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From the Committee of 100 to the Committee to Re-Elect the President: The Political Campaigns of Richard M. Nixon

A thesis

presented to

the faculty of the Department of History

East Tennessee State University

In partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree

Master of Arts in History

by

Niklas Trzaskowski

May 2013

Dr. Daryl A. Carter, Chair

Dr. Emmett M. Essin III

Dr. Stephen G. Fritz

Keywords: Richard Nixon, Campaigns, Elections, Campaign Strategy, Murray Chotiner, John Mitchell, 1968 Election, Watergate

ABSTRACT

From the Committee of 100 to the Committee to Re-elect the President: The Political Campaigns of Richard M. Nixon

by

Niklas Trzaskowski

From the Committee of 100 to the Committee to Re-elect the President: The Political Campaigns of Richard M. Nixon offers the reader a comprehensive biography of Richard M. Nixon through the lens of his political campaigns. This thesis illustrates how Richard Nixon became one of the fiercest campaigners in 20th century American political history. This thesis, furthermore, examines the key staff and strategy of each campaign Nixon waged. This thesis, additionally, presents to the reader insight on how Nixon often fought his campaigns independently from the Republican Party and how he relied on the help of a few dedicated men.

DEDICATION

To my mother and father, Angelika and Frank Trzaskowski, who made my 'American Dream' a possibility.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many people supported me throughout the process of writing this thesis. First off, I would like to thank my family, who always believed in me and were there during every step of my journey. I want to thank my mother and father, to whom this thesis is dedicated to, without their support, sacrifice, and unconditional love I could have never completed this project. When we first moved to the United States of America, I remember telling my mother how I was afraid of leaving my native country behind and living in an environment where almost no one spoke my native language. My mother told me that everything would turn out just fine. My mother's faith in my ability to overcome the difficult challenges associated with studying and communicating in a foreign language allowed me to carry on and face my fears. I think that she always knew that a few years later I would complete a major written work in English. I am forever grateful to my father, Frank, who gave me the opportunity to accompany him to the United States. My father continues to serve as my role model. My father installed in me the mindset that nothing is impossible, and that hard work always pays off. My sister Luise and my brother Moritz always supported me and motivated me when I felt down and out. Although we live several thousand miles apart, my brother's and my sister's love and support knows no distance or barriers.

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Dr.Carter helped me during every step of completing this thesis. I was fortunate to have Dr.
Carter serve as my thesis chair. Dr.Carter spent enormous amounts of his time looking over my writing and offering suggestions on how to improve it. When my research was stalled, Dr. Carter got me back on track by offering solutions to my problems. Furthermore, through discussions with Dr.Carter, inside and outside the classroom, I learned more about American political culture

than I ever thought possible. Dr.Carter offered professional and personal advice and helped me to further my understanding of what it takes to be a historian. Dr. Stephen G. Fritz tremendously helped me throughout my graduate career at ETSU and was kind enough to serve on my thesis committee. I will cherish what I learned in Dr.Fritz's seminars, and I enjoyed the conversations I had with him about topics ranging from history to politics and sports. I am also thankful for Dr. Emmett M. Essin III for serving on my thesis committee and offering advice and guidance throughout my time at ETSU. I would also like to thank Dr. Brian J. Maxson, who as graduate coordinator, not only helped me maneuver through the massive amounts of paperwork associated with graduate studies but also offered invaluable professional advice to me. Moreover, this thesis started out as a project for Dr.Maxson's historical methods course. I would like to thank the chair of the history department Dr. Dale J. Schmitt and executive aide Sharon Chandler for all their help and support throughout my time at ETSU. In addition, I am grateful that the history department funded a trip to the Richard Nixon Library last summer. Without the trip, I could have never completed this work. I was honored to be selected as a recipient of the Barbara Jaffe Silvers Memorial Scholarship and I am grateful for the help the scholarship provided. I, furthermore, would like to thank my fellow graduate students for their support.

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process and for balancing my workload so that I would have enough time to research and write. I would also like to thank the staff at the Nixon Library and Museum in Yorba Linda, California for all their help. Furthermore, I would like to thank Drs. Michael E. Birdwell, Wali R. Kharif, and Jeffery J. Roberts, at the Tennessee Tech University History Department, who taught me important lessons on my way to becoming a historian and helped to positively shape me as a person in more ways than they will ever know.

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Although I received a lot of assistance in writing this work, all errors that might remain in this work are my own.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

When Aristotle said, "Man is by nature a political animal" he most certainly did not have Richard M. Nixon in mind. However, if there has ever been a prime example in modern American political history of a 'political animal' it would be, Richard Nixon. In fact, the term "political animal" and Richard Nixon for many scholars, journalist, and political pundits belong in the same sentence. Nixon remains a divisive figure in 20th century American political history. Moreover, Richard Nixon, to this day, remains one of the most polarizing figures in American History.

For many of those in charge of writing history, the proverbial wounds caused by the president's actions in the early 1970s are still too fresh, and their feelings towards Nixon remain filled with hatred and disgust. However, over the last couple of years a serious reexamination of Richard Nixon has begun. Scholars such as Irwin F. Gellman, in his incredibly well researched book on Nixon's early years in politics, entitled *The Contender: Richard Nixon: the Congress years, 1946-1952*, and David Greenberg, in his work *Nixon's Shadow: The History of the Image*, effectively disprove some of the myths that have been created around Nixon. Scholars, moreover, have taken a renewed interest in examining the 1960 presidential campaign. Scholars Gary Donaldson, W. J. Rorabaugh, and David Pietrusza have all reexamined the 1960 campaign and provided serious research on the Nixon campaign in 1960. In regards to Nixon's political campaigns, they are often examined in episodes, with each monograph focusing on a single

¹ Irwin F. Gellman, *The Contender: Richard Nixon: the Congress years, 1946-1952* (New York: The Free Press, 1999), David Greenberg, *Nixon's Shadow: The History of an Image* (New York: W.W.Norton&Company, 2003)

² Gary Donaldson, *The First Modern Campaign: Kennedy, Nixon, and the Election of 1960* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2007), W.J. Rorabaugh, *The Real Making of the President: Kennedy, Nixon and the 1960 Election* (Lawrence, KS: The University Press of Kansas, 2012), David Pietrusza, *1960: LBJ Vs.JFK Vs. Nixon: The Epic Campaign that Forged Three Presidencies* (New York: Sterling Publishing Group, 2008).

election. However, what remains missing from not only the recent reexaminations but from the overall historiography of Richard Nixon is a complete analysis of Nixon as a political campaigner, taking into account all of his political campaigns from 1946 to 1972. In order to understand Nixon's campaigns of a certain year, one has to take into account the campaigns that proceeded as each campaign shaped Nixon's skills as a campaigner and his larger understanding of the political environment in the post-WWII United States.

From 1946 to 1974, Richard Nixon ran in nine elections, losing only twice. Nixon campaigned for the offices of congressman, senator, vice-president, governor, and president. Having sought after so many offices, Nixon left behind a legacy as one of the fiercest campaigners in American history, a man who would often do whatever was necessary in order to win the election. Nixon evolved as candidate and campaigner throughout his political career, from "redbaiting" Jerry Voorhis in 1946, to uniting what would later become known as the "Silent Majority" in 1968, and defeating George McGovern by any means necessary in 1972. This thesis presents to the reader a unifying narrative of Nixon's political campaigns and shows how Nixon evolved from a campaigner seeking a seat in the U.S. House of Representatives in 1946, to a president obsessed with winning reelection by disregarding the law of the land in 1972. This thesis, furthermore, focuses on and examines the people who surrounded Nixon on the campaign trail.

Throughout Nixon's career he stuck, if he could, by a certain formula when he selected his campaign staff and aides. Furthermore, Nixon kept a very close circle of trusted associates. Although membership in this inner circle varied, Nixon relied on only a few people throughout each stage of his political career. For the majority of Nixon's campaigns, the key figures on his staff, the strategists and commanders, were almost mirror images of the candidate. Nixon

admired men who worked themselves up the social ladder. Thus, Nixon's campaign staffs often became an extension of his own persona, including his feelings towards society. The men who accompanied Nixon on the campaign trail, particularly through his early career, have been less frequently examined. As such, this thesis employs an approach that treats the candidate and the key staff as equally important and examines the campaigns from the inside out. Nixon tremendously benefitted when a staff that suited his ideological needs surrounded him during a campaign and struggled when they did not surround him. Ultimately, this thesis presents a biography of Richard Nixon, and the men who made him, through the lens of the political campaigns he fought from 1946 to 1972.

In chapter one, the framework of Nixon's campaigns is examined. The chapter examines Nixon's early years growing up in Whittier California, and how his first campaign, for a seat in the United States Congress, set the foundations for the types of campaign structures that suited Nixon best throughout his political career. The reader is introduced to Francis Nixon, Richard's father, and key members of the Committee of 100 who helped Nixon fight his first election, and can therefore see how these men influenced Richard Nixon in regards to what kind of staff he wanted to surround himself with on the campaign trail. This basic structure, which consists of a combination of campaign strategy and campaign personal, is referred to as Nixon's *modus operandi*. The chapter, furthermore, explains the reason for Nixon's overall worldview, examining his poor upbringing and constant struggle with class, and why he often saw the world in matters of "us versus them."

Chapter two, discusses the evolution of Nixon as a campaigner in the 1950s. The chapter examines Nixon's 1948 reelection campaign, which is often casted aside, but crucial for Nixon, concerning his ability to capture not only Republican, but Democratic voters. The chapter,

furthermore, explores the 1950 Senate campaign against Helen Gahagan Douglas and how Nixon's relationship with his campaign manager, Murray Chotiner, not only advanced the *modus operandi*, but also strengthened Nixon's ability to attack his opponents on the campaign trail. In addition, the chapter shows how Nixon learned to incorporate the overall national mood into his political campaigns. Moreover, the chapter reiterates how important it was for Nixon to be surrounded by a good staff when they helped him overcome the fund scandal in 1952. Chapter two, above all, explains that by the end of the 1950s Nixon went into the 1960 presidential election with no support from some of his past allies. Murray Chotiner was dismissed from helping the Republican Party in fighting elections after he got in trouble with the law.

Furthermore, Nixon's father, a key influence throughout his life, had passed away. Nixon had to deal with the staff passed down by the Eisenhower administration in organizing his election effort, and these men worked hard for the Republican Party, but not for Richard Nixon.

Richard Nixon's 1960 presidential campaign is examined in chapter three. The focus of the chapter is not on Nixon's now infamous performance in the first ever-televised debates, but instead argues that Nixon's campaign suffered immensely when the candidate took control of his own campaign. Furthermore, the overall campaign strategy by the Nixon campaign, which in other examinations is often overshadowed by the debates, is examined. Moreover, the chapter answers the question as to why Nixon decided to manage his own campaign. The 1960 campaign serves as a major turning point in the historical examination of Nixon's campaigns, as he in the years that followed readjusted and returned to his strength as a campaigner.

Chapter four, presents to the reader Richard Nixon's years in political exile. However, what is often referred to as "the Wilderness Years" is actually Nixon's longest political campaign. During the years from 1961 to 1968, Nixon improved his campaign staff and returned

to the *modus operandi* that made him into a successful politician. The chapter discusses Nixon's 1962 gubernatorial campaign in California and how it was the last time Nixon listened to the Republicans in Washington. After the failed 1962 campaign, Nixon operated from the outside of the party and emerged as a serious powerbroker during the latter half of the 1960s. Moreover, Nixon moved to New York City and made acquaintances with people who assisted him in reestablishing his political career after two crushing losses. Above all, the chapter introduces the reader to John Newton Mitchell, a key figure in the political comeback and further evidence of Nixon's favoritism towards campaign managers who shared some of his personal qualities. The fourth chapter serves as a bridge between Nixon's defeat in 1960 and his decision to run for the presidency in 1968 and shows that Nixon in those years regained his ability to understand the larger political trends of the country and exploit them to his advantage.

How Nixon acted upon the things he learned since the 1960 campaign is explained in chapter five, which examines the 1968 presidential campaign. The chapter argues that the 1968 presidential campaign remains the ultimate exercise of Nixon's *modus operandi*. The campaign featured a clear command structure, with an unquestioned leader at the top, managing, a small group of individuals with business oriented backgrounds and commitment to the candidate and not the party, and a campaign strategy centered on exploiting the overall national mood in favor of the candidate. The chapter traces how Nixon overcame the doubts that many Republicans had in his ability to win the election in November and how his newly assembled staff helped him overcome and deal with the domestic and foreign crises of 1968.

The sixth and final chapter discusses how the Nixon White House staff increasingly embraced Richard Nixon's persona and became obsessed with not only winning elections, but also protecting the president's victory by any means necessary. In addition, the chapter

chronicles the downfall of the *modus operandi*, best exemplified in the events that occurred prior to the 1972 presidential election. The chapter argues that just as much as Nixon's obsession with winning and shielding the White House from attacks by the press or political opponents, a breakdown in overall campaign organization contributed to his ultimate downfall. The reader will uncover that while Nixon's trusted staff were responsible for his comeback in 1968, they were responsible for his resignation in 1974. A serious conflict in personalities and a fight for respect of the president caused Nixon's key staffers to take up their own election efforts. John Mitchell, Charles Colson, and H.R. Haldeman all operated uncoordinated reelection efforts. Subsequently, this disorganization, in part, contributed to the Watergate break-in that would eventually unravel Nixon's presidency.

Ultimately, the reader will receive a more complete narrative of the political campaigns of Richard Nixon and will receive insight on the people who assisted him in fighting these campaigns. Overall, this thesis hopes to leave the reader with a better understanding of not only Richard Nixon as a campaigner, but also of the way the political landscape evolved from 1945 to 1974. Furthermore, this thesis shows that Nixon operated best when staffers who mirrored his personality surrounded him. Politicians, to this day, take notes out of Nixon's political playbook when it comes time to hit the campaign trail. Moreover, Nixon with his *modus operandi* created election efforts that decentralize the control of the party over such efforts. Nixon left a lasting legacy on the campaign trail that can still be seen in the 21st century.

CHAPTER 2

Modus Operandi

On August 9, 1974, at 9:36 am in the East Room of the White House, Richard Nixon took to the podium. Nixon addressed a crowd made up out of the White House staff, cabinet members, and friends. Nixon delivered his goodbyes to those in attendance because he resigned from the office of the presidency the previous night on national television, due to the pressures brought by the investigations into the Watergate scandal. Nixon, in his final speech in the White House, mentioned something that defined his entire political career, his family and upbringing. Nixon prided himself in his humble upbringing and always sought to point it out, whether it was on the campaign trail or in a closed circle of trusted associates as in this speech. This time, however, the situation differed, there were no votes at stake, and those in attendance probably heard the stories several times previously. Nixon showed awareness of his bigger audience, the nation, which had their eyes glued to the television or ears pinned to radio sets, listening to a speech by a man who by this time had become one of the most polarizing figures in the United States of America. Nixon's invocation of his father having the "poorest lemon ranch in California" and his mother taking care of his brothers when they were struck by a fatal case of tuberculosis served not as points to garner sympathy but rather as a testament to his political career. Besides all these odds, here stood Richard Nixon, the proverbial leader of the free world, who was not born into this position but worked to earn it, every step of the way.³

Even in his departure, Nixon reminded the audiences of his journey to Washington, D.C. Nixon invoked that he, like many Americans, grew up poor and misfortunate, and that he never gave up, and, because of hard work, and determination managed to obtain the highest office in

³Richard M. Nixon: "Remarks on Departure From the White House," August 9, 1974, edited by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, The American Presidency Project. http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=4325. (accessed March 5, 2012)

American politics. The theme of 'us versus them' was Nixon's most powerful tool on the campaign trail and one of his favorite strategies. The roots for this worldview lie within Richard Nixon's early life. One, however, must understand how this theme developed over the early years of Richard Nixon's life in order to gain a full appreciation for just how fitting this narrative suited the political interest of Richard M. Nixon. Furthermore, the foundations for Richard Nixon's campaign style developed in Whittier, California long before he ever entered the political life. Nixon grew up in Whittier and started his political career there. Thus, an analysis Nixon's time in Whittier is necessary in order to gain a broader understanding of Nixon as a campaigner. Moreover, an analysis of Richard Nixon's early influences is necessary because those early influences became the blueprint for the kind of advisors and strategists he chose to wage his campaigns.

Besides his upbringing in Whittier, which would become a standard theme for many of his campaign speeches, Whittier also played an important role in regards to his future campaign organizations. Richard Nixon's 1946 campaign for a seat in the U.S. House began out in California. With the help of a number of businessmen turned amateur political activists he won the election. Naturally, a discussion and analysis of this first race is important, but such an analysis is more important than many historians previously suggested, especially in regards to the 'Nixonian campaign style'. In Richard Nixon's very first campaign one finds many of the same organizational patterns that he took on the campaign trail throughout his entire career. The staff that ran the campaign in 1946 served as the standard model to which all of Nixon's campaign staffs had to live up to. One, therefore, could make the argument that Nixon always wanted to emulate the 1946 campaign organization in regards to structure and personnel. One, however, must first confront Richard Nixon's path until 1946 in order to gain a broader

understanding of just what kind of candidate these campaign staffs dealt with. After all, Nixon's upbringing and career until 1946 would define the candidate more than anything else would.

Richard Milhous Nixon was born on January 9, 1913, to Francis and Hannah Nixon in Yorba Linda, California. Francis Anthony Nixon, or Frank Nixon, was a hard-working individual. Frank's mother died of tuberculosis when he was eight years old and therefore, Frank quit school in order to work full time. 4 Francis Nixon tried several jobs, working as a streetcar motorman, as a farmer in Ohio, a sheep shearer in Colorado, and as a temporary worker in an oilfield in California.⁵ Francis built the house where Hannah gave birth to Richard and prided himself in being a self-educated man, a man who according to Richard "had a driving ambition, not for himself but for his sons."6 Francis wanted nothing but the best for Richard and his siblings and played a pivotal role in shaping his early political viewpoints. When Richard was in the sixth grade, his class teacher divided the class in two groups. The boys had to debate the girls in the class on the issue on whether or not owning a home was more desirable than renting. Richard consulted his father on how to debate the issue, given that the boys had to argue for renting instead of owning, a difficult task in rural Whittier, California. Francis helped Richard break down the numbers and together they prepared an argument, which pointed out that renting a home is more cost effective than owning one because you spare the costs of repairs and utilities. For the first time in Richard Nixon's life, he sought outside help on an issue. In the following year, Francis advised Richard to seek help from his uncle Phillip Timberlake, an etymologist, in order to prepare an argument for his class that insects were indeed beneficial to the society. Francis Nixon would continue to advise Richard on his debate performances, during

⁴ Richard M. Nixon, *In the Arena: A Memoir of Victory, Defeat and Renewal* (New York: Pocket Books , 1991), 79.

⁵ Richard M. Nixon, *In the Arena*, 80.

⁶ Richard M. Nixon, *In the Arena*, 80.

⁷ Nixon. *In the Arena*. 81.

Richard's years at Whittier College. In addition, Frank would often travel with the debate team and dissect the arguments of the opponents as well as Richard's own. Frank was Richards' first advisor and, in a sense, laid the groundwork for every advisor Richard would choose afterwards: hardworking, self-educated, passionate men who found solutions to the tough problems rather than to draw up talking points, men able to get through to Richard and make him understand his weaknesses as well as his strengths. However, while most politicians seek advice, Nixon took the advice his father gave him to heart and made the improvements that he suggested. Moreover, presented in a simple fashion here, one can find early signs on Nixon seeking outside help on issues and listen to advice, something that he continuously did throughout his political career, with the 1960 election being the one notable exception. Richard Nixon's mother, Hannah Nixon, also heavily influenced Richard Nixon.

Hannah Nixon came from a long line of Irish Quakers. Like Francis, Hannah was deeply religious; however, she never "wore her religion on her sleeve." Moreover, Hannah, like Francis, was also a hard worker, often waking up at four in the morning in order to bake pies to sell in order to help with the costs of Harold's, Richard's brother, struggle with tuberculosis. While Richard Nixon's early viewpoints on politics were shaped by his father, Hannah's influence on Richard was more personal and intellectual helping Richard develop traits that shaped his image as a statesman later on in his career. Hannah Nixon studied at Whittier College for two years, the same college which subsequently would become Richard's alma mater. At Whittier College and throughout her life, she would become proficient in Greek, German, and Latin. Hannah taught Richard how to read before he went to grammar school and how to play Christmas carols on the piano before Richard ever took any lessons on the instrument. Hannah

⁸ Richard M. Nixon, *RN: The Memoirs of Richard Nixon* (New York: Touchstone, 1990), 9.

⁹ Nixon,*RN*,8.

educated Richard on how to read the newspaper objectively and turned him into an "avid newspaper reader." While Richard Nixon's father taught him to form arguments and debate, his mother installed in him the thirst for knowledge and the drive to not give-up even in the face of adversity. These two characteristics mark Richard Nixon throughout his political life, as he became a fierce debater and intellectual road warrior.

Richard Nixon fell in love with politics at an early age. Richard remembered when Francis and Hannah disagreed politically. In 1916, his father supported Republican Charles Hughes while his mother supported Democratic candidate Woodrow Wilson, because Hannah hoped that Wilson would keep the United States out of World War I. When the United States eventually entered the Great War, Francis would let never Hannah forget that she supported Wilson. However, Francis Nixon was not a Republican hardliner, considering that he supported Bob LaFollette, the governor of Wisconsin who ran as a Progressive in 1924. Francis admired LaFollette, because to Francis, LaFollette represented the "little man" against Calvin Coolidge. Richard often saw himself as the "little man" fighting the establishment and furthermore embraced the role as the underdog throughout his campaigns, whenever he took on Jerry Voorhis in 1946 Nixon pointed out his wartime experience in comparison to Voorhis's ineffective representation of California's 12th District. Furthermore, in 1950, in his Senate campaign against Hollywood actor, Helen Gahagan Douglas, Nixon drove from one campaign rally to another in a station wagon in order to show his support for the common-man.

It would not be long before Richard Nixon would run for office for the first time in his life. After two years at Fullerton High School, Nixon transferred to Whittier High School. At Whittier High, Nixon lost the election for president of the student body in his junior year. Nixon

¹⁰ Nixon, *In the Arena*, 85.

¹¹ Nixon. *In the Arena*, 81.

ran in the election for the student body at Whittier High School against his good friend and future president of Whittier College Roy Newsom and another classmate named Bob Louge.

Louge won the election for the student body. 12 However, out of this defeat the young Richard Nixon learned some valuable lessons that would define his later career as a politician.

Nixon was appointed manager of the student body, a position which involved going doorto-door and asking for contributions to the school or selling ads. ¹³ Nixon told Frank Gannon in an interview in 1983 that it was a job that he disliked, "I was not good at it at all. I was never able to go up to somebody and ask them for a contribution or to sell an ad or something like that." ¹⁴ For Nixon, the experience of being the manager of the student body carried through his political career, "in all of my political campaigning, I've never gone door-to-door." 15 Whenever Nixon campaigned he would meet voters not by going door-to-door, but rather, "do it in small groups or even large groups...", he saw it as improper to invade "the privacy of a home and saying, 'will you vote for me, and here's a piece of literature" Nixon stated that "if they [politicians] came to my place, I'd kick them out. I would understand it if they did that to me." ¹⁶ Nixon took the defeat and learned from his experience as the manager of the student body. For the young Richard Nixon, each time that he did not achieve the goal that he aimed for, it presented a major turning point in his life. Nixon, oftentimes, through rejection, had to find an alternative pathway to use his talents. These rejections and subsequent alternative paths opened many doors for him.

¹² Richard M. Nixon, interview by Frank Gannon, February 9, 1983, Day 1, Tape 2 0:22:15, transcript University of Georgia Special Collections Libraries, Walter J. Brown Media Archives & Peabody Awards Collection, http://www.libs.uga.edu/media/collections/nixon/nixonday1.html (accessed March 12, 2012).

¹³ Richard M. Nixon, interview by Frank Gannon, February 9, 1983, Day 1, Tape 2 0:22:15.

¹⁴ Richard M. Nixon, interview, February 9, 1983, Day 1, Tape 2 0:22:15.

¹⁵ Richard M. Nixon, interview, February 9, 1983, Day 1, Tape 2 0:22:15.

¹⁶ Richard M. Nixon, interview, February 9, 1983, Day 1, Tape 2 0:22:15.

After Richard's brother Harold's diagnosis with tuberculosis, his high school experience changed. Richard finally gained enough weight to try out for the varsity football team at Whittier High School. A medical exam however, revealed that Richard had a scar on his lungs from a previous case of pneumonia and his doctor advised him against playing football. Richard would not play football again until years later at Whittier College. Once again, Richard found himself on the outside looking in. If Nixon could not excel at football, he excelled in drama and debate at Whittier High School.

During Nixon's time at Whittier, part of the curriculum included "oratorical contests," which he frequently won. ¹⁷ Richard claimed that one of his major influences on his skills as a debater was H. Lynn Sheller, a teacher at Whittier, who told the young Nixon to take into consideration his audience and to turn a speech into a conversation with said audience. ¹⁸ As early as his first congressional campaign Nixon would hold meetings in a question-and-answer session. By 1968, the Nixon campaign-team led by John Mitchell realized that Nixon performed better in question and answer sessions as opposed to giving directed speeches, a trend he had slipped into during his years as legislator, and adopted a strategy in which Nixon would answer questions directly from the audience. ¹⁹ The foundation for this strength, like so many others, was laid in Whittier, California with rejection serving as the catalyst for the development of certain political traits. Nixon would continue to practice his rhetorical skills in college.

Richard Nixon always wanted to continue his education on the East Coast. Nixon finished third in his class at Whittier high school and won the constitutional oratorical contests in his junior and senior years. Moreover, the Harvard Club of California bestowed upon him the

¹⁷ Richard M. Nixon, interview by Frank Gannon, February 9, 1983, Day 1, Tape 1 1:25:59.

¹⁸ Richard M. Nixon, interview by Frank Gannon, February 9, 1983, Day 1, Tape 1 1:25:59.

¹⁹ Herbert G. Klein, *Making it Perfectly Clear: An Inside Account of Nixon's Love-Hate Relationship with the Media. New York* (Doubleday& Company Inc. 1980) , 19. And *Nixon,RN*,303.

outstanding all-around student award.²⁰ Furthermore, a tuition scholarship to Yale was also a possibility.²¹ Nixon, however, had to deal with unforeseen circumstances that required him to stay home, at Whittier College, rather than fulfilling his dream of attending a college in the east. By the 1930s, the Great Depression laid its tight grips on much of America. In addition, Harold's illness put the Nixon family in a financial crisis. Therefore, Richard could not afford to move east. Nixon once again needed to overcome the fact that his preferred choice would not work out. Nixon later remarked in his memoirs, that he "was not disappointed, because the idea of college was so exciting that nothing could have dimmed it for me."²² At Whittier College, Nixon's education as a politician and as a campaigner continued.

In 1930, Richard Nixon enrolled at Whittier College. After his dreams of going to college in the east fell through, Richard made amends to live on a much smaller, less prestigious campus than he had imagined. Nixon joined the football team, at Whittier College, and in his first year made acquaintances with teammate Dean Triggs. Dean, a transfer student from Colorado College where he was a member of a fraternity, transferred to Whittier College as a sophomore, and noticed that there was only one society for the entire male student body at Whittier College. Whittier College previously banned fraternities all togetherbecause the Quaker institution did not believe in elitism. Triggs approached Nixon and asked him if he would be interested in helping found a new society for male students. The only men's society at this time on Whittier College's campus was called the Franklin Society, known for representing the better off students at the school and society; they posed in tuxedos for their yearbook pictures. Students of lower social standing did not have a society at this point. Having previously won election for class president

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²⁰ Nixon, *RN*, 15.

²¹ Nixon, RN, 15.

²² Nixon *RN* 15

²³ Richard M. Nixon, interview by Frank Gannon, February 9, 1983, Day 1, Tape 2 0:53:26.

²⁴ Richard M. Nixon, interview by Frank Gannon, February 9, 1983, Day 1, Tape 2 0:53:26.

at Whittier College, Nixon expanded his numerous extracurricular activities by getting involved in the drafting process for a new male society. ²⁵ Together with football teammates, Nixon and Triggs organized a society known as the Orthogonians. Nixon was elected as the society's first president. ²⁶ Nixon provided the society with a constitution, slogan, song, and insignia. ²⁷ The slogan for the society came from the French philosopher Voltaire. "Écrasons l'infâme," the legendary phrase by the enlightenment writer translated often as "Crush the Infamous." The boar's head served as the insignia of the Orthogonians. The Orthogonians prided themselves in representing the underdogs; originally organized to "promote campus spirit" the organization held dances and other social activities. ²⁸

On a larger scale, the Orthogonians provided Nixon with an opportunity to direct a large number of people and, furthermore, influence the tone for most of his political campaigns. Now, Nixon was in charge of representing the outsiders against the establishment Franklin Society. After all, throughout much of his political career, Nixon turned his opponents into establishment figures, too entwined in political interests that did not represent the values of Southern California or the nation as a whole. The Orthogonians were exactly about this recruiting those who felt disenfranchised because they were poor or from lower social standing and giving the "little man" a voice on campus. Many of Nixon's campaigns would feature this exact tone. Nixon would often make the claim of representing the outsiders, many of his political allies and closest associates on the campaign trail would have made outstanding members in the Orthogonians. Nixon's aides on the campaign trail were more than often political outsiders, holding occupations in business outside of the political arena. With the Orthogonians, one can see Richard Nixon's

²⁵ Stephen Ambrose, *Nixon, Vol. 1: The Education of a Politician 1913-1962* (New York: Simon & Schuster 1988), 59.

²⁶ Ambrose, *Nixon Vol.1*,60.

²⁷ Ambrose, *Nixon Vol.1*,60.

²⁸ Ambrose, *Nixon,Vol1.*,60.

attraction to people who worked themselves up in social standing and not fed with the proverbial silver spoon. Nixon would often "Crush the Infamous" in regards in his selection of advisers and strategists, often railing against the Republican establishment, by not selecting political insiders, but instead complete outsiders, unfamiliar with the political process from a legislative standpoint, but experts in securing victories. Richard Nixon continued his rhetorical training at Whittier College.

At Whittier College, Nixon performed well on the debate team. Nixon always argued both sides of every topic. Some of the topics that were debated at the time included, "free trade versus protectionism" and whether the axis war debts, accumulated because of World War I, "should be cancelled or not." Naturally, this continued practice would later benefit Nixon when he ran for office, considering both Jerry Voorhis in 1946 and Helen Gahagan Douglas in 1950 struggled in debating then-candidate Nixon.

Whittier College provided a crucial stomping ground for Nixon to sharpen his skills as a debater and to get hands-on training in organizing a large organization. Whittier College's small student population provided a man as eager as Richard Nixon with an opportunity to stand out from the crowd and to taste success. Richard Nixon in 1983 stated that those that opposed him through his presidency probably wished that he had attended "...Harvard, because then they wouldn't have had me [him] in politics." Nixon showed intellectual abilities that were far above many of the student population at Whittier College. Nixon left such a legacy as a student that the University President, Walter Dexter, remembered his name and secured him an interview for his first political job. However, Nixon felt intimidated by those who possessed a superior intellect. At Duke Law School, Nixon's next stop on his journey to Washington D.C., this intimidation

²⁹ Richard M. Nixon, interview by Frank Gannon, February 9, 1983, Day 1, Tape 2 01:04:50.

