in such a resounding fashion by establishing a new coalition. By 1982, this voting bloc was already being referred to as the “Reagan Coalition.”²⁵⁵ In his article for the Brookings Review, A. James Reichley examines the different parts of this coalition and how they came to be aligned with the Republican party and Reagan. “The conventional wisdom in Washington is that the Reagan coalition is made up of Conservatives, neoconservatives, and the religious new right.”²⁵⁶ Reichley contends that the Conservatives who he associates with New York’s Conservative Party, “descend from the anticommunist movement of the years after the Second World War.” Further, “the neoconservatives are for the most part former liberals.”²⁵⁷ Finally, the “religious new right is composed of socially conservative groups, mainly from evangelical Protestant backgrounds, who during the latter part of the 1970’s rose up against such expressions of ‘social liberation.’”²⁵⁸ Aside from the voting base of the Reagan Coalition, Reichley recognizes a fourth group who aided in the creation of this voting bloc, “a collection of publicists, politicians and heterodox economists preaching the doctrine of supply-

²⁵³ "United States Presidential Election of 1980," Encyclopædia Britannica, last modified October 28, 2018, Accessed February 4, 2019, <https://www.britannica.com/event/United-States-presidential-election-of-1980>.

²⁵⁴ "Voting America Presidential Elections."

²⁵⁵ Reichley, "The Reagan Coalition," 6-9.

²⁵⁶ Reichley, "The Reagan Coalition," 6.

²⁵⁷ Reichley, "The Reagan Coalition," 6.

²⁵⁸ Reichley, "The Reagan Coalition," 7.

side economics.”²⁵⁹ These supply-siders promoted market capitalism, free of intervention from politicians and created the religious new right, “in part [by] a cadre of political and economic conservatives... who behaved with more political sophistication and insularity than most of its predecessors founded on similar social bases. (such as Dixiecrat Movement of the 1940’s and George Wallace’s American Independence Party of 1968).”²⁶⁰ Reichley also pinpoints one sector of the “fundamentalist” or traditional conservative base that supported Reagan heavily, “moderates and progressives... the moderates accept social change and try to make it work better but are cautious of implementing it themselves. The Progressive Republicans differ crucially from liberal Democrats, in their support for a social and economic ‘partnership’ between business and government.”²⁶¹ As Reichley demonstrates, much of this new Republican voting coalition converged upon the rhetoric and ideology that stemmed from the opposition to Operation Dixie, progressivism such as the Civil Rights Movement, and Nixon’s New Federalism’s attack on New Deal programs.

After his first term in office Reagan’s average approval rating was 50%.²⁶² In his bid for reelection in 1984 Reagan faced off against Democratic candidate Walter Mondale. During this election cycle Reagan recognized the power of his new coalition and “the overwhelming majority of Reagans rhetoric focused on domestic policy proposals rather than foreign policy.”²⁶³ And although he introduced a “litany of policy proposals... the campaign did not promote the anti-government message as stridently as the previous effort.”²⁶⁴ As part of Reagans campaign

²⁵⁹ Reichley, "The Reagan Coalition," 7.

²⁶⁰ Reichley, "The Reagan Coalition," 7.

²⁶¹ Reichley, "The Reagan Coalition," 7.

²⁶² "Presidential Approval Ratings -- Gallup Historical Statistics and Trends," Gallup, Accessed December 14, 2018, <https://news.gallup.com/poll/116677/presidential-approval-ratings-gallup-historical-statistics-trends.aspx>

²⁶³ Colleen Shogan, "Presidential Campaigns and the Congressional Agenda: Reagan, Clinton, and Beyond," *Woodrow Wilson International Center For Scholars*, (November 22, 2004), 6.

²⁶⁴ Shogan, "Presidential Campaigns," 7.

platform he made a point of highlighting “where we were” stating that before his administration “the only things going up were prices, unemployment, taxes and the size of government.”²⁶⁵ Furthermore he contributed economic recovery to his efforts as president, “In 1981, President Reagan offered a plan for economic recovery and it has worked. Real after-tax income is up...Over four million Americans found jobs last year, the greatest employment gain in 33 years...That crippling, double digit inflation rate was cut to 3.8 percent in 1983.” As proof of all his administrations successes his campaign brochure included a “For the Record” section as well. This section provided statistics about cutting taxes, lowering inflation, achieving economic growth, increasing workers real earnings and reducing crime. Also, important to note is that every one of the statistics provided endorsing his successes is contrasted with the economic strife during the “Carter-Mondale” administration.²⁶⁶ A campaign ad released by Reagan displayed a construction worker, a mother caring for her kids, and a farmer who were all asked questions along the line of “Walter Mondale thinks you can afford to pay more in taxes, what do you think?”²⁶⁷

Walter Mondale’s 1984 campaign for president was completely tone-deaf to the public and policy realignment that had taken place during previous elections. On his official campaign brochure, he criticized Reagans record on the economy and claimed he would “Put people – millions of men and women – back to work like FDR did.”²⁶⁸ Additionally Mondale’s brochure in 1984 failed to mention crime or law and order once. Rather, he touted his record on supporting

²⁶⁵ “Ronald Reagan for President 1984 Campaign Brochure,” 4President Corporation, Accessed February 10, 2019, <http://www.4president.org/brochures/1984/reaganbush1984brochure.htm>.

²⁶⁶ “Ronald Reagan for President 1984 Campaign Brochure.”

²⁶⁷ “Presidential Campaign Commercials 1984,” CSPAN, Accessed February 11, 2019, <https://www.c-span.org/video/?25896-1/presidential-campaign-commercials-1984>.

²⁶⁸ “Walter Mondale for President 1984 Campaign Brochure,” 4President Corporation, Accessed February 19, 2019, <http://www.4president.org/brochures/1984/mondale1984brochure.htm>.

rivil rights legislation and vowed to “enforce civil rights laws so that women and minorities have a fair chance to get and keep a good job.”²⁶⁹ However, Mondale did understand the need to appeal to moderate working class voters and repeatedly attacked Reagan for lining the pockets of corporations and the rich. In one campaign advertisement, Mondale is shown giving a where he states, “I refuse to make your family pay more so that millionaires can pay less,” and in another, a video of businessmen in black suites walking out of the capital is shown, while a narrator states, “In this building Mr. Reagans people are borrowing the money that’s putting each of us 18,000 dollars into debt. Deficit spending, and who walks away with the money? 90,000 profitable corporations who pay no taxes.”²⁷⁰

The results of the 1984 election reaffirmed what many Republican strategists already knew, their coalition was becoming the new majority. Reagan won 59% of the popular vote and every single electoral college vote except for those in Mondale’s home state of Minnesota. Reagan increased his share of voters who held moderate political philosophies to 54%. Moreover, approximately a quarter of those with liberal philosophies or self-identified Democrats continued to vote in favor of Reagan. In each of the four regions Gallup divides voters by Reagan won a majority share. While he only received 53% of the votes in the East, he received more than 60% of peoples votes in the Midwest, South, and West.²⁷¹ Additionally, his share of independent voters increased remarkably to 64%.²⁷² Finally, among the five income brackets Reagan received an overwhelming majority of the votes. Those who made between 12,500 – 25,000 dollars gave Reagan 58% of their votes, while out of all three income brackets

²⁶⁹ “Walter Mondale for President 1984 Campaign Brochure.”

²⁷⁰ “Presidential Campaign Commercials 1984.”

²⁷¹ “How Groups Voted in 1984,” Roper Center for Public Opinion Research, Accessed February 12, 2019, <https://ropercenter.cornell.edu/how-groups-voted-1984>.

²⁷² “How Groups Voted in 1984.”

above that, he received more than 60% of the vote. Even in the one income bracket that Mondale won the majority of votes, those who made less than 12,500, he only received 54% of the votes, a smaller majority than any of the income brackets Reagan won.²⁷³



George H. W. Bush: Riding off the Coattails of Reagan

In 1987 vice president George H.W. Bush announced he would run for the Republican nomination for president. The platform and rhetoric that Bush used along the campaign trail is almost identical to that of Reagan. The platform agreed upon by the Republican National Convention for the 1988 election reads,

Our nation of communities is prosperous and free. In the sixth year of unprecedented economic expansion, more people are working than ever before; real family income has risen; inflation is tamed. By almost any measure, Americans are better off than they were eight years ago. The Reagan Revolution has become a Republican renaissance. Our country's back—back in business and back on top again.”²⁷⁵

Additionally, Bush and the Republicans continued to bash the Carter-Mondale administration and by extension the Democrats for damaging the economy with their control of the federal government,

Remember the Carter-Mondale years: Taxes skyrocket every year as Democrats' inflation pushed everyone into higher tax brackets... The Democrats threatened workers, investors, and consumers with “industrial policies” that centralized economic

²⁷³ "How Groups Voted in 1984."