³⁰ Richard M. Nixon, interview by Frank Gannon, February 9, 1983, Day 1, Tape 2 00:48:55

showed through. At Duke, Nixon combated poverty and remained more focused on scholarly work, rather than extracurricular activities, because he was eager to remain on his scholarship.

An analysis of Richard Nixon's time at Duke Law School in regards to his development as a candidate is necessary, because he would once again take on the role of the outsider. Moreover, Nixon, for the first time, would put his win at all cost attitudes on full display, by breaking into the Dean's office in order to see his grades. 31 Furthermore, the Great Depression made it even tougher on a young Richard Nixon already short on financial resources. However, besides all these obstacles Nixon worked hard and remained studious and ultimately graduated from Duke Law School. Richard Nixon hailed from a much smaller school than many of his fellow students and as a lifetime resident of the west coast, he would struggle to adapt to the environment presented to him in Durham, North Carolina.

Richard Nixon arrived at Duke Law School in September of 1934. Nixon struggled to retain his scholarship. The scholarship Nixon received covered only the tuition and was known as the "meat grinder," because of the twenty-five scholarships originally distributed for the first year only twelve recipients would be able to continue on it for another year. Nixon faced stiff competition during his time at Duke from classmates. According to Nixon, half of his classmates belonged to the prestigious Phi Beta Kappa honor society. 32 At Duke, Nixon would earn the nickname "Iron Butt" because he would spend countless hours in the library; fellow student Bill Adelson who told Nixon that he had "what it takes to learn the law-an iron butt", gave the nickname to him. 33 Nixon would transfer his studious behavior displayed at Whittier College and Duke Law School into campaigning, often spending hours analyzing and discussing politics

³¹ Ambrose, *Nixon,Vol1.*,76. ³² Nixon,*RN*,20.

³³ Nixon, *RN*, 20.

while on the campaign trail and studying his opponent's moves. Because Nixon's scholarship covered tuition only, in order to live, Nixon worked his way through law school.

For the first two years of law school, Nixon lived in a rented room for five dollars a month. In Nixon's third year of law school, he moved in with some of his friends to a place, which they named "Whippoorwill Manor" a "one room clapboard shack without heat or inside plumbing," in which the four friends would share "two large brass beds." ³⁴ The shack was part of a women's house who lived near the Duke campus, she appreciated the boys staying with her because they provided security considering that the house was located in the middle of Duke Forest. 35 During his stay at Whippoorwill Manor, Nixon walked over a mile to campus, shaved in the men's room on campus, and much to the disliking of his dentist ate a Milky Way candy bar each morning for breakfast because at five cents apiece, the candy bar was "good for the pocketbook."³⁶ Nixon finished law school in 1937, though Nixon would travel to New York in order to interview for potential law firms, he would instead end up doing what Dean H. Claude Horack, who Nixon worked for during his time at Duke, suggested. Horack advised Nixon whenever he sought advice on how to approach potential firms to return to his home state, telling Nixon, "don't go to New York. If you are interested in politics, go home. Practice law at home. You may not get as much money, but that's the only way if you want to do anything in the political area."³⁷ Besides the advice given to him by the Dean, Nixon would go to New York, where he would once again experience rejection.

In New York, Nixon met with several potential law firms. However, only one would respond to his application. The law firm of Donovan, Leisure, Newton, and Lombard showed

³⁴ Nixon,*RN*,20-21

³⁵ Richard M. Nixon, interview by Frank Gannon, February 9, 1983, Day 1, Tape 3 00:05:58

³⁶ Richard M. Nixon, interview by Frank Gannon, February 9, 1983, Day 1, Tape 3 00:05:58

³⁷ Richard M. Nixon, interview by Frank Gannon, February 9, 1983, Day 1, Tape 3 00:09:14

interest in Nixon. However, by the time Nixon heard back from the firm, he had already decided to take his career into a different direction. Moreover, Nixon met with recruiters from the Federal Bureau of Investigation, who never contacted Nixon. Years later, whenever Nixon served as Vice-President to Dwight Eisenhower, FBI chief J. Edgar Hoover told him that indeed his application went through and they would have hired him if Congress would have increased appropriations. After failing to land a job with a law firm and as a special agent for the FBI, Nixon followed Dean Horack's advice and returned home. Back in Whittier, Nixon passed the California Bar Exam and was hired by a local law firm. He also got involved in amateur theater productions. Nixon dating all the way back to his High School years was involved in drama. Nixon enjoyed poetry and literature. In regards to Nixon as a candidate, his involvement in theatrics would be important not in the literal sense that it made him a better performer, after all many have observed Richard Nixon's almost awkward hand gestures and poses behind the podium, but because he met Thelma Catherine Ryan during the rehearsals for George S. Kaufman and Alexander Woollcott's play "The Dark Tower."

Pat's influence on Richard Nixon as a campaigner lacks discussion in the historiography of Richard Nixon. Pat was the bedrock for Richard as she often served as the main motivator behind Nixon's campaigns and worked tirelessly on every campaign he ever fought. Before meeting Richard, Pat was a teacher at Whittier High School and part of her duties included taking an active role in the community. ³⁹ Pat was encouraged by the school's assistant superintendent to take on the role of Daphne after he found out that the theater production was struggling in finding someone to play the role. ⁴⁰ Pat took on the opportunity to audition and subsequently, earned the part of Daphne. That very night, Nixon fell in love with Thelma Ryan.

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³⁸ Richard M. Nixon, interview by Frank Gannon, February 9, 1983, Day 1, Tape 3 00:09:14

³⁹ Julie Nixon Eisenhower, *Pat Nixon: The Untold Story* (New York: Simon& Schuster, 1986),54.

⁴⁰ Julie Nixon Eisenhower, *Pat Nixon*,55.

Whenever both left the church which housed the auditions, Richard talked to Pat and told her, "you may not believe this but I am going to marry you someday", Pat soon realized Nixon was not joking with her and whenever she returned to her apartment she told her roommate, "I met this guy tonight who says he is going to marry me." In Thelma, Richard found his perfect match, though at first like with so many other things in his life, he had to experience rejection before experiencing success. Nixon, quite possibly fought his first non-political campaign in order to capture the heart of Thelma Ryan. After several attempts at courting Thelma, Richard finally succeeded in June 1940, when he proposed to Thelma at Dana Point, California, on June 21st ,1940, Richard married Thelma. Richard's marriage to Thelma or Pat as she was now known, would be at times a tumultuous one; however, as chronicled later in this work, she would play an important role in the campaigns of her husband. Pat stayed with Richard and provided massive support during his time in the United States Navy.

On September 1st 1939, Adolf Hitler proclaimed that Polish troops had fired upon German territory and that Germany had no other option but to return fire and invade Poland. This was just one of many blatant lies by the Führer; World War II was now officially underway. While America in many ways still officially stood on the sidelines, months before Pearl Harbor Richard Nixon was one of the first in experiencing America shifting gears in regards to preparing for a possible entry into the theater of war. Richard Nixon's time in the United State Navy was tremendously valuable in regards to his campaigns. Nixon's wartime experience is important for two reasons. First, it brought Richard Nixon to Washington D.C. where he experienced government bureaucracy for the first time. Furthermore, it made him attractive as a candidate to the Committee of 100, a group made up of Southern Californian businessmen and local

⁴¹ Julie Nixon Eisenhower, *Pat Nixon*,55.

Republicans turned political activist seeking to find a candidate who could challenge incumbent Democrat Jerry Voorhis, and it helped him, in part, finance his 1946 campaign for Congress.

In December 1941, Richard Nixon through recommendation by his former professor David Carters, landed a job with the Office of Price Administration in Washington, D.C. 42 While the pay was minimal, Nixon took the opportunity because he could work in the nation's capital which he always wanted to do. On the Sunday before Nixon was scheduled to arrive in Washington, on his way to the movies with Pat, they stopped at her sister's house. Here, Richard Nixon found out that America was under attack. The Japanese had attacked Pearl Harbor, Nixon's role with the Office of Price Administration suddenly became more important than previously expected, and Richard would now actively play a part in his nation's effort in fighting the Axis powers. However, Nixon was not satisfied with his job, instead often frustrated by the mechanics of government bureaucracy. Nixon decided to become an officer in the United States Navy. While first being stationed in Iowa, Nixon would later be reassigned into the Pacific theater. In Bougainville, a frequent stop for fighter planes and bombers to refuel, Nixon spent most of his time playing poker and serving hamburgers and beer to flight crews. 43 Some have estimated the winnings of Nixon's poker playing in the Pacific ranging anywhere from "\$3000 to \$10000."44 Regardless how much money Nixon made in the Pacific, a good amount would later be reinvested in his first campaign. In July 1944, Nixon returned home after his duty in the Pacific was completed. In January 1945, Nixon was assigned to work for the Navy on contract terminations. This job would bring him and Pat to Washington, New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore. While in Baltimore, Nixon would receive the offer that would forever change his life.

⁴² Nixon,*RN*,25.

⁴³ Nixon, RN, 28.

⁴⁴ Stephen Ambrose, Nixon, Vol. 1: The Education of a Politician 1913-1962 (New York: Simon & Schuster 1988), 113.

While Richard Nixon was still serving in the Navy in Baltimore, across the country on the west coast, local businessmen had already formed a plan in order to unseat their current congressmen. All they needed was a candidate. While, the committee, which is known as the Fact Finding Committee or the Committee of 100, is always present in previous examinations of Richard Nixon's political career, its inner workings are often not examined. The committee in several works often turns out to be a faceless entity filled with scrupulous Republicans. Nothing however, could be further from the truth. The Committee of 100, no doubt served as an invaluable tool in getting Nixon elected in 1946. The argument could easily be made that Richard Nixon throughout the years always wanted to emulate the success that the committee had. The ways of the committee in 1946 became for Richard Nixon's modus operandi. A connection between the men who served on the committee in 1946, with the men who ran Nixon's presidential campaign in 1968, is easily recognizable, both campaigns featured men who had no interest in running for office themselves, who held occupations in business, and were committed to winning the race for the candidate, and not themselves. One can see direct relations in the character traits of a Herman Perry, a wealthy banker from Whittier, who started Richard Nixon's career, by extending an offer to run for the House in 1945, and John Mitchell, a wealthy lawyer who helped Nixon get to the White House in 1968. Both had respect for Nixon and neither needed the job of participating in a political campaign. Both men knew how to sell and how to make things happen, an attitude that Nixon always admired. Nixon throughout his political career would always look for people like a Frank Jorgenson, Roy Day, and Herman Perry when time came to hit the campaign trail, because these men worked hard in getting Nixon into congress and achieved the unthinkable in replacing Jerry Voorhis with an unknown Navy officer from Whittier, California.

Jerry Voorhis was a popular congressman, he had won four elections previous to 1946. However, to the Committee of 100, Voorhis represented everything that was wrong with postwar America. Voorhis had been a registered socialist until 1932, and changed his partyaffiliation to go along with Franklin D. Roosevelt. 45 The committee composed of businessmen and Republican hardliners strongly disliked FDR, largely due to his strong support for labor regulations and higher taxes. 46 Voorhis had been a staunch supporter of Roosevelt and his polices, subsequently the businessmen in the 12th District saw FDR and Voorhis as one and the same. With Roosevelt dead and another Democratic presidency on the horizon, which promised to uphold many of the programs established by the former president, the businessmen and Republicans in the 12th District had enough. They rightfully thought that the national mood had shifted to their advantage, voter registration in the 12th district "was close to fifty-fifty" Republican to Democrat. Furthermore, post-war enthusiasm had turned into post-war stagnation with millions of veterans still unemployed, labor organizations on strike across the country, and the threat of communist totalitarianism ruling the same world which just had been cleaned from fascist imperialism. Businessmen upset with the policies of the New Deal and the current state of America helped Richard Nixon run for congress in 1946.

One has to start with Frank Jorgensen when looking at the various people who helped Richard Nixon run for office. Jorgensen served on almost every campaign that Nixon ever ran. Furthermore, he served as an ideological blueprint for the men who organized many of Nixon's campaigns. With Jorgensen, one can see a man who was never politically motivated, who still found himself in the middle of an organizational effort to unseat an incumbent congressman, who held the seat for the last ten years. Jorgenson worked as an insurance sales representative

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⁴⁵ Frank Jorgenson, oral history typescript.

⁴⁶ Ambrose. *Nixon Vol.1*,127.

during his quest to unseat Jerry Voorhis, the incumbent Congressman of California's 12th

District. Jorgenson got involved in Nixon's 1946 race for Congress almost by accident.

Jorgenson was dissatisfied with members of the local school board in San Marino, California.

Upset that the school board members dedicated a vast amount of resources and time to expanding the school's real estate and equipment, and, thus, not paying attention to "what the teachers were doing", Jorgenson discovered the art of campaigning for a candidate. Together with other unsatisfied citizens, the group selected Maurice Jones as their candidate. Jones was a young lawyer in San Marion and displayed to the group an active interest in improving the community.

The group in charge, led in part by Jorgensen, had to organize a write-in campaign, because it was too late to file for a candidacy in the upcoming election in 1945. Jones subsequently won the school-board seat. The group, however, was not satisfied with changing the local school board, they became interested in changing the local politics. After pulling off a write-in campaign for Jones, the group asked themselves why "are we having a Congressman who had been a Socialist, and now a Democrat in the Roosevelt image, representing us?" The group researched the entire 12th District and found a number of people who shared their sentiment. Frank Jorgenson took the call to action and made it his mission to unseat Jerry Voorhis.

Jorgenson became a member of the local Republican Central Committee in the 12th District. When Jorgenson first arrived at the committee, he noticed that it was "far from

⁴⁷ Frank Jorgenson, *Richard M. Nixon in the Warren Era*, typescript of an oral history conducted 1976 by Amelia M. Fry, Regional Oral History Office, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, http://archive.org/stream/nixonwarrenera00rfryrich#page/n7/mode/2up (accessed January 1, 2012).

⁴⁸ Frank Jorgenson, oral history typescript.

⁴⁹ Frank Jorgenson, oral history typescript.

⁵⁰ Frank Jorgenson, oral history typescript.

energetic," many had given up hope that a Republican would retake the Congressional seat as long as Jerry Voorhis ran for re-election.⁵¹ Jorgenson still caught up in the grass-roots activism, displayed earlier, with the school board election decided that the committee needed a boost. Jorgenson believed that if the committee would just organize properly, Voorhis could be defeated. 52 The committee went to the newspapers and published advertisements looking for a candidate. Anyone who was interested in the position could come and audition. In the meantime, Jorgenson organized the committee so that it was representative of the local Republican establishment, he invited the presidents of the local women's clubs and Republican clubs to attend meetings and be involved in selecting a candidate. Furthermore, he contacted several prominent business owners in the district, including Herman Perry. The turnout for the job audition for United States Congressman was marginal and no interviewee could really impress the committee. After the initial meeting and audition, the committee was now known as the Committee of One Hundred. In the several assemblies interviews for the job were held, the committee, however, struggled to find a suitable candidate. Jorgenson became acquainted with Whittier because it held such assemblies. In the old Quaker town, Jorgenson met Herman Perry. 53 Perry was the manager of the Whittier branch of Bank of America. Herman Perry would become extremely important to Richard Nixon's political career; however, he served mostly behind-the-scenes of the committee.

Herman Perry received a lot of credit in regards to Richard Nixon's 1946 campaign largely due to Richard's emotions towards Perry, not because Perry was actively involved in waging the campaign. As previously stated, Perry hailed from Whittier and had been a very successful businessman there. Nixon considered Perry responsible for his candidacy. However,

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⁵¹ Frank Jorgenson, oral history typescript.

⁵² Frank Jorgenson, oral history typescript.

⁵³ Frank Jorgenson, oral history typescript.

Perry was an intermediary in Frank Jorgenson's larger grand scheme to unseat Voorhis. While Perry wrote the letter to Nixon, asking him to be the candidate, Frank Jorgenson did much of the groundwork in researching a possible Nixon candidacy. Nixon recalled that Perry remembered his interest in politics because of discussions the two had about Nixon running for a seat in the State Assembly before he left for the Navy. 54 According to Frank Jorgenson, Perry originally suggested Walter Dexter, President of Whittier College, as a potential candidate, and the committee extended an offer to Dexter, but he declined because the committee would not guarantee that if he would lose the election to provide a job which paid equal to his current salary. During the committee's effort to recruit Dexter, he brought Nixon's name to Jorgenson and said that the former student "had evidence, in his opinion, some interest in political endeavor" and had been a "brilliant student." ⁵⁵ Jorgenson made it his mission to find out more about the young man who Dexter spoke off so highly. Jorgenson talked to Herman Perry who referred Jorgenson to Nixon's former law firm of Bewley, Knopp, and Nixon in order to find out more. ⁵⁶ Moreover, Jorgenson went to Whittier to meet with Nixon's parents. Knowing Nixon was in Baltimore, Jorgenson interviewed Nixon's father and mother in Whittier. Jorgenson's research favored Nixon as a candidate, previously during a cocktail party the committee members had debated about what they actually wanted in a candidate. Frank Jorgenson recalled that the committee wanted,

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"A young man that has an excellent education — college or university. We want a young man who has demonstrated a forensic ability, the ability to get on his feet in front of an audience. We'd like to have a young man who has a service record—been in the army or navy or air force. We want this young man to be married and living with his wife, and we'd like to have some young children. If we could find this individual, we think this man would be our candidate if he's a good Republican and thinks, as we do, that things are getting a little crazy." ⁵⁷

⁵⁴ Nixon, RN, 34-35.

⁵⁵ Frank Jorgenson, oral history typescript.

⁵⁶ Frank Jorgenson, oral history typescript.

⁵⁷ Frank Jorgenson, oral history typescript.

Nixon certainly fulfilled most, if not all, of the prerequisites the committee wanted in a candidate. Herman Perry contacted Nixon via letter asking him if he would consider being a candidate for Congress in 1946.⁵⁸ Nixon accepted the offer with the knowledge that the committee was still interviewing other candidates. He would not be rejected this time.

On November 2, 1945, Nixon flew to Whittier where the Committee of 100 had set up a dinner for Nixon and six other prospective candidates. Nixon now auditioned for a job, which nobody else could seem to fill; he wore his Navy uniform during his proposal because he claimed that he "didn't own a civilian suit." The committee favored Nixon's speech which featured calls for "individual freedoms" and arguing that returning veterans did not want "a dole or a government handout", but a "respectable job in private industry." Nixon's plea together with his credentials must have wowed the Republican audience, mostly made up out of committee members, which all too often held occupations in business. That night the Committee of 100 found their candidate.

The committee faced three major challenges: first, they had to win the Republican primary, not an easy task considering Nixon was a largely unknown former Navy officer, with no political background or direct experience. Second, the committee had to take a crash-course on campaigning. Jorgenson admitted to Nixon that while Roy Day had some experience running campaigns on a local level, and Herman Perry had limited experience in regards to statewide elections, the rest were all "newcomers." Jorgenson told Nixon, not to worry, "...we don't know a hell of a lot about this thing [campaigning], but we'll work our tails off." Third, the committee was going up against an incumbent congressman who won his previous four elections

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⁵⁸ Nixon, RN, 34.

⁵⁹ Nixon,*RN*,35.

⁶⁰ Nixon, RN, 35.

⁶¹ Frank Jorgenson, oral history typescript.

⁶² Frank Jorgenson, oral history typescript.

by wide margins. The committee would overcome all three challenges and help elect Richard Nixon.

Nixon without these men could have never won the election in 1946, as they provided incredible support for the candidate and were committed to winning the election. However, the men who worked Richard Nixon's campaign in 1946 were not interested in helping the candidate because they wanted to advance their own power. Nixon inspired in these committee members a sense of hope that Voorhis could be defeated. This sense of hope led the high command of the Committee of 100 to throw their full force behind the candidate. Furthermore, many of the committee members supported Nixon in future political endeavors. In general, one can see throughout the later chapters of this work that if people who are committed to seeing the candidate win and not interested in advancing their own position or social standing run Richard Nixon's campaigns, Nixon stood victorious on election night. The Committee of 100's ability to overcome the three previously mentioned challenges in regards to the Nixon campaign of 1946 is seldom discussed within the larger analysis of the elections of Richard Nixon.

The first challenge the Committee faced included making Richard Nixon known around the district. After all, almost all of the members, including Frank Jorgenson, were new to political campaigning. However, they did offer one advantage over other political campaigns.

The Committee of 100 members "...knew how to sell." They knew that their candidate had a very sellable background, with Pat expecting a child and Richard as a former Navy officer.

Furthermore, the committee members seemed very enthusiastic about their prospect. Herman Perry, Roy Day, and Frank Jorgenson provided the groundwork and setup the campaign. Herman Perry used his political connections in order to introduce Richard Nixon to the Republican establishment in California as well as in Washington, D.C. Perry wrote Joseph Martin, the future

⁶³ Frank Jorgenson, oral history typescript.

Republican Speaker of the House, and John Phillips a California Congressman from nearby Banning, California. ⁶⁴ Furthermore, Nixon himself met with several Congress members in order to discuss the strength and weaknesses of his opponents. ⁶⁵ This early involvement in trying to research his opponent shows more than just Nixon's willingness to be informed against his opponents, it shows his obsessiveness with wanting to know everything there was to know about his opponent. Throughout his political career, Nixon's advisers always had to report to the candidate about the moves their opponents were making. Back in Whittier, Nixon agreed with his advisers that he should get known around the district, while he enjoyed a fair deal of popularity in Whittier, he knew that he was a "stranger" in most other towns in the 12th District. ⁶⁶

In order to do this the campaign decided on a strategy that would serve Nixon well throughout all of his campaigns, Nixon had to meet the constituency in a small intimate setting. What would later develop in the 'Man in the Arena Strategy' started in the 12th District as a series of house meetings in which supporters and committee members would open their houses to Nixon and invite potential voters to meet the candidate in an informal setting and let him answer questions specifically concerned to the voter. ⁶⁷ Nixon called local newspaper editors and introduced himself personally, and the committee hired a public relations specialist who would ensure favorable coverage. ⁶⁸ Above all, the committee took advantage of Nixon's supreme speech giving ability and advised him to address several service clubs such as the Kiwanis and

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⁶⁴ Irwin F. Gellman, *The Contender: Richard Nixon: the Congress years, 1946-1952* (New York: The Free Press, 1999), 37.

⁶⁵ Gellman, *The Contender*, 38.

⁶⁶ Nixon,*RN*,34.

⁶⁷ Nixon, RN, 34.

⁶⁸ Gellman, *The Contender*, 42.

Rotary clubs in order to talk about this positions and wartime experience. ⁶⁹ The committee showed great awareness of the candidate's strengths by placing Nixon in an informal setting and holding speeches to audiences that responded favorable would become a go-to strategy for all future Nixon campaigns.

Throughout this campaign, Nixon would constantly check in with his advisors and ask them for suggestions in regards to his campaign. ⁷⁰ This shows that Nixon took in advice, a trait constantly displayed in his other successful campaigns. In regards to financing the campaign, Nixon largely stood out of the picture and relied on the committee to keep the campaign afloat financially.

Herman Perry plays an important role in regards to campaign finance of the 1946 campaign. The other committee members would refer to him as "Uncle Herman." He organized Pat and Richard a house in Whittier, because the Nixons decided to invest most of their savings into the campaign. Furthermore, Frank Jorgenson and Arthur Kruse, who like Perry also held an occupation in loan and financing, assisted Perry on the finance committee of the campaign. While Nixon stood mostly on the sidelines in regards to campaign finance, he donated much of his wartime savings to the campaign. The finance committee focused on smaller donations, often not by choice, as money did not come in the amounts they hoped. In order to make up for the deficits, Perry raised money through his connections. Furthermore, Frank Jorgenson and his wife sent out three thousand mailers asking the voters in the 12th district "have you had"

⁶⁹ Gellman, *The Contender*, 43.

⁷⁰ Gellman, *The Contender*, 46.

⁷¹ Frank Jorgenson, oral history typescript.

⁷² Frank Jorgenson, oral history typescript.

⁷³ Frank Jorgenson, oral history typescript. and *Nixon,RN*,34.

⁷⁴ Frank Jorgenson, oral history typescript.

⁷⁵ Frank Jorgenson, oral history typescript.

enough?"⁷⁶ These mailers brought over \$5000 to the campaign.⁷⁷ The campaign worked hard on financing a campaign that for many voters still seemed like a hopeless cause because Voorhis seemed undefeatable.

Pat Nixon played a very important role in the 1946 campaign for Congress. One might think that in the years following WWII women did not play an important part in running campaigns; however, nothing could be further from the truth. The argument could be made in, regards to Pat Nixon, that without her financial contribution the campaign would have never happened; however, such an argument is quite simplistic and depreciates the actual role Pat played in the 1946 campaign. Women in post-war America earned a new place in the social hierarchy. Although still far removed from equality in regards to present standards, their role in the war effort had earned them respect within the United States. Pat constantly supported her husband during the war by writing him letters and taking care of the money that Richard sent home. Pat had influenced many of Richard's decisions ever since they met. The fact that her husband was now running for congress did not change that. Pat Nixon contributed massively to Nixon's victory over Jerry Voorhis. Thus, an analysis of Pat Nixon's contributions to the Congressional campaign is important.

Pat Nixon worked tirelessly in the 1946 campaign. She kept the candidate as well as the staff around him motivated and focused. Pat Nixon exclaimed that "in 1946 not many wives were active in politics," but that she was "so anxious to win" that she thought of any way that she could possible help the campaign. ⁷⁸ Pat got heavily involved in organizing the small campaign office and constantly assisted the many volunteers who helped the campaign, and, furthermore, got involved in mailing letters and writing campaign literature, at one point preventing

⁷⁶ Frank Jorgenson, oral history typescript.

⁷⁷ Frank Jorgenson, oral history typescript.

⁷⁸Patricia Nixon, as quoted in, Julie Nixon Eisenhower, *Pat Nixon*,88.

Democratic Party members posing as volunteers for the Nixon campaign from stealing the valuable brochures needed to get the candidate known in the district. ⁷⁹ Later on, the campaign office was burglarized and the brochures were stolen, Pat committed to seeing her husband win sold the remaining stake in her inheritance to her brother Tom and with the money made of the sale bought new brochures. 80 Besides helping in the campaign office, Pat served a crucial role in the house meetings the committee had organized. While the candidate could only stay for a limited amount of time due to the extreme distances he traveled within his own district, Pat always stayed for the remainder of the meeting answering the questions of concerned citizens and letting the people know about her husband. 81 Pat quit smoking in public during the campaign, because "it wasn't acceptable in Whittier for women to smoke then." 82 Besides helping in the office and sacrificing both time and money for the candidate, at home Pat played an important part in keeping the candidate rested. Throughout Nixon's career as a campaigner, the 'rest-factor' should not be underestimated. By 1968, the campaign team developed an almost science-like approach to keeping the candidate rested so he could perform at his best. Now back in Whittier in a small house with not enough furniture to even fill all the space and a newborn baby, Richard had to rely on Pat to keep him rested and energized. Pat during these times would take care of Tricia in the living room at night so that the candidate could remain sleeping in case Trica woke up. 83 While this action could be seen as a miniscule gesture made by Pat, in the larger context it is very important to see that she recognized what many other political advisers would later on realize, Richard Nixon needed rest in order to perform well on the campaign trail. Pat Nixon's role included more than just being the candidate's wife during the 1946 campaign,

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⁷⁹ Julie Nixon Eisenhower, *Pat Nixon*, 90.

⁸⁰ Julie Nixon Eisenhower, *Pat Nixon*, 90.

⁸¹ Julie Nixon Eisenhower, *Pat Nixon*, 89.

⁸² Patricia Nixon, as quoted in, Julie Nixon Eisenhower, *Pat Nixon*,89.

⁸³ Julie Nixon Eisenhower, *Pat Nixon*, 88.

she was an active campaigner willing to make every sacrifice possible in order to help her husband across the finish line and to Washington, D.C.

While the committee and Pat could help Nixon overcome the obstacles of gaining popularity and financing his campaign, Nixon himself contributed to the most daunting task of the campaign, defeating an incumbent Congressman. However, first Nixon had to secure a victory in the Republican Primary. Winning the Republican nomination was a task that together with the committee Nixon easily overcame. Because Nixon as well as Voorhis both cross-filed in both the Republican and Democratic primary; therefore, the primary actually setup as the first matchup between the two. Nixon for the first time emerged as a serious challenger whenever the committee noticed that Jerry Voorhis's margin dropped from 60 percent, he secured in 1944 to 53.5 percent in 1946. Besides signaling that the unknown Navy Officer had secured the Republican Primary, the primary also indicated that there was some excitement in the Republican establishment in their shot in defeating Jerry Voorhis. After securing the primary victory, the campaign could now switch into full attack mode and focus on the challenge ahead.

Whenever the general election between Jerry Voorhis and Richard Nixon got underway, Nixon relied heavily on the work of the committee in order to help him secure victory. However, much like the primary the committee faced a set of serious challenges. First, the committee had to figure out what Nixon stood for as a candidate. While in the primary Nixon made very broad statements on what issues were of importance to him, in the general election the committee made it their mission to point out the differences between Nixon and Voorhis and thus created the platform on which Nixon ran. Second, the committee needed a way to show the electorate of the 12th District just how different Richard Nixon was in comparison to Jerry Voorhis. Voorhis made it easy for the committee to find a way to expose the differences between the two. Voorhis

⁸⁴ Gellman. The Contender.61.

challenged Nixon to a set of debates. Nixon's campaign manager in 1946 Roy Day remembered that he received a letter from the Voorhis campaign asking the Republican candidate to meet the Democratic incumbent in a public setting in order "discuss the issues for the people of the Twelfth District." According to Roy Day, Voorhis used this strategy in earlier elections in order to make his opponents "look silly on the platform." Unfortunately for Jerry Voorhis, Richard Nixon was a very skilled debater. The committee jumped on the opportunity to present their candidate in the public arena. They developed a strategy for the debates in order to weaken Voorhis's record and image in California's 12th district. The committee was well aware of Nixon's superb debating skills after all, if they knew one thing about Nixon, it was that during his time at Whittier College he had won multiple oratory contests given that they had first heard of Nixon through Walter Dexter, president of Nixon's alma mater, Whittier College. In order to keep the Voorhis campaign from not backing away from the invitation, the committee decided that Voorhis could dictate both the time and place for the debates. Voorhis accepted the invitation to debate Nixon.

The Committee of 100 wanted to challenge Voorhis on three major issues: his limited legislative record, his nonexistent service record, and the endorsement he supposedly received from a political action committee tied to communism. The committee prepared Nixon for the debates by researching Jerry Voorhis's record and provided him with a hardcopy of his legislative record. During one of the debates when Voorhis wanted to inform the audience of the bills he helped pass in Washington, Nixon crept up behind Voorhis and informed the audience that "while Mr. Voorhis has been in Washington I've been in the service of my country in the

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⁸⁵ Roy O. Day, *Richard M. Nixon in the Warren Era*, typescript of an oral history conducted 1976 by Amelia M. Fry, Regional Oral History Office, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, http://archive.org/stream/nixonwarrenera00rfryrich#page/n7/mode/2up (accessed January 1, 2012).

⁸⁶ Roy O. Day, oral history typescript.

⁸⁷ Roy O. Day, oral history typescript.