²⁷⁴ "Voting America Presidential Elections."

²⁷⁵ "Republican Party Platform of 1988," The American Presidency Project, last modified August 16, 1988, Accessed February 12, 2019, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/republican-party-platform-1988>.

planning...In addition to all of these problems, the Democrats were telling us that there was something wrong with America and something wrong with its people.²⁷⁶

However, for all the similarities that Bush's campaign had to Reagan's previous platforms, it had many differences. It was far more aggressive at courting voters away from the Democratic party.

Reagan won both the 1980 and 1984 elections with very little support from minority voter groups. Particularly in 1984, less than 10% of African-Americans cast their vote in his favor.²⁷⁷

In 1988 the Republican Party was poised to try and sway at least part of this voting base into their camp, after all, following the 1984 election there were few voting groups left for the party to take control of. When discussing the job growth Reagan generated, the RNC platform stated, "Job Growth for minority and ethnic Americans has been even more impressive: Black unemployment has been cut almost in half since 1982...Black teen unemployment is at its lowest levels in 15 years...A free economy helps defeat discrimination by fostering opportunity for all."²⁷⁸ Bush himself, albeit very briefly, mentioned his support of civil rights legislation on his official campaign brochure.²⁷⁹ Additionally, as Reagan had done in 1984 Bush continued to distance himself from bashing the federal government. Although rather than use his past initiatives as vice president, director of the CIA, or ambassador to the United Nations to prove his qualifications for president as Reagan had done with his Governance of California, Bush touted his business expertise as his most important qualification. The second line of his campaign brochure states, "his years of experience in private business and at the highest levels of our government have earned him the reputation as a man who gets the job done right."²⁸⁰ Moreover, he reiterates the point later stating, "In the late forties, [his family] moved to Midland, Texas, where George

²⁷⁶ "Republican Party Platform of 1988."

²⁷⁷ "How Groups Voted in 1984."

²⁷⁸ Republican Party Platform of 1988."

²⁷⁹ "George Bush for President 1988 Campaign Brochures," 4President Corporation, Accessed April 20, 2019, <http://www.4president.org/brochures/1988/georgebush1988brochure.htm>.

²⁸⁰ "George Bush for President 1988 Campaign Brochures."

began a career as a businessman in the energy industry. [He] knows, firsthand, the obstacles and challenges today's workers and business people face and will expand upon pro-growth, job-creating and free enterprise."²⁸¹ Another element of Reagan's campaign platform, that appeared in Bush's election strategy as well, but that was also much more aggressive, was his law and order rhetoric. The epitome of how aggressive Bush's stance had become, was his attack ad on his Democratic opponent Michael Dukakis, that featured Willie Horton.²⁸² A dark-skinned black man from Massachusetts, Horton was convicted of murder after stabbing a young boy. As part of a prison work-furlough program Horton was allowed to leave prison on select weekends. During one of these furlough weekends Horton escaped and raped and murdered a white woman. As governor of Massachusetts, Dukakis had supported the furlough program as well as opposed the death penalty. The ad, while relaying this series of events with Willie Horton's mugshot onscreen, stated "weekend prison passes, Dukakis on crime," and reiterated that Bush was in support of the death penalty.²⁸³ As Alexander states, "though controversial, the ad was stunningly effective; it destroyed Dukakis' chances of ever becoming president."²⁸⁴

Dukakis also ran a very similar campaign to his predecessor, Mondale. His official campaign brochure featured zero mention of crime or law and order, it meekly criticized the government under the Reagan administration, and it attempted to convince working class people that Dukakis and the Democratic party could provide a strong economy.²⁸⁵ Most importantly however, was his lack of response to an onslaught of attacks from the Bush campaign. Aside

²⁸¹ "George Bush for President 1988 Campaign Brochures."

²⁸² Alexander, *The New Jim Crow*, 55.

²⁸³ "Willie Horton 1988 Attack Ad." YouTube, last modified November 03, 2008, Accessed February 11, 2019, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Io9KMSSEZ0Y>.

²⁸⁴ Alexander, *The New Jim Crow*, 55.

²⁸⁵ "Mike Dukakis for President 1988 Campaign Brochures," 4President Corporation, Accessed February 11, 2019, <http://www.4president.org/brochures/1988/mikedukakis1988brochure.htm>.

from the Willie Horton commercial, Bush released ads further criticizing Mondale's record on crime, the environment and national defense. Most notably Dukakis made a publicized campaign stop to a General Dynamics facility where he was filmed operating a tank, this was to further his credibility as potential commander in chief. Bush took this video clip and aired an ad where he listed all of the military initiatives Dukakis had opposed, followed by stating "And now he wants to be our commander in chief. America can't afford that risk."²⁸⁶ Ultimately this political gaffe came to be representative of Dukakis's entire campaign, which was poorly planned and easy to attack. Although he would eventually attempt to fire back and released a series of "handler ads" that criticized Bush's campaign managers and strategists, they were essentially ineffective. In response to the ads Bush's senior campaign manager Roger Ailes responded that he was unconcerned and said, "It's a massive waste of money and a stupid campaign tactic, but I understand why they do it... I hope they spend a fortune on them, while we talk about the issues."²⁸⁷ These attack ads seemed to only further demonstrate how out of touch Dukakis and the Democratic party had become with most Americans.

Ultimately, while Bush would win the election with 53% of the popular vote, he proved to be a less attractive candidate than Reagan. Bush won the most votes in four of the six income brackets Gallup identified during the 1988 election but with much smaller margins of victory and the two lowest income brackets went to Dukakis.²⁸⁸ Bush's marginal victories diminished even further among each region when compared to Reagan. Failing to eclipse 60% of the vote in any

²⁸⁶ "Michael Dukakis The Tank Ad 1988 ElectionWallDotOrg." YouTube, last modified June 01, 2011, Accessed February 10, 2019, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BRPZQ3UEN_Q.

²⁸⁷ Lloyd Grove, "Dukakis Counterpunches at Bush's Handlers in Television," The Washington Post, last modified October 05, 1988, Accessed February 9, 2019, https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/1988/10/05/dukakis-counterpunches-at-bushs-handlers-in-television-spots/5de1ae88-d006-4659-b41c-4c019fb320e9/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.50770ed468b7.

²⁸⁸ "How Groups Voted in 1988," Roper Center for Public Opinion Research, Accessed February 10, 2019, <https://ropercenter.cornell.edu/how-groups-voted-1988>.

one area, the south provided his strongest support base, casting 59% of their votes in favor of Bush.²⁸⁹ Moreover less than 20% of either self-identified Democrats or those with liberal political philosophies voted for Bush, a stark drop from the bipartisan support Reagan had previously received.²⁹⁰ Perhaps most important was the decline in support from independent and politically moderate voters. Bush still received much of the independent vote at 57%, but that represented a decline of 7% in just one election cycle.²⁹¹ Furthermore, Dukakis won the moderate vote, leaving Bush with just 49% of moderates support.²⁹² Additionally, Bush continued to fail to garner any substantial support from minority voters. Nonetheless, the marginal majority of voters aligned under the Reagan Coalition allowed Bush to win the election with relative ease as he carried forty states and received over 400 electoral college votes, more than three times the 111 Dukakis received.²⁹³



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Bill Clinton and the New Democrats

In Jon Hale's "The Making of the New Democrats," he explains how the New Democrats, were created in large part by the Democratic Leadership Council whose "objective

²⁸⁹ "How Groups Voted in 1988."

²⁹⁰ "How Groups Voted in 1988."

²⁹¹ "How Groups Voted in 1988."

²⁹² "How Groups Voted in 1988."

²⁹³ "1988 Electoral College Results," National Archives and Records Administration, Accessed February 8, 2019, <https://www.archives.gov/federal-register/electoral-college/scores.html#1988>.

²⁹⁴ "Voting America Presidential Elections."

was to move the national Democratic Party, in both perception and substance, toward the center of the political spectrum.”²⁹⁵ This was necessary for many reasons, first and foremost the Republicans continued to win presidential elections, secured control of the senate, and increased their share of house representatives throughout the 1980’s. However, perhaps even more startling to Democratic politicians was how American political ideology had moved swiftly away from favoring liberals and by extension any Democratic candidate. In the 1982 house races, southern moderate Democrats such as “Hiddleston and Hunt, who had been tied to the ‘liberal’ Democratic ticket,” lost their elections as a result.²⁹⁶ It was quickly becoming apparent for Democrats that in order to even consider electoral victory on a national scale they would have to distance themselves from liberal policies and perceptions, adopting the new center-right ideologies that Americans now favored. As a result, the Democratic Leadership Council expanded its efforts and began to court political figures who operated outside of Washington, to avoid their candidates being branded as traditional liberal Democrats. By 1989 the DLC had “essentially institutionalized itself as an unofficial party organization.”²⁹⁷ In 1990, Bill Clinton became the DLC’s first outside-Washington chair and in the next years he worked to found nearly two dozen state chapters of the DLC.²⁹⁸ Hale characterizes the DLC’s strategy at this point in time as a policy of evasion aimed at distancing itself from traditional liberal ideologies and providing substantive solutions. Although, Hale admits that most of the policies put forth as part of the New Democrats agenda weren’t entirely benign from their past initiatives, they had a few stark contrasts. This included, “The New Democrats [being] more closely tied to business

²⁹⁵ Jon F. Hale, "The Making of the New Democrats," *Political Science Quarterly* 110, no. 2 (1995): 207.

²⁹⁶ Hale, "The Making of the New Democrats," 213.

²⁹⁷ Hale, "The Making of the New Democrats," 224.

²⁹⁸ Hale, "The Making of the New Democrats," 221.

than to organized labor and taking pains to distance themselves from Jesse Jackson's Rainbow Coalition."²⁹⁹

In 1992 Bill Clinton began his efforts at the national level of moving the Democratic Party toward the ideological center, to obtain the moderate voters that Reagan had taken. One of the ways he did this was by adopting many of the same free market, supply-side economics stances that his Republican predecessors had. Clinton like many Republican candidates before him called for a "reinvention of the government."³⁰⁰ On his campaign brochure, Clinton offered "an economic plan to compete and prosper in the world economy," the first step to this was to "cut taxes for the middle class and make the rich pay their fair share."³⁰¹ Like Bush, Reagan and Nixon before him, Clinton also promised to attack the large bureaucracy of the federal government, asserting that he would "cut 100,000 unnecessary bureaucratic positions through attrition and mandate 3% across-the-board savings in every federal agency."³⁰² One stark contrast between Clinton and his Republican predecessors however were the targets of his rhetorical attacks. Rather than criticizing liberal or political elites for running the federal government afoul, he attacked rich corporate elites, "The rich keep getting richer and the politicians just seem to be taking care of themselves. It's time we took care of our own. If America's not strong enough at home, we'll never be able to stand up for what we believe in around the world."³⁰³ While this did offer a slight change from Reagan it had many more similarities. Like Reagan, who wanted to make America great again under strong leadership, Clinton promised to build a strong America. Moreover, he wanted to achieve this by putting

²⁹⁹ Hale, "The Making of the New Democrats," 224.

³⁰⁰ Hale, "The Making of the New Democrats," 226.

³⁰¹ "Bill Clinton for President 1992 Campaign Brochure," 4President Corporation, Accessed February 6, 2019, <http://www.4president.org/brochures/billclinton1992brochure.htm>.

³⁰² "Bill Clinton for President 1992 Campaign Brochure."

³⁰³ "Bill Clinton for President 1992 Campaign Brochure."

Americans first, rather than those who profited or benefited from creating large governmental programs and bureaucracy. By rebranding the Democratic Party's economic policy to appear more conservative Clinton was able to achieve electoral victory. Because of his ability to be "on a level playing field for the mantle of economic leadership," Clinton prevented Republicans from using the "liberal-bashing tactics," that diverted attention to social issues and fractured the Democratic base.³⁰⁴

Economics wasn't the only part of the Republican Party's platform that Clinton had to assimilate. After Dukakis had been smeared in the media as being weak on crime it was clear that, to become president Democrats were going to have to embrace the War on Crime and Drugs. Which they very quickly did, Clinton avoided further liberal-bashing from the Republican party by "vowing he would never permit another Republican to be perceived tougher on crime than he [himself]."³⁰⁵ Furthermore, while on the campaign trail he flew to his home-state of Arkansas to oversee the execution of a disabled African-American man and afterward told the media, "I can be nicked a lot but no one can say I'm soft on crime."³⁰⁶ Once in office Clinton would make good on these promises and pass numerous crime bills, many of which targeted drug offenders.

At the end of his first term, George Bush had a 60% approval rating and to many it might have appeared unthinkable that a Democrat would win the presidential election. However, the savings and loans crisis and subsequent "Jobless Recovery" were becoming a growing concern among many Americans.³⁰⁷ "The savings and loans crisis of the 1980s was one of the worst

³⁰⁴ Hale, "The Making of the New Democrats," 226.

³⁰⁵ Alexander, *The New Jim Crow*, 63.

³⁰⁶ Alexander, *The New Jim Crow*, 63.

³⁰⁷ Robert J. Gordon and Robert M. Solow, "The Jobless Recovery: Does It Signal a New Era of Productivity-Led Growth?" *Brookings Papers on Economic Activity*, (1993): 273-304.

financial disasters of the twentieth century,” and many Americans felt that the Bush and Reagan administrations were to blame.³⁰⁸ Furthermore while campaigning in 1988 Bush pledged not to raise taxes. But in 1990 with the passage of the Budget Enforcement Act, taxes were raised, which only served to bolster growing economic discontent about his administration.³⁰⁹ When Bush was questioned during a presidential debate how the recession affected him personally, he responded in a combative tone and appeared upset that he was accused of being out of touch. At one point he said, “I don’t think its fair to say you haven’t had cancer, I don’t think you know what it’s like.”³¹⁰ Immediately following Bush’s lackluster response, Clinton unprompted, addressed the woman personally, asking how the recession had affected her life. Clinton then told her,

I’ve been governor of a small state for twelve years and I’ll tell you how its affected me. Every year congress and the president sign laws that make us do more things and give us less money to do it with. I see people in my state, middle-class people, their taxes have gone up in Washington and their services have gone down... In my state when people lose their jobs there’s a good chance ill known them by their names.³¹¹

Clinton then went on further to claim Americas economic woes were the direct result of being in “the grip of a failed economic theory,” and that to fix this he would, “invest in American jobs.”³¹² To add insult to injury for the Bush campaign, third-party candidate and businessman Ross Perot entered the race and was highly critical of the incumbent president.

Ross Perot: The Epitome of the Sixth Party System

³⁰⁸ K. Calavita, R. Tillman, and H. N. Pontell. "The Savings and Loan Debacle, Financial Crime, and the State." *Annual Review of Sociology* 23, no. 1 (1997): 19.

³⁰⁹ "1990 Budget Enforcement Act," Regional Oral History Office - University of California, Berkeley, Accessed February 11, 2019, <http://bancroft.berkeley.edu/ROHO/projects/debt/budgetenforcementact.html>.

³¹⁰ "1992 Presidential Election," Regional Oral History Office - University of California, Berkeley, Accessed February 13, 2019, <http://bancroft.berkeley.edu/ROHO/projects/debt/1992presidentialelection.html>.

³¹¹ "1992 Presidential Election."

³¹² "1992 Presidential Election."

Although Ross Perot's campaign for presidency holds extreme significance, it did not destroy Bush's chance at reelection as many such as his son George W. Bush have claimed.³¹³ Rather, Perot's candidacy displayed how large the base of moderate American voters who voted solely based on economic policy was. One of the reasons Perot's campaign gained so much attraction was because of his ability to use his wealth for self-promotion. Most famously, he bought an entire thirty-minute time slot for a commercial on national television to promote his campaign. The first fifteen minutes of this commercial is titled "Mr. Clintons Arkansas." During this time Perot argued that Clinton was unqualified based on his governing record of Arkansas and the state's economic performance. Repeatedly referring to Arkansas as a business Perot offered a seemingly endless amount of negative statistics, including that Arkansas,

"Ranked last among the 50 states among median family income. There is no place to go but up, that's a good thing. On the economy Arkansas ranks last, its 50th among the 50 states in the hourly wages of manufacturing work. Not much manufacturing work in Arkansas. Manufacturing wages are the high-paying wage, jobs of the future. In terms of personal disposable income, the people in Arkansas are poor. They're 48th out of 50 states after 12 years of Governor Clintons leadership."³¹⁴

The second half of Perot's commercial is entitled "Twelve Years of Voodoo" and highly criticized Bush's continuance of Reagan's economic policies that were hurting the American economy. Providing another onslaught of negative economic statistics, Perot portrayed Bush as a poor money-manager and called him such, repeatedly. Describing the outcomes of this mismanagement Perot quipped, "Again they just don't know how to manage money. Now the money they're managing used to be your money. The debt they're building up, falls 100% to you

³¹³ Kyle Balluck, "Perot Cost Father Reelection, Bush Says," The Hill, last modified November 09, 2014, Accessed February 11, 2019, <https://thehill.com/blogs/blog-briefing-room/news/223446-perot-cost-father-reelection-bush-says>.