South Pacific" and that the only piece of legislation passed into law by him transferred "…authority over domestic rabbits from the Department of Agriculture to the Department of Interior." Nixon concluded his attack at Voorhis by stating that one must be "a rabbit to have representation in the Twelfth Congressional District." According to Roy Day, this line "brought the house down" and that throughout the debate Voorhis could never recover. 90

Nixon furthermore, pressed Voorhis on the endorsement he supposedly received by a political action committee. Before the debates while Jerry Voorhis stayed in Washington, Richard Nixon and the committee campaigned hard in the twelfth district. The Nixon campaign talked to local groups of citizens and told the groups that a left leaning PAC had endorsed Jerry Voorhis. On April 23, Roy Crocker, a member of the Committee of 100, released a campaign statement that asked voters whether the 12th District should be represented by Nixon or by Voorhis and his PAC. 91 Crocker falsely accused Voorhis of earning the endorsement from the CIO-PAC, which represented organized labor and high numbers of openly communist members. Voorhis never received the endorsement in 1946. Voorhis, however, did receive the endorsement in 1944. However, the charges brought against Voorhis by the Republican challenger in 1946 "fell flat" because the Communists within the CIO "were cooperating handsomely in turning out war goods." ⁹² In 1946, the Nixon campaign operated in a different national environment. The campaign could play on the massive hysteria surrounding the apparent Communist threat to America because the Axis powers had been defeated. Furthermore, the campaign played on the massive labor strikes that plagued the United States. However, they still had to overcome the fact that there was no endorsement by the PAC for Voorhis. The Nixon campaign had an easy

⁸⁸ Roy O. Day, oral history typescript.

⁸⁹ Roy O. Day, oral history typescript.

⁹⁰ Roy O. Day, oral history typescript.

⁹¹ Ambrose, *Nixon Vol.1*,129.

⁹² Ambrose, *Nixon Vol.1*,130.

solution for this. Given that most of the members on the Committee of 100 had a business background, they controlled the messenger, in this case newspapers, because they would often place the advertisements in them, subsequently generating the revenue the paper needed to operate. 93 The Committee would bombard the newspapers with advertisements linking Voorhis to the PAC, whenever the Voorhis campaign tried to respond, the Nixon campaign received an advance notice of the rebuttal, allowing them to "respond on the same day the ad appeared." 94 Moreover, the Nixon campaign promised it would deliver proof of the endorsement. During the debates, the committee equipped Nixon with another gimmick. Besides a hard copy of Voorhis's congressional record, Nixon carried a newspaper clipping which stated that Voorhis received the endorsement by the PAC. 95 Nixon would wave this endorsement in front of the audience as apparent proof that communists supported Voorhis. Voorhis made a serious error. Instead of keeping his cool and waiting for Nixon to finish before responding, Voorhis got out of his chair to look at the clipping. 96 Voorhis from here on out only made the situation worse for his reelection campaign. While the Nixon campaign could never produce definite proof of the endorsement, they instead tied Voorhis's voting record by claiming he had consistently voted in line with bills supported by the PAC. 97 Thus, the Nixon campaign argued that Voorhis's voting record at least qualified him for an endorsement. Voorhis continued to play in the hands of the campaign by sending a telegram to the PAC headquarters asking them to withdraw any such qualifying endorsement. 98 Furthermore, Voorhis distributed copies of the telegram, which further

⁹³ Ambrose, *Nixon Vol.1*,131.

⁹⁴ Ambrose, *Nixon Vol.1*,131.

⁹⁵ Frank Jorgenson, oral history typescript.

⁹⁶ Frank Jorgenson, oral history typescript.

⁹⁷ Ambrose, *Nixon Vol.1*,133.

⁹⁸ Ambrose, *Nixon Vol.1*,133.

caused the electorate in the 12th District to wonder where Jerry Voorhis stood on the issue of labor and communism.

The Committee of 100 together with Richard Nixon created a campaign-style that suited the candidate well. Instead of offering steadfast alternatives, Nixon would often play on the fear of the electorate. In Jerry Voorhis's case, Nixon played on the fear that a Communist sympathizer could represent California's 12th district. Voorhis could never recover from his badly botched response to the PAC issue. Nixon would use communism as a wedge issue again, whenever he ran against Helen Gahagan Douglas for a seat in the United States Senate in 1950. Furthermore, Nixon would use his time in Congress to establish a fierce anti-communist record, so that whenever he returned to the campaign trail for his next competitive election there would be no question about Richard Nixon's credibility. Above all, the committee established a campaign style that Nixon used in every campaign, except in 1960. Nixon would always be on the attack, never letting an opponent take shots at his own record, instead making his opponents constantly defend their own.

While some historians, such as Irwin F. Gellman, have pointed out just how "mundane" the campaign of 1946 actually was, in regards to an analysis of Richard Nixon's campaign organizations throughout the years nothing could be further from the truth. ⁹⁹. Throughout his political career, Richard Nixon would rely on smart individuals with the instincts of a salesperson whenever it was time to secure votes. Even though Nixon had established a formidable resume for a political candidate by 1945, he could have never done the unthinkable and defeated Jerry Voorhis on his own. Instead, he needed individuals like Frank Jorgenson and Herman Perry who were absolutely committed to the candidate and willing to undertake

⁹⁹ Gellman, *The Contender*,88.

anything they could in order to help the candidate win. Throughout Nixon's career, he would surround himself with just such individuals.

On November 6th, 1946, Richard Nixon at age 33 won his first ever-political campaign. In his memoirs, he remarked, "Pat and I were happier on November 6, 1946, than we were ever to be again my political career." This statement alone serves as evidence that after the 1946 campaign Nixon could never return to the type of campaign he fought. Nixon fought a campaign that was led by people with big hearts and bigger wallets. Nixon also harkened back and at times romanticized this early period of his life and this reflected in his future campaign organizations, as the same people who helped him get elected would remain in his organization. Nixon wanted to keep the organization small and efficient even as his popularity and goals grew. Nixon in the early 1950s emerged as a serious politician and engaged in running and planning his campaigns. By 1960, in Nixon's campaign for the presidency against John F. Kennedy, he thought he could run the campaign himself.

¹⁰⁰ Nixon, RN, 40.

CHAPTER 3

"There Comes a Point, When you Have to Go Up or Go Out"

The years 1947 to 1960 were incredibly successful years for Richard Nixon. Nixon enjoyed incredible triumph as a freshman congressman. Nixon served as a member on the subcommittee of the House Labor Committee, which held hearings on the Taft-Hartley act, and, furthermore, rose to prominence in the nation's capital because of his involvement on the House Committee on Un-American Activities in their relentless and successful prosecution of Alger Hiss. Nixon also won reelection to the United States House of Representatives in 1948. In 1950, Nixon managed to defeat Democrat Helen Gahagan Douglas for a seat in the United States Senate. By 1952, Nixon emerged as a candidate for the vice-presidency of the United States. When rumors began to flourish that Nixon could lose his spot on the Eisenhower ticket due to allegations that he had misused campaign funds, he went on television, and in an unprecedented move, revealed his personal finances to the nation. In 1956, whenever doubts about Nixon as vice-president reemerged he managed to outmaneuver one of history's greatest military leaders by openly declaring himself as a candidate for the vice-presidency, thus leaving Eisenhower no possibility of dumping him from the ticket. Above all, throughout the years of 1947 to 1960, Nixon remained loyal and continued to rely on help from the same people who helped him get to Washington D.C. Moreover, Nixon formed a bond with political strategist Murray Chotiner. Chotiner, a lawyer, campaign manager, and public relations specialist for politicians from California, served as the mastermind behind Nixon's success as a campaigner in the 1950s. However, the previously mentioned period negatively affected Richard Nixon.

The years before his campaign against John F. Kennedy in 1960 made Nixon incredibly arrogant if not cocky in regards to his political future. Before the start of the 1960, campaign

Nixon lost his two closest political allies Murray Chotiner to a scandal and his father to illness. Furthermore, the Republican Party doubted Nixon's chances of winning in 1960. By the 1960 presidential campaign, Nixon thought he learned so much about political campaigning throughout the previous years that he thought he could manage his own campaign. The result of Nixon's disregard for advice resulted in him running his own campaign for the presidency of the United States in 1960, a campaign mismanaged from start until finish.

Throughout the years, Nixon relied on strong men running his campaigns. Nixon's own brainchild, the 1960 presidential campaign, resembled no previous Nixon campaign. Nixon instead, disregarded most of the advice given to during previous campaigns. In 1960, Nixon remained short on rest, spoke in unfriendly environments, and above all, did not take any advice. Moreover, Nixon's inability to win a personality competition against one of the most charming and handsome politicians of the 20th century hurt his chances of capturing the Presidency.

Journalist Theodore White captured Nixon's stubbornness in his Pulitzer Prize winning account of the 1960 campaign entitled, *The Making of the President 1960*. White recorded the frustration of an unnamed member of Nixon's campaign board, "...we used to meet for strategy session at the University Club and we were like ten guys in a house of mirrors entrancing each other." The board "satisfied each other with how smart" they were, but nobody "could get through to Dick." Nixon's campaign board resulted in over delegation and thereby caused "constant overlap and confusion compounded often by the candidate frequently sending out duplicate instructions." How Richard Nixon arrived at the decision to run his own campaign and disregarded anything he learned or observed is the focus of this chapter.

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¹⁰¹ Theodore H. White, *The Making of the President 1960* (New York: Harper Perennial Political Classics, 2009), 313. ¹⁰² White, 313.

¹⁰³ Klein, 12.

Nixon arrived in the United States Congress in 1947 as part of a Republican wave that brought the House back under the control of the G.O.P. Richard Nixon became part of the Labor Committee as well as the House Committee on Un-American Activities (HUAC). The committee investigated possible communist infiltration into American life. While Nixon's assignment on the labor subcommittee, in part responsible for producing the union busting Taft-Hartley act, HUAC failed to produce the same success.

On August 3, 1948, the fate of the committee changed. As the committee looked into infiltration by communists into the United States Government, Elizabeth Bentley, also a former communist herself and Russian spy, named thirty-two government officials who were involved in spying on the United States. Nixon later remembered that for him the now legendary case against Alger Hiss began three days later on August 3 1948. ¹⁰⁴ Bob Stripling, the chief-investigator for HUAC, looked for witnesses who could either corroborate or dispute the testimony that Bentley delivered before the committee, subsequently the Committee subpoenaed Whittaker Chambers. Chambers, editor for *Time* and a former Russian spy, informed the committee of Hiss's communism. While historians have exhaustively analyzed the Hiss case and the impact it had on Richard Nixon's career and image, historians have failed to analyze the campaign element of the Hiss case. Nixon might have never been there to question Chambers, because he had to campaign in his own district, instead the 1948 campaign secured his reelection by June 1 1948.

Nixon needed to secure victory in his bid for reelection to the United States House of Representative in order to continue his prosecution of Hiss. Furthermore, Nixon's work on the Herther Committee, the committee that traveled to Europe in order to examine the need for United State foreign aid on the war torn continent, kept the congressman occupied in

¹⁰⁴ Richard M. Nixon, interview by Frank Gannon, Day 1, Tape 6, 00:04:21.

Washington, D.C. Nixon needed the support of his men now more than ever. While Nixon's duties inside Washington grew, the same group of people that helped him get to Washington were already organizing and planning his reelection. The men who were already planning his reelection campaign were in part responsible for Nixon's early success in Washington D.C. Instead of Nixon having to travel the 2000 plus miles, back and forth, to his district in order to campaign, his campaign staff developed a strategy that included limited travel by the candidate. Subsequently, they secured reelection without technically waiting until Election Day. The Nixon campaign remembered what Nixon himself did in 1946. Nixon out-campaigned a sitting congressman while that congressman remained in Washington and even earned the title of "hardest working congressman." That congressman was Jerry Voorhis. The Nixon campaign could not afford to let a competitor rise in popularity in the district. The Nixon campaign in 1948 set as their goal to secure both the Republican as well as the Democratic Party nominations through cross-filing, a practice which allowed the candidate to file in both the Republican and Democratic primary and giving him the chance of winning both, thus neutralizing the need for a general election. 105 Nixon's men, moreover, eliminated any chance Nixon would lose his seat in the House of Representatives.

Cross-filing remained a distinctive Californian practice. Established by progressive Californian Governor Hiram Johnson, he designed the process at the beginning of the 20th century in order to limit the power of the political parties by allowing candidates running for office in the state of California to run in the primaries of both parties. Johnson wanted to return control of local government back to the people with this plan. Political scientist James Reichley argued that cross-filing "not only helped wreck the California parties, but contributed to the

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 $^{^{105}}$ Frank Jorgenson, oral history typescript.

development of an almost totally candidate-oriented brand of state-politics." ¹⁰⁶ Nixon benefited immensely from this candidate-oriented way of fighting elections because he did not have to please the local GOP. Instead, Nixon could rely on his men to manage his campaign and only occasionally delegated the moves the campaign executed. The Nixon reelection campaign in 1948, and in his Senate campaign in 1950, did not ask the voters what did the G.O.P do for you, but rather what did Richard Nixon do for you? The limited role that both political parties played in California helped the Nixon campaign to convey this message. The organizational make-up of the campaign in 1948 resembled that of the 1946 campaign.

Harrison McCall served as the campaign manager for the 1948 campaign. He previously served as the interim manager after Roy Day quit the 1946 congressional campaign because it took too much time out of his life. 107 McCall worked as a businessman in Los Angeles where he worked in a laboratory for a business testing concrete. 108 Nixon turned to his old campaign aide Frank Jorgenson in order to "to get things done in the district." McCall and Jorgenson organized a campaign that suited the candidate. Nixon could stay in Washington D.C. and continue his involvement not only with the Hiss case, which by the time Nixon secured reelection had just got underway. Jorgenson realized that Nixon would be more valuable away from the district, because "by this time Nixon's star was starting to rise in the sky..." 109 If Nixon wanted to embark on a successful political career, he could not lose his seat in the Congress after just one term. The Nixon campaign also needed to deal with the fact that President Truman, now campaigning for reelection and traveling around the country, promoted the notion of a "donothing-congress." Many of the policies that the 80th Congress enacted were highly unpopular

¹⁰⁶ A. James Reichley, *The Life of the Parties: A History of American Political Parties* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc, 2000), 157.

¹⁰⁷ Frank Jorgenson, oral history typescript.

¹⁰⁸ Frank Jorgenson, oral history typescript.

¹⁰⁹ Frank Jorgenson, oral history typescript.

with a nation not yet ready to say goodbye to many of the New Deal programs that Truman's predecessor enacted. 1948 promised to be a tough year for incumbents.

The strategy for the Nixon campaign included winning both primaries through crossfiling. In order to do so the Nixon campaign needed to win a solid majority of Democratic voters in the district. Not an easy task considering that many of those same Democrats in the district supported Jerry Voorhis just two years earlier. Thus, the campaign created a tool that served Richard Nixon well as a candidate throughout his political career. The campaign established "Democrats for Nixon" committees. Long before a term like "Reagan Democrat" entered the vernacular of American political history, the Nixon campaign realized that they as Republicans could appeal to disenfranchised Democrats. Although the organization of "Democrats for Nixon" committees is often discussed in the historiography of Richard Nixon's political campaigns, the formation is usually not mentioned until the 1972 reelection campaign. However, the formation of such committees started in 1948 and continued throughout every Nixon campaign. In Nixon's 1962 campaign for the governorship of California his campaign manager H.R. Haldeman advised candidate Nixon that the campaign was in the process pulling together a "Democrats for Nixon Committee" and was already "distributing" bumper stickers for the committee. 110 In 1968, Richard Nixon suggested to his campaign manager John Mitchell to line up "as many prominent Democrats as we can..." in order to form a "Democrats for Nixon Committee." Thus an analysis of how the Nixon campaign first implemented a "Democrats for Nixon" committee in 1948 is crucial considering the same idea was implemented in every Nixon campaign following.

¹¹⁰H.R. Haldeman to RN, 3/29/1962, RE: Democrats for Nixon Committee. [WHSF38-11. Box#38]. <u>Nixon Presidential Returned Materials Collection: White House Special Files (WHSF)</u>. Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, Yorba Linda, CA. National Archives and Records Administration.

¹¹¹ RN to John Mitchell, 2/9/1968, RE: Launching Democrats for Nixon committee. [WHSF35-12. Box#35]. <u>Nixon Presidential Returned Materials Collection: White House Special Files (WHSF)</u>. Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, Yorba Linda, CA. National Archives and Records Administration.

An examination of Democratic opponent Steve Zetterberg, however, is necessary in order to appreciate just how effectively the Nixon campaign used the previously discussed committees.

In 1948, the Democrats did not put forward their best effort to defeat Richard Nixon. Steve Zetterberg emerged as the frontrunner for the Democratic Party. Zetterberg, however, allowed the placing of his name on the ballot only "out of sheer desperation..." because previously he served on a committee trying to persuade Jerry Voorhis to run again. 112 Voorhis did not run. Born in Galesburg, Illinois, Zetterberg moved to Claremont, California, attended high school there, and graduated from Pomona College before going to Yale Law School. 113 The attorney, only three years younger than Richard Nixon, served on Voorhis's reelection campaign in 1946 and after Voorhis's defeat opened up a law firm in the district. 114 Zetterberg faced an uphill battle, many of the newspapers in the district endorsed Nixon. 115 Zetterberg, furthermore, proposed an interesting solution to the threat of communism when he proposed that the best way to deal with communism is to "have a strong forward-looking liberal program." ¹¹⁶ Zetterberg furthermore, heavily criticized the Taft-Hartley bill and received the infamous CIO-PAC endorsement, the same endorsement that essentially ended Jerry Voorhis's career in the Congress. 117 The campaign felt confident that if Nixon did not win the Democratic primary he could still defeat Zetterberg easily in a general election, Roy Day predicted that Nixon would carry a general election three to two. 118 The Nixon campaign faced a weak Democratic opponent

¹¹² Gellman, 171.

¹¹³ Gellman, 171-172.

¹¹⁴ Gellman, 172.

¹¹⁵ Gellman, 175.

¹¹⁶ Gellman, 175.

¹¹⁷ Gellman, 176.

¹¹⁸ Gellman, 176.

Zetterberg's campaign was "woefully underfinanced, and incapable of defeating the increasingly powerful Nixon political machine." ¹¹⁹

In 1948, the Nixon committee used "Democrat for Nixon" committees in order to win the Democratic primary. One should note however that Democrats seeking Republican defectors and Republicans seeking Democratic defectors according to Kathleen Hall Jamieson "is a long-lived tradition in American politics." Thus, the Nixon campaign did not invent the strategy. The campaign to reelect Congressman Nixon used the strategy to perfection. "Democrats for Nixon" committees, and the superb usage of them, were essential for Richard Nixon securing reelection in 1948, because they further weakened an already anemic Democratic opposition in the 12th District.

The way the Nixon campaign used "Democrats for Nixon" was simple but very effective in 1948. Before the Democrats in the district even showed any signs of challenging Nixon the campaign recruited three Democrats for the committee. Jesse B. Blue Jr. an appraiser from Rosemead, California, Leland Poage, a farmer from Azusa, and Dan Cleveland a reverend from El Monte all endorsed Nixon early on. ¹²¹ Besides endorsing the candidate, the Nixon campaign put Blue Jr. in charge of running the "Democrats for Nixon" committee. The committee then send out letters addressed to "Fellow Democrats" and placed ads in newspapers, Reverend Cleveland also recorded a radio broadcast for Nixon that received airtime just before the primary election. ¹²² Because of the massive advertisement, campaign that the "Democrats for Nixon" waged, many voters thought that Richard Nixon was indeed a Democrat, on top of the ad

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¹¹⁹ Gellman, 177.

¹²⁰ Kathleen Hall Jamieson, Packaging The Presidency: A History and Criticism of Presidential Campaign Advertising (Oxford University Press, 1996), 302.

¹²¹ Gellman,170-171.

¹²² Gellman, 178.

campaign; Nixon's name appeared first on the ballot because of his incumbency. ¹²³ Historian Irwin Gellman summed up the actions undertaken by the Nixon campaign perfectly when he stated that when "Zetterberg walked the district, he learned that many voters were convinced that Nixon was a Democrat and displayed their sample ballots as proof." ¹²⁴ Although it did not require massive work by the Nixon campaign, the strategy of using "Democrats for Nixon" committees worked.

On June 1, 1948, Richard Nixon secured reelection when he won the Democratic primary against Steve Zetterberg. Unchallenged in the Republican primary, Nixon secured both nominations. On November 2, 1948, Richard Nixon officially won reelection against Una W.Rice an Independent Progressive. Nixon won 141,590 votes to Rice's 19,631. 125 Once again, Richard Nixon stood victorious. The 1948 campaign receives limited attention in the historiography of Richard Nixon, because the election could be labeled as an election in which Nixon faced no opposition, thus making it uncompetitive. Richard Nixon personally does not mention the campaign in any detail in either of his memoirs. However, in regards to analyzing the elections of Richard Nixon as a whole, it is crucially important for three reasons. In the 1948 reelection campaign, Nixon once again entrusted the same cast of individuals that helped him get to Washington in the first place. Nixon remained faithful to those who helped him achieve victory in 1946. The 1948 reelection campaign furthermore, marked the beginning of the "Democrats for Nixon" committees, a crucial tool in every election that followed. Above all, it secured Richard Nixon a second term in the United States House of Representative and because of the June 1st victory in both primaries Nixon could use the rest of the year traveling the United

¹²³ Gellman, 178.

¹²⁴ Gellman, 178.

¹²⁵ Election Information 1948, Office of the Clerk United States House of Representatives, http://clerk.house.gov/member_info/electionInfo/1948election.pdf (accessed June 21,2012)

States and further marketing his brand. Besides these three previously stated reasons, the campaign of 1948 set the stage for the campaign that forever changed Richard Nixon's image on Capitol Hill and earned him the nickname "Tricky Dick." Without securing reelection in 1948, Richard Nixon could not have challenged Helen Gahagan Douglas for a seat in the United States Senate in 1950.

Richard Nixon spent the rest of 1948 campaigning for the Republican Party. Nixon, however, displayed great dissatisfaction with Dewey's approach to campaigning against President Truman, and supported former Minnesota governor Harold Stassen during the 1948 Republican convention. 126 Nixon thought that Dewey fought a "lofty and detached campaign" while incumbent President Harry Truman "behaved as if he really wanted the job." 127 Nixon had already planned his own campaign for a seat in the United States Senate, a campaign in which Nixon, according to his opponent Helen Gahagan Douglas, behaved like a candidate running for Senate "...who wanted to get there, and didn't care how." 128 The 1950 campaign would forever change not only Richard Nixon's image, but also his style of campaigning. The campaign for the Senate was the most aggressive and downright nastiest campaign Richard Nixon ever fought to that point. Richard Nixon learned many lessons from the 1950 campaign and the victory against Douglas further boosted his confidence, thus, further influencing Richard Nixon's decision to run his own campaign in 1960. Murray Chotiner, a key member of the men who stood behind Richard Nixon's elections, thoroughly planned and engineered the 1950 campaign.

For Richard Nixon running for the Senate in 1950 was in part a political and in part a personal decision. Richard Nixon sensed that the national mood shifted in the favor of the Democrats. President Truman defeated Dewey and the Republicans lost control of the House and

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¹²⁶ Nixon,*RN,71*.

¹²⁷ Nixon,*RN*,72.

¹²⁸ Helen Gahagan Douglas, A Full Life (Garden City, New York: Doubleday& Company, Inc.,1982), 341.

Senate in 1948. As Nixon returned to Washington, many of his former colleagues left the Nation's capital. Pat and Richard Nixon grew close to George and Betty MacKinnon during Richard's first term. 129 MacKinnon lost his seat representing Minnesota's Third District by more than ten thousand to Roy Weir who represented the Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party. 130 The Nixons actively helped the MacKinnon's get over the defeat. 131 Richard Nixon did not want to suffer defeat. According to his daughter Julie, for Richard, "a senate seat meant a six-year term and the chance to accomplish more." ¹³² Nixon, however, first needed to convince his closest political allies that a campaign for a seat in the United States Senate made sense. Nixon faced early opposition from Frank Jorgenson. When Nixon called Jorgenson to inform him that he might seek a seat in the Senate, Jorgenson told Nixon to "stay in the United States House of Representatives where you're gaining seniority. This district will send you back again and again and again. You've got a good, safe district." ¹³³ Jorgenson did not provide the answer that Nixon looked for. Nixon alluded to Jorgenson that unless the Republicans made "substantial gains" in the House rewinning the seat would be "a rather empty victory" because the Republicans could only serve as a "vocal, but ineffective minority." ¹³⁴ Nixon asked Jorgenson to check around in and see what people might think of a Nixon run for the United States Senate. Jorgenson found out that some people showed interest. 135 Back in Washington, Pat cheered on Richard, faithful as always, she backed his decision from the start. 136 Richard informed Jorgenson that he would visit California and asked him to get some people, who could back the Nixon campaign, together for

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¹²⁹ Julie Nixon Eisenhower, *Pat Nixon*, 103.

¹³⁰ Election Information 1948, Office of the Clerk U.S. House of Representatives,

http://clerk.house.gov/member info/electionInfo/1948election.pdf (accessed June 21,2012)

¹³¹ Julie Nixon Eisenhower, 104.

¹³² Julie Nixon Eisenhower, 104.

¹³³ Frank Jorgenson, oral history typescript.

¹³⁴ Nixon, *RN*, 72.

¹³⁵ Frank Jorgenson, oral history typescript.

¹³⁶ Julie Nixon Eisenhower, 104.

meetings. ¹³⁷ Nixon knew that in 1950 he could recapture a seat for the United States Senate in California. Nixon sought to challenge incumbent Democratic Senator Sheridan Downey whose term was set to expire in 1950. ¹³⁸ Jorgenson thought that Downey's ill health might prevent him from running again. ¹³⁹ Nixon, however, still lacked the political backing for such an endeavor. Jorgenson was convinced by both his internal research that Nixon could win a Senate seat. Frank Jorgenson helped Nixon to overcome the hurdle of finding potential backers for the campaign.

Nixon and Jorgenson knew that they needed big help if he wanted to wage a successful campaign for the Senate. Jorgenson arranged a meeting with influential businessmen from Northern California. Albert C. Mattei, president of Honolulu Oil Company, attended the meeting and Jorgenson introduced Nixon to the influential executive as the next senator from California. 140 Mattei readily supported the idea of a Nixon run for the Senate. Jorgenson, furthermore, arranged for meetings with similar influential executives in Los Angeles at which Nixon received a similar reaction to his idea. After the meeting in Northern California, Jorgenson and Nixon returned to Los Angeles via train, both men sitting in their shorts because of the immense heat, Jorgenson turned to Nixon and asked him if he made a decision, Nixon answered :"Yes. We're going to go." That night, Richard Nixon decided to run for the United States Senate. After Jorgenson went to sleep, he awoke and asked Nixon who he thought could organize such a campaign? Nixon thought that his old crew, who previously managed his campaigns in 1946 and 1948, could run the show. Jorgenson disagreed, he told Nixon that they were excellent in winning elections in the district, but on a state-level Nixon needed to bring in someone with some statewide experience, a man who managed a senatorial campaign before. The two men

¹³⁷ Frank Jorgenson, oral history typescript.

¹³⁸ Nixon RN 72

¹³⁹ Frank Jorgenson, oral history typescript.

¹⁴⁰ Frank Jorgenson, oral history typescript.

agreed that a man by the name of Bernard Brennan, an attorney from Los Angeles, should run the campaign. Brennan previously served on campaigns for Governor Earl Warren and Senator William Knowland. Nixon, however, still needed a man who could manage the candidate. Again, Nixon turned to Jorgenson and asked him to manage the campaign, Jorgenson declined.

Jorgenson suggested Murray Chotiner, also a veteran from the Warren and Knowland campaigns. Nixon agreed and told Jorgenson to finalize the deals with both men.

While Nixon gave Jorgenson the go ahead to assemble a campaign team for his run, he had not yet announced officially that he intended to campaign for a seat in the Senate. However, rumors emerged in California and Washington D.C. that Richard Nixon would run for the Senate. Nixon received a letter from William F. Price, president of the Young Republicans in Arcadia, California, enthusiastically informing Nixon that they were "anxiously awaiting your decision as to whether or not you will be a candidate." Norris Poulson, a congressman from California and future mayor of Los Angeles, informed his Republican colleagues in the state that Nixon would run for the Senate, because the congressman told his colleagues, Poulson hoped the Republicans in California did not field too many candidates in the primary for the "top offices such as Governor and Senator." As the political world in California and Washington D.C. waited for Richard Nixon to make it official, his campaign team laid the groundwork for the campaign behind the scenes.

Richard Nixon and Murray Chotiner shared several similarities. If Nixon admired campaign managers that resembled his own traits, he found one in Murray Chotiner. At age forty, he was only three years older than Nixon, and at five foot seven only four inches shorter

¹⁴¹ William F. Price to RN 10/5/1949. Correspondence Jan. 1949-Dec. 1950. Box#3:3-5:1. <u>Campaign 1950</u>. Richard Nixon Library and Birthplace Foundation, Yorba Linda, California.

¹⁴² Norris Poulson to Arthur Carlson 10/6/1949. Correspondence Jan. 1949-Dec. 1950. Box#3:3-5:1. <u>Campaign</u> 1950. Richard Nixon Library and Birthplace Foundation, Yorba Linda, California.

than the candidate. Chotiner described himself as "colorless," a trait also often associated with Richard Nixon, but besides their physical similarities they also shared a similar background. Chotiner worked his way up through the ranks. He worked on Earl Warren's gubernatorial campaign. William F. Knowland's 1946 senatorial campaign was the first that found Chotiner at the helm. Obsessed with politics since his days in high school, Chotiner, as the *New York Times* wrote in 1956 "was the product of the fact that California politics long have been less organizational than emotional." Chotiner a lawyer by trade, like Nixon, formed a law firm together with his brother Jack. Chotiner's first love, however, was politics. Nixon and Chotiner connected on every level. Murray M. Chotiner emerged as Richard Nixon's most trusted confidant.

Chotiner and Brennan both agreed to serve on the Nixon campaign. While Brennan told Jorgenson that the campaign only needed to cover his expenses, Chotiner negotiated with Jorgenson and in the end received around \$12,000 for the primary campaign. He Brennan and Chotiner started working immediately. Nixon still had not announced his candidacy. Chotiner send a list of names to Nixon, the list included the names of local political newspaper editors in Northern California, and asked Nixon to once again personally meet with them and call their publishers. Chotiner knew that Nixon needed to wage a statewide campaign but also knew that he could rely on the things that worked well before. After all, Nixon in his previous campaigns managed to get the print media on his side because of his willingness to meet and talk to the editors. Chotiner, furthermore, arranged for Nixon to take pictures for the campaign mailers at

¹⁴³ "Lone Wolf of Politics: Murray M. Chotiner," *The New York Times* 3 May, 1956, 16.

¹⁴⁴ "Lone Wolf of Politics: Murray M. Chotiner," *The New York Times* 3 May, 1956, 16.

¹⁴⁵ "Lone Wolf of Politics: Murray M. Chotiner," The New York Times 3 May, 1956, 16.

¹⁴⁶ Frank Jorgenson, oral history typescript.

¹⁴⁷ Murray Chotiner to RN 10/18/1949. Correspondence Jan. 1949-Dec. 1950. Box#3:3-5:1. <u>Campaign 1950</u>.RNLBF

Twentieth-Century Fox Studios. 148 Because Nixon was an almost unknown outside of his district in California, Chotiner suggested that a picture together should be sent to every newspaper editor once he declared his candidacy. 149

While the campaign was running in high gear in October of 1949, they received news that at least one Democrat sought to challenge Downey for his seat. Helen Gahagan Douglas, congressional representative from California's 14th District announced her candidacy for the Senate. According to Nixon, Douglas's entry into the race "brightened" his prospects, because he thought that Downey, should he win the primary, would emerge as a weaker candidate. ¹⁵⁰ In fact, as discussed later, Helen Gahagan Douglas emerged as a weakened candidate after the primary process concluded. In the meantime, Nixon wrote selected supporters in California that if he made the decision to run for the Senate, he asked them to support him and promised an "aggressive, hard-hitting campaign against the Socialistic Welfare State policies which have been consistently supported by the incumbent Senator Downey and by Congresswoman Helen Gahagan Douglas..."¹⁵¹ On November 3, 1949, Richard Nixon officially announced his candidacy for a seat in the United States Senate. In his announcement Nixon doubled down on the charges he made in the letters sent earlier and ended the speech by once again promising to wage a "...fighting, rocking, socking campaign..." he stated that he would take his campaign into "...every county, city, town, precinct, and home in the state of California." 152 Nixon did not lie.

¹⁴⁸ Murray Chotiner to RN 10/19/1949. "In Re: Itinerary for Tuesday October 25th" Correspondence Jan. 1949-Dec. 1950. Box#3:3-5:1. <u>Campaign 1950</u>.RNLBF

¹⁴⁹ Murray Chotiner to RN 10/19/1949. "In Re: Itinerary for Tuesday October 25th" Correspondence Jan. 1949-Dec. 1950. Box#3:3-5:1. <u>Campaign 1950</u>.RNLBF

¹⁵¹ RN to Stephen M. Cope, 10/21/1949. Correspondence Jan. 1949-Dec. 1950. Box#3:3-5:1. <u>Campaign 1950</u>.RNLBF ¹⁵² Nixon. *RN*, 73.

Nixon perfected his strategy of 'us versus them' in 1950. At the end of the campaign, voters did not learn as much about the issues but rather were left with a choice between two contrasting personalities. The Nixon campaign in 1950 managed to paint Helen Gahagan Douglas as a left-leaning, communist-sympathizer and created an image of Richard Nixon as an all-American communist slayer. In 1950s America, the voters naturally chose to cast their ballot for the latter of the two contrasting images.

The Nixon campaign developed a strategy called "station stops" that served the candidate well throughout the primary and general election season. Because of Nixon's promise to carry his word into every part of the state, he needed a strategy that suited this approach. Nixon traveled around California in a "secondhand wood-paneled station wagon with large signs reading 'Nixon for Senate' attached to each side." ¹⁵³ A loudspeaker mounted on the top of the car played music once Nixon arrived into town, the music gathering the attention of people and the car pulled over so that Nixon could address the potential voters. ¹⁵⁴ Nixon later recalled that in the beginning this strategy caused him to speak "to no more than a handful of bemused passersby." ¹⁵⁵ The campaign, however, eventually made it their mission to plan Nixon's trip in the station wagon. By March of 1949, still three months before the primary, Nixon's campaign manager Murray Chotiner wrote a memo to a local organizer planning a "station stop" for two months later. Chotiner outlined successful preparation for the station stop. Chotiner outlined the reasons for the station stop strategy. Chotiner included in the reasons for the station stops that the candidate needed to "get away from the orthodox campaign of only speaking at banquets and to

¹⁵³ Julie Nixon Eisenhower, 105.

¹⁵⁴ Nixon, *RN*, 73.

¹⁵⁵ Nixon, *RN*, 73.

our own people." ¹⁵⁶ Chotiner, furthermore, outlined details on how the station stop worked. Chotiner informed the local advancemen to give the local press advance notice on when the wagon arrived. Advancemen, furthermore, informed the local radio station for the purpose of covering the event and interviewing the candidate. Chotiner showed awareness in Nixon's strengths when he suggested that during radio appearances the candidate should answer questions rather than just give a stump speech because these "canned political speeches will not do the job." ¹⁵⁷ Like in 1946, Nixon once again operated in a question and answer session rather than giving a rehearsed speech. Local advancemen, moreover, worked on providing time for question and answer sessions at each station stop. Chotiner understood what it took for Nixon to run a successful campaign. Although to the innocent spectator the 'station stop' might look like a spontaneous event, the campaign controlled every minute of the event. Thus, the Nixon campaign in 1950 placed the candidate in controlled spontaneous situations a trademark move of a successful Nixon campaigns in the past, and a practice reused in the 1968 campaign.

Nixon delivered a simple message to the people on 'Main Street'. Nixon made it his mission to lambast the Democrats in every single speech he gave during the station stop tour through California. Although Nixon aggressively attacked Jerry Voorhis in 1946, in 1950, Richard Nixon really ratcheted up his attacks. Nixon's speeches often featured the same narrative, a narrative that stated that the Democrats betrayed the good people of America by surrendering the United States to communism. Nixon attacked the Democrats as a whole rather than attacking an individual candidate.

¹⁵⁶ Chotiner to William G. Moore, 03/16/1950, Correspondence Jan. 1949-Dec. 1950. Box#3:3-5:1. <u>Campaign</u>

¹⁵⁷ Chotiner to William G. Moore, 03/16/1950, Correspondence Jan. 1949-Dec. 1950. Box#3:3-5:1. <u>Campaign</u> 1950.RNLBF

Three key factors made Nixon's narrative not only timely, but also credible, to the ears of the skeptical voter. Nixon managed to receive a favorable outcome in the Alger Hiss trial. Furthermore, as communism expanded across the globe Republicans claimed that America stood idly bye as it happened. Moreover, the Soviet Union developed a nuclear weapon. For Republicans, the post-WWII world that America dominated suddenly seemed under threat. Many Americans also thought that their nation needed to act against the threat of communism. Nixon targeted those Americans during the 1950 campaign.

During his days in the House of Representatives made a name for himself as a diehard cold warrior. Just months after his reelection to the United States House, new evidence surfaced in the case against Alger Hiss that made a conviction of the former State Department official more likely. Whittaker Chambers saved his best evidence for last. In order to prove that Hiss indeed was a communist he turned over a film he previously stored in a hollowed out pumpkin. The film contained pictures of documents that Hiss made and gave to Mr. Chambers. Nixon broke off his vacation on a cruise liner and returned to Washington D.C. where he proudly presented the new evidence to dozens of reporters. The now legendary pictures of Nixon examining the film with a magnifying glass not only made Nixon into a crusader against communism, it gave him national name recognition. Although, the "pumpkin papers" did not prove that Hiss spied while serving for the State Department, they proved that Hiss knew Chambers and could face conviction because of perjury. On January 21, 1950, the jury in the Hiss Case found him guilty. 158 The conviction of Alger Hiss made for great fodder on the campaign trail. Nixon could now rally against the Democrats that opposed and dismissed his efforts in prosecuting Hiss and paint them as soft on communism.

¹⁵⁸ Ambrose, Nixon Vol.1, 205.

The rapid spread of communism across the globe served as another driving force behind the narrative of the Nixon campaign in 1950. China fell to communism in 1949, and Nixon accused the Truman administration of standing idly bye. In one campaign stop, Nixon told a group of supporters that the United States only focused on Europe in regards to preventing communism, and forgot about Asia. ¹⁵⁹ Once again, Nixon's claim seemed believable to the voters because the Truman administration, in August 1949, released the "China White Papers" which according to historian David McCullough officially declared, "the largest nation on earth was lost to communism." ¹⁶⁰ Just one month later in August of 1949, the Truman administration also announced that the Soviet Union developed a nuclear bomb, in part possible because of spies inside the American government. ¹⁶¹ The conviction of Alger Hiss, the fall of China to communism, and the imminent threat posed by the Soviet Union all fueled Nixon's campaign narrative. Nixon stood on the right side of the issues that worried many Americans in the early 1950s.

While Nixon was building his campaign, the Democrats fought an ugly primary battle. Nixon remained largely unchallenged in his primary and focused strictly on bashing Democrats as a whole rather than his potential opponents. Senator Downey quit the race due to his health and the constant attacks he faced from the Douglas camp. Soon thereafter Manchester Boddy, a newspaper publisher and conservative Democrat, challenged Douglas for the nomination. After Downey's exit from the race he accused Douglas of giving comfort to "...Soviet tyranny by voting against aid to both Greece and Turkey" and that she voted in line with Vito Marcantonio, a left-leaning Democrat in the House of Representative who consistently voted against measures

¹⁵⁹ Ambrose, *Nixon Vol.1*, 213.

¹⁶⁰ David McCullough, *Truman* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1993), 893.

¹⁶¹ Ambrose, *Nixon Vol.1*, 212.

¹⁶² Ambrose, Nixon Vol.1, 209.

that fought Communism. ¹⁶³ Greece and Turkey both suffered from the immediate threat of communism in the years following WWII. If to the voters in California Truman seemed weak on communism, Douglas seemed even weaker. Boddy immediately noticed the attack line and made it a "major feature" of his campaign. ¹⁶⁴ Nixon wanted to jump into the fight and take shots at Douglas's voting record himself. Chotiner advised Nixon not to do it. ¹⁶⁵ The Nixon campaign sat back and watched from afar as the Democrats destroyed each other in the primary. Back in Washington D.C., Nixon received another unlikely supporter when John F. Kennedy bounced into his office and told him that "…obviously can't endorse you, but it isn't going to break my heart if you can turn the Senate's loss into Hollywood's gain" and gave Nixon an envelope containing \$1,000 as a campaign contribution. ¹⁶⁶

Boddy provided Nixon with many of the attack lines he used during the general election. In particular, Boddy provided Nixon with the "pink lady" label that the campaign used to perfection. Historians like Fawn Brodie in her way to portray Nixon as the evil villain who destroyed Douglas actually give the Nixon campaign too much credit. Brodie claims that the Nixon campaign distorted Douglas's voting record by comparing it to the record of socialist Democrat Vito Marcantonio. ¹⁶⁷ The Nixon campaign, however, borrowed this strategy from Manchester Boddy who first accused Douglas for voting in line with Marcantonio. In fact, Boddy does not receive a single mention in Brodie's book. Brodie is, however, not alone in her charges against Richard Nixon inventing the comparison. More recently, Rick Perlstein in his much-acclaimed book *Nixonland* also fails to mention Boddy's original charge against

¹⁶³ Ambrose, *Nixon Vol.1*, 210.

¹⁶⁴ Ambrose, *Nixon Vol.1*, 210.

¹⁶⁵ Ambrose, *Nixon Vol.1*, 211.

¹⁶⁶ Nixon, *RN*, 75.

¹⁶⁷ Fawn M. Brodie, *Richard Nixon: The Shaping of his Character* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc. 1981),241.

Douglas. ¹⁶⁸ Instead, one could assume that the Nixon Campaign invented the strategy, but in fact, they just borrowed the attack lines, a practice very common in the American political campaigns. Irwin Gellman, furthermore, provides an excellent analysis of Nixon's campaign against Douglas and provides insight on what really happened on the campaign trail. ¹⁶⁹ Gellman's analysis is further evidence that a serious reexamination of Richard Nixon will disprove some of the myths generally associated with his career as a politician.

The Nixon campaign did not act alone in redbaiting their opponent. Candidates across the nation engaged in smearing their opponents as communists. In Florida, Democrat George Smathers accused his opponent Claude Pepper of liking Joseph Stalin, because Stalin liked him. ¹⁷⁰ Furthermore, Republican John Foster Dulles, in his unsuccessful bid for the Senate, accused his opponent Herbert Lehman that he got "the 500,000 Communist votes that last year went to Henry Wallace..." in the state of New York. ¹⁷¹ The Nixon campaign was neither original in developing, nor the only ones to use the strategy, of tying their Democratic opponent to communism. However, they heavily benefited from the Democrats tearing each other apart in the primary.

After Helen Gahagan Douglas won the Democratic primary on June 6, 1950, the general election campaign could get underway. The Nixon campaign set their sights on defeating Douglas. The campaign's strategy included painting Douglas as a diehard left-winger who ignored the rise of communism at home and abroad. Richard Nixon won the election of 1950 because the campaign set the pace putting Douglas on defense and managed to win a large majority of the Democratic vote.

¹⁶⁸ Rick Perlstein, *Nixonland* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2008)

¹⁶⁹ Gellman 319-343

David Halberstam, *The Fifties* (New York: Villard Books, 1993), 56.

¹⁷¹ Halberstam, 56.

After the primary, the high command of the Nixon campaign met at the San Ysidro Ranch Hotel. At the luxury hotel located in Santa Barbara Nixon's staff pondered on how to attack Douglas. They already settled on the communist issue because the Democrats had done their part in bringing it up during the primary. Furthermore, they decided to continue the "station stop" strategy, running Nixon around California stopping in every city possible. The Nixon campaign set the pace for the campaign and at one point, according to Frank Jorgenson, was two to three days ahead of her in terms of schedules. At each stop, Nixon exited his station wagon stood on the back hatch and addressed a crowd of locals that gathered around to hear the candidate speak. Nixon then lashed out at Douglas. Douglas often traveled to the same towns that Nixon traveled to and thus needed to answer to the charges that Nixon made. ¹⁷² The Nixon campaign therefore, created a situation where Douglas needed to answer to Nixon, the same strategy they used against Voorhis just four years earlier. Moreover, the campaign created "Flying Squadrons" made up out of men and women, strategically planted by the Nixon campaign, at Douglas's campaign stops. 173 These squadrons asked Douglas embarrassing questions to furthermore throw her off guard and appear defensive. The Nixon campaign realized that uniting the disenfranchised Democrats behind Nixon could easily lead to a landslide victory in November. 174

Nixon once again relied on the help of "Democrats for Nixon" committees in 1950.

Nixon unsuccessfully cross-filed during the primary. However, cross-filing in 1950 gave the Nixon Campaign the excuse to target Democratic voters even before Douglas won the nomination. Nixon, during the primary, sent a letter to Democratic voters. Nixon greeted the reader of the letter with a salutation that read "As One Democrat to Another" and then proceeded

¹⁷² Frank Jorgenson, oral history typescript.

Rov Crocker, interview, transcript, Earl Warren Oral History Project

¹⁷⁴ Gellman, 304.

to list his achievements and credentials as a cold warrior. ¹⁷⁵ The letter served Nixon well in the fall campaign. Democrats disgusted with the primary process now remembered Richard Nixon and all of his achievements in the fight against communism. During the fall campaign, in 1950, the Nixon campaign relied on the work of former Woodrow Wilson chief-propagandist George Creel to recruit fellow Democrats in showing support for candidate Nixon. ¹⁷⁶ Democrats who supported Nixon made favorable statements to the press and further accused Douglas of cozying up to communists. The Douglas campaign did not have an answer to this onslaught by the Nixon campaign. Heavily damaged by a tough primary fight, outpaced by Nixon's station wagon, and stabbed in the back by her fellow Democrats, Helen Gahagan-Douglas never stood a chance against Richard Nixon. Then the Nixon campaign proceeded to crush any remaining hope the Douglas campaign might have had of putting together a miraculous comeback. Murray Chotiner in a move that forever tarnished Richard Nixon's legacy gave the orders to publish the infamous "Pink Sheet."

While Downey and Broody both charged Douglas with voting in line with Vito Marcantonio, the Nixon campaign took the same charge to a completely new level. Douglas countered and charged Nixon with voting in line with Marcantonio, in fact Nixon voted with Marcantonio on several issues. Douglas furthermore, distributed flyers that read: "The Big Lie! Hitler Invented it. Stalin Perfected it. Nixon uses it... You pick the Congressman the Kremlin loves!" The charges did not stick. Nixon solidified his image as an all-American cold warrior a long time ago with his prosecution of Alger Hiss. The last thing the Douglas campaign should have done was to attack Richard Nixon on the issue of communism. The Nixon campaign responded and instead of invoking two of the greatest mass-murders of the 20th century, they

¹⁷⁵ Mazo and Hess, 69.

¹⁷⁶ Frank Jorgenson, oral history typescript.

¹⁷⁷ Nixon, *RN*, 77.

created a "...carefully researched leaflet, filled with dates, reference date and lawyerlike analogies that were just confusing enough to convince laymen of their authenticity." ¹⁷⁸ Chotiner ordered the leaflets to appear on pink paper. Chotiner ordered more than 500,000 copies. The leaflet read that while many congressmen voted along with Marcantonio, the voter should note how many times Helen Gahagan-Douglas voted with him. The leaflet cited that Douglas voted in line with Marcantonio 354 times. ¹⁷⁹ The charges stuck.

On November 3, 1950, Richard Nixon won the race for the Senate against Helen Gahagan-Douglas by 680,000 votes. Although Douglas never stood a chance against Nixon, she managed to achieve the bigger victory and shaped his image forever. After the "Pink Sheet" appeared in circulation, the *San Francisco Chronicle* reported that Douglas called Nixon "tricky Dick." The nickname forever stuck with Richard Nixon, the press from now on observed his every move, always trying to uncover the next move "Tricky Dick" might have up his sleeve. As historian David Greenberg writes, after the Pink Sheet attack "many liberals were outraged by this tactic; thereafter they fumed about Nixon's too-ready use of the communism issue and pronounced him a cheap-shot artist nonpareil." However, the election of 1950 is also important in an analysis of Nixon's campaign-style and the people that developed it.

While Nixon became the boogeyman for the political-left for smearing his opponent, the 1950 race only continued a practice that he used in the 1946 campaign. The 1950 campaign only further sharpened Nixon's skill as an aggressive campaigner, one who not only outhustled his opponents, but also outsmarted them. Furthermore, the 1950 campaign also introduced Richard Nixon to Murray Chotiner. Chotiner served as Nixon's closest political ally throughout the

¹⁷⁸ Mazo and Hess, 73.

¹⁷⁹ Mazo and Hess, 74.

¹⁸⁰ Nixon, *RN*, 77.

¹⁸¹ David Greenberg, Nixon's Shadow: The History of an Image (New York: W.W.Norton&Company, 2003), 30.

1950s. The fact that Chotiner designed a successful campaign for Nixon in 1950 only solidified Richard's trust for Murray. Above all, the Nixon Campaign managed to incorporate the national mood into their campaign and used the fear of communism as their main driving message. In 1960, as well as in 1962, Nixon's campaigns did not reflect the mood of the nation. In 1960, Nixon did not realize that the nation was stagnant after eight years of Eisenhower's policies, and Kennedy's mission to 'get the country moving again' appealed to the nation's voters. In 1962, when Nixon decided to run for Governor of California, he failed to understand that the voters of California did not want to hear about national issues, but wanted to know what Nixon could do for the state. In 1968, the Nixon campaign returned to their roots and managed to recapture the mood of the nation. A nation bitterly divided over the issues of race and the Vietnam War sought after a leader who could unite the country. Nixon promised just that in 1968. However, while those missteps were still to come, immediately following the 1950 campaign Nixon rose in stature and political importance within the Republican Party and the national dialogue on politics.

The Republicans in 1951 set their eyes on the White House. The Republicans knew that they would face a new Democratic challenger in 1952, because Truman's popularity within his own party had substantially decreased. However, they knew that they needed a candidate as well as a winning strategy. Richard Nixon tried to involve himself in solving both of these issues.

Soon after the victory in 1950, Richard Nixon emerged as one of the most sought after speakers for the Republican Party. Former President Herbert Hoover wrote Richard Nixon that his victory over Douglas "was the greatest good that can come to our country." Herbert Brownell Jr., the campaign manager for Thomas Dewey's presidential run, called Nixon's 1950

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¹⁸² Mazo and Hess, 76.

campaign a "brilliant campaign." 183 Subsequently, Nixon took this praise and proposed in his speeches that the Republican Party should adopt his style of campaigning. On June 28, 1951, Nixon addressed the Young Republican Convention in Boston, Massachusetts. The speech that Nixon gave was entitled "The Challenge of 1952." In this speech, Nixon proposed that the party should wage "the kind of a fighting, rocking, socking campaign that will bring home to the people the merits of our candidate and our program." ¹⁸⁴ Nixon also continued his partisan rhetoric and accused the Truman administration of not standing up to communism, which at this point was no longer true, and furthermore charged the administration of hiding communists within their own government. Although the facts were not on Nixon's side, the speech appealed to Republicans all over. Tired of not having won a presidential election in nearly two decades the Republicans desperately needed a win. In order to win, they could not afford to nominate the wrong candidate or use the wrong strategy. Nixon understood the need for tough rhetoric. Nixon remembered Thomas Dewey's campaign that to him seemed weak and constantly on the defensive. After the speech in Boston, Richard Nixon received even more speech invitations, and in five months, Nixon addressed Republican organizations in eleven states with the same rhetoric. Throughout the year following the win against Helen Gahagan-Douglas, Richard Nixon did not campaign for himself, but for the Republican Party. After the win in 1950, Richard Nixon emerged as the main motivational speaker for the Republican Party, his constant speech giving and aggressive rhetoric appealed to and gave the party hope that they could recapture the most prized possession in American politics, the White House.

In 1952, the Republican Party held their national convention in Chicago. After some squabbling about who should represent their party in the upcoming election, the convention

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¹⁸³ Mazo and Hess, 76.

¹⁸⁴ Mazo and Hess, 76.

settled and nominated Dwight David Eisenhower, the former supreme commander of the Allied forces in Europe, as their candidate. However, the question on who should join Eisenhower on the ticket remained unanswered. Senator William Knowland, Nixon's senate colleague from California, Minnesota Congressman Walter Judd, Colorado's Governor Dan Thornton, and Richard Nixon were seen as possibilities to join Eisenhower on the ticket. Nixon, still relatively young at age 39, a fire starter with his speeches, and a credentialed Republican seemed as a very good asset to the ticket, considering Eisenhower's age at this point 62, and given that, he only officially joined the Republican at the beginning of 1952, in part because of his commitments to the United States Army. Nixon arrived at the national convention, still in disbelief that he could join Eisenhower on the ticket and ordered his staff to save the headlines speculating about his nomination so that he could show them to his grandchildren one day. While Richard and Pat showed some second thoughts about campaigning all across the nation, Chotiner told Nixon "there comes a point when you have to go up or go out."

The next day after Eisenhower sealed the nomination, Nixon returned to his hotel room to rest until the evening session where Eisenhower and his vice-presidential nominee addressed the convention. Chotiner soon arrived at Nixon's room and reported that Nixon's name was on the list along with several other names as the final candidates for the vice-presidential slot, Chotiner added that Herb Brownell, now a chief-strategist for the Eisenhower campaign, asked Chotiner on how to contact Nixon in the case that Eisenhower selected him. ¹⁸⁷ Chotiner channeled Nixon's mood when he told him that it was still "wishful thinking" that Nixon wind up as Ike's running mate. ¹⁸⁸ Nixon returned to resting and eventually fell asleep when the phone rang to

¹⁸⁵ Nixon, *RN*, 85.

¹⁸⁶Nixon, *RN*, 86.

¹⁸⁷ Nixon, RN, 86.

¹⁸⁸ Nixon,*RN*, 86.

wake him up from his nap, Brownell told Nixon that they decided on him as a running mate and that he should make his way over to Eisenhower's suite in the Blackstone Hotel, Chotiner already one step ahead of Nixon managed to organize a limousine and police escort and Nixon arrived at Eisenhower headquarters to make it official. 189 While Nixon and Chotiner rushed over to meet with Eisenhower, Pat lunched downstairs with some of her friends, she did not hear the news immediately, but when she did, she dropped the sandwich that she was eating. 190 Richard Nixon completed the unthinkable, just seven years after replying to Herman Perry's letter, he now accepted the nomination on the Republican ticket. When the convention erupted in cheers, Nixon turned to Speaker of the House Joe Martin and asked him if there is anything, he could do to calm down the crowd, Martin replied, "get in the hay while the sun is shining." ¹⁹¹ Indeed, Richard Nixon's honeymoon as the hailed vice-presidential nominee soon ended, when doubts about his candidacy emerged. Nixon and his staff needed to pull off one last campaign in order to solidify Nixon's nomination in the eyes of the Eisenhower campaign. The Nixon campaign stunned the nation when Nixon went on television to enclose his personal finances in what is now known as the "Checker's Speech."

After the convention, Nixon immediately went on the campaign trail for the Eisenhower ticket. Fulfilling his usual role as an attack dog, the campaign hit the railroad track on the *Nixon Special*, a train designed to take Nixon around the country. Eisenhower in the meantime campaigned across the country on his own train the *Look Ahead, Neighbor*. However, the Nixon candidacy was almost derailed when on September 18, 1952, just a day after the Nixon train left Pomona, California in order to campaign the *New York Post* reported that Nixon improperly used campaign funds for his own personal use. The story accused Nixon of embezzling money from

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¹⁸⁹ Nixon RN 87

¹⁹⁰ Richard M. Nixon, interview by Frank Gannon, February 9, 1983, Day 3, Tape 2, 00:13:01.

¹⁹¹ Richard M. Nixon, interview by Frank Gannon, February 9, 1983, Day 3, Tape 2, 00:13:01.

his supporters, money originally raised for office supplies and staff salaries. 192 Throughout the following days, the Nixon campaign faced immense pressure, the Democratic chairman Stephen Mitchell asked Nixon to resign from the ticket, and several editorials came out in support of Nixon vacating the position as vice-presidential candidate. Above all, Eisenhower remained very quiet, not showing any signs of support for Richard Nixon. Whenever the New York Herald Tribune, a generally right-leaning newspaper, published an editorial calling for Nixon to resign, panic broke out in the Nixon camp. Chotiner knew that if the *Tribune* would only write such an editorial if they received the word from the Eisenhower train that Nixon indeed could lose his spot on ticket. Chotiner exclaimed to Nixon, "If those damned amateurs around Eisenhower just had the sense they were born with, they would recognize that this is a purely political attack and they wouldn't pop off like this." ¹⁹³ Only the Republican hardliners Robert Taft and Herbert Hoover still stood by Nixon. However, the campaign was no longer in their control. Eisenhower needed to be convinced that Nixon did no harm. Besides, Eisenhower, the people of the United State of America needed convincing because the story now circulated almost everywhere. The last thing the Republicans needed, in the important year of 1952, was a man who allegedly embezzled money. The Nixon campaign brainstormed on how to solve the issue. In a stroke of pure political genius, Murray Chotiner suggested that Nixon should use the television time allocated for the Vice-Presidential nominee and explain the situation to the American people. 194

Nixon once again needed to campaign; however, this time not for holding an elected office, but rather for himself, for his own image, and to convince Americans that he did no harm.

After a campaign stop in Oregon, Nixon flew to Los Angeles where his campaign rented a studio for him to address a nationwide audience. Nixon combined his rhetorical skills with his

¹⁹² Nixon, *In the Arena*, 175.

¹⁹³ Nixon, *RN*, 95.

¹⁹⁴ Nixon, RN, 97 and Nixon, interview by Frank Gannon, February 9, 1983, Day 3, Tape 2, 00:26:52.

knowledge of politics into one speech. Assisted by his media advisor Ted Rodgers, Nixon appeared on Television on September 23, 1952. Nixon in the speech outlined his entire budget, including his salary and personal expenses, took a shot at the Truman's administrations scandal involving a mink coat when he mentioned that, "Pat doesn't have a mink coat. But she does have a respectable Republican cloth coat, and I always tell her she'd look good in anything." Nixon however, admitted that he did received one gift from a donor, a cocker spaniel, and continued saying that his daughter Trica named it "Checkers." The invocation of the dog was not only a very personal appeal that indeed Nixon done nothing wrong, but also a direct shot at Truman's predecessor FDR, who was criticized for supposedly sending the United States Navy to rescue his own dog Fala. In the eyes of the American people the speech was a huge success, they flooded the Republican National Committee with telegrams supporting Nixon's candidacy as vice-president. Eisenhower, however, did not voice his whole support yet and instead asked that Nixon meet him in Wheeling, West Virginia in order to discuss his place on the ticket. Nixon, angered at Eisenhower's non-response, ordered Rose Mary Woods to his room and dictated his resignation from the ticket. After she finished typing up Nixon's resignation letter, Rose Mary Woods showed it to Murray Chotiner. Chotiner ripped up the resignation and insisted that Nixon should instead wait patiently, instead of acting out of pure emotion. ¹⁹⁵ Nixon followed the General's orders and flew out to Wheeling. When Nixon arrived at the airport, Eisenhower greeted Nixon at the airport. As Eisenhower entered the plane, Nixon told him "General you didn't need to come out to the airport", Ike replied, that Nixon was his "guy" and that of course he needed to pick him up from the airport. 196 Eisenhower finally convinced that Nixon should

¹⁹⁵ Nixon. *RN*. 106.

¹⁹⁶ Nixon, RN, 106.

stay on the ticket addressed a frantic campaign rally that same night and spoke highly of Nixon.

The "Checkers Speech" worked to perfection, Nixon secured his spot on the ticket.

The speech is important for three reasons. First, it showed that the Nixon campaign, once again, managed to overcome seemingly insurmountable odds, while the Republican establishment, the press, and Eisenhower gave Nixon little chance, his people, in particular Murray Chotiner managed to find a way out of a dire situation. Secondly, it reinforced Richard Nixon's believe if he could just take his message to the American people, the American people would support him. Third, Nixon once again presented himself as the outsider, now almost a decade in government, Nixon still managed to sound like the proverbial underdog, who just like so many Americans struggled with his own personal finances. Nixon managed to reduce a serious problem down to the lowest emotional level possible and thus convinced Americans that he was just like them. Moreover, the speech secured and fastened Nixon's place on the ticket in 1952. Thus, on November 4, 1952, whenever Dwight Eisenhower defeated Democrat Adlai Stevenson in a landslide victory, Richard Nixon became vice-President at age 39.

During Nixon's time as vice-president, he suffered major setbacks in regards to his political future. During the period of 1952 to 1959, Nixon lost his closest advisor Murray Chotiner. Chotiner got involved in a scandal involving organizing government contracts for some of his former clients, subsequently he became persona non grata not only within the Nixon camp, but also the Republican party. Nixon's relationship with the Eisenhower administration remained strenuous at best, and they tried to push him off the ticket in 1956. Nixon furthermore, managed to fall out of favor with much of the leadership within the Republican Party, so much so that by the end of his time as vice-president, he could not trust them to support his candidacy for the presidency of the United States in 1960. These three events need examination, because

they are crucial to Nixon's road to the 1960 Presidential race. At the end of 1959 with the presidential race only several months away, Nixon stood alone. Nixon did not have the help of his former allies that helped him win in 1950 and 1952. The Republican Party unofficially looked elsewhere to find a candidate for 1960, and Eisenhower did not help Nixon's campaign at all. While the road to 1952, almost resembled a Horatio Alger story, the road to 1960, would be tough and unrewarding for Richard Nixon.