³¹⁴ "Perot Campaign Commercial 1992," CSPAN, Accessed February 14, 2019, <https://www.c-span.org/video/?34277-1/perot-campaign-commercial-1992>.

and me. You need somebody up there that knows how to watch the cash register.”³¹⁵ He followed this with a graph where he claimed that the outcome of the Bush-Reagan policies was that every American west of the Mississippi had their income tax dollars going 100% toward paying interest on the national debt. Perot stated, “I don’t have to tell you that interest does not buy anything for us. Now if you can take four more years of this God bless ya [sic], but I can’t.”³¹⁶ Approximately twenty-eight of the thirty minutes Perot spent promoting his campaign during this commercial was criticizing both Clinton and Bush’s record on the economy and promising that he would fix Americas economic problems.

Perot went on to receive 19% of the popular vote but failed to win a single electoral college vote.³¹⁷ Claims that his campaign stole votes from Bush are demonstrably false. Perot received an even split of liberal and conservative voters, garnering 18% of both groups support.³¹⁸ Additionally a large share of the voters who came out to vote for Perot have found to be people who would not have voted otherwise. In “The Vote-Stealing and Turnout Effects of Ross Perot in the 1992 U.S. Presidential Election” Lacy and Burden found that of the 5.1% percent increase in voter turnout between 1988-1992, Perot’s candidacy “appears to account for over-one-half the aggregate increase.”³¹⁹ Moreover, when questioning those who cast their votes for Perot, Lacy and Burden found that “36.1% would support Bush with Perot out of the race, 44.1% would support Clinton, and 19.8% would abstain.”³²⁰ Overall they concluded, “Perot reduced rather than increased Bill Clintons margin of victory over George Bush.”³²¹

³¹⁵ "Perot Campaign Commercial 1992."

³¹⁶ "Perot Campaign Commercial 1992."

³¹⁷ "How Groups Voted in 1992," Roper Center for Public Opinion Research, Accessed February 12, 2019, <https://ropercenter.cornell.edu/how-groups-voted-1992>.

³¹⁸ "How Groups Voted in 1992."

³¹⁹ Lacy and Burden, "The Vote-Stealing," 251.

³²⁰ Lacy and Burden, "The Vote-Stealing," 251.

³²¹ Lacy and Burden, "The Vote-Stealing," 251.

Results of the 1992 Election

Bill Clinton won the 1992 election with 43% of the popular vote, less than half of the total votes cast. Clinton won the majority of votes among the three lowest income brackets out of five, including 58% of the poorest bracket of voters making less than 15,000 dollars. Across the four regions of voters Clinton received a majority of the votes in the East, Midwest, and West, losing the South by just 2% of votes to Bush. While he failed to win many Republican voters over, winning just 10% of their votes, Clinton received 38% of the votes from voters registered as Independents, more than Bush and Perot. Furthermore, Clinton received almost half of all moderate votes at 48%, Bush and Perot only received 31% and 21% respectively. In total, Clinton received 370 votes from the electoral college versus Bush who received 168. (Third Party voter concentration displayed on second map that follows).



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³²² Voting America Presidential Elections."

³²³ Voting America Presidential Elections."

The Results of Sixth Party System Legislation and Ideology

The Death of Organized Labor

As I discussed in previous chapters, between the peak of unionization in 1954 and the beginning of the Reagan era, attitudes of the American working class shifted. Transferring support away from unions and beginning to favor corporate interests such as free-enterprise economics. Moreover, with the passage of Taft-Hartley, and later the Landrum-Griffin Act, unions' power to strike was nullified. As unions became directly associated with the progressive policies of the Fifth Party System, all these factors compounded to prevent their growth. By 1983, there were 17.7 million private-sector union workers, a proportion of just 20% of the workforce, down a total of 14% from the 1954 peak in unionization.³²⁴ As I previously demonstrated, striking during the 1960's and 70's was fraught with union infighting and remained relatively ineffective. Although striking previously had negative effects on unions, branding them a threat to democracy, free-enterprise and law and order, they had yet to directly damage organizing efforts. This would begin to change in the 1980's, with the onset of America's growing public unions and the Air Traffic Controllers strike of 1981.

At the beginning of the 1960's few public-sector employees were represented by unions. However, in contrast to the private sector, membership in public sector unions grew following 1960. In 1984, 36% of all government employees were unionized.³²⁵ As many states were working to pass right-to-work laws and other acts that hampered private unions, they conversely

³²⁴ "Union Members Summary," U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, last modified January 18, 2019, Accessed February 19, 2019, <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/union2.nr0.htm>.

³²⁵ Casey Ichniowski, "Public Sector Union Growth and Bargaining Laws: A Proportional Hazards Approach with Time-Varying Treatments," *National Bureau of Economic Research*, (1986): 1.

sought to empower the bargaining strength of public unions. And as Casey Ichniowski explains, “public sector laws may be more effective safeguards of employees’ bargaining rights, since these laws may have stricter enforcement or stiffer penalties for violations than does the NLRA.”³²⁶ Given the benefits of duty-to-bargain laws, Ichniowski found that public sector unions probability of unionizing increased exponentially meaning that the effective unionization of these occupations was almost inevitable as time had passed.³²⁷ However, the propensity of specialized protection afforded to public sector unions couldn’t combat the attitudes of Americans as well as the crippling strength of the Taft-Hartley Act. On August 3, 1981, the Professional Air Traffic Controllers Organization (PATCO), a union that had endorsed Reagans election, announced that it would go on strike. The strikers were seeking better pay and working conditions, as a result 13,000 Air Traffic Controllers walked off the job and refused to work.³²⁸ Under provisions of section 305 of the Taft-Hartley Act, striking among federal employees was illegal those who disobeyed this law, were subject to immediate termination of employment.³²⁹ Many public sector unions that had formed during the 1960’s and 70’s had adopted no-strike provisions or opted for alternatives to striking.³³⁰ However, public union strikes still occurred from time to time and were dealt with accordingly, handled in a similar fashion to private sector strikes. Although when PATCO members refused to return to work, Reagan delivered a speech displaying just how mainstream anti-Operation Dixie and Mohawk Valley Formula rhetoric had become. He insisted that “seven months of negotiations,” had already taken place where PATCO members were guaranteed pay rises higher in proportion to most of America’s other public sector

³²⁶ Ichniowski, "Public Sector Union Growth," 36.

³²⁷ Ichniowski, "Public Sector Union Growth," 39-40.

³²⁸ Bryan Craig, "Reagan vs. Air Traffic Controllers," Miller Center, last modified October 04, 2017, Accessed February 17, 2019, <https://millercenter.org/reagan-vs-air-traffic-controllers>.

³²⁹ Bernard D. Meltzer and Cass R. Sunstein, "Public Employee Strikes, Executive Discretion, and the Air Traffic Controllers," *The University of Chicago Law Review* 50, no. 2 (1983): 774.

³³⁰ Meltzer and Sunstein, "Public Employee Strikes," 774.

employees, branding PATCO members as disingenuous and greedy.³³¹ Furthermore, he says to meet the new union demands, “it would impose a tax burden on fellow citizens which is unacceptable.”³³² Moreover, he thanked those union members who chose to work rather than strike and relayed a story of a union member who had left PATCO and continued to work because “how could he ask his children to obey the law if he didn’t.”³³³ There on national television the President of the United States, pinned the demands of striking workers against the public, because of the costs they would have to incur on behalf of a union wage increase. Further he praised the select group of workers who chose to work despite the strike, branded those who were on strike as oath-breaking criminals and encouraged other PATCO members to return. On August 5, 1981, just two days after the strike began, Reagan fired 11,345 PATCO employees.³³⁴ Thus, displaying to Americans that directly negotiating with employers was the best path to economic progress rather collective action. Finally, just as FDR had displayed the change in American’s opinions by forcing the Justice Department to enforce Anti-Peonage legislation, Reagan signaled to America’s state governments and corporate leaders that it was time to begin enforcing the harshest provisions of the Taft-Hartley Act, as the American public would now support it.