Murray Chotiner emerged as the real winner from Eisenhower's election in 1952. Chotiner now managed or helped political campaigns of all sizes and scopes. Chotiner returned to California to continue his law practice, but he was still very connected in Washington D.C. and traveled to the nation's capital at least once a month. Chotiner shared his knowledge on managing campaigns when in September of 1955, he advised forty-eight state chairman at the Republican National Committee campaign school on how to win races. The lecture Chotiner gave almost resembled a tell-all expose of Richard Nixon's campaigns. Chotiner advised the audience to start early to campaign and to attack their opponents first and to not play defense. According to a transcript obtained by Russell Baker at the New York Times, Chotiner told his audience "the American people in many instances vote against a candidate, against a party, or against an issue, rather than for." ¹⁹⁷ Certainly, this was the major theme of all Nixon campaigns whether or not Chotiner was a part of it. Chotiner also told the audience about another trademark Nixon campaign move, when the candidate finds himself under attack and is forced to answer, Chotiner advised the audience to answer with an attack, and certainly, this had been the case in both the 1950 campaign, as well as in 1952. In 1950, when Douglas tried to compare Nixon's record to Marcantonio's, the Nixon campaign answered with the "Pink Sheet" and in 1952 when

¹⁹⁷ Russell Baker, "Chotiner Advises GOP now to Win; Candidates Told to Run Down Opponents Before the Race and to Limit Issues," *The New York Times*, 12 May 1956, 65.

the fund story almost derailed the Nixon campaign for the vice-presidency, Nixon answered with the "Checkers Speech." What seemed like a defense to many, indeed was a cheeky attack on the Democratic Party and their scandals of the past.

When Chotiner spoke the audience listened, after all he was the man behind Richard Nixon's sudden rise to the vice-presidency and a veteran of many victorious campaigns of some of the top politicians in the country, including Senator William F. Knowland and California Governor Earl Warren. Chotiner, however, also became the target of a senate investigation whenever it was revealed that Chotiner took advantage of his political contacts in order to obtain favor for some of his clients. Chotiner represented the Kravitz brothers, who made their money in the clothing business, whenever the Senate Subcommittee investigated them because of bribery charges. Chotiner denied the accusations. However, he admitted that he sought after White House assistance when he represented two airlines that faced cases in front of the Civil Aeronautics Board, however to no avail, as in both cases the board ruled against the airlines. 198 Chotiner thought that the subcommittee chaired by John L. McClellan was out to get him, and called the investigation a "fishing expedition." The investigation led by Robert F. Kennedy, who served as the subcommittee's chief counsel, made Chotiner a damaged good within the Republican Party and the Nixon campaign. On June 2nd, after *The St. Louis Globe Democrat* asked Leonard Hall, chairman of the Republican Party, about the role Chotiner would play in the

¹⁹⁸ C.P. Trussell, "Nixon's Aide in '52 Denies Trying to Sway Contracts; But Chotiner, Who Managed Campaign, Agrees He Approached White House Assistants on 2 Airline Appeals Nixon Aide Denies Using Influence," *The New York Times*, 3 May 1956, 1.

¹⁹⁹ "G.O.P. Won't use Chotiner in Race; National Party Well Staffed for Presidential Election, Hall Tells Questioner," *The New York Times*, 2 June, 1956.

upcoming reelection campaign, Hall answered that Chotiner would not play any role in the 1956 Republican presidential campaign. ²⁰⁰

While Chotiner would not play a role in the 1956 election, Richard Nixon, in the meantime worried about his role in the campaign. The first four years of Nixon's vice-presidency, he spent in a largely ceremonial role, as he traveled around the globe and sharpened his skills in foreign policy by attending several meetings of the National Security Council. Nixon stepped in with confidence and managed to not act overly aggressive whenever Eisenhower suffered a heart attack on September 24, 1955. Within the Eisenhower administration, however, serious doubt emerged if Nixon was still an asset to the ticket.

Eisenhower recovered from the heart attack, but still many worried about his health.

Once the General announced that he sought reelection, questions emerged about whether or not Nixon would run with him. In typical Eisenhower fashion, he gave a non-answer when asked by the press and exclaimed that he believed "...it is traditional that the Vice President is not nominated until after a presidential candidate is nominated, so I think that we will have to wait to see who the Republican convention nominates, and then it will be proper to give an expression on that point." The Eisenhower staff, furthermore, did not give any sign of support for Nixon's re-nomination as vice-president, but instead leaked details to the press that Nixon should take a cabinet post in the next administration. On March 7, 1956, Eisenhower furthermore added fuel to the proverbial "dump Nixon" fire when he explained to reporters that Nixon should "... chart out his own course, and tell me what he would like to do." Nixon angry at Eisenhower's statement wrote up a resignation letter and threatened to release it to the public. Leonard Hall,

²⁰⁰ "G.O.P. Won't use Chotiner in Race; National Party Well Staffed for Presidential Election, Hall Tells Questioner," *The New York Times*, 2 June, 1956.

²⁰¹ Nixon, RN, 169.

²⁰² Nixon, *RN*, 170.

²⁰³ Nixon, *RN*, 170.

warned Nixon not to do it, and Nixon did not. If Eisenhower thought that Nixon should chart his own course, Nixon took him by his word, and on April 26, announced to Eisenhower that he would be his vice-president, Eisenhower perhaps stunned by the aggressive move by Nixon voiced his support and Nixon secured his spot on the ticket. Nixon forced the general's hand, if Nixon made a decision Eisenhower needed to answer.

Nixon did not serve as the proverbial attack dog in the 1956 presidential election.

Worried about losing votes, Eisenhower encouraged Nixon that instead of "give'em Hell" he should "give'em Heaven" on the campaign trail. ²⁰⁴ Nixon followed the orders. Eisenhower won in another landslide against Democrat Adlai Stevenson in the 1956 Presidential Election.

For Nixon, however, the victory must have been bittersweet. Just two months before the election Nixon's father died, the man who taught Richard Nixon how to debate and gave him support and advise throughout his political career was now gone. Furthermore, Murray Chotiner the man who took Nixon from a congressman, representing a small rural Californian congressional district, to senator and vice presidential candidate also disappeared out of his life, shunned by many in the Washington crowd, Nixon as vice-President and future Presidential candidate could no longer associate with him. Above all, the Republican Party remained largely skeptical of Nixon's political future, the candidacy in 1960, no longer a given, considering how much opposition he faced just to become vice-President. Nixon stood alone. Nixon by himself drew out the roadmap to securing the candidacy for President of the United States in 1960, and furthermore constructed his own strategy to win it.

²⁰⁴ Nixon, *RN*, 177.

CHAPTER 4

"Nobody Could Get Through to Dick"

On September 26, 1960, legendary reporter Howard K. Smith introduced television and radio audiences to an hour of programming that changed presidential politics forever and altered Richard Nixon's political legacy. John Fitzgerald Kennedy and Richard Milhous Nixon gathered in Chicago to partake in the first televised presidential debate. After Smith introduced both candidates, he asked them for their opening statements. Kennedy stepped towards the podium, unbuttoning one of his suit buttons on the way on his dark colored suit, bursting immediately into his prepared statement staring into the camera his face looking relaxed, well rested, and, most importantly, confident. After Kennedy finished his statement, Smith asked Nixon to step forward to deliver his opening statement. Nixon got out of his chair, and slowly made his way to the podium, awkwardly nodding his head at Kennedy and the reporters hired to ask questions of the candidates during the question and answer part of the debate. Nixon wearing a grey suit and looking paler than normal almost blended into the grey background that was setup for the debate on black and white television. Nixon hesitated just a second before starting his remarks, he looked tired, sick and while Kennedy's face seemed unmoving during his remarks, Nixon's face clearly showed signs of sadness, almost a frown during the entire opening remarks. Nixon kept drying his upper-lip that gave him trouble throughout his career, and throughout the entire debate never seemed to recover from his poor opening performance.

These are commonly remembered images from the 1960 presidential election. Kennedy out charming and outdebating the dank Richard Nixon, the image of Kennedy dominating in the debates could lead one to think that the debates alone secured him victory in the election. Historians as well have adopted the same thinking, devoting considerable amount of research to answering the questions how did the televised debates factor into the election. Historians

describe Nixon's lack of preparation and in elaborate detail illustrate Kennedy's preparation for them. Unfortunately, the debates alone cannot stand as justification alone to why Nixon lost the election. Instead, one should examine a series of blunders that the Nixon campaign made during his run for the presidency in order to find a suitable answer to the question why Nixon lost. Certainly, the debates played a part in Nixon's defeat. Kennedy looked better on television and knew how to use the medium to his fullest advantage. Nixon, however, made several tactical errors, which contributed to his defeat, most of which lack proper examination.

During the 1960 campaign, Nixon struggled to remain on message, outpaced himself, and above all, did not take advice from anyone. On top of these errors, Nixon also took matters into his own hands and emerged as the chief decision maker and manager of the campaign, a position he never assumed in any of his previous campaigns. Because of the monumental occurrence of the televised debates, the overall strategy of the Nixon campaign in the 1960 election remains an under examined topic in the historiography.

In regards to Richard Nixon's campaign style and strategy, the 1960 campaign resembled an atypical exercise. Nixon broke the *modus operandi* that worked so well for him in the past. In 1960, Richard Nixon involved himself in every major and minor decision in regards to his campaign strategy. Nixon, moreover, became his own campaign manager. In his past campaigns, Nixon relied on strong individuals to manage his campaigns. In 1946, Nixon relied heavily on the help of the Committee of 100 and his members, so that in his election against Jerry Voorhis he only needed to deliver the message to the voters. In 1948, for his reelection bid against Zetterberg he once again needed the help of key members of the Committee in order to secure victory in the primary. Throughout the 1950 and the 1952 campaigns, Nixon relied on Murray Chotiner to secure victory over Helen Gahagan Douglas and a spot on the Eisenhower ticket. By

1960, however, Nixon stood alone, as Chotiner's reputation was badly damaged and the Republican Party now shunned him. Chotiner could under no circumstance reemerge to manage Nixon's campaign, because such a move would only further alienate the Republican establishment already weary of a Nixon candidacy. The members of the Committee 100, including Frank Jorgenson, Roy Day, and Harrison McCall, were good enough for congressional campaigns. Nixon, however, rapidly grew in political statue and a presidential campaign was just too large and too complex for the men from California to manage.

Nixon found himself at an interesting crossroad. On the one hand, he dreamt most of his adult life of becoming president, on the other hand, he had no one to entrust running the most important campaign of his life. In order to make up for the void of a missing campaign strategist, Nixon put a board in charge of managing his campaign. Nixon headed the board; the board consisted of one old friend and six other Republican administers. Nixon told the press that he and party officials studied the "board system". Nixon also told the press, that he in the past always preferred the board system to just having one campaign manager. A complete lie, considering there was always one campaign manager who reigned over each of his campaigns. In the 1950s, Nixon pointed out to his good friend and future press secretary Herb Klein the "folly of a candidate's" attempt "to manage his own campaign." Bob Finch and Leonard Hall served as the board's main strategists. Hall held the title of campaign manager, while Finch served as campaign director. Hall and Finch, besides their titles, only affected the candidate slightly. In order to understand why Nixon did not listen to their advice, one has to understand Hall's and Finch's backgrounds. Their backgrounds were largely political in nature. Throughout Nixon's

²⁰⁵ William M. Blair "Nixon Picks Board to Run Campaign," New York Times ,29 July 1960, 1.

²⁰⁶ Blair 1

²⁰⁷ Herbert G. Klein *Making it Perfectly Clear* ,(New York: Doubleday 1980), 12.

²⁰⁸ Klein,12.

career he had entrusted people outside of the political spectrum to run his campaigns because he believed them to be more loyal and competent.

Richard Nixon's campaign for the presidency of the United States began in 1958. Nixon needed to convince both the country and the Republican Party that his selection as the party's nominee could secure victory in November 1960. Nixon, however, needed an act that showed his importance to the national political scene. Nixon made speeches that inspired the Republican Party to take back the White House in 1952. In 1958, Nixon needed to return to form, only that this time he needed to not inspire the party as a whole, but instead, inspire the party to throw their full force behind a Nixon candidacy for president. Although no serious challenger had yet emerged, Nixon's spotlight had largely faded because of his constant overseas trips and minimal involvement in domestic policy. The year 1958 offered Nixon a genuine opportunity to return on the national political scene. In a midterm election year, Nixon could campaign around the country to show the Republicans just how much of a political driving force he was.

Nixon, in his own mind, already created the strategy that could secure him the nomination. Nixon would travel around the country and campaign for Republican congressmen, senators. Once these candidates won their races, they thought of Nixon and how he helped them win. Subsequently, these candidates would do anything, in their respective powers in order to help the Nixon campaign in 1960. ²⁰⁹ The party would remember Nixon for helping Republicans regain control in the House and in the Senate. Subsequently, there would be no drama at the convention, no last minutes attempts by the Eisenhower staff to dismantle his candidacy, and no room for a challenger to emerge. The nomination would be his alone. The Republican Party owed him a big favor for taking time off as vice-president to actively campaign for all these politicians. Nixon's strategy backfired, not because he did not put his best effort into campaign,

²⁰⁹ Klein, 83.

but rather because being a Republican in 1958 and running for reelection was almost an impossible task, considering that the mood of the nation swung in favor of the Democratic Party. Eisenhower already decided to not campaign for any candidate in the 1958 midterm election. In 1957, a recession set in and in October of the same year, the United States lost the space race to the Soviet Union when *Sputnik 1* became the first satellite in orbit. Republicans needed to play defense, and defend a lethargic Eisenhower administration in front of an American electorate that slowly came down from a post-war high in prosperity and enthusiasm. Campaigning in this kind of environment posed as a challenge even for a seasoned politician like Richard Nixon.

Nixon traveled around the nation in a chartered DC-6 aircraft to campaign for embattled Republicans. ²¹⁰ Followed by the national press, the vice president jetted around the country and held speeches endorsing candidates. Nixon, at times, did not know how to promote an embattled candidate because Nixon knew that many Republicans were not up to standard. At one point in Idaho when the press asked him what the candidate's biggest asset was, Nixon replied that the candidate's daughter is "the best baby-sitter in the capital." Nixon could not save the Republican Party from the Democratic wave, and the G.O.P lost more than forty seats in the United States House of Representatives. Nixon now needed to worry that the Republicans would not endow him with the presidential nomination in 1960, because he did not come through for the party in 1958. Furthermore, one Republican victory made the loss in 1958 even worse for Nixon.

In the state of New York a political miracle for the Republican Party occurred. While Republicans across the nation lost, Nelson Rockefeller won the election for Governor.

Rockefeller presented himself as the one shining hope in an otherwise gloomy year for the

²¹⁰ Klein, 83.

²¹¹ Klein, 83.

Republican Party. Richard Nixon had the chance to secure the Republican nomination in 1958 instead, he lost the chance, and Nelson Rockefeller emerged as a serious challenger. Rockefeller was the exact opposite of Nixon, charming, rich, and of course victorious. Adding insult to injury, on Rockefeller's post-election victory tour to Caracas, Venezuela, the same place Richard and Pat Nixon were spat on and attacked just a few months earlier when the vice-president visited on a diplomatic mission, Rockefeller received a warm welcome by the locals who praised the philanthropist for his projects that introduced locals to modern agricultural techniques and which resulted in record potato crops. ²¹² Rumors swirled internationally that Nixon might not be the standard-bearer in 1960. The German news magazine *Der Spiegel* pointed out the differences between the receptions that both Rockefeller and Nixon received and proceeded to point out that Nixon indeed should worry about a potential Rockefeller campaign, given the governor's popularity and Nixon's unpopularity; however, the article still pointed out how Nixon had an inside track through the party loyalists to the nomination. ²¹³ During a press conference given in Spanish, Rockefeller denied interest in seeking the presidential nomination. Rockefeller, however, knew and showed that he held the presumptive nominee in the palm of his hand, throughout Nixon's quest to secure the nomination he pushed him around and made him sleep with one eye open, because now Rockefeller captured the nation's headlines as the possible next G.O.P. standard-bearer.

What made Rockefeller so dangerous were his outsider status and his victory on an otherwise brutal election night for Republicans. Rockefeller, furthermore, embraced an unorthodox form of Republicanism. While the Eisenhower administration pushed for peace and

²¹³ "Nichts mit Nixon." Der Spiegel, 19 November 1958, 52-53.

²¹² Leo Egan "Rockefeller Sees No Nixon Setback; Hailed in Caracas," *The New York Times* 9 November, 1958, 1.

nuclear disarmament, Rockefeller pushed for further defense spending.²¹⁴ While the Eisenhower administration pursued Civil Rights legislation, Rockefeller proposed even further federal action in order to solve the crisis. Rockefeller's outsider status allowed him to criticize the Eisenhower administration every step of the way, a luxury Nixon did not have.

Nelson Rockefeller could have been a perfect member of the Franklin Society at Whittier College, the society that opposed Nixon's Orthogonians. Rockefeller never ran for office before seeking the office of governor of New York, although he was actively involved in humanitarian projects for every administration starting with Franklin Delano Roosevelt's administration, 1958 marked the beginning of his career as an elected official. The son of industrialist John D. Rockefeller Jr. and grandson of oil billionaire John D. Rockefeller, Nelson chose to run as a Republican in 1958. Rockefeller's campaign crushed his Republican opponents in the process of securing the nomination, including former Republican National Committee chair and trusted Eisenhower ally, Leonard Hall, who also sought the nomination. While Hall's action of dropping out of the race pleased the New York Republican Party, he remained bitter at Rockefeller, because not only had he lost the nomination but also the control of the state's party. ²¹⁵ Besides advancing his own political power, Hall saw Nixon's campaign as the perfect springboard to seek revenge on Rockefeller. If Hall could not keep Rockefeller out of Albany, he would try to keep him out of Washington D.C., the only place Hall still held some influence. While Rockefeller celebrated his victory, President Eisenhower continued to send Nixon on overseas trips, Nixon traveled to England and although he enjoyed the trip, the only thing he could think of was his run for the presidency. Nixon wrote Herbert Klein, to provide him with the latest polling on his prospects for the presidency and wanted to know how he would match-up against

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²¹⁵ White, *1960*, 63.

²¹⁴ "Rockefeller Group Calls for Increased Defense Spending," *The Washington Observer* 6 January, 1958, 14.

both Nelson Rockefeller for the Republican nomination and John F. Kennedy, the now Democratic Senator from Massachusetts. ²¹⁶

Richard Nixon's biggest problem in the early preparation stage of his campaign for the Presidency hid itself in his attempt to please the Republican Party. Nixon suffered from shell shock after nearly losing his spot on the Eisenhower ticket in 1952 and 1956. Thus, Nixon concluded that in order to secure the nomination outright he needed the backing of the entire Republican Party, because he feared that one fraction of it could overthrow his nomination at the convention. What Nixon failed to see was that the fabric of the Republican Party started to come apart. The party of Dewey, Eisenhower, and Taft increasingly became the party of Rockefeller and Goldwater. Eight years of Eisenhower had the Republican Party wondering where they would go in the future. Goldwater, a conservative senator from Arizona, had increasingly become more powerful, especially because fewer and fewer Republicans remained in the Senate. While Rockefeller challenged Nixon on the ideological left, Goldwater challenged Nixon from the right as he represented conservatives who were increasingly frustrated with Eisenhower's unwillingness to dismantle key elements of the New Deal, and decision to govern from the center instead from the right. In his past campaigns, Nixon never needed to secure the party's support. In California, as previously discussed, the process of cross-filing allowed Nixon to run his campaigns independently of the local Republican Party. Nixon's ability to set his own course in his previous campaigns allowed him greater flexibility, it also allowed him to campaign aggressively on any issue he wanted to. In 1960, in order to incorporate the different stances on policy within in the party Nixon gave up this flexibility, so that he became the hostage of the two ideological sides within the party, each pulling the candidate in one direction. Richard Nixon's inability to pick a side, or to form his own message, hindered him immensely on the campaign

²¹⁶ Ambrose, Nixon Vol.1, 508.

trail in 1960, especially in regards to civil rights. During the organization of Richard Nixon's 1968 campaign the Republican Party faced a similar divide, but instead of caving in to the message that the different factions of the party wanted, Nixon used his own message and proved to the party that he could win.

Nixon began planning his strategy for the 1960 campaign in late November of 1958. Leonard Hall, Nixon's longtime political friend, Eisenhower aide, and former chair of the RNC, gave Nixon a call and informed him that the two needed to have dinner. ²¹⁷ After dinner, Hall told Nixon that if he wanted to wage a serious campaign he needed to start now, and he volunteered to start organizing delegates to secure Nixon's nomination as the Republican candidate. ²¹⁸While Hall argued that the momentum right now favored Rockefeller, he promised Nixon that in the end he would be nominee, Hall agreed with Nixon that John F. Kennedy would most likely be the democratic nominee. ²¹⁹ While the early Nixon campaign still kept a watchful eye on a possible Rockefeller nomination, a series of events in 1959 not only derailed Rockefeller's early efforts, but also boosted Nixon's standing within the Republican Party, and with the electorate. While Nixon stood mostly on the side of losing issues in 1958, in 1959 he reemerged as a serious contender for the Presidency in 1960. Three events catapulted Nixon back into the eyes of the nation. First, the sluggish economy of 1958 began to recover in 1959. Second Nixon faced off against Soviet premier Nikita Khrushchev in what became known as the "Kitchen Debates" which boosted Nixon's standing at home. Furthermore, by the end of 1959 Nixon engaged in settling, and eventually settled a large steel labor strike. 220 While Nixon elevated both his

²¹⁷ Nixon, Six Crises, 301.

²¹⁸ Nixon, *Six Crises*, 301-302.

²¹⁹ Nixon, *Six Crises*, 302.

²²⁰ Nixon, *Six Crises*, 303-304.

standing within the party and with the electorate, Nelson Rockefeller was also traveling the country in order to boost his presidential credentials.

Rockefeller's campaign officially lasted eight weeks in 1959, although he would haunt Nixon until the June of the following year. Rockefeller traveled to different parts of the country attacking the Eisenhower administration. Rockefeller wherever he went, needed to deal with the Nixon campaign. Len Hall set up shop in the Sheraton-Park Hotel in Washington D.C. and "...using his long-distance phone as his instrument," countered each achievement that Rockefeller made on his trip. ²²¹ When Rockefeller announced in Indiana that Republican Senator Homer Capehart was his friend, Hall countered with a statement making Governor Wesley Powell of New Hampshire the head of the Nixon campaign in the nation's first primary. 222 While Rockefeller found opposition by the Republican Party everywhere he went, the electorate of the state of New York also became dissatisfied with him, because Rockefeller, raised taxes as governor. Once Rockefeller returned to New York in early December of 1959, his advisers urged him against a run for the Presidency, and he announced his decision not to run shortly after. Nixon, however, wanted a battle with Rockefeller in the primaries because if he were victorious it would further justify his position as the candidate of choice for the Republicans in 1960. After the Rockefeller announcement journalists overheard one of Nixon's staff members saying, "We've just been kicked in the groin." 223 Richard Nixon did not realize in December of 1959 that the fight for the nomination with Nelson Rockefeller was over. Instead of focusing on using the early start to campaign against the Democratic Party, Nixon chose to secure the Republican nomination first and devoted much of his early strategy to winning the primaries, which after Rockefeller left the race where of little to no value, at least to securing the nomination because

²²¹ White, *1960*, 74.

²²² White, 1960, 75.

²²³ White, 1960, 77.

delegates, at this point, could still switch their allegiance freely at the convention. However, the Republican nomination for President in 1960 after those eight weeks in 1959 was Nixon's alone. Nixon, nevertheless, failed to recognize this. Herein lays the biggest mistake of Nixon's early campaign for the Presidency. Len Hall lived up to his promising he made to Nixon in November of 1958 and moved the party away from falling in love with a Rockefeller candidacy. Richard Nixon failed to listen to Len Hall, and throughout the months until the Republican convention in July 1960, kept waiting for Rockefeller to return to the race.

In January 1960, Nixon assembled the organization of his campaign. In attendance, Leonard Hall, Cliff Folger, Robert H. Finch, Herb Klein, Fred Scribner, Jim Shepley, Fred Seaton, and Claude Robinson. Hall and Folger, both were loyal Eisenhower aides, Hall of course as chairman of the party, and Folger was chairman of the finance committee. Robert H. Finch held a long-standing friendship with Richard Nixon. Finch, like Nixon, hailed from California. 224 Finch arrived in Washington as an assistant for Los Angeles Congressman Norris Poulson. 225 Finch served right down the hallway from a young congressman, Richard Nixon. 226 Finch, a former Marine, decided to run for congress in southern Los Angeles County and lost by 2000 votes. 227 By 1956, Finch provided advance work for then Vice-president Nixon. 228 In 1959, Finch gave up his job practicing law in California and moved to Washington, D.C. in order to help manage Nixon's campaign in 1960. 229 Finch previously served as Nixon's chief of staff and thereby had gotten to know the candidate. Herbert Klein was another close friend of Nixon. Also from California, Klein worked as a newspaperman covering Nixon's early campaigns and now

²²⁴ White, *1960*,63.

Robert H. Finch in *The Nixon presidency : twenty-two intimate perspectives of Richard M. Nixon* (University Press Of America:1987), 243.

²²⁶ Finch, 243.

²²⁷ Finch, 243.

²²⁸ Finch, 243.

²²⁹ White, *1960*,64.

took on the job as press secretary of the campaign. Fred Scribner also served as an aide to Eisenhower. Jim Shepley was a writer for *Time* and offered his talents to the campaign as a speechwriter. Fred Seaton served as the interior secretary under Eisenhower. Claude Robinson provided the campaign with polling data.

The previously listed men made up the Nixon campaign in 1960. One can observe that the campaign missed a person with experience of running a campaign, only Hall had limited experience in organizing campaigns. Richard Nixon did not listen to any of his staff, although they tried to come up with a strategy for him, he decided his own course in 1960. Furthermore, one can see that the majority of the men in the high command had personal political motivations, as most chose to take a political course after 1960. Leonard Hall and Cliff Folger reemerged to manage George Romney's failed presidential campaign in 1968. While Leonard Hall never said anything publicly, according to Nixon speechwriter William Safire, Hall ended the campaign in 1960 "furious" at Nixon because Hall felt that Nixon had undermined his political knowhow and that Nixon alone was at fault for losing the election. ²³⁰ Robert Finch eventually became Lieutenant Governor under Ronald Reagan in 1966. Fred Seaton, unsuccessfully ran for Governor in the state of Missouri in 1962. While Finch and Klein returned to the Nixon campaign in 1968, the rest did not. Nixon throughout all of his political life until 1960 had never entrusted his campaigns to people with personal political motivations. Instead he relied on men who wanted to see Nixon win instead of advancing their own political standing.

While the majority of the high command of the Nixon campaign did not stick with Nixon until his 1968 presidential campaign, people that took on a significant role in Nixon's second run for the presidency occupied jobs at the bottom of the chain of command. Two key people

²³⁰ William Safire, *Before the Fall: An Inside View of the Pre-Watergate White House* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday Company, 1975), 264.

who worked for the Nixon campaign in 1960 later emerged as crucial assets to Nixon's victory in 1968, Harry Robbins Haldeman and John Ehrlichman. Haldeman worked as the tour manager of the campaign, organizing Nixon's stops on the campaign trail, while Ehrlichman provided advance work for the Nixon campaign in several cities. Although Haldeman and Ehrlichman did not serve in a position of power in the 1960 campaign, it is important to mention them because they witnessed the disaster that unfolded and thus knew what mistakes to avoid in 1968 when they served as a key component of the travel division and followed the candidate on every step he took on the campaign trail.

In May 1960 the Nixon campaign together with the Republican National Committee got together in order to discuss the campaign strategy for the fall campaign. Nixon's campaign staff proposed several ideas to the candidate that could secure victory in the fall. One idea included setting up the campaign headquarters in Washington D.C., which then housed the "Plans Board" made up out of key Nixon staffers, whose sole role was to direct the candidate and make all the arrangements for him, "...the Vice-President would make no commitments independently Plans Board..." and the board "would have all authority over detail and timing..." In regards to what message Nixon should deliver on the campaign trail, two different visions emerged amongst the staff of the campaign. Len Hall and Jim Shepley proposed that Nixon should carry a positive message on the campaign trail and connect the past with the future using his experience to convey the message that he could take the country forward, especially in regards to scientific development that was about to take the country by storm. Carroll Newton and Ted Rogers, two television advisers for the campaign, imagined Nixon on a series of television specials in which he could introduce himself to the American electorate and

²³¹ White,1960,264.

²³² White, 1960, 264.

²³³ White, 1960, 265.

elaborate about his family and his experiences as vice-president.²³⁴ Two conflicting visions emerged, one stressing Nixon's ability to promise the nation to continue on a path of peace and prosperity, the other humanizing Nixon and making him appear as an everyday American, and thus, setting a sharp contrast with John F. Kennedy's wealthy upbringing. In the end, Nixon chose to take neither message. Nixon suspended talks about all strategy and left his staff waiting for directions.²³⁵ If the Nixon staff had not figured out yet that he would not listen to any of their advice, they found out within the next couple of weeks.

On May 24, 1960, the *Associated Press* confirmed what many of Nixon's staffers already knew, Nixon managed to secure the number of delegates needed to receive the Republican nomination. ²³⁶ Previously, on May 1, the Nixon campaign leaked to the press that Nelson Rockefeller ranked on top of Nixon's personal choice for the vice-presidential slot on the ticket. ²³⁷ However, Rockefeller quickly rebuffed the offer and made it known that he did not even plan to undertake the trip to Chicago to the Republican convention. ²³⁸ Rockefeller, however, again mused with the idea of running for the nomination. On June 8, 1960, Rockefeller released a statement bashing those "assuming control of the Republican Party..." and accused those in the leadership of failing to propose solution to the problems the country faced, along with the statement, he released specific proposals on how to solve the crises in economic growth, civil rights, and national defense amongst others. ²³⁹ Rockefeller regained some steam and a National Draft Rockefeller movement emerged, and on July 18, three days before the start of the Republican Convention, Rockefeller's staff transferred their headquarters of the draft movement

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²³⁴ White, *1960*, 265.

²³⁵ White, 1960, 265.

²³⁶ Mazo, 221.

²³⁷ White, 1960, 181.

²³⁸ White, 1960, 181.

²³⁹ White, 1968, 184.

to the Conrad Hilton Hotel in Chicago. ²⁴⁰ In the meantime, the Nixon campaign set up shop in the Blackstone Hotel, just a couple of minutes away from the Hilton, a couple of days beforehand. ²⁴¹ The Nixon staff did not worry about the Rockefeller threat. Herbert Klein remembered that everything "seemed to be moving smoothly."

The Nixon campaign concerned itself with writing the party platform that would later be presented to the delegates. Charles Percy, a Republican businessman, chaired the platform committee and stood in regular contact with Bob Finch and James Shepley to get the input of the Nixon campaign on the platform. 243 Nixon had not yet arrived in Chicago, instead staying in Washington D.C. President Eisenhower was vacationing in Rhode Island. 244 Nixon submerged to Rockefeller's pressure and decided to give the Governor of New York a visit. Nixon, however, did not talk with his staff about such a visit. Nixon's staff was confident they had the votes needed for Nixon to receive the nomination. Nixon did not trust them, although he never elaborated on why he undertook the trip, certainly on the back of his mind were the images of Senator Robert Taft of Ohio pressuring delegates during the 1948 convention to nominate him instead of New York Governor Thomas E. Dewey. The convention took three ballots to nominate Dewey, and Nixon was in attendance that night witnessing how Dewey went on the campaign trail with a divided Republican Party. Nixon furthermore, witnessed how Illinois Governor Adlai Stevenson took the Democratic nomination from Tennessee Senator Estes Kefauver during the 1952 convention, although Kefauver had earned the nomination outright by winning the majority of primaries. Furthermore, reports had surfaced that the Kennedy campaign had outmaneuvered a vast majority of the Democratic establishment in order to secure their

²⁴⁰ White,*1968*,187.

²⁴¹ Klein, 99.