This anti-union ideology spilled over into the private sector and wreaked havoc on even the most organized and militant strikers. In 1986, 1,000 members of Local P-9 of the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) began striking against meatpacking company,

³³¹ "Ronald Reagan-Remarks on the Air Traffic Controllers Strike (August 3, 1981)," YouTube, last modified July 28, 2010, Accessed April 17, 2019, https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=173&v=Dc8brHWFZMY.

³³² "Ronald Reagan-Remarks."

³³³ "Ronald Reagan-Remarks."

³³⁴ Craig, "Reagan vs. Air Traffic Controllers."

Hormel.³³⁵ The striking workers hired a New York labor consultant and began roving picket lines to prevent workers from entering Hormel's plant. However, Hormel was able to break the strike because of a multitude of factors favoring their position against the strikers. Other UFCW members had already accepted the contract that Local P-9 was striking over, and under that contract were obligated to work at any of Hormel's nine plants, providing a substitute workforce. Additionally, Minnesota, where the Hormel plant was located, was experiencing 7% unemployment at the time and 3,000 additional applicants applied for the striker's positions.³³⁶ Moreover, Democratic Governor Rudy Perpich ended the strike effort by personally calling out the Minnesota National Guard to break up the roving pickets. Lastly, the company cited their supposed "2% profit margin" and claimed offering any concessions to strikers would defunct the business creating large job losses.³³⁷ After six months Hormel resumed slaughtering hogs at the plant previously organized by Local P-9 without the 1,000 striking workers who had been fired.³³⁸

By the 1990's with union membership on the decline in America, Democrats decided they no longer could let Wall Street money flow in such unequal measure to Republicans "under Clinton's lead, the floodgates of campaign payola were now fully bipartisan".³³⁹ Not only lacking support from the Democratic Party, organized labor was now under attack from both sides of the aisle, as well as the American public and unionization continued to decline at a steep pace. By 2011 the Bureau of Labor Statistics reported a total of 14.8 million unionized workers,

³³⁵ Peter Perl, "The Hormel Strike Was Doomed," The Washington Post, last modified February 16, 1986, Accessed February 17, 2019, https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/opinions/1986/02/16/the-hormel-strike-was-doomed/eaf87a1c-b393-44d7-aedd-6316cd8078e9/?utm_term=.e82c768fe50a.

³³⁶ Perl, "The Hormel Strike."

³³⁷ Perl, "The Hormel Strike."

³³⁸ Perl, "The Hormel Strike."

³³⁹ Robert Scheer, *The Great American Stickup: How Reagan Republicans and Clinton Democrats Enriched Wall Street While Mugging Main Street* (New York: Nation Books, 2010), 40.

a proportion of about 11.8% of the private workforce.³⁴⁰ Not only did unionization remain stagnant during the Sixth Party System, but it experienced an overall decline in the total number of unionized workers for the first time since before the New Deal.

The Effects of Economic Deregulation

Beginning in the early 1900's and lasting until the early to mid-60's, income inequality decreased, and wages of all workers increased. This culminated in an era known as the Great Compression between 1940 and 1960 in America. Thomas Piketty and Emmanuel Saez contribute this compression to several factors. Foremost, during WWI, The Great Depression, and WWII there were large fiscal shocks, during which top capital incomes fell and struggled to recover.³⁴¹ Primarily because of the progressive tax programs at the time that attacked capital accumulation as well as general wealth inequality. Additionally, during the period of 1920-1940 top wage shares were consistently flat and experienced little to no growth.³⁴² As Claudia Goldin and Robert Margo, similarly found, "The Great Compression, was primarily the result of a particular confluence of short-run events affecting demand for labor and of institutional changes brought about by the war."³⁴³ However, they concede that following WWII compression of inequality continued throughout the 40's and 50's. Goldin and Margo contribute this compression to: the relative demand for less-educated workers during the period, a rising minimum wage, the strength of the labor movement, and increases in the supply of educated labor which served to offset the price of skilled labor.³⁴⁴ Though, citing Goldin and Margo's

³⁴⁰ Bellace, "American Unions And The Economy," 3-4.

³⁴¹ Thomas Piketty and Emmanuel Saez, "Income Inequality in the United States, 1913-1998." *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, (2001): 3

³⁴² Piketty, and Saez, "Income Inequality," 3.

³⁴³ Claudia Goldin and Robert Margo, "The Great Compression: The Wage Structure in the United States at Mid-Century," *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, (1991): 32.

³⁴⁴ Goldin and Margo, "The Great Compression," 32.

research, Piketty and Saez contend that, while inequality continued to compress post-WWII, the major gains made toward income equality were achieved during the wartime period. Thus, they argue that “this pattern of evolution of inequality is additional indirect evidence that nonmarket mechanisms such as labor market institutions and social norms regarding inequality may play a role in the setting of compensation at the top.”³⁴⁵ They note that during this period, redistributive programs such as Social Security and Aid for Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) reflect that “American society’s views on income inequality and redistribution greatly shifted from 1930 to 1945.”³⁴⁶ The era of relative equality would not last forever though and beginning in the late 1960’s, inequality began to rise and would eventually reach pre-WWI levels by the end of the century.

As we know beginning in the late 60’s and early 70’s economic policy realignment centered around what Nixon called “New Federalism,” and occurred throughout America as party lines were being redrawn. By 1980, with Reagan’s ascendancy to the office of President by making supply-side and free enterprise economics a clear forefront of his campaign platform, election results displayed that the American public’s attitude had effectively shifted since the Great Compression. Furthermore, by 1980 the power of organized labor had almost entirely diminished, and the movement had failed to grow among the private sector since the mid 1950’s. These structural and societal changes facilitated by large economic policy reformation created a surge in economic inequality during the Sixth Party System. As Piketty and Saez argue, “the huge increase in top wage shares since the 1970’s cannot be the sole consequence of technical change.” And that while many attribute this increase solely to the decline of organized labor and

³⁴⁵ Piketty and Saez, “Income Inequality,” 34.

³⁴⁶ Piketty and Saez. “Income Inequality,” 34.

a non-growing minimum wage, Piketty and Saez contend that “changing social norms regarding inequality and the acceptability of very high wages [only] partly explain the rise in U.S. top wage shares observed since the 1970’s.”³⁴⁷ In “The Great American Stickup,” by Robert Scheer, he explores how economic policy and attitude changes under Reagan and Clinton contributed to what he calls an “enriched wall street while mugging main street.”³⁴⁸ As Scheer illustrates, the growing income inequality is often rationalized by politicians and subsequently the media as being a consequence of unforeseen disastrous economic events. However, he argues that “it is not conspiratorial but rather accurate to suggest that blame can be assigned to those who consciously developed and implemented a policy of radical financial deregulation.”³⁴⁹

The Reagan Revolution is often characterized by the shift in voting coalitions and restructuring of parties, as a result the policy initiatives that contributed to this revolution often get left out of the scholarly debate. A main component of the policy initiatives that accompanied the Reagan Revolution were “a deconstruction of the complex public-private partnership ushered in by Franklin Roosevelt’s New Deal to restrain capitalism’s most self-destructive patterns.”³⁵⁰ For example, the Glass-Steagall Act of 1933 regulated the financial service industry, and in 1982, Reagan signed the Garn-St. Germain Depository Institutions Act, which eased savings and loans regulations. Although, Reagan faced much opposition from his Democratic opponents and struggled to push through major pieces of legislation, Reagan and later Bush, found that by appointing chairs of federal commissions and agencies who were sympathetic to corporations, they could circumvent regulatory pushback by congress.³⁵¹ This culminated in Reagan

³⁴⁷ Piketty and Saez. “Income Inequality,” 34-35.

³⁴⁸ Scheer, *The Great American Stickup*, Introduction.

³⁴⁹ Scheer, *The Great American Stickup*, 8.

³⁵⁰ Scheer, *The Great American Stickup*, 37.