²⁴² Klein, 99.

²⁴³ Klein, 99. And Mazo, 226.

²⁴⁴ Klein, 100.

nomination. Nixon did not want any backroom deals at his convention, and he would do whatever it takes in order to prevent such a disaster Nixon above all, worried about a party split and figured that he could not win in November with a divided Republican Party. ²⁴⁵

Nixon's strategy backfired. Nixon's visit to Rockefeller only further alienated many of the core elements of the party, including President Eisenhower and the growing conservative movement led by Barry Goldwater. As historian Mary C. Brennan points out to the conservatives within the Republican Party the Rockefeller-Nixon meeting and the subsequent pact that emerged from it seemed like Nixon surrendered to the liberal wing of the party and further "...strengthened the resolve of those Republican delegates already committed to Goldwater and prompted many others to see him as 'the only legitimate spokesman among National Republican leaders for true Republican principles." ²⁴⁶ A presidential candidate seeks to become the spokesperson of the party in an election year. Richard Nixon forfeited that goal in 1960. Nixon also managed to throw his campaign staff into disarray while they were preparing Nixon's grand introduction to the Republican Party. They found out the night of July 22 that Nixon decided to take a trip to New York. At 9 pm that night James D. Hughes, Nixon's military aide, called Bob Finch in Chicago and informed him that Nixon and Rockefeller were meeting in New York, but that nobody could say anything about the meeting. 247 The Nixon campaign stood idle and did not issue a statement or release anything to the press. The Rockefeller campaign, however, capitalized on the occasion and leaked the news of the meeting to New York Times reporter James Reston.²⁴⁸ Herbert Klein managed to fend off reporters and did not confirm the reports. While Nixon met Rockefeller, the Platform Committee led by Charles Percy completed the first

²⁴⁵ Klein, 100.

²⁴⁶ Mary C. Brenna, *Turning Right in the Sixties: The Conservative Capture of the GOP* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1995), 36.

²⁴⁷ Klein, 100.

²⁴⁸ Klein, 100.

draft of the Republican Platform and planned on holding final deliberations at nine the next morning. 249 At three in the morning the Nixon campaign got word from Hughes that the meeting was over and that both sides were returning to Washington D.C. Robert Finch called Leonard Hall and gave him the information and the Nixon campaign started to wake up reporters to inform them that a meeting indeed took place earlier that evening. 250 On the night of July 22, 1960, Nixon officially crowned himself chief strategist of his presidential campaign. Nixon ignored the hard work his staff undertook in Chicago, ignored their advice in regards to a potential Rockefeller challenge. In Nixon's previous campaign every move had been perfectly calculated, every meeting carefully planned and signed off by the chief-architects of the campaign. In 1960 Nixon dismissed these experiences and acted, according to Herb Klein, "...atypical..." by making decisions that "...had critical impact on his election fate." 251 Nixon's decision to meet Rockefeller was the first, but certainly not the last decision that completely defied his staff's wisdom.

The result of the Rockefeller-Nixon meeting was more symbolical than substantive. The two released a series of statements that were called "the Compact of Fifth Avenue," a reference to Rockefeller's headquarters in New York City were the meeting took place. In regards to national defense, the "Compact of Fifth Avenue" only added 62 words to the 540 original words in the Republican Platform. ²⁵²What angered President Eisenhower, were the calls to increase defense spending. More importantly, what angered the Goldwater conservatives were proposed increases in spending on welfare and education and the suspension of Section 14b of the Taft-

²⁴⁹ Mazo, 221.

²⁵⁰ Klein, 100.

²⁵¹ Klein, 99.

²⁵² Mazo, 222.

Harley Act, which authorized states to impose right-to-work laws. ²⁵³ Goldwater, furthermore, felt betrayed by Nixon after he had promised the senator that he would not undertake a trip to visit Rockefeller until after the convention when the completed platform received confirmation by the delegates. ²⁵⁴ Goldwater called the meeting "an American Munich," however, stopped shy of telling his supporters of the promise made by Richard Nixon. ²⁵⁵ Goldwater even allowed himself to place his name in nomination. Nixon went into damage control and managed to convince Goldwater to speak on his behalf. When Nixon arrived in Chicago, he met with several wavering delegates to put down any chance of a rebellion. ²⁵⁶ Although Nixon managed to escape temporarily from the blunder of meeting Rockefeller in New York, the next major decision Nixon made affected his chances of winning the election tremendously. Nixon promised the convention to visit all fifty states during the campaign, a task demanding even in today's age of improved transportation.

Before Nixon met Rockefeller, the candidate had already involved himself in the organization of the campaign. Nixon watched as the Democratic Party nominated Massachusetts Senator John F. Kennedy in Los Angeles at their convention. Nixon, however, did more than keenly observe the events that unfolded during the convention. Nixon watched the convention with an eye on his own campaign. Nixon wrote a memorandum to campaign manager Robert H. Finch and shared his observation that at the Democratic convention even "with all the money they have spent on high priced public relations people, the microphones were not proper on the

²⁵³ Barry M. Goldwater, With No Apologies: The Personal and Political Memoirs of United States Senator Barry M. Goldwater, (New York: William Morrow and Company Inc, 1979), 112.

²⁵⁴ Goldwater, 111.

²⁵⁵ Goldwater, 112.

²⁵⁶ Mazo, 227.

first day of the Convention."²⁵⁷ Nixon wanted to make sure that the campaign consulted a technician so that his microphone on the campaign trail remained at the right spot. Nixon could not simply entrust Ted Rogers with this task because his focus remained on production and "not with the technical aspects." These kinds of memoranda resembled a trend within the Nixon campaign. Nixon himself concerned himself with minor details of campaign stops. During the campaign John Ehrlichman remembered the thick manual of procedures given to him and the daily telegrams arriving from high command demanding changes to the kind of car that was to be used, the podium which the candidate should line up behind, and the signs placed at the side of the car. 259 Nixon, furthermore, continued to barrage Robert H. Finch with similar orders, at one point he indicated that it would be best to use "big still pictures on a screen of the riot in South America, the reception in Poland, standing up to Khrushchev and the like with commentary" as his introduction, because at a previous rally, these pictures seemed "extremely effective and really brought the house down."²⁶⁰ Head of the advance team for the Nixon campaign H.R. Haldeman, also received notice from the candidate that during a campaign stop in Alabama the advance team mis-scheduled the candidate because he arrived an half hour early at the venue an opportunity had been missed to stop and take more pictures in Birmingham, worst of all for Nixon the advanceman on the trip dismissed his request to stop. 261 Nixon not only created the general strategy but also involved himself in many minute and infinitesimal decisions. The three major blunders of the campaign that lack examination in the historiography of Richard Nixon

 $^{^{257}}$ RN to Bob Finch 6/14/1960 [Donated Papers. Box 1] <u>The H. R. Haldeman Collection</u>. Richard Nixon Library and Birthplace Foundation, Yorba Linda, California.

²⁵⁸ RN to Bob Finch 6/14/1960 [Donated Papers. Box 1] <u>The H. R. Haldeman Collection</u>. Richard Nixon Library and Birthplace Foundation, Yorba Linda, California.

²⁵⁹ John Ehrlichman, Witness to Power: The Nixon Years (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1982),24.

²⁶⁰ RN to Bob Finch 08/29/1960 [Donated Papers. Box 1] <u>The H. R. Haldeman Collection</u>. Richard Nixon Library and Birthplace Foundation, Yorba Linda, California.

²⁶¹ RN to Bob Haldeman 08/26/1960 [Donated Papers. Box 1] <u>The H. R. Haldeman Collection</u>. Richard Nixon Library and Birthplace Foundation, Yorba Linda, California.

were the promise to campaign in all fifty states, the inability for Nixon to form a consistent message on Civil Rights, and his unwillingness to attack Kennedy. The reason these three mistakes need further examination because when Nixon decided to run for President again in 1968, the campaign made improvements in these particular areas.

No misstep hurt the campaign more than the promise that Richard Nixon made during his acceptance speech at the Republican National Convention in Chicago. Nixon revealed his grand strategy for the presidential campaign of 1960 during his acceptance speech at the Republican national convention in Chicago on July 28, 1960. Nixon promised in his acceptance speech to wage a campaign "unprecedented in scope." 262 Nixon pledged to campaign in all fifty states, and he thought his main campaign message would be his experience. 263 Nixon argued that every vote served important and probably realized that the race would be closer than thought it would be. Nixon, therefore, wanted to fight for every vote, in every state. While Nixon's promise seemed ambitious and courageous, the promise made very little sense. For presidential campaigns, in general, every state is seldom in play. Nixon, however, thought he could make an appeal to people everywhere and secure states that were by all estimates Democratic strongholds. While Nixon promised to campaign in every state, including Hawaii and Alaska, the Kennedy campaign focused on the seven largest states and "most of New England and the South, were the basis of his campaign strategy." ²⁶⁴Although the Kennedy campaign visited forty-five out of fifty states, according to Kennedy aide Ted Sorenson "those states with slender electoral totals or slim Democratic chances were visited only once in order to concentrate on more critical areas." ²⁶⁵ Richard Nixon did not have this luxury. Given that Nixon was in charge of his own campaign, in

²⁶² RN,216.

²⁶³ RN 216

²⁶⁴ Ted Sorenson, *Kennedy: The Classic Biography*, (New York: Harper Perennial Political Classics, 2009), 187. ²⁶⁵ Sorenson. 187.

the last weeks of the election when almost all polls indicated that the election was in a dead heat Nixon traveled to Alaska, which at the time offered three electoral votes instead of electorate rich the battleground states of Illinois, New Jersey, and New York.²⁶⁶

Nixon's pledge suffered a major setback in the beginning of the campaign trail when the candidate injured his knee at a campaign stop in Greensboro, North Carolina. The injury forced Nixon to spent two weeks at Walter Reed hospital. Moreover, Nixon needed to take heavy antibiotics the rest of the campaign season. While previous campaigns offered some flexibility and could react to sudden situations, the campaign that Richard Nixon directed did not. In 1950, when Senator Downey dropped out of the race his campaign quickly redesigned their strategy to face off against Douglas although much of the early planning focused on facing Downey in the general election. In 1952, when Nixon's vice-presidential candidacy was almost derailed by the slush fund scandal his campaign advised Nixon to take to the airwayes. However, in 1960, Nixon did not want to break his promise and adjust his campaign because of the knee injury. Nixon kept the pledge, which led to the candidate desperately trying to remain on schedule. This desperation hurt the Nixon campaign because it caused the candidate to adopt an unhealthy and rushed schedule, which was never the case in any of his past campaigns. Starting with his 1946 campaign Pat Nixon realized that the candidate needed rest between campaign stops, and even in his statewide campaign against Douglas, his advisers planned each stop carefully and with enough breaks between so the candidate could rest. Furthermore, Nixon kept his schedule wideopen, whereas John Kennedy's campaign had only two open dates left after Labor Day, Nixon's schedule remained open until late October with Election Day on November 8 1960. 267 One can only imagine how exhaustive this must have been for the candidate with fifty states, a two-week

²⁶⁶ White, *1960*,267.

²⁶⁷ White, *1960*,267.

delay, and constant involvement in every minute detail of every campaign stop while taking antibiotics. ²⁶⁸ John Ehrlichman recalled that by the end of the campaign, the candidate had become "…irritable, unwise and exhausted." ²⁶⁹ "The Promise" hampered the Nixon campaign and was the first of the three major mistakes that Nixon made in managing his own campaign.

In Nixon's past campaigns, the black vote had never played a major role in deciding the election. The issues discussed on the campaign trail in the elections for the United States House of Representative in 1946, 1948 and for the Senate in 1950 where communism, labor, and national defense. Furthermore, the issue of civil rights was not much of a factor in the election of 1952. During his two stints on the Eisenhower ticket, the general was elected twice with such overwhelming numbers of votes that an analysis of the black vote seemed unreasonable, if not unnecessary. Richard Nixon, however, was no Dwight D. Eisenhower, and every poll or statistic that the campaign received pointed towards it being one of the closest of all time. The way Nixon handled the issue of civil rights on the campaign trail in 1960 influenced his handling of the same issue in 1968. Historians have frequently examined Nixon's southern strategy during the 1968 election. However, they fail to connect it with the mistakes that were made during the 1960 campaign. Nixon's inconsistency on the issue of civil rights in 1960 made the Nixon campaign in 1968 adopt a strong and firm stance on the issue. In regards to the 1960 election, the way Nixon handled civil rights best exemplifies how he misjudged himself as a candidate. Nixon as early as his Chicago acceptance speech at the Republican convention realized that every vote would count. For Nixon this meant taking his campaign message to every voter whether they be, white or black.

²⁶⁸ RN. 218.

Ehrlichman, 27.

The black vote posed a problem for Nixon. The Republican Party during his years as vice-president increasingly lost power in both the United States House and Senate. Thus, major civil rights legislation was now in the control of the Democrats. Nixon did not stand idly by, and as early as 1956, Nixon went out on his own during the campaign and promoted Eisenhower's message of peace and prosperity to black voters. Furthermore, Eisenhower, who is generally regarded as seeing black civil rights as a nuisance, but something he needed to deal with, delegated to Nixon the important jobs within the government on the issue of civil rights. Nixon's record on civil rights as Vice President was stellar compared to most of his Republican colleagues in the Senate and the House. Nixon chaired Eisenhower's committee that in part insured that there was no discrimination in federal jobs, and help to pass key rules in the Senate that allowed for a continuation of the debate over the 1957 Civil Rights Act. Nixon entered the 1960 presidential election poised to convince black voters that he would continue the progress made under the Eisenhower administration. Nixon during his meeting with Rockefeller made sure that a progressive stance on civil rights was included in the party platform. In a statement that the governor and the vice-president released it called for "aggressive action to move the remaining vestiges of segregation or discrimination in all areas of national life voting and housing, schools and jobs."²⁷⁰ Moreover, the statement called on businessmen to desegregate their businesses and expressed support for the sit-in demonstrators. ²⁷¹ Nixon deemed it necessary to steer the platform in this direction in order to secure votes of northern blacks in some of the key battleground states. As often, however, with the 1960 presidential campaign, Nixon had good intentions, but lacked execution. Instead of embracing his positive stance on civil rights, one campaign stop changed everything for Nixon.

²⁷⁰ White, Appendix B.

²⁷¹ White, Appendix B.

One campaign stop in the Deep South changed Nixon's entire message on civil rights. If there was an example in the inconsistences of the Nixon campaign in formulating a message and sticking with it throughout the campaign, the example came in Atlanta, Georgia on a hot summer day. Theodore White captured the moment when Nixon arrived in Atlanta to the cheers and jubilations of thousands of white southerners, who since the end of World War II felt betrayed by their government, a government that constantly chipped away at what they saw as their individual rights. Nixon decided to leave Washington while the Senate was still in session, and planned to show the Kennedy campaign that they could not take the south for granted.²⁷² For Nixon there was no larger ideological point in this visit other than as one Nixon aide pointed out "disturb Jack Kennedy's rear, to worry him and make him spend some of his time down there."²⁷³ In fact, the Nixon campaign only scheduled the visit after they received a warm welcome in Greensboro, North Carolina; the south was not a target for the campaign because of the progressive civil rights plank adopted in Chicago. 274 Moreover, although nobody in Nixon's campaign stated it publicly, the selection of Texas Senator Lyndon Johnson as the Democratic vice-presidential candidate certainly secured the Kennedy campaign the southern vote. Nonetheless, whenever Nixon addressed the rowdy crowd in Atlanta, he spoke of states' rights and pandered his message to the audience. Nixon on the flight to his next campaign stop decided to throw away his credentials as an active advocate for civil rights, and as campaign manager decided that, the way to win the election would be through the Deep South. Thus, the Nixon campaign abandoned the strategy to pursue the northern black voter in order to appeal to white southerners. Two episodes during the 1960 election distinctly show how paranoid Nixon was in losing the southern white vote in the election. First, his refusal and immediate rebuttal whenever

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²⁷² White, 272.

²⁷³ White, 272.

²⁷⁴ White, 272.

vice-president Henry Cabot Lodge promised that an African-American would receive a cabinet position in a Nixon/Lodge administration, and his unwillingness to act whenever the Martin Luther King was arrested for a bogus charge and faced a sentence of hard labor. Both episodes need further examination and will be discussed later. However, first one needs to understand that even if Nixon never pursued the issue of civil rights in the campaign, or never pandered to the south, for those in leadership in the south he was already damaged goods.

Although Nixon altered his message on civil rights to appeal to southern whites, they could see right through his strategy, as historian Jason Morgan Ward, points out in his work Defending White Democracy: The Making of a Segregationist Movement and the Remaking of Racial Politics, 1936-1965, segregationists "remained wary of the Republican Party as a haven for white majority politics." ²⁷⁵ Southerners were disappointed in Eisenhower's stance on the issue of Brown and the Civil Rights Act of 1957, and regarded him as a violator of state sovereignty. 276 According to Ward, many Southerners actually preferred Barry Goldwater as their candidate of choice. ²⁷⁷ In terms of the larger campaign strategy of the 1960 Nixon campaign, it is important to understand that even if Nixon had adopted strong language against the implementation of civil rights in the south, he could have never shaken his image of being part of the Eisenhower administration, and could not have convinced weary southern whites to join his cause. What happened in Atlanta was a fluke in the sense that Nixon took the huge turnout as sign of support for his candidacy and subsequently altered his entire campaign strategy because of one campaign stop. Nixon's flexible approach to his campaign backfired as in the end he alienated black northerners, who were crucial to swinging states like Illinois and New Jersey

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²⁷⁵ Jason Morgan Ward, *Defending White Democracy: The Making of a Segregationist Movement and the Remaking of Racial Politics, 1936-1965* (Chapel Hill, NC: the University of North Carolina Press 2011), 167. ²⁷⁶ Morgan Ward, 167.

²⁷⁷ Morgan Ward, 169.

his way. Nixon, furthermore, lost the vote of the white southerner as he only carried Tennessee and Florida. By 1968, Nixon abandoned his flexibility in forming a message on the key issues and instead entered the campaign with a set of messages that resonated with many and were not altered by one campaign stop.

While the southern white vote was already lost before Nixon changed his mind on civil rights; the northern black vote could have still been rescued. The Nixon campaign closed the door on the northern black vote whenever they reacted unfavorably to two instances important to black voters. Both instances happened during the last full month of campaigning in October of 1960.

For the Nixon campaign the events and their subsequent responses to them in the month of October in 1960 served as the final nail in the coffin on potentially appealing to the black voter. Months passed since Nixon and Rockefeller enthusiastically steered the party platform to include more progressive action on civil rights, since then Nixon had not addressed the issue in many of his campaign stops. Henry Cabot Lodge Jr, served as the vice-presidential candidate for Nixon in the 1960 election, the former U.N. Ambassador and loser to John F. Kennedy in his bid for the U.S. Senate, tried to reach out to black voters during the 1960 campaign. During one campaign stop in Harlem, Lodge promised the largely black audience that he favored the appointment of a black American to the Nixon cabinet, if Nixon won in November. ²⁷⁸
Furthermore, Lodge went out on his own, and without checking the speech with Nixon, and proposed a series of actions on civil rights. The Nixon campaign furiously reined in Lodge. Lodge's pledge undermined months of hard work by Nixon to keep the issue of civil rights off the campaign trail, after all since July he had drastically altered his stance. The Lodge incident

Edward C. Burks, "Negro In Cabinet Pledged By Lodge; Harlem Hears Talk -- Nixon Bars Race As Criterion Negro In Cabinet Pledged By Lodge" *The New York Times* 13 October 1960, 1.

caused a clear rift between the two candidates. The Nixon campaign went into damage control and quickly stated that vice-president Nixon would not appoint a cabinet member based on race, color, or background, but instead based on qualifications. The pledge also caused a permanent rift between the two candidates, because Lodge disregarded Nixon's attempt of not talking about the issue of civil rights. The rift between Nixon and Lodge garnered so much media attention that Lyndon Johnson suggested that Nixon and Lodge should have a televised debate so they could settle their difference on the issue of civil rights. ²⁷⁹ Nixon certainly feared the response by southern whites, and subsequently sent Lodge to the south in order to make sure southerners understood that he could not make any promises. While the Nixon campaign tried to calm down white southerners, black Americans also were not impressed by Lodge's promise. Jet Magazine immediately accused the Nixon campaign of "double talk" because Lodge told an audience in Virginia and North Carolina, one day after the Harlem rally, that he "could not pledge anything." ²⁸⁰ In the larger picture, the Lodge incident represented the disorganization of the Nixon campaign, and the inability to stay on message. Although the Kennedy campaign had proposed similar stances on civil rights, they did not make any promises or pledges that seemed like a desperate attempt to capture the black vote. The Kennedy campaign, however, outsmarted the Nixon campaign and acted when it mattered.

Days after Lodge's pledge the Nixon campaign faced another situation in regards to civil rights. On October 19, 1960, Dr.Martin Luther King Jr. together with other protesters were taken into custody in Atlanta for refusing to leave a table in the segregated Rich's Department Store. King's fellow protesters were immediately released the next day. King, however, remained in custody and received a sentence of four months of hard labor. The Kennedy campaign reacted

²⁷⁹ "Johnson suggests Nixon Lodge Debate" *The New York Times* 19 October 1960

²⁸⁰ "Nixon Lodge Double Talk," *Jet Magazine*, 3 November 1960.

immediately, Jack Kennedy placed a phone call to Coretta Scott King and ensured her that "of his interest and concern in her suffering and if necessary, his intervention." ²⁸¹ Kennedy knew of King's stature amongst black voters and knew that if he could get him out of jail, the black vote would go his way in November. Kennedy also realized that a four-month sentence of hard labor for a black American in Georgia in the 1960 was almost like a death sentence. John F. Kennedy's campaign manager, his brother, Robert F. Kennedy, called the judge in Georgia and made a plea for King's immediate release. Robert Kennedy delivered and the next day King was released from jail. Richard Nixon on the other hand did not intervene, nor did he call Mrs. King. Although the campaign drafted a statement for the immediate release of King, no one saw it. 282 Furthermore, Herbert Klein issued statements that said while the candidate though that King received a "bum rap", no lawyer should ever call the judge and that "Robert Kennedy "should have known better than to do so." ²⁸³The Nixon campaign, and in particular Richard Nixon, stood idly bye as the Kennedy campaign outsmarted him yet again. For Nixon, not getting involved in the King decision was a calculated attempt at continuing to court the southern white vote, however, as previously mentioned, he had long lost this part of the electorate. Two years later in Nixon's book Six Crises, he called the King situation an "unfortunate incident in heat of the campaign..."²⁸⁴ Furthermore, Nixon went on to cite in *Six Crises* the professional code of ethics for lawyers which states that a lawyer should not communicate with the judge.

An examination of the way the Nixon campaign handled the issue of civil rights during the 1960 campaign is important for two reasons. First, as previously mentioned, it shows the inconsistency within Nixon's management style of his own campaign. Nixon in his past

²⁸¹ White, *1960*, 322.

²⁸² White, *1960*, 315.

²⁸³ Nixon, Six Crises, 362.

²⁸⁴ Nixon, Six Crises, 363.

campaigns managed to remain on message, he entered the campaign with the same tone as he exited it. Nixon because of his flexible approach and his misjudgment of the electorate created a situation in which he seemed distrust worthy and desperate to capture a corner of the electorate that at least in 1960 could have never swung his way. Secondly, one can see a direct correlation between how the Nixon campaign approached civil rights in 1960, with how the campaign approached the same issue in 1968. By 1968, Nixon did not favor any talk about progressive action like he did in Chicago in 1960, but instead entered the campaign with a well-drawn out "Southern Strategy" that appealed to the white vote in the south. Historians have failed to make this connection, because they often do not take into account how Nixon's mistakes in 1960 formed his politics of the late 1960s.

Another unusual decision by Richard Nixon employed during the 1960 campaign was his unwillingness to attack his opponent. Nixon in the past adopted a no holds barred, "rocking socking" campaign style, always on the offense and never on defense. Nixon had destroyed the political careers of both Jerry Voorhis and Helen Gahagan Douglas through branding them as communist sympathizers, and on the campaign trail in 1952 had frequently engaged in attacks against the Democratic establishment. Nixon did not choose this route during the 1960 election. Instead, Nixon adopted a style of campaigning that secured Eisenhower the election in both 1952 and 1956. Nixon somehow wanted to remain above the fray of politics; however, Nixon, did not see that he was not like Dwight Eisenhower and that Nixon's brand of politics, which featured attacks on both policy as well as character, had long entered the mainstream political discourse within the United States of America.

Nixon, furthermore, in the past, managed to employ the strategy of "us versus them" and made sure that Americans knew that he was one of them, concerned about the well-being and in

touch with the common person. In 1960, Nixon faced off against a member of one of America's wealthiest families and could have exploited this fact to his benefit. However, unlike in past campaigns there was an issue. Richard Nixon immensely respected John F. Kennedy and throughout their years in the United States House, the two formed a working relationship. While Nixon wanted to upkeep the sense of mutual respect, the Kennedy campaign managed by Robert Kennedy, the same man who prosecuted Nixon's former campaign manager, Murray Chotiner, disregarded this call for mutual respect, and attacked Nixon any way they could, beating Nixon at his own game. At one point during the campaign Senator Kennedy compared Nixon to a circus elephant Nixon did not choose to run on an 'us versus them' platform in 1960, instead, he wanted to act statesmanlike and act above the political framework. Nixon thus ignored and not incorporated one of his most successful campaign strategies in the 1960 campaign. While in 1968, Nixon also did not engage in personal attacks, he did, however, give the nation a clearer choice. Nixon did not level personal attacks against Hubert Humphrey and George Wallace, but instead took on the entire Democratic establishment and labeled them as weak on every aspect of policy. While there is no way to prove that Nixon's unwillingness to attack Kennedy personally cost him the election, in a larger examination of Nixon's campaign style it is worth pointing out that he dismissed one of his strongest assets. Nixon's ability to tear down and destroy the character of his opponent had been a key to his past victories; however, in the campaign that Nixon himself directed there would be no personal attacks.

The results of the 1960 presidential Election are well documented in the chronicles of history. The election despite all of Nixon's missteps remained a close one. Nonetheless, Nixon lost largely because of bad campaign design and a weak staff that could not earn the full trust of the candidate. One can see a direct correlation between the mistakes made in 1960 and the

improvements made in the years from 1960 to 1968. While Nixon lost one more time in that period, he started to surround himself with talent that could secure him the election. People outside of the political spectrum who had careers in law, business, and advertising, these men could secure him victory. Throughout those previous mentioned years Nixon fought one long campaign, a campaign to rehabilitate his image within the party and America.

By 1968, the Nixon campaign would offer structure, a candidate willing to listen and a staff with no personal political ambitions. Nixon would suffer one more defeat before taking on Hubert Humphrey in the 1968 presidential election. Nixon lost the election for Governor of California in 1962, a defeat which almost drove him out of the political scene. When Nixon lost the election for governor, he vented his frustration to the press stating that they "won't have Nixon to kick around anymore..." and that indeed this would be his last press conference. However, Nixon would come back, hold several more press conferences, execute all he learned in 1960, and win the presidency in 1968. Historians analyzing the 1968 presidential election and especially Nixon's candidacy have often failed to make the connection between his mistakes in 1960 and the improvements undertaken in the 1968 campaign.

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²⁸⁵ Nixon,*RN*,245.

CHAPTER 5

"Gentleman, This is Not My Last Press Conference"

The years 1962 to 1968 were extremely important for Richard Nixon. Throughout these years, Nixon grew as a candidate and as a politician. After his loss to John F. Kennedy, and his subsequent defeat against Pat Brown for the governorship of California, Nixon returned to the drawing board and assembled a team of highly skilled, non-politically motivated, operatives that ran Nixon's campaign and secured him victory in the 1968 and 1972 presidential campaigns. Nixon, furthermore, grew cynical during these years, and as a man who grew up as a politician within the Republican Party, distanced himself more and more from it. When Nixon announced in February 1968 that he would seek the Republican nomination for the presidency, the party seemed less than excited. By 1968, Nixon was a two-time loser, a man of little national relevance, and the G.O.P. establishment hoped Nelson Rockefeller, George Romney or Ronald Reagan would assume the position of standard-bearer going into the election year. Nixon, however, by 1968 did no longer need the Republican Party on his side in order to capture the nomination. In those six years after his loss against Pat Brown, Nixon acquired the help of image shapers and skilled tacticians that would secure victory in November 1968. Nixon returned to the modus operandi and the people that secured him the victory were as far removed from politics as possible and were hardworking self-made men.

John Mitchell, a bond lawyer, served as Nixon's campaign manager in 1968. John Ehrlichman and H.R.Haldeman, who survived the 1960 and the 1962 campaign, returned from their jobs in law and advertising to travel with the candidate. Leonard Garment, also a lawyer, helped with media operations and was assisted by, a young man named Roger Ailes, a television producer from rural Ohio. While in previous assessments of the Nixon campaign in 1968, these

men appear as the key players, the question of how Nixon met these men and learned to trust them remains unanswered. The focus of this chapter is to fill this void and explain why and how these men found themselves on Richard Nixon's campaign for president in 1968. While historians and Nixon himself have titled this period of his life as "The Wilderness Years," nothing could be further from the truth. Although not in the center of the political world, the years from late 1962 to early 1968 can be seen as Richard Nixon's longest campaign, a campaign for redemption. Furthermore, these years serve as the story on how one politician engineered one of the biggest comebacks in modern American political history. In order, however, for one to appreciate just how big Nixon's comeback was, one first has to examine the loss that dealt a crushing blow to his immediate political standing. Nixon's 1962 campaign against Pat Brown might have been the dirtiest one he ever participated in, it also was the most haphazardly planned campaign of his career.

On January 20, 1961, John F. Kennedy took the oath of office and was sworn in as the 35th President of the United States of America. A few days later, his opponent in the election, Richard Nixon together with his wife Pat went on vacation in the Bahamas. ²⁸⁶ Although surrounded by palm trees and beaches the vacation must have offered little relaxation for the former vice-president. Since 1946, Nixon had been a resident of Washington D.C., now the town that he loved and worshipped had no use for him anymore. Pat and Richard brainstormed, and decided that he should return to California in order to take a job with a law firm that previously offered him a job in case he lost his first campaign against Jerry Voorhis. Nixon remembered that when he took the job with the Adams, Duque, and Hazeltine law firm, he joked it only took "fourteen years to get the right qualifications." ²⁸⁷

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²⁸⁶ RN, 231.

²⁸⁷ RN, 231.

While Nixon returned to California, Pat remained in Washington so his children would not switch schools in the middle of the school year. In Los Angeles, Nixon roomed alone in what he later described as a "small bachelor apartment on Wilshire Boulevard." Almost immediately, after Nixon returned to California, rumors began to swirl that the former vicepresident wanted to defeat Pat Brown and become governor. Nixon, however, at first knew better than to give into the temptation of such a run, the conservative base of the Republican Party had rejected him in 1960, and it was the main power player in the state of California.