³⁵¹ Scheer, *The Great American Stickup*, 39.

appointing Wendy Gramm as chair to the Commodity Futures Trading Commission in 1988. As Scheer states, “the end result by the turn of the century was a massive casino in which bettors poured money into huge gambles on expected gain or to hedge against a loss if conditions changed.”³⁵² Critics decried Gramm’s appointment and subsequent deregulation but she assured critics that derivative markets were too small a portion of the economy to have widespread effects. However, after fifteen years of deregulation, the value of all “unregulated derivative trading,” was \$640 trillion.³⁵³ In 1992, congress would push through further deregulation. The Futures Trading Practices Act of 1992, was supported by Gramm and effectively protected the market in financial derivatives from regulation, resulting in fifteen years of unchecked growth. Gramm responded to critics of the bill asserting that large financial markets such as the OTC were self-regulating and cited their growth as evidence of her and Reagans policies effectiveness. However, as Scheer quips “Yes, the OTC market was growing fast-like a malignant tumor. We now know that this financial cancer would become a terribly destructive force for hundred of millions of people.”³⁵⁴ To best illustrate how American attitude and ideology effected change which influenced myopic, but extremely fast economic growth among the private sector, Scheer uses the example of General Electric. Throughout much of his life Reagan maintained he had an affinity for FDR because his financial programs helped Reagan’s father find work. However, after Reagan spent time at GE he started to espouse the idea that, what helped big business helped America. This viewpoint made sense because “under pressure from an aggressive union, [GE] provided solid manufacturing jobs that supported a then-growing middle class.”³⁵⁵ Although GE would later destroy its own future by seeking short-term greed. GE Capital, a

³⁵² Scheer, *The Great American Stickup*, 40.

³⁵³ Scheer, *The Great American Stickup*, 46.

³⁵⁴ Scheer, *The Great American Stickup*, 50.

³⁵⁵ Scheer, *The Great American Stickup*, 52.

Depression Era creation, provided credit for consumers for fifty years. But in the 1980's GE Capital expanded it's loan business without much forethought. In 2007 GE Capital accounted for 55% of the companies revenue and when the market crashed, so did GE, only being saved by more than \$100 billion in government funds.³⁵⁶ For all of Reagan and Gramm's efforts though, "legislatively his administration was a bust when it came to reversing the New Deal. Yet rhetorically it was an enormous success in propagandizing a view that so-called big government was the cause of America's late-twentieth-century crisis of economic confidence."³⁵⁷

By the time Clinton and the Democrats retook possession of the federal government, "there was widespread agreement among Wall Street lobbyists, leading politicians of both parties, and the business media that radical financial industry deregulation was, 'the wave of the future.'"³⁵⁸ Scheer notes that through the 80's and early 90's, through the corporate banking dominated Federal Reserve, regulatory agencies were emasculated. But that wasn't enough as corporate interests continued to demand a complete repeal of the Glass-Steagall Act. In 1999 the Commodity Futures Modernization Act accomplished what corporate interests had been fighting to achieve for 60 years. The bills primary author, Senator Phil Gramm stated at the time of its passage, "in the 1930's at the trough of the Depression, it was believed that the government was the answer. We are here today to repeal Glass-Steagall because we have learned that government is not the answer... I am proud to be here because this is an important bill. It is a deregulatory bill."³⁵⁹ The bill was forced upon congress by the merger of Citicorp and Travelers Group into Citigroup in 1992. Business executives knew at the time that the merger was illegal, but they bet on the fact that attempting to merge could potentially force the government to repeal Glass-

³⁵⁶ Scheer, *The Great American Stickup*, 54.

³⁵⁷ Scheer, *The Great American Stickup*, 39.

³⁵⁸ Scheer, *The Great American Stickup*, 58.

³⁵⁹ Scheer, *The Great American Stickup*, 65.

Steagall which it did. Sanford Weill, a Citigroup executive called President Clinton directly to float the idea of the merger to the president. Rather than express pushback or question the consequences of such a merger, Clinton immediately endorsed Weill's plan and promised to aid in the merger.³⁶⁰ New Democrats weren't the only ones complicit in aiding corporate interests though., before the Modernization Act of 1992, Weill also contacted the very liberal Jesse Jackson, who came out in support of the bill. As Scheer explains, "The Weill-Jackson alliance is not as complicated as it is depressing," since his time as civil rights activist, Jackson had developed several lucrative business endeavors and Weill was one of his major financial contributors.³⁶¹

For all that the repeal of Glass-Steagall did legislatively and operatively among businesses, more importantly it signaled what was now an entire shift among American economic standards. Joseph E. Stiglitz, Nobel Prize winner, and chair of Clintons Council of Economic Advisors was one of few people who opposed albeit unsuccessfully almost all the deregulatory actions taken during Clintons administration. Regarding repeal of Glass-Steagall he wrote,

The most important consequence was indirect – it lay in the way repeal changed an entire culture. Commercial banks are not supposed to be high-risk ventures; they are supposed to manage other people's money very conservatively... When repeal of Glass-Steagall brought investment and commercial banks together, the investment bank culture came out on top. There was a demand for the kind of high returns that could be obtained only through high leverage, big risk taking.³⁶²

The best demonstration of how this deregulation disproportionately benefitted the short-term interests of corporations while throwing to the side all New Deal safeguards that protected

³⁶⁰ Scheer, *The Great American Stickup*, 69.

³⁶¹ Scheer, *The Great American Stickup*, 76.

³⁶² Scheer, *The Great American Stickup*, 84.

average Americans, is the dismantlement of the Community Reinvestments Act (CRA). It was the final hurdle to completely repealing Glass-Steagal and drafter during the New Deal under Roosevelt. The CRA was a provision that “forced banks to invest in poor areas... and provide credit to citizens in minority and low- and moderate-income areas.”³⁶³ The CRA would have remained in effect under the Modernizations Act much to the dismay of the bill’s drafter Senator Gramm, who was threatening to destroy his own bill.³⁶⁴ However, Weill with the aid of Clinton simply nullified Gramm’s concerns as well as any of the power vested in the CRA. Under the new standards set about in 1993, “there will be no ongoing sanctions against holding company banks that fail to meet the CRA standards, and it will lessen the number of CRA examinations, making it harder for regulators.”³⁶⁵

Data provided by Saez and Piketty shows how income growth occurred in extreme disproportions during this era. While the top 1%’s share of wealth grew between 1970 and 1985 it was only by a factor of 2.5%, increasing their share of the wealth to 7.5%.³⁶⁶ However, in just two years, between 1984 and 1986 the top 1%’s share of wealth jumped another 2% entirely, to 9.5% of the total wealth, this jump they argue is attributable to the 1986 Tax Reform Act.³⁶⁷ Once again the increase of wealth shares remained constant for a period of time until 1994 just one year after the Modernizations Act. Between 1994 and 1998 the 1%’s share of wealth from 9% to 11%.³⁶⁸ This increase, as Piketty and Saez report, was attributable to economic deregulation but also vast disparities in wage shares. Since the early 1970’s the average wage of CEO’s increased dramatically while average wage compensation remained stagnant. In 1970

³⁶³ Scheer, *The Great American Stickup*, 77.

³⁶⁴ Scheer, *The Great American Stickup*, 77.

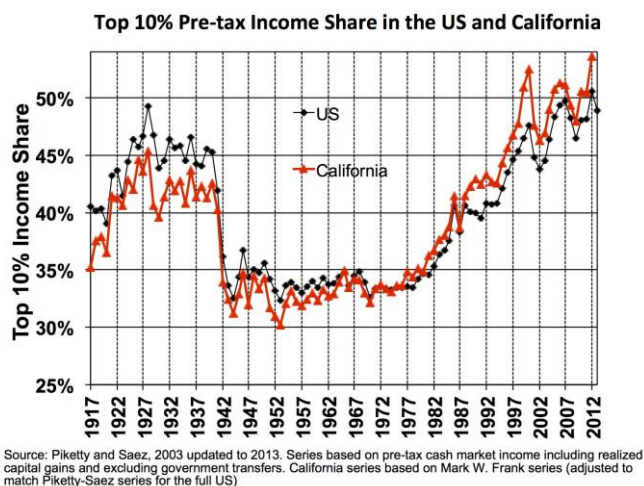
³⁶⁵ Scheer, *The Great American Stickup*, 81.

³⁶⁶ Piketty and Saez. "Income Inequality," 31.

³⁶⁷ Piketty and Saez. "Income Inequality," 31.

³⁶⁸ Piketty and Saez. "Income Inequality," 32.

average compensation of the top 100 CEO's hovered around \$1.5 million but by 1999 that average was slightly less than \$40 million. In that same period average salary of all other Americans had remained stagnant at about \$40,000 and at many points fell below that average.³⁶⁹ By the end of the century and the Sixth Party System, shift in American attitudes, economic deregulation and weak labor unions contributed to wide scale economic inequality on par with the Gilded Age. Data provided by Piketty and Saez indicate that in recent years this gap has actually grown wider than and eclipsed the inequality experienced during the Roaring 20's.



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Mass Incarceration

In previous chapters I demonstrated how Richard Nixon, and subsequent presidential candidates, utilized the Southern Strategy to dismantle the New Deal coalition and win over white southern democrats as well as many working-class moderates. As I demonstrated, Nixon inherited many elements of this strategy from Barry Goldwater and George Wallace. Nixon

³⁶⁹ Piketty and Saez. "Income Inequality," 33.

³⁷⁰ "Inequality in Income Top 10% CA and US Saez & Piketty," The City Project, last modified May 11, 2017, Accessed February 21, 2019, <https://www.cityprojectca.org/blog/archives/37962>.

capitalized on these ideals to attack the civil rights movements as well as the progress of African-Americans during his presidency utilizing the argument of states' rights. However, an idea entirely unique to the Nixon administration was the bipartisan support and passage of the Comprehensive Drug Abuse Prevention and Control Act of 1970. While both Wallace and Nixon ran campaigns based on law and order, Nixon was the first to manifest this rhetoric into legislation³⁷¹ As Nixon, Republicans, and moderate Democrats decried the overreaching power and inefficiency of the federal government to create positive social change during the late 1960's, they remained positive that federal legislation could fix what they recognized as the growing drug problem in America. Ironically, rather than attempt to veto this legislation or hamper its enforcement, Nixon used every bit of his power to increase the federal governments involvement in drug enforcement. In 1971 Nixon gave a televised press conference where he declared that "drug abuse is public enemy number one" and announced 155 million dollars would go toward the creation of a special action office for drug abuse prevention.³⁷²

To explain why Nixon so heavily pursued this War on Drugs at a time when states' rights was a key selling point of the Republican party, I quote John Ehrlichman who served as Nixon's domestic policy chief:

You want to know what this was really all about? The Nixon campaign in 1968... had two enemies: The antiwar left and black people... We knew we couldn't make it illegal to be either against the war or black, but by getting the public to associate hippies with marijuana and blacks with heroin and then criminalizing them both heavily, we could disrupt those communities.³⁷³

³⁷¹ "1968 Presidential Campaign Ads," CSPAN, Accessed December 01, 2018, <https://www.c-span.org/video/?409120-1/1968-presidential-campaign-ads>.

³⁷² "President Nixon Declares Drug Abuse 'Public Enemy Number One,'" YouTube, last modified April 29, 2016, Accessed November 01, 2018, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y8TGLLQID9M>.

³⁷³ "Top Adviser to Richard Nixon Admitted That 'War on Drugs' Was Policy Tool to Go After Anti-War Protesters and 'Black People,'" Drug Policy Alliance, Accessed November 25, 2018, <http://www.drugpolicy.org/press-release/2016/03/top-adviser-richard-nixon-admitted-war-drugs-was-policy-tool-go-after-anti>.

The War on Drugs was merely an extension of the racist ideas promoted by Wallace and Nixon to attract white southern and silent majority voters who feared African-Americans and others growing role in society. As Natasha Christie explains, “Although racially neutral on their face, many modern criminal justice policies not only have a disproportionate impact on African Americans, but they exhibit evidence of race-based use.”³⁷⁴

Additionally, while the War on Drugs was solely a creation of Nixon, fighting crime was a national issue that both parties recognized needed to be addressed. During the previous administration, LBJ embarked on a War on Crime seeking to prevent the rise in violent crime and created The Presidents Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice in 1965. This commission performed the most comprehensive evaluation of crime in the U.S. at the time and perhaps ever, culminating in the release of a 360-page report providing guidelines on how to control crime.³⁷⁵ Although, despite Johnson’s best efforts, violent crime continued to rise. In 1968 he desperately signed the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets act which created the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA). The LEAA funneled large amounts of federal government funds into state and local police forces to aid their fight against crime.³⁷⁶

Nonetheless Nixon managed to capitalize on president Johnson’s perceived inability to control crime and promised that under his administration “the first civil right of all Americans is to be free from domestic violence.”³⁷⁷ However at the end of Nixon’s first term as president violent crime was still rising. To combat having the same criticisms aimed at him that he had so

³⁷⁴ Natasha V. Cristie, "Racial Neutrality by Any Other Name: An Examination of Collateral Consequence Policies in the United States," *Social Science Quarterly* 95, no. 2 (2013): 541

³⁷⁵ “The Challenge of Crime in a Free Society,” National Criminal Justice Reference Service, Accessed December 12, 2018, <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/42.pdf>

³⁷⁶ "From Harlem to Ferguson: The War on Crime and America's Prison Crisis," Ohio State University, Accessed February 4, 2019, <http://origins.osu.edu/article/harlem-ferguson-lbjs-war-crime-and-americas-prison-crisis>.

³⁷⁷ "From Harlem to Ferguson."

aply used to defeat Johnson, Nixon declared “drug addiction to be public enemy number one,” converting the War on Crime into the War on Drugs.³⁷⁸

While incarceration rates didn’t begin to dramatically increase during Nixon’s time in office³⁷⁹, his ability to shift the efforts of the “tough on crime” rhetoric to attacking drug abuse had lasting political effects. Furthermore, the 1970 Drug Abuse Prevention and Control Act paved the way for an expansion to federal legislation which criminalized drug abuse. Before resigning from office, Nixon went further and in 1973 “declared ‘an all-out global war on the drug menace’ and sent Reorganization Plan No. 2 to Congress.”³⁸⁰ The result was the establishment of the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), “at that time, the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs within the Department of Justice, was responsible for enforcing the federal drug laws. However, the U.S. Customs Service and several other justice entities were also responsible for various aspects of federal drug law enforcement.”³⁸¹ Now all responsibilities of drug enforcement including trafficking, dealing, and abuse were organized under one federal administration, the DEA. The creation of DEA set the precedent for the enlargement of the federal bureaucracy at a time when federal government was under extreme scrutiny for its size and power, if the enlargement pertained to control of crime.

In stark contrast to the efforts of Nixon regarding the War on Drugs, Jimmy Carter voiced support of marijuana legalization during his 1976 presidential campaign and criticized criminal penalties as an alternative to treatment.³⁸² Nonetheless, his words were separate from his actions

³⁷⁸ "From Harlem to Ferguson."

³⁷⁹ "Trends in U.S. Corrections," The Sentencing Project, last modified 2017, Accessed January 1, 2019, <https://sentencingproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Trends-in-US-Corrections.pdf>.

³⁸⁰ "The DEA Years," DEA.gov, Accessed December 21, 2018, https://www.dea.gov/sites/default/files/2018-07/1970-1975_p30-39.pdf.

³⁸¹ "The DEA Years."

³⁸² Jimmy Carter, "Call Off the Global Drug War," The New York Times., last modified June 16, 2011, Accessed January 6, 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/2011/06/17/opinion/17carter.html>.

and while many states passed forms of marijuana legalization during his administration, Carter failed to pass any significant reforms to drug enforcement laws. Furthermore, the results of the change in public opinion and the mobilization of enforcement agencies and statutes enacted under Nixon began to take effect. Between 1976 and 1980, despite some states passing marijuana legalization, the total population of incarcerated Americans rose by roughly 100,000.³⁸³ Carter's attempts to shift the conversation and public attitude away from criminal consequence and toward treatment had effectively failed.

The election of Ronald Reagan signaled a dramatic shift in drug enforcement and gave rise to the phenomena that is now known as mass incarceration.³⁸⁴ Although Nixon's War on Drugs was essentially rhetorical, Reagan put into work legislative action that would lead to the incarceration of millions of Americans. In 1982, Reagan officially announced his administration's War on Drugs and "practically overnight the budgets of federal law enforcement agencies soared. Between 1980 and 1984, the FBI antidrug funding increased from \$8 million to \$95 million."³⁸⁵ Meanwhile, Reagan cut the budget of the National Institute on Drug Abuse, from \$274 million to \$57 million in the same period.³⁸⁶ Still, Reagan needed a way justify this huge government expenditure at a time when he was preaching budget cuts and a smaller federal government. With the help of the crack-cocaine epidemic in the mid-1980's, Reagan and other "conservatives found they could finally justify an all-out war on an 'enemy' that had been racially defined years before."³⁸⁷ After Reagan ordered the DEA to undertake a press campaign promoting the War on Drugs in 1985, "*Newsweek* declared crack to be the biggest story since

³⁸³ "Trends In U.S. Corrections."

³⁸⁴ "Mass Incarceration," American Civil Liberties Union, Accessed January 3, 2019.
<https://www.aclu.org/issues/smart-justice/mass-incarceration/mass-incarceration-animated-series>.

³⁸⁵ Alexander, *The New Jim Crow*, 49.