Nixon's former stomping grounds of San Marino and Orange County were now the new hotbed for extreme conservatism led by several grassroots organizations including the John Birch Society. These conservative grassroots organizations had already selected who they wanted as their next governor of California. Joe Shell a conservative Republican in the state assembly was seen as the candidate of choice. However, Nixon failed to see this and possibly for the last time trusted his political allies in Washington D.C. Len Hall and Cliff Folger, two of members of the campaign staff in 1960, visited Nixon in California and tried to convince him that if he wanted a future in politics he had to run for governor in 1962. Nixon remembered that Hall argued that if he wanted to run for the presidency again in 1964 he needed to be a governor, and that nobody would remember Richard Nixon if he did not.²⁸⁹ Further encouragement came from Nixon's former boss, Dwight Eisenhower, who also urged him to take a shot at beating Pat Brown. Nixon crumbled under the pressure placed by his old allies, failing to see that California Republicans would not greet him with open arms; Nixon announced his run for the governorship on September 27, 1961. ²⁹⁰

²⁸⁸ RN, 231.

²⁸⁹ RN, 239.

²⁹⁰ RN, 241

Although Nixon won the primary campaign against Joe Shell quite easily, it had a devastating effect on Nixon in the general election. During the primary, Nixon disavowed the John Birch Society, mainly because of accusations made by the society against former president Eisenhower. Although Nixon had made a name for himself early as a diehard anti-communist, conservatives increasingly distrusted of Nixon's political positions. Not only had Nixon sided with liberals on race and right to work laws in 1960, he had sold out Barry Goldwater, the icon of the extremist conservatives, when he made a joint statement with Rockefeller right before the Republican convention in 1960. 291 As historian Lisa McGirr writes in her book Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right, Nixon's repudiation of the far right during the primary made conservatives stay at home during the general election and furthermore did not activate the grassroots activism that Nixon needed to win in California. McGirr, however, makes a point that "...while conservatives failed to work for Nixon, damaging internal party unity and probably leading at least a few conservatives to sit out the election, responsibility for Nixon's loss lay with his inability to draw enough Democratic voters, which was a necessary in California for a Republican victory." ²⁹² Therein lies the crux of the matter, Nixon was not able to convince Democrats to vote for him in California, although he knew from his previous campaigns in the state that he always needed a solid turnout for him. The inability of Nixon to convince Democrats in 1962 is often under examined.

The 1962 campaign organization featured some familiar faces of Nixon's past.

H.R.Haldeman served as the campaign manager, and he recruited John Ehrlichman as the campaign's chief scheduler. ²⁹³ Furthermore, Herb Klein, Bob Finch, and Murray Chotiner

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 $^{^{291}}$ Nixon ended the Steel Strike of 1959 by siding with the union.

Lisa McGirr, Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right (Princeton University Press, 2002), 119-121

²⁹³ Ehrlichman, 29.

rejoined the campaign staff. The campaign never got off to a good start, and Nixon endured one scandal after another. First, there was the issue surrounding a loan made by American entrepreneur Howard Hughes to Richard Nixon's brother Donald. Although the loan was already exposed during the 1960 election, Nixon had to deal with the issue during the 1962 campaign. The press raised the question if Nixon profited from the loans, and thus, faced an ethical challenge because Hughes also served as a major defense contractor. During the 1962 campaign, the press bombarded Nixon with questions and regardless where he went he had to talk about the loan and his brother's failed investments, instead about talking what he would do for the state of California. Although in the past, the campaign managed to get hold of stories and provide serious damage control, Nixon could not shake the Hughes loan, since his brother actually took the money. What made the issue even worse for Nixon was that he refused to answer any questions about the loan, unless Governor Brown asked him in a debate.²⁹⁴

Secondly, the Brown campaign beat the Nixon campaign at their own game. Pat Brown's campaign circulated flyers and pamphlets slandering Nixon and his reputation, a practice that Nixon had used to the fullest extend in the past. Instead of countering each attack, the Nixon campaign took a legal approach and sued the Brown campaign, which in turn sued the Nixon campaign. Instead of slugging it out like Nixon did in the past, the campaign became very technical and complained every time they faced a challenge. One can however understand this move by the Nixon campaign, because since the election of 1960 many prominent voices had advised Nixon to challenge the election he lost against Kennedy and ask for a recount. The new and technical approach of the Nixon campaign stretched even further when it placed a heavy emphasis on telethons to be broadcasted before the election. Although telethons had been part of Nixon's past campaigns, especially in 1960, in 1962 the get out to vote effort by the Nixon

²⁹⁴ Ambrose, *Vol I*. 664.

campaign did not resonate with the voters in California. Herb Klein later recalled the process of the telethons in 1962, "pretty volunteers were seen answering telephones, and the questions were screened by the staff," the press got a glimpse of the screening process, and "interspersed with the questions were celebrity appearances, which inevitably led to on-the-air endorsements."²⁹⁵ Although the telethons were incredibly well produced, they failed to move the needle, mainly because Nixon had nothing to say about the local issues that plagued the Golden State. Herb Klein wrote that the telethons, "...did not have the impact that was evident in 1960," because "...Nixon said little that was dramatic regarding local or state uses where the viewer had his most direct interest." 296 Overall, Nixon answered questions regarding national and international issues with more vigor and detail. While one could chalk up the telethons as a failure in 1962, in a larger examination of Richard Nixon's political campaigns they represent an evolution in one of his favorite strategies. Since 1946, Nixon had been put in situations where he would answer questions instead of giving a stump speech; the questions always came from generally friendly audiences. Nixon operated well in these kinds of settings as he could tailor each answer individually to the specific question asked, by 1960 the campaign for all its missteps understood this basic concept and designed telethons that mirrored the house meetings Nixon used in the past. By 1968, the Nixon campaign worked out all the kinks out of the telethon format and used it to its fullest advantage. In 1962, the telethons were already incredibly well produced, but Nixon, unlike in his past campaigns, had nothing to offer the voters of California and could never sell himself as a viable alternative to Pat Brown. The inability to appeal to Democratic-leaning voters in California might have been the biggest failure of the Nixon campaign in 1962.

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²⁹⁵ Klein, 61.

²⁹⁶ Klein, 61.

In past campaigns, Nixon and his staff managed to capture the national mood and inject it into local races. In 1946, Nixon managed to capture the ever-growing anger at New Deal policies and the threat of communism and turn it against his opponent Jerry Voorhis. Similarly, in 1950, the Nixon campaign managed to tie Douglas to many larger domestic issues such as communism. In 1962, the Nixon campaign did not drag national issues into the local race. While Nixon tried to make himself into a local candidate, people could not accept the fact that he just two years earlier lost the presidency and surely would use California only as a springboard for the presidential election in 1964. Polls indicated that people thought Nixon only cared about running for president. Nixon, however, found this notion absurd, mainly because he knew that Kennedy would be unbeatable in 1964. Nixon recalled later in his memoirs that he recognized "...that there was a measure of truth in what the polls showed the public perceived" he thought that Kennedy "would be unbeatable" so that his "...disclaimers of any interest in running for President were absolutely honest." 297 However, he "was really not all that eager to be governor of California." ²⁹⁸ This lack of eagerness that Nixon talked about was a unique factor that no Nixon campaign previously had to deal with. Nixon tried to compensate the lack of eagerness by engaging himself in local issues. The voters, however, could see through the candidate. Herb Klein recalled later that "...while Nixon made efforts to be local, with media events ranging from a 4 a.m. appearance at the Los Angeles produce market to an afternoon at a peach festival in Chico, California, he never appeared to be the man interested in peaches or produce." ²⁹⁹ The final dagger to Nixon's campaign came during the last full month of campaigning in October of 1962, when President Kennedy successfully defused the Cuban Missile Crisis. Whenever Richard Nixon heard about the success of the naval blockade, he turned to his secretary Rose

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²⁹⁷ RN, 243.

²⁹⁸ RN, 243.

²⁹⁹ Klein, 64.

Mary Woods and exclaimed: "Well, I just lost the election." Unable to convince voters that he cared about California's issues, constantly bothered by the press about his brother's loan, and incapable of damaging Pat Browns popularity, Richard Nixon lost the 1962 election for governor of California by 297,000 votes. 301

The 1962 election was the last election Nixon ever lost, and he did not take it well. Nixon, just two years after his bitter defeat against John F. Kennedy, stood in his hotel room in Beverly Hills as the loser in yet another relatively close election. The man who had won his first five elections had now lost his last two. His record as an impeccable campaigner was badly damaged. As the bad news of Nixon's defeat kept pouring in John Ehrlichman remembered, "Nixon had begun greeting defeat with lubrication but without grace." The next morning there would be no comments to the press by Nixon, H.R. Haldeman instructed his staff that the candidate would be escorted out of the hotel and be reunited with his family. Herb Klein was in charge of making a brief statement to the press and concede to Pat Brown. Just as his campaign staff wanted to escort Nixon out of his hotel room, Nixon overheard one of the reporters on television shouting, "where's Nixon?" Nixon had enough, and when he and his entourage made it to the bottom floor of the hotel; he stormed into the pressroom to deliver his now infamous "Last Press Conference." Nixon vented at the press and complained that his loss was largely due to unfair coverage he received in the waning months of the campaign. Nixon ended the press conference by promising the reporters that they "... won't have Nixon to kick around anymore, because, gentlemen, this is my last press conference..."303 Nixon looked tired, hung-over, and

³⁰⁰ Julie Nixon Eisenhower, 211.

³⁰¹ RN 243

³⁰² Ehrlichman, 33.

³⁰³ RN, 245.

most importantly, defeated. Nixon's wife Pat, according to their daughter Julie, cheered "bravo" at the end of Nixon's speech; however, she was the only supporter of Nixon's ill-advised rant. ³⁰⁴

Nixon's 1962 campaign, however, should not be considered a complete disaster. In general, the opposite is true. While his campaign suffered from a candidate not fully motivated to run for the office, it laid the groundwork for many of the strategies Nixon used in his 1968 campaign for the presidency. Furthermore, the mistakes made during the 1962 helped the campaign in 1968, as they knew what to avoid. In 1962, Nixon seemed out of touch with domestic issues, after all much of his vice-presidency and his campaign against John F. Kennedy centered on foreign affairs, thus when he returned to California he never managed to run on domestic issues. By 1968, the Nixon campaign made it their issue to center their campaign mostly on domestic issues. In 1968, Nixon captured the domestic issues that plagued the country and ran his campaign on a theme on restoring 'law and order' and 'peace with honor' in the Vietnam War. Certainly his staffers, especially H.R. Haldeman and John Ehrlichman, remembered that Nixon had lost twice in a row because he could not capture and exploit the national mood of the country to his advantage. Another lesson learned from the 1962 campaign, was the implementation of Nixon's television specials. In 1962, the Nixon campaign aired their telethons, and although successfully produced, they did not matter because Nixon had nothing to say to California voters. Authors like Joe McGinniss in his work The Selling of the President have often attributed the 1968 campaign with using television to its fullest advantage; however, the groundwork for this approach was laid in the 1960 and 1962 campaign. By 1962, the Nixon campaign already discovered the power of television and returned to the same strategy of using telethons and television specials in 1968, only this time their candidate actually delivered an appealing message to the voters. The general disregard for how Nixon used television in 1962

³⁰⁴ Julie Nixon Eisenhower,213.

within the historiography is another reason why Nixon's political campaigns need to be examined as a whole and not separately. Above all, because of his loss in 1962, Richard Nixon could operate outside the political spectrum, for the first time since 1946 Nixon could move independently from Washington D.C. and the Republican Party. This independence made it possible for Nixon to assemble the team that secured him victory in 1968. Nixon no longer needed the high command of the Republican Party on his side, mainly because they did not want to embrace and support a two-time loser. The victories of Nelson Rockefeller and William Scranton for Governor in New York and Pennsylvania, respectively, in 1962 secured that Nixon would not be seen as a frontrunner for 1964 and, thus, the party largely disavowed their former standard-bearer. This made it easier for Nixon to distance himself from those inside the Beltway and assemble a team unaffiliated with the G.O.P. that suited the candidate. How Nixon assembled this team and returned to the *modus operandi* is the focus of the rest of this chapter.

Richard Nixon began his unlikely comeback in New York City. Handed a crushing blow by California voters, seen in Washington D.C. as a loser, the only spot left for Nixon where money, power, and politics all intersected was New York. New York in 1962, as it had been in the past, was the place to be for many of America's most powerful people. New York's diverse cultural scene, it proximity to not only the United States' largest financial institutions, but also to prestigious law, advertising, and insurance firms, led many to seek shelter in the Big Apple.

Nixon knew that in order to stay relevant in politics he needed to maintain a certain degree of power and respectability; he could not be like other defeated statesmen and retire to the homestead. Instead, Nixon needed a position which not only was qualified for, but that allowed him flexibility to maintain and expand his connections in the political world. Although Nixon knew that moving to New York would "mean giving up any though of becoming a candidate for

President in 1964..." Nixon exited the political arena for the first time since 1946 in the waning months after his defeat in 1962. Although Nixon never admitted it, he must have known that his chances of getting the Republican nomination in 1964 were slim. Nixon witnessed the utter destruction the Kennedy campaign had done to his candidacy, and probably felt like no Republican did stand a chance in 1964 against John F. Kennedy. After taking his family on a six week vacation through Europe and the Middle East in June of 1963, in which he not only dined with France's Prime Minister Charles de Gaulle, visited the Berlin Wall, but also undertook a trip a trip to the site of the Aswan dam organized by Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser, Nixon went to New York to join the law firm of Mudge, Rose, Guthrie, and Alexander.

Although the firm had once been one of the most prestigious law firms in New York, after the financial disaster in 1929, there had been a major decline in clientele. By 1950, however, Hobson Guthrie had taken over the partnership and reversed its fortuned through smart hiring and active pursuit of new and interesting businesses to represent. By 1960, the firm, according to Len Garment, a lawyer at the firm, could "count on growing revenues from corporate clients like Warner-Lamber, PepsiCo, General Cigar, Stone and Webster Engineering Corporation, Studebaker-Worthington, Continental Baking, and El Paso Natural Gas." However, the firm missed one key element that set them above the hundreds of other successful law firms in New York. The firm needed a name, someone with enough a reputation in either the political or legal world. The firm could not have asked for a better candidate to boost their own reputation than Richard Nixon. Although Nixon lost his last two political races, to many he was still a former vice-president and political veteran, and although he had not actively practiced law in almost two decades he brought with him the instincts of a lawyer. The firm changed its name

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³⁰⁵ RN, 248.

³⁰⁶ Leonard Garment, *Crazy Rhythm: My Journey from Brooklyn, Jazz, and Wall Street to Nixon's White House, Watergate, and Beyond* (New York: Random House, 2000), 61.

when he arrived in New York. Now Nixon had officially become part of the New York circuit. At the Nixon, Mudge, Rose, Guthrie, and Alexander law firm, Nixon assembled the team that organized his run for the presidency in 1968.

1963, however, also served as the starting point for Nixon's message of the 'Silent Majority'. President Kennedy overcame his early mistakes. Kennedy had established himself firmly as the commander-in-chief by overcoming the Cuban Missile Crisis in late 1962, earlier that same year Kennedy challenged the American people, at Rice University in Houston, to go to the moon by the end of the decade. He was still riding high on the wave of the New Frontier. While all seemed peaceful in the United States, underneath this new energetic America, the proverbial powder keg stood ready to explode. John Kennedy and his brother, attorney general, Robert Kennedy had made themselves many enemies, particularly in the south. In the late summer of 1962, Kennedy had ordered the United States Army to Mississippi to secure the integration of the University of Mississippi and protect, United States Air Force veteran, James Howard Meredith so that he could safely enroll and attend classes. U.S. Marshalls previously had protected Meredith, but massive riots broke out on the campus forcing Kennedy to send in the military. If it had not been clear in the late fall months of 1962 that America would go to war with itself over the issue of race, the following fall in August 1963, Alabama Governor George Wallace, who promised during his inaugural address to keep the state of Alabama forever segregated, stood at the entrance of the administration building of the University of Alabama in order to block the entry of Vivian Jones and James Hood. Only after long negotiations with Wallace, led by Attorney General Robert Kennedy and his deputy Nicholas Katzenbach, the justice department forced Wallace to step aside. Both stories captured a national audience and angered many who thought that the federal government overstepped its bounds. George Wallace,

a Democrat and one of Nixon's opponents in 1968, arrived on the national scene in 1963 and stood as a symbol for many white Americans who saw their society crumbling underneath the pressure of liberal democracy. All the flowery and mythical rhetoric by the Kennedy administration could not cover up the domestic angst, the sheer panic to many, that America as they knew it would soon be a fact in the history books.

Kennedy's use of government action against the states also helped to fuel the early sixties conservative counterrevolution. Led by William F. Buckley, conservative columnist at National Review and intellectual co-leader of the movement, the movement had grown more sophisticated since its early days under the Eisenhower administration, and had taken control of more and more of the Republican Party. Nixon did not mind, after all, he knew that he would not run in 1964 for the Presidency. However, these were the times that Richard Nixon lived in, and these would also become the times that Richard Nixon would exploit on the campaign trail in 1968. By 1968, America seemed to come apart at its seams. Civil Rights, Vietnam, and seemingly utter chaos in the street ruled the United States, and Nixon knew that they did not need another firebrand conservative to ignite the flames, but a peacemaker, a man who represented those who stood on the sidelines, and who, like Richard Nixon, disgusted at what they saw on television, and ready for America to be peaceful again. Nixon certainly learned this lesson from the 1964 election in which candidate Barry Goldwater never took this approach, but instead offered conservative solutions to unmanageable problems. America's coming apart would be temporary delayed by the events that occurred on November 22, 1963.

On the morning of November 22, 1963, Richard Nixon landed in New York. He had just returned from a two-day stint in Dallas attending a meeting of the board of the Pepsi-Cola company. On his way to the airport in Dallas, Nixon had noticed the American flags that lined

the streets of Dallas, ready to greet President Kennedy and Vice-President Lyndon B. Johnson on an early campaign swing through Texas. Although Nixon had heard about the news of Kennedy's assassination from a man who approached his taxicab returning to his law firm in New York at a stop light, Nixon could not believe it. When he returned to the firm, the door attendant greeted Nixon with tears in his eyes and informed Nixon of the tragic events that unfolded in Dallas, Texas. The Kennedy assassination marked the end of one of America's greatest political rivalries, Nixon's nemesis and old friend of years was now gone. That night, Nixon sat in his library and composed a letter to Jacqueline Kennedy, expressed his condolences, and offered to help in any way he could. 307 Lyndon Johnson was now the President of the United States and the hope and change that Kennedy promised slowly seemed to be deteriorating.

Many Americans were impacted by Kennedy's assassination. For a brief moment, it seemed to bring the country closer together. Nixon, over the course of the first couple of months at the law firm had become close with Leonard Garment, an attorney who rose from humble beginnings to become one of the young protégés at Nixon's firm. Nixon and Garment had previously discussed the potential of Nixon returning into politics. Garment with eyes on 1968, was tasked with helping to recruit staff that would help Nixon win that year. Over the course of the next three years, it was Garment, with precise instructions from Nixon, who recruited many of the skilled individuals the campaign would require. Nixon did not want to make any early commitments to anyone on the staff, Garment described the process of recruiting the team in his memoirs stating that Nixon day after day "mused and muttered, fussing with details, calling here and there, soaking up information, reacting to events, doubling back, breaking away occasionally for a foreign trip or business meeting, ceaselessly tinkering, bobbing, weaving, and maneuvering

³⁰⁷ RN, 253.

at his disciplined chess player's pace toward the 1968 endgame." Nixon knew what kind of individuals he wanted, and although he never explicitly stated it, he knew he needed to return to the *modus operandi* cast that made him successful in the first place. Garment, of course, was instructed to find these kinds of individuals and singlehandly recruited core aspects of the 1968 Nixon campaign including, Tom Evans, John Sears, Frank Shakespeare, Bill Gavin, Harry Teleaven, Alan Greenspan, Martin Anderson, Roger Ailes, and Kevin Phillips. These men together with some of Nixon's past staffers, most notably Rose Woods, John Ehrlichman, and H.R. Haldeman would make up Team Nixon in 1968. Only one key factor was still missing from this a strong campaign manager. The issue of who would manage the Nixon campaign would not be solved until 1967. One, however, first must discuss the years until then in order to appreciate how Richard Nixon himself restored a lot of his political power lost from the defeats in 1960 and 1962.

The presidential election of 1964 to this day is bitterly remembered by many Republicans. Lyndon Johnson profited immensely from the momentum created by the assassination of John F. Kennedy for the Democrats. Furthermore, Johnson benefited from the missteps made by Republican presidential nominee and Senator from Arizona Barry Goldwater. Nixon, however, stood largely on the sidelines during the 1964 race. He waited until the last possible minute to endorse Goldwater's nomination, because he knew how much his political fate could have been impacted by associating himself with the conservative firebrand. According to Garment, Nixon "pulled himself back from the brink with inches to spare, announcing his support for Goldwater's nomination shortly before the Republican convention in July." There was however, still considerable hope by many of Nixon's staffers that Nixon might still wind up

³⁰⁸ Garment, 100.

³⁰⁹ Garment, 102.

as the nominee. Goldwater had been a contested candidate, and the New Right still needed some support from the old Republican establishment to win nomination on the first ballot at the convention. Nelson Rockefeller denounced extremism during his speech and the Goldwater delegation erupted in disgust for the New York Governor. H.R. Haldeman observed the chaos on television and quickly gathered the small Nixon delegation from their hotel room to the convention hall, maybe the Goldwater forces would behave in such a way that would make the Senator lose his apparent grip on the nomination, and maybe the convention would turn to Nixon to pick up the broken pieces and carry the fight into November. 310 H.R. Haldeman was there to ensure that such a nomination would be handled properly. However, the situation never occurred, and Nixon was chosen to introduce Barry Goldwater as the next President of the United States, a fact that to many of the Republican establishment seemed unrealistic. Goldwater, however, did have some momentum, especially with the grassroots conservative movements that sprung up across the country in part as a response to Kennedy's alleged overreach of the federal government, and Johnson's promise to continue it. Goldwater, according to Garment, "in an instant lost whatever minuscule chance he might have had to win the presidency" when the candidate stated that "extremism in the pursuit of liberty is no vice" during his acceptance speech. 311 Goldwater with the remarks had singlehandedly stabbed in the back the same grassroots radical forces that secured him the nomination in the first place. The man who proposed radical ideas now seemed to disavow his radicalism. After Goldwater accepted the nomination, Nixon hit the campaign trail to campaign for embattled Republican congressional candidates. Nixon was frustrated by Goldwater's performance as a candidate and encountered problems everywhere he went when congressional candidates asked Nixon to not mention the

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³¹⁰ Garment, 102.

³¹¹ Garment, 104.

Goldwater's name during speeches supporting them. ³¹² On November 3, 1964, Richard Nixon was finally taken out of his misery and Goldwater lost to incumbent Lyndon Johnson in a landslide. For Nixon, however, Goldwater's defeat could not have come at a better time. For quite some time Republicans across the United States remembered Nixon as loser, now Goldwater would take that place of the token defeated Republican. Goldwater's defeat, moreover, secured that the senator from Arizona would not be a candidate in 1968, instead the growing conservative movement had to find a new standard-bearer. They did very quickly. In November of 1966, just two years after Goldwater's defeat, Ronald Wilson Reagan, a former actor, leader of the Screen Actors Guild, and General Electric spokesperson, who gained respect throughout the political world with his "Time for Choosing" television broadcast days before the election, won the election for Governor of California. While Reagan seemed to ride the conservative tidal wave all the way to 1968, Reagan's time did not come until years later whenever the governor acquired the staff and organization necessary to win the Presidency. Reagan, however, would become a minimal threat to Richard Nixon's nomination in 1968. The opportunity for Ronald Reagan to emerge as the new standard-bearer of the conservative wing of the Republican Party is the only negative that came out of the 1964 election for Richard Nixon. The results of the 1964 election forced Nixon to please the conservative wing in 1968 and disavow many of his personal stances, especially in regards to race.

While 1965 presented a calm year in regards to Nixon's preparation for his 1968 campaign, Richard Nixon returned to the 'arena' in 1966 to actively campaign for Republican congressional candidates during the midterm election held that year. Nixon, like in 1958, decided it would be best if he served as a kingmaker in order to regain credibility in the Republican Party. However, unlike in 1958, 1966 was a better year to campaign for Republicans, as

³¹² RN. 263.

Democrats across the nation had to defend the passing of key acts of Lyndon Johnson's Great Society. The Civil Rights Act of 1964, which in part ended much of the lawful segregation in the United States, combined with the passing of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, which abolished many of the practices that kept black Americans from the polls, added fuel to the fire that burned in middle and southern America. Many white voters felt betrayed by the actions of the federal government and somehow thought that Johnson like his predecessor misused the power of the federal government. The Republicans pounced on the opportunity to convert and to recruit many of the former Democrats in the south. While in 1966 the conflict in Vietnam was still seen in a favorable light, on the college campuses and across the emerging counterculture, grumblings rose against the conflict that demanded more and more troops. Lyndon Johnson a man who had built his reputation on being able to accumulate political power saw his own party and the country slowly drifting into chaos. The 1966 midterms only confirmed what many voters in the United States already felt America continued to be divided amongst racial, class, and social lines.

While Nixon campaigned for Republican candidates across the nation with little to no media attention, Lyndon Johnson catapulted him back into the national realm of politics by calling Nixon out during a press conference and claiming that Nixon did not serve his country well by using the Vietnam conflict, on which Nixon by this time frequently commented on often taking a contrary stance to the Johnson administration, as a campaign issue. Nixon, now, returned to the national spotlight, as reporters and editorialist wanted to sit down with the man that Johnson personally took issue with, furthermore the Republican Congressional Campaign Committee offered Nixon airtime on NBC in order to respond to the charges. Len Garment, although largely on the sidelines for the 1966 campaign, organized an interview with CBS's

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³¹³ RN, 275.

³¹⁴ RN, 276.

Mike Wallace who chartered a plane in order to interview Nixon on the trail in New Hampshire. 315 While Nixon received all the credit and publicity, his team actually partially instigated the event. By 1966, Nixon had hired two gifted speechwriters; one was Pat Buchannan and the other William Safire. Buchannan, a former journalist and a man very much in touch with the growing conservative movement, joined the Nixon team in January of 1966 as a writer and researcher served Nixon well during the 1966 campaign. 316 However, it was William Safire, a publicity man, who drafted large parts of the document that Johnson ended up criticizing. Safire had drafted "an open letter to the president" in which Nixon would criticize the plans that Johnson proposed at the Manila conference, at which Johnson stated that all U.S. Forces would be withdrawn if the North Vietnamese would withdrew their forces from South Vietnam. Safire wrote a staunch note in which he criticized the President for not standing up to communist threat in Southeast Asia. Nixon, according to Garment, vetoed the "open letter" format calling it "...too gimmicky, but he agreed with the substance of Safire's draft." After some revisions, they could now see if they could get the document published. The only problem was that nobody needed to publish anything written by Richard M. Nixon, he afterall was still a two time loser and not in high demand. For the first time, however, Richard Nixon's new team came through. William Safire called his old friend Harrison Salisbury, the assistant managing editor of the New York Times and "sold as hard as I ever sold anything in my life..." the next morning the New York *Times* ran the story on the front page causing Johnson to attack Nixon. 317 Richard Nixon in 1966 returned to political relevance. On election night in 1966, Nixon, relaxed in the Drake Hotel in New York and watched as the returns from across the nation, urging his staffers in

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³¹⁵ Garment, 114.

³¹⁶ RN, 271

³¹⁷ Safire, 38.

another room "have another drink on the house, everyone" whenever another race was called. 318 Walter Cronkite interviewed Nixon that night via telephone during his CBS special. 319 While Republicans across the nation celebrated their victories, Richard Nixon emerged as the real winner of the 1966 midterm elections.

What did Nixon's success mean for his new campaign organization? It meant that Team Nixon had passed the first test on their way to the candidacy in 1968. Nixon had for the first time in his political career operated completely without any assistance by the Republican Party. If Nixon wanted another shot at the Presidency in 1968, he had to prepare himself for not receiving any support from the party at least during the early crucial stages of the primaries. In 1966, the Party insiders in Washington did not pull any strings, instead it was his men and women who pulled off the first step in Nixon's comeback and brought him from the oblivion back to relevance, with a strategically placed note in the *New York Times* and Lyndon Johnson's ill temper. However, what was missing from all the talent that Nixon surrounded himself with was a leader, a leader who could manage these characters and would make sure that Nixon would focus on delivering the message in 1968, rather than micromanaging his campaign. During the year of 1967, John Newton Mitchell emerged as the leader that would lead team Nixon into the election year of 1968.

1967 served as a crucial year for Richard Nixon's road to the White House. Two events transpired before candidate Nixon even formally announced that he sought after the Republican nomination in 1968, events that contributed to a smarter strategy and better staff in 1968. On January 1, 1967, Nixon's law firm merged with the firm of Caldwell, Trimble, and Mitchell,

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³¹⁸ Garment, 115.

³¹⁹ Garment, 115.

which specialized in municipal bonds. ³²⁰ This law firm merger brought John Mitchell into the life of Richard Nixon. Furthermore, in June 1967, H.R. Haldeman sent a memorandum to Nixon which laid the groundwork to developing a new campaign strategy for 1968. ³²¹

Mitchell earned admiration from Richard Nixon because of his "instinctive talent" for politics. 322 Mitchell's job included dealing with local governments in regards to bond issues. Mitchell's clients consisted of state governments and cities. 323 Ex-Nixon rival Nelson Rockefeller sought the services of Mitchell when he tried to raise \$2.2 billion through bonds in order to improve metropolitan transportation in the state of New York. 324 Nixon admired Mitchell's ability to bring success to his clients, especially when the odds did not favor the client. The state of Wisconsin sought to build new dormitories for their state university, but the state constitution did not allow for the state to go deeper in debt than \$250,000; Mitchell subsequently drafted a law that would allow the state of Wisconsin to raise the money by "legal subterfuge." Nixon soon became friends with his newest law partner and after a few months, Nixon turned to Mitchell "for advice and counsel on political matters." Mitchell provided insight and a connection into the political world, while still being a businessman first. Mitchell would take on the task to manage the campaign for Richard Nixon in 1968.

On January 7 and 8, 1967, Nixon held a meeting at the Waldorf Towers in New York City. Here, Nixon started to build a political staff that could secure him the Republican nomination in 1968. Nixon brought in Raymond K. Price, Jr., a journalist for the *New York*

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³²⁰ RN, 279.

³²¹ RN, 303.

³²² RN, 279.

³²³ White, *1968*,53.

³²⁴ White, *1968*,53.

³²⁵ White, 1968,53.

³²⁶ RN, 27.

Herald Tribune. 327 Price served as Nixon's personal speechwriter and idea man. 328 Moreover, Nixon hired Dwight Chapin as a personal aide. Chapin previously worked as an advertising executive, and worked under H.R. Haldeman during the 1962 campaign. 329 Nixon started to plan his strategy at the Towers; he planned on taking a six-month moratorium, so that while the other presidential candidates sought the nomination, Nixon remained absent from the scene. Nixon imagined that candidates like George Romney would take the heat from the media while Nixon stood on the sidelines "quietly planning" his grand entrance into the race of a lifetime. 330

Another crucial event took place in 1967. Nixon received a memorandum from H.R. Haldeman, which laid out the strategy the campaign used in the election of 1968. Haldeman wrote Nixon that if he ever decided to run again, his campaign should "move out of the dark ages and into the brave new world of the omnipresent eye." 331 Haldeman argued that a candidate could hold a number of speeches and keep a hectic schedule, but such a strategy proved unsuccessful, as it did with Nixon in 1960. 332 Such an old fashioned strategy would also cause the candidate to "become punchy, mauled by his admirers, jeered and deflated by his opponent's supporters and paid troublemakers, misled by the super-stimulation of one frenzied rally after another."333 Haldeman clearly had spent time analyzing the mistakes made during the 1960 race, and had found the root for Nixon's success during the early days of his political career.