³⁸⁶ Alexander, *The New Jim Crow*, 49-50.

³⁸⁷ Alexander, *The New Jim Crow*, 52.

Vietnam/Watergate in June of 1986.³⁸⁸ The subsequent articles that flooded the press featured a multitude of harsh portrayals of African-Americans as “crack babies,” gangbangers,” “welfare queens,” and “predators.”³⁸⁹ As a result of this media frenzy new anti-drug legislation was passed and more funds were allocated or diverted to fighting the War on Drugs. In 1986 alone, the House passed bills to allocate \$2 billion to the cause, allowed the death penalty for drug offences and authorized the admission of some illegally obtained evidence in drug trials; following that the Senate proposed and Reagan signed into law the Anti-Drug Abuse Act (ADAA) of 1986.³⁹⁰ This new act included mandatory minimum sentences for drug offenses, with particularly harsh penalties levied toward the distribution of crack cocaine. The ADAA was later amended by congress in 1988, and even harsher penalties were tacked on to the bill, including the expansion of the death penalty, and new mandatory minimum sentences that could apply to first-time offenders. By the end of Reagans two terms in office the prison population doubled from approximately 329,000 to 627,000 total Americans incarcerated.³⁹¹ In 1980 there were a total of 4,749 people sentenced to federal prison on account of drug offences, in 1990 that number rose 30,470.³⁹² Moreover, while prison admission rates for African-Americans had been increasing between 1926 and 1940, in the 1980’s they skyrocketed, “the increase in absolute disparities is especially striking... from 1980 to 1990 [African-American] imprisonment rates

³⁸⁸ Alexander, *The New Jim Crow*, 52.

³⁸⁹ Alexander, *The New Jim Crow*, 52.

³⁹⁰ Alexander, *The New Jim Crow*, 53.

³⁹¹ “The History of Mass Incarceration,” Brennan Center for Justice, last modified July 20, 2018, Accessed February 17, 2019, <https://www.brennancenter.org/blog/history-mass-incarceration>.

³⁹² “Trends in U.S. Corrections.”

more than doubled.”³⁹³ Moreover, by the end of 1991 one-fourth of young African-American men were under control of the justice system.³⁹⁴

Once in office Bill Clinton made good on his vows to be tough on crime. In his 1994 State of the Union address Clinton advocated for a three-strikes law and later that year congress sent a bill to his desk which, “created dozens of new federal capital crimes, mandated life sentences for some three-time offenders and authorized more than \$16 billion for state prison grants.”³⁹⁵ By extending these policy initiatives to both parties on the national scale, Clinton escalated the drug war and rise of mass incarceration at an extreme rate. In line with embracing fiscal conservatism, Clinton saw that welfare was reformed through the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act, which removed the availability of welfare and food stamps to anyone who had been convicted of a felony drug offense.³⁹⁶ By cutting welfare and increasing drug enforcement funding by 1996 “the penal budget doubled the amount that had been allocated to AFDC or food stamps.”³⁹⁷ By the turn of the century, 12 years after Reagan left office with a prison population of 627,000 Americans, the prison population now hovered around 2 million.³⁹⁸ In 2000, the number of people sentenced to federal prison on drug offenses more than doubled from 1990, to 74,726.³⁹⁹ Furthermore, of those 2 million people incarcerated “90% admitted to prison for drug offenses in many states were Black or Latino.”⁴⁰⁰

³⁹³ "The Growth of Incarceration in the United States: Exploring Causes and Consequences," National Academies Press, Accessed January 26, 2019, <https://www.nap.edu/read/18613/chapter/4#57>.

³⁹⁴ Alexander, *The New Jim Crow*, 56.

³⁹⁵ Alexander, *The New Jim Crow*, 56.

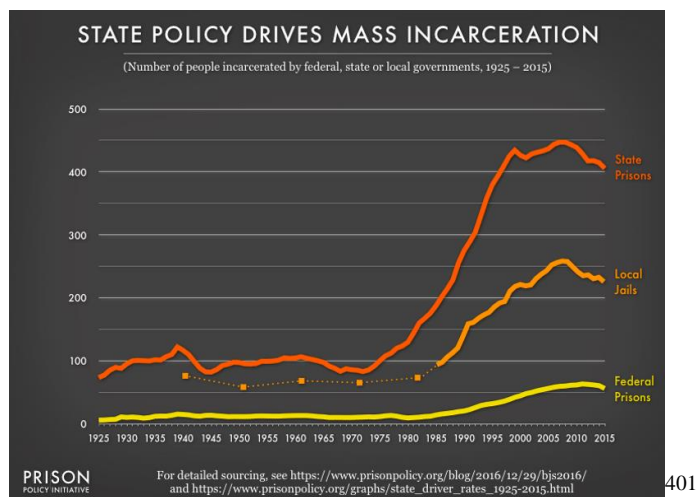
³⁹⁶ Alexander, *The New Jim Crow*, 57.

³⁹⁷ Alexander, *The New Jim Crow*, 57.

³⁹⁸ Alexander, *The New Jim Crow*, 57.

³⁹⁹ "Trends in U.S. Corrections."

⁴⁰⁰ Alexander, *The New Jim Crow*, 57.



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Conclusion

As organized labor proliferated throughout America's working class, and began to cross racial boundaries, corporate elites had to move quickly to regain control of their companies from strikers while no longer being able to employ violence. The Mohawk Valley Strategy developed in the 1930's among urban industrialists fought to break strikes and union organizing by pinning the community against labor. It involved portraying striking workers as criminal and presenting the company as the protector of workers prosperity, with the aid of local police forces. This essentially failed until the CIO attempted to unionize the newly industrialized south beginning in the final years of WWII. Anti-Operation Dixie proponents espoused rhetoric that played into people's fear of racial progress and communism, culminating in the branding of organized labor as being antithetical to American democracy, capitalism, and law and order. Through the promotion of this rhetoric Protestantism became linked with free-enterprise economics and labor was associated with the most progressive tenants of liberal New Deal policies, creating ire

⁴⁰¹ "State Policy Drives Mass Incarceration (rates per 100,000)," Prison Policy Initiative, Accessed January 21, 2019, https://www.prisonpolicy.org/graphs/state_driver_rates_1925-2015.html.

among backlash moderate voters. Furthermore, this counter-campaign created a new political alliance between Delta Planters and Industrialists traditionally from the North at a time when strikes reached a national scale in 1946 and 1947. Moreover, the counter-campaign broke organized labor into a group of warring factions, at a time when organized labor represented more Americans than ever before. Backlash to these strikes spurred bipartisan legislation that mitigated the power of organized labor and the movement never fully recovered. After years of organized labor failing to grow and momentum of the Civil Rights Movement reached its peak a new American political ideology began to form. This anti-labor rhetorical strategy was first seized upon at a national political level by Barry Goldwater, and later Nixon, Reagan, Clinton and others. The rhetoric and policies pursued by proponents of southern strategy included attacks on African Americans as well as the entire New-Deal Democratic Party Platform. Nixon while unable to realign the entire party system, shifted ideology concerning American economic policy to the right. The subsequent fallout from this was that the Democratic Party was blamed for the economic stagflation of the 1960's and 1970's as well as increased domestic tensions, making liberalism a stigmatized philosophy for national politicians to hold. Thus, throughout the decades of the 1980's and 1990's, a coalition of moderate voters, first under the title of Reagan Democrats and later New Democrats under Clinton, elected a series of presidents that pursued similar domestic policies concerning economics and crime. These policies resulted in many government service programs being cut and new financial markets going largely unregulated, creating huge income inequality after a period of relatively stable economic equality. Furthermore, the crime policies implemented at this time contributed to the phenomenon of mass incarceration which disproportionately negatively affected African Americans and served as an attempt to roll back the progress of the Civil Rights Movement. The connections that I have

demonstrated between these various facets of American politics are just scratching at the surface at the interconnectedness of the racial and class divide among American society, and how it affects national electoral politics. The purpose of this paper is not to prove or assert any one idea as fact, but rather to broaden the conversation regarding the realignment of Americas political parties. The phenomena of realignment in the mid to late-twentieth century if often characterized by regional and racial divides. However, as electoral and policy evidence demonstrates the explanation is much more complicated. The majority of Americans experienced a change in political views over a period of time, regarding not only the Civil Rights Movement, but progressive economic and social policies as a whole, regardless of region or location. I believe that once these ideas are further explored and recognized, policymakers and voters alike will be able to better understand their ideological roots and perhaps use this understanding to either shift or reaffirm their views.