Haldeman's memorandum served as the groundwork for the development of the "Man in the Arena" strategy. 334 Nixon's '68 staff had all studied clips of the candidate in 1960. The staff

³²⁷ RN, 279.

³²⁸ RN, 279. ³²⁹ RN, 279.

³³⁰ RN, 303.

³³¹ RN, ,303.

³³² RN, ,303.

³³³ RN, 303. ³³⁴ RN, ,303.

noticed that Nixon performed at his best in spontaneous situations. A staple technique of Nixon's early political campaigns, as he used the question and answer format until the 1952 presidential campaign. The Nixon campaign thereby developed a strategy that placed the candidate in controlled spontaneous situations. Nixon would stand on a stage with no podium surrounded by citizens and sometimes local reporters.³³⁵ The citizens would then ask Nixon questions. What Haldeman proposed was a perfectly staged campaign event that played to Nixon's strength.

By the end of 1967, Richard Nixon returned to the *modus operandi*. Nixon surrounded himself with people who wanted to see Nixon win and were far removed from the political spectrum. Nixon in his own worldview admired these kinds of people. After all, the same type of people helped him succeed during the early years of his political campaign. Nixon, moreover, trusted these men, he trusted them because they stood by him when nobody else gave him a look, they did not come to Nixon at the height of his career, but at the absolute lowest point. It was this undying trust in his men that would ultimately lead to Nixon's resignation from office. Above all, these men taught Nixon the most important lesson for the 1968 campaign. Nixon no longer needed the Republican Party. Instead, Nixon and his men moved independently without much party support in order to secure the Republican nomination for president. During the years 1962 to 1967, Nixon learned that he could remain a strong force in politics even though his party had long ignored his relevance. On the afternoon of February 2, 1968, at the Holiday Inn Hotel in Manchester, New Hampshire, Nixon threw his hat in the race and announced that "gentleman, this is not my last press conference." 336 Richard Nixon would enter the 1968 campaign with men who were dedicated to seeing Nixon win, who understood the candidate's strengths and weaknesses, and who developed a campaign that would secure victory. The years 1962 to 1967

³³⁵RN,304.

³³⁶ RN, 297.

had seen Nixon come back from incredible defeat. The next four years were going to be incredibly victorious for Nixon; however, after he achieved victory in 1968 and 1972 he would suffer his biggest defeat. This victory would secure Nixon's downfall. Nixon's victories in 1968 and 1972 and his downfall are the focus of the next chapters.

CHAPTER 6

The Recrudescence of the Modus Operandi

When Richard Nixon announced his candidacy for the Republican presidential nomination in February 1968, he must have known that he could not afford any mistakes. His candidacy was still too fragile, given that he lost his previous two campaigns. Most of Nixon's momentum was based upon the excellent results that came out of the midterm elections held in 1966, in which he actively campaigned for entrenched Republican candidates and even got into a proverbial shouting match with President Johnson. Nixon admitted in his memoirs that he knew that he needed to prove to the Republican Party that he could win in 1968. Team Nixon, made up out of the individuals who surrounded Nixon since 1962, solved the issue of rehabilitating Nixon's image as a successful political campaigner through the primaries and all but sealed the nomination before the start of the convention, which was held in Miami in August 1968. It is important to analyze Nixon's 1968 presidential campaign within the larger context of Nixon's previous campaigns as the 1968 campaign made sure to play to the candidate's strengths more than any other campaign previously. Richard Nixon's 1968 campaign represents the ultimate exercise of the *modus operandi*.

Nixon's campaign for the nomination started in Manchester, New Hampshire.

Throughout the months leading up to the convention, the goal of the Nixon campaign was to secure as many delegates as possible and thus show the Republican establishment, that still feared a Nixon nomination, that the former vice-president remained more than capable of leading the party into the fall election season. The Nixon campaign through a connection at *Time* received a list of quotes by prominent Republican politicians commenting on a potential Nixon nomination. The "raw file of the correspondents' copy" included, for example, quotes by Edward

³³⁷ Nixon,*RN*, 297.

Brooke, a prominent Republican Senator, stating that "the stigma of being a loser still stay[ed] with him [Nixon]" and that if Nixon managed to capture the Republican nomination "it wouldn't be a contest in '68- it would be a giveaway." Nixon knew he needed to win in order to silence those critical of his ability. Before analyzing the fall campaign, three events need to be examined in order to better understand Nixon's supreme primary campaign organization that secured him the nomination: The New Hampshire and Oregon primaries played a pivotal role in Nixon's road to the nomination in 1968, Nixon's trip to a meeting of the southern Republican State chairmen in May of 1968, because the meeting assured him the support of the Republicans across the south, and the convention and the nomination will be analyzed as it represents the thoroughness, effectiveness, and professionalism of Team Nixon in 1968. Above all, however, one must gain an appreciation for the tumultuous times in which Nixon ran in order to appreciate how the campaign successfully exploited the fear, frustration, and desperation of the American electorate in 1968.

Nixon focused on the issue of Vietnam during the primary campaign. In 1968, Nixon wanted to convey to Americans that he could end the war that consumed more and more blood and treasure. Nixon had ample reasons to invoke the war on the campaign trail in 1968 as the situation in Vietnam got progressively worse. In January 1968, the North Vietnamese's armed forces together with the Viet Cong, launched a sudden and surprise attack against multiple military targets across South Vietnam known as the Tet offensive. Although largely a military defeat for the North Vietnamese, the attack signaled for Americans that the United States was not winning the war. Many U.S. military bases were attacked, inside South Vietnam, which previously seemed impenetrable. The images on the news of dead G.I.s became more frequent as the war escalated even further in 1968. On top of the media showing the gruesome footage of

³³⁸ Safire, 46.

America at war, Walter Cronkite went on a fact-finding mission to Vietnam to see the war for himself. Cronkite was a man many Americans trusted. As the host of CBS's Evening News, Cronkite was in living rooms across the country. Walter Cronkite, who once claimed he was impressed with the efforts in Vietnam, presented a different story on the evening news. Cronkite on February 27, 1968, "concluded his evening news broadcast with a graphically illustrated, personal report on the recent North Vietnamese Tet offensive." Cronkite hinted to his audience that he thought the United States should withdraw from Vietnam. This report prompted President Johnson to supposedly tell one of his aides, "If I've lost Cronkite, I've lost Middle America."

The Nixon campaign in 1968 managed to incorporate the national mood into the campaign. Nixon actively talked about the Vietnam War on the campaign trail, although many journalists were furious at him for not offering a specific plan out of the war or examples on how to solve the war, he kept on mentioning the war. Team Nixon, however, ran a campaign suited to the candidate's strengths and one of his strengths in previous campaigns was to not offer many specifics, but instead incorporate the national mood into his campaigns. In 1968, this meant channeling the voices of many Americans that demanded peace in Vietnam. Nixon knew better than to offer concrete proposals because such proposals only would have tied his hands in case he won the presidency. Furthermore, as a candidate, he could not rely on the same intelligence briefings as Lyndon Johnson. The end, Nixon was asking the primary voters to "take on faith" in his "ability to end the war." Thus, he regularly promised voters "new leadership will

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³³⁹ Royce J.Ammon, *Global television and the shaping of world politics: CNN, Telediplomacy, and Foreign Policy* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2001), 59.

³⁴⁰ Ammon, 59.

³⁴¹ Mark Kurlansky *1968: The Year that Rocked the World* (New York: Random House Paperbacks, 2005), 61.

³⁴² Nixon, *RN*, 298.

³⁴³ Nixon, *RN*, 298.

end the war and win the peace in the Pacific."³⁴⁴ Like two-decades before, in his last independently managed race, against Helen Gahagan Douglas for a seat in the United States Senate, Nixon managed to look like a solid alternative in comparison to his opponent. President Johnson had seemingly lost American's faith in ending the war. Nixon reignited their faith that a solution to the quagmire in Indochina could be possible. As Nixon speechwriter, William Safire later wrote, "People wanted hope, and there was nothing wrong in promising to do what he intended to do."³⁴⁵

The turning point for the early Nixon campaign came in March 1968. Three things transpired that further assisted not only Nixon's nomination in August, but also a potential victory in November. Nixon's chief rivals for the Republican nomination were Nelson Rockefeller, Ronald Reagan, and George Romney. At first, however, only Romney stood in the way of a Nixon nomination. Rockefeller, only later, would announce his intention to seek the nomination. The Nixon campaign, however, kept an close eye on Nelson Rockefeller. National Gallup polling indicated long before the first primary that Nixon led Rockefeller by fourteen percent and Romney by forty percent. Ale Nonetheless, Romney and Rockefeller fought to prevent Nixon from receiving the nomination. The Romney campaign, managed by former Nixon board member and veteran of the 1960 campaign Leonard Hall, never got off to a good start. Ale Romney did not even wait until the votes were counted in the first primary in New Hampshire to quit the race. Ale Romney, however, made no secret about his support for Nelson Rockefeller in the race for the nomination when he threw his weight behind him after his exit from the race.

³⁴⁴ RN, 298.

³⁴⁵ Safire, 48.

³⁴⁶ RN 297

³⁴⁷ White, *1968*, 267.

³⁴⁸ "Governor Romney Quits" *The Pittsburgh Press* 29, February, 1968 18.

primary almost unopposed.³⁴⁹ Entering and winning the primaries was the early focus of the campaign. However, the Nixon campaign still feared an entry by New York Governor Nelson Rockefeller and, thus continued, with their strategy of shoring up delegates thru the primaries. Rockefeller remained Nixon's nemesis inside the Republican Party.

On March 12, 1968, Richard Nixon won the New Hampshire primary. 350 While Nixon continued to impress Republican voters, the Democrats grabbed the headlines that evening when Eugene McCarthy, senator from Minnesota, managed to cut into the lead of incumbent President Johnson in the Democratic primary. 351 At 8:45 pm, Nixon made his way to a second-floor room in his headquarters in New York to address his supporters on the victory in New Hampshire. Nixon called the primary results "the first referendum on Lyndon B. Johnson" and boldly predicted victory in November. 352 While certainly the New Hampshire primary was the first voter referendum on Lyndon B. Johnson, Nixon could not have known that it was also the last referendum for the man who first took the oath of office as President of the United States after John F. Kennedy's assassination, and he went on to crush Barry Goldwater in the 1964 election. McCarthy made the incumbent vulnerable and Johnson's stronghold on the Democratic Party was badly damaged. With the situation in Vietnam seemingly unsolvable, outflanked by his own party and his popularity on the decline, aided by the announcement that Robert Kennedy challenged him for the Democratic nomination, Lyndon Johnson in an unprecedented move announced on March 21, 1968, that he would not seek or accept the nomination of his party to seek reelection in November. Nixon did not even know that Johnson made the announcement,

³⁴⁹ RN 299.

³⁵⁰ White, *1968*, 173.

³⁵¹ RN 299

Robert Semple Jr, "Nixon Forecasts Victory In Fall; Says 'People Don't Want 4 More Years Of Johnson," *The New York Times* 13 March 1968. 1.

because he was traveling back from a campaign stop in Wisconsin. ³⁵³ Reporters at the airport in New York greeted him. As they asked questions regarding Johnson's announcement, Nixon responded that this was the "year of the dropouts." ³⁵⁴ Within a matter of days, Nixon's competition had seemingly been vanquished. Rockefeller entered his name into the race, only to withdraw again. Romney dropped out after his polls showed him clearly behind Nixon. Now, Lyndon Johnson, a man who many regarded as having a lock on the nomination prior to 1968, vowed not to seek reelection. The month of March 1968 seemed, at least to Nixon loyalists, to signal the inevitable; Richard Nixon would win in November of 1968. However, as historian and Nixon biographer Stephen Ambrose wrote, "in the Presidential Campaign of 1968 nothing ever stayed fixed." ³⁵⁵

On April 4, 1968, the campaign season took another unexpected turn. In Memphis, Tennessee, civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated. Within hours of the assassination, riots broke out across the United States. The Nixon campaign now needed to evaluate how they would handle this delicate situation. For Nixon, this meant deciding whether to attend the funeral of the slain civil rights leader. Within the Nixon camp, there was a serious debate about Nixon making the trip to Atlanta to pay his respect to Dr. King. Speechwriter William Safire reminded Nixon of "a painful moment in the 1960 campaign, when Jackie Robinson, a supporter of Nixon for President, came to him and pleaded that he at least telephone Dr.King, who had just been jailed." Nixon knew that "in the long run, politicians who try to capitalize on this [King's Funeral] could be hurt." Nixon, broke with his campaign manager,

³⁵³ RN, 300.

³⁵⁴ RN, 301.

³⁵⁵ Ambrose, Nixon Vol.2., 157.

³⁵⁶ Ambrose, Nixon Vol.2., 150.

³⁵⁷ Safire, 48.

³⁵⁸ Ambrose, *Nixon Vol.2.*,150.

John Mitchell, who, according to William Safire, voiced his opinion "probably" against the visit, and went to Atlanta on April 7th under the condition that "there will be no grandstanding." ³⁵⁹ Nixon did not march in the procession. 360 However, what came out of the King funeral and the subsequent riots was more than just a ceremonial message. The riots that raged across the nation added a new message to the campaign rhetoric and added a new facet to the overall strategy. Restoring "law and order" in the country would become a prominent theme on the campaign trail for Richard Nixon. For two weeks after King's assassination, Nixon canceled "all political activity."³⁶¹ Nixon returned to the campaign trail and used the "Man in the Arena Strategy" to its full perfection when he met with the American Society of Newspaper Editors on April 19, 1968. 362 The question and answer session was so successful that it drew the praise of Dwight Eisenhower who wrote to Nixon, "I applaud your Q and A. format- it gives you opportunity for spontaneity, humor, and hard hitting observations." 363 Nixon's meeting with the ASNE was a success, and best illustrates the effectiveness of the "Man in the Arena Strategy" in 1968. Nixon during the meeting "got off some quips, challenged Bobby Kennedy to a debate, and got in a dig or two at Rockefeller."³⁶⁴ On April 30, the campaign took another turn. On the day of the Massachusetts primary, Governor Nelson Rockefeller announced that he reentered the race, although too late to enter any remaining primaries he won the Massachusetts primary that day. 365

In the primaries, however, Nixon kept on winning. Aided by a smooth organization, led by John Mitchell, and run out of New York, Nixon won easily in the primaries. ³⁶⁶ The last test

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³⁵⁹ Ambrose, Nixon Vol.2.,150.

³⁶⁰ Safire, 48. And Ambrose, *Nixon Vol.2.*, 151. For a description of the "Man in the Arena Strategy" see Chapter 4.

³⁶² RN 301-302. And Ambrose, Nixon Vol.2., 151.

³⁶³ RN, 302.

³⁶⁴ Ambrose, *Nixon Vol.2.*,151.

³⁶⁵ RN, 302.

³⁶⁶ Ambrose, *Nixon Vol.2.*, 153 and Mazo and Hess, 308.

that remained was the Oregon primary on May 27, 1968. The last primary in California, Nixon decided to sit out because he did not want to challenge Ronald Reagan's 'favorite son' status in the Golden State. According to Nixon, "Rockefeller and Reagan shared a common strategy," which included slowing down Nixon's momentum by challenging him in Oregon and going to the convention ready for a "final attack" at Nixon's nomination. In Oregon, Nixon "doubled" his efforts and campaigned in the state while Reagan and Rockefeller did not. In the end, Nixon won the Oregon primary quite easily with 73% of the vote. The only thing that could derail a nomination would be a sudden move by Rockefeller and Reagan on the wavering delegates. Nixon's staff orchestrated a movement in order to keep delegates in place. While Nixon's staff could control the delegates, the politicians and strongmen behind them needed some personal attention by the candidate. Thus, Nixon headed to the Deep South where he essentially eliminated any chance that the southern conservatives of the Republican Party would stab him in the back and prevent his nomination.

Nixon, in the eight years he was out of office, learned that the center of power of the Republican Party had drastically shifted. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the subsequent Voting Rights Act of 1965 angered many white southerners who felt that their way of life was under attack from the federal government. The Republican Party fully exploited the anger at the Johnson administration and began chipping away at the solid Democratic South. Already in 1960, many southerners, as previously examined, were weary of a Nixon nomination. Nixon had been an advocate for civil rights and his agreement with Rockefeller in 1960, further justified many of the fears southerners had of a potential Nixon administration. However, Nixon

³⁶⁷ RN, 303.

³⁶⁸ RN, 303.

³⁶⁹ RN, 303.

³⁷⁰ Ambrose, *Nixon Vol.2.*, 155.

understood the Republican Party better in 1968 than he did in 1960. In 1960, Nixon worried about a party split and thus undertook the trip to Nelson Rockefeller in hopes of pleasing the 'Eastern Establishment; when to the contrary he only alienated the Goldwater led conservatives that started to take over the Republican Party. In 1968, Nixon must have known that the last thing he needed at the convention was an outcry by the southern right against his past progressive stance on Civil Rights. He needed to convince the new power of the party that he could be trusted.

On May 31, 1968, Nixon returned to Atlanta, for the first time since Dr. Martin Luther King's funeral, "for one of the most important conferences of the pre-convention period." The Southern Republican state chairmen held a meeting in Atlanta. There, Nixon met with Strom Thurmond, the former Democrat turned Republican, in order to convince him to join his campaign and help in delivering key parts of the south for Nixon. Thurmond agreed on issues of national defense, Nixon "reluctantly went along" with the senator from South Carolina on issues such as tariffs against textile imports from Asia. Thurmond and Nixon disagreed on the Civil Rights act and its implementation. However, while Nixon and Thurmond disagreed on fundamental issues, Nixon later wrote that Thurmond "respected" his "sincerity and candor" and that he knew that Nixon would "not make the South the whipping boy." Nixon promised Thurmond to "slow the pace of integration, especially by resisting forced busing as a solution to racial segregation in the schools.

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³⁷¹ RN, 304.

³⁷² RN, 305.

³⁷³ RN, 305.

³⁷⁴ RN, 305.

³⁷⁵ RN, 305.

³⁷⁶ Ambrose, *Nixon Vol.2.*, 155.

alone managed to hold off Reagan at the convention reassuring "wavering delegations with speeches and private talks." Furthermore, during the final hours before the vote, Thurmond "was on the convention floor with a megaphone, imploring southern delegates not to be fooled into taking Regan and allowing Rockefeller to slip through." Although Crespino perhaps exaggerates Thurmond's power to hold off Reagan, Nixon's campaign played an important role in shoring up and securing delegates, one cannot analyze Nixon's 1968 campaign without discussing the meeting between the candidate and Thurmond. For Nixon as a campaigner, the meeting with Thurmond symbolized more than just shoring up the right flank of the Republican Party. The meeting meant that Nixon regained the awareness necessary for a candidate to make astute political decisions. In 1960, Nixon failed to observe the path that the Republican Party was on, and underestimated the growing movement in support of Barry Goldwater. In 1968, however, Nixon was spot on by pleasing Thurmond and obtaining his support. While Thurmond delivered Republican support in the South for Nixon, his men delivered the rest for him. At the convention, the Nixon campaign staff faced its first great challenge.

Like so many days in 1968, the days leading up to the Republican convention in 1968 were filled with troublesome news, not only for the Nixon campaign, but also for many Americans. Violence in the streets of America and on the battlefields of Vietnam continued. Civil Rights, the anti-war protests, and the fight for leadership within the Democratic Party also continued. Robert F. Kennedy, the brother of John F. Kennedy, former Attorney General, and senator from New York, campaigned for the Democratic nomination. After losing the Oregon primary, Kennedy campaigned in California. The press asked Robert Kennedy if he considered the Californian primary as the "ultimate test", the young New York Senator replied, "That would

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³⁷⁷ Joseph Crespino, *Strom Thurmond's America* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2012), 218.

³⁷⁸ Joseph Crespino, *Strom Thurmond's America* , 218.

be very close to describing how I feel."³⁷⁹ Kennedy won the California primary, and after his victory speech, Kennedy was assassinated. Back in New York, Nixon was asleep. President Eisenhower's grandson, David Eisenhower, awoke him to tell him the news about Kennedy's assassination. ³⁸⁰ The next morning while sitting in his study Nixon's wife delivered the news that Kennedy had passed away, Nixon was deeply saddened by the news and although he and Kennedy were, as Nixon later wrote, "political antagonists, representing wholly different constituencies and philosophies," they shared "as all politicians do, membership in an unchartered club of those who devote their energies, and themselves to public life and public services." For a second time in less than three months, Nixon attended a funeral of one of the titans of postwar America.

For the Nixon campaign, the days before the convention were filled with less heartbreak and more annoyance. After the Robert Kennedy assassination, President Johnson gave all presidential candidates secret service protection. Nixon had to move his office at the New York campaign headquarters, which was housed in the former home of the American Bible Society, because the office was in perfect sight for a potential assassin taking aim from the building across from the headquarters. Herb Klein moved into Nixon's office and "for the first week felt uncomfortable." Besides moving offices at the headquarters, the campaign had to deal with Nelson Rockefeller who continued to challenge the upcoming Nixon nomination. H.R. Haldeman, veteran of the 1960 and 1962 campaign, rejoined the staff in May of 1968. Second Rockefeller launched a \$5 Million dollar advertising campaign in newspapers across

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³⁷⁹ Thurston Clarke, *The Last Campaign: Robert F. Kennedy and 82 Days That Inspired America* (New York: Holt Paperbacks, 2008), 240.

³⁸⁰ RN, 305.

³⁸¹ RN, 306.

³⁸² Safire, 48.

³⁸³ Safire, 48.

³⁸⁴ Ambrose, *Nixon Vol.2.*, 160.

the United States claiming that polls paid for by Rockefeller, showed that he was the only Republican candidate able to defeat the Democratic nominee in November whether it would be Vice-President Hubert Humphrey or Senator Eugene McCarthy. 385 Although the Nixon campaign had technically secured enough delegates, they did not want to risk a sudden uprising by Rockefeller. Anything that could be seen as weakening a Nixon candidacy had to be avoided. Thus, the campaign set up shop in Miami three months ahead of the convention. John Ehrlichman and Bill Timmons "opened a small office in an out-of-the-way building in Miami Beach," within sight of the facilities that housed the Republican National Convention in 1968. 386 Ehrlichman started to negotiate with the convention organization for extra telephones, trailers, and additional facilities inside the hall for the Nixon campaign. ³⁸⁷ The campaign thought that even if Rockefeller or Reagan wanted to stage a coup against Nixon, they would have a proverbial leg up organizational wise. Ehrlichman also secured extra rooms in the Hilton Hotel, the hotel closest to the convention center, in order to prevent infiltration by the press or the Rockefeller and Reagan campaigns, even roping off the fire escapes in order to "safeguard" the top four floors. 388 John Ehrlichman later wrote, that the staff "reserved virtually the entire hotel to house" the staff and contributors to Nixon's campaign. 389 At one point during the process, the Teamsters' Union, who held the mortgage on the hotel, wanted to check-in journalists Drew Pearson and Jack Anderson into the hotel. Haldeman convinced the management not to grant them access. ³⁹⁰ The gigantean effort by the Nixon staff during the pre-convention days allowed the campaign to smoothly settle in and prepare their effort to prevent any wavering delegates

³⁸⁵ Ambrose, *Nixon Vol.2.*, 160.

³⁸⁶ Ehrlichman, 41.

³⁸⁷ Ehrlichman ,41.

³⁸⁸ Ehrlichman, 41.

³⁸⁹ Ehrlichman, 41.

³⁹⁰ Ehrlichman, 41.

from switching their votes. At no other time during the 1968 election, is the professionalism and the dedication of Nixon's staff to the candidate better exemplified than in their efforts during the Republican National Convention.

When delegates arrived at the Miami airport, the Nixon campaign handed them "red, white and blue airline bags" filled with "gifts, guidebooks and Nixon brochures." Nixon's staff previously researched each delegate's travel plan and together with volunteers and a brass band, greeted each delegate with a personalized welcome at the airport gate in Miami. H.R. Haldeman, scheduled pro-Nixon events throughout the day, brought in a live elephant, jugulars, and "legions of beautiful young women who attracted the lenses of the cameras." The Nixon campaign managed to invite the often-flamboyant basketball all-star Wilt Chamberlin to speak for the candidate and to the delegates, and even paid his outlandish hotel bill which included "thousands of dollars of charges from the men's haberdashery at the Hilton." Nixon's staff dedicated themselves to organizing everything. Nixon did not have to worry about a single thing other than accepting the nomination.

While Nixon's staff in 1960, was made up mostly of politicians and beltway insiders. The 1968 staff featured a heavy business background and this helped them in dealing with delegates. The Nixon staff in 1968 treated the delegates like business clients eager to convince them to engage in business with Richard Nixon. Most certainly, the business experience that most of the Nixon staff shared had something to do with this sort of strategy. Above all, however, John Mitchell's command of every unit led to a smooth operation. Rockefeller and Reagan just could

³⁹¹ Ehrlichman, 45.

³⁹² Ehrlichman, 45.

³⁹³ Ehrlichman, 46.

³⁹⁴ Ehrlichman, 46.

not compete with the effort undertaken by Mitchell and the Nixon campaign, not only had they convinced voters during the primaries they also convinced the delegates arriving in Miami that Nixon deserved the nomination and could secure victory for the G.O.P. in November .

At the same time, when Nixon's staff organized everything for the candidate's arrival, Ronald Reagan arrived in Miami. Aided by Clifton White, Reagan's John Mitchell and veteran of Goldwater's 1964 campaign, he began looking for delegates and tried to break Nixon's southern flank. On the day Reagan made it official that he sought the nomination at the Republican convention Richard Nixon flew down to Miami Beach. 395 Rockefeller and Reagan were operating at full force in order to prevent the nomination of Richard Nixon; however, the months of preparation by the Nixon campaign paid off and when Nixon arrived John Mitchell told Nixon "not to worry." Nixon's staff, together with help by the candidate and his trip to visit with Thurmond, shored up enough delegate support to nominate Richard Nixon on the first ballot. The final tally included 692 delegates for Nixon, twenty-five more than the candidate needed. ³⁹⁷ John Mitchell actually convinced Maryland Governor Spiro Agnew to place Nixon's name in nomination and told Nixon that if Agnew "did a good job, he would be among those considered for the second spot on the ticket." ³⁹⁸ Essentially, the Nixon campaign gave their candidate for the vice-presidential slot a tryout. At first, Bob Finch, Nixon's former aide and lieutenant governor of California, and Thurston B. Morton were considered. However, after a review session with John Mitchell Nixon decided to select Spiro Agnew as his running mate.³⁹⁹

Nixon's acceptance speech on August 8, 1968, featured many of the same themes that he used during the primary. Nixon captured the anger and the fear of millions of Americans and

³⁹⁵ RN, 309.

³⁹⁶ RN, 309.

³⁹⁷ RN 311

³⁹⁸ RN, 310.

³⁹⁹ RN, 313.

planted the seeds what would later become the 'Silent Majority.' At one point during the speech, Nixon pointed out that he heard the voice of those Americans nervous about the future, he claimed to have heard "the voice of the great majority of Americans, the forgotten Americans -- the non-shouters; the non-demonstrators." For the first time since 1950, Nixon managed to incorporate the national mood into his campaign message. Nixon also had certain credibility behind his speech aimed at the apparent misguided leadership of the Johnson administration. In 1968, Nixon railed against those in power and promised a brighter future and security. Above all, unlike in 1960, Nixon made no bold promises of campaigning in every state and instead focused the entirety of his speech on the message he took into the fall campaign. Nixon wanted to be seen as a healer, a man who could unite the divided and polarized country. Richard Nixon entered the fall campaign of 1968 with a solid organization, a strong message, and a candidate ready to win. From August to November 1968, the Nixon campaign became the ultimate exercise of the *modus operandi*.

In 1968, the Nixon campaign featured a more conventional organization. At the top of the command chain, like in so many of his past campaigns, stood one campaign manager, John Newton Mitchell. He directed the campaign in 1968 from an office in New York City. Although Mitchell had never managed a campaign before, he soon garnered the trust of not only Nixon, but also of the veterans of some of Nixon's past campaigns. Herbert Klein later recalled that although at first he was skeptical of Mitchell, through conversations he realized "that Mitchell was stronger and understood more of the realities of national politics than I had anticipated." In September 1968, *The New York Times* published a profile of Nixon's campaign staff. Richard

⁴⁰⁰ Richard M. Nixon: " Address Accepting the Presidential Nomination at the Republican National Convention in Miami Beach, Florida, August 8, 1968, edited by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, The American Presidency Project. http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=25968. (accessed December 5, 2012) ⁴⁰¹ Klein. 13.

Reeves, the author of the article, described John Mitchell as a "big balding 54 year-old who looks like a Wall Street version of comedian Paul Ford."402 Reeves captured the business-like atmosphere that Mitchell brought to Nixon's campaign organization and remarked on how Nixon's staffers did not sound or look like politicians. 403 Whenever a campaign staffers ran into any troubles, they talked to John Mitchell who could find a solution to any problem. 404 Often times, Mitchell fixed the problem himself. 405 Mitchell also reduced the influence of former Nixon allies who wanted to help on the campaign. Mitchell did not want any politicians involved in executing the campaign. John Mitchell made a point when he told Reeves that there are no politicians on the campaign team, because "politicians are always after self-status" and that his campaign remained solely "interested in the candidate." Subsequently, the campaign staff represented everything that Nixon did not have in 1960, a team dedicated not to the Republican Party, but to Richard Nixon. Mitchell disliked Bob Finch, a veteran of the 1960 campaign, who came on board because of the friendship he shared with Richard Nixon, because of his illadvised comment to the press at the end of the campaign in which he suggested that President Johnson's bombing halt over Vietnam was only undertaken to help Democratic presidential candidate Hubert Humphrey. 407 Weeks of careful campaigning could have been derailed if Johnson all of sudden involved himself in the race. Mitchell, like Nixon, served in the Navy during WWII and served as the commander of PT boat squadrons in the Pacific. Mitchell served as John F. Kennedy's commander but never made personal acquaintances with the future president, because Kennedy was one of many junior officers he had to deal with on a daily

⁴⁰² Richard Reeves, "Nixon's Men are Smart but No Swingers", *The New York Times* 29 September, 1968, 28.

⁴⁰³ Reeves, 29.

⁴⁰⁴ Safire, 264.

⁴⁰⁵ Safire, 264.

⁴⁰⁶ Reeves, 29.

⁴⁰⁷ Finch, 314.

basis. 408 Mitchell now served as the commander of a campaign that partially molded itself after Kennedy's 1960 presidential campaign in order to achieve the same goal. Herbert Klein noticed that the campaign organization "borrowed strategy on timing from the Kennedy effort of 1960" and "added other communications techniques which were ahead of their time and provided a modern example for varied campaigns of the seventies." Klein noted that the campaign organization "also indicated to the astute observer the way Nixon later operated from the White House." However, while there were multiple divisions fighting for Richard Nixon's reelection in 1972 they were disjointed and operated independently from one another. In 1968, Mitchell reigned over each division.

Nixon's 1968 campaign featured four coordinated divisions. All orders came from John Mitchell. The fundraising division was headed by Maurice Stans whose offices were setup away from the other offices so that he would not get caught up in the "day-by-day hurdles and demands of the election drive." The fundraising division had orders from Mitchell to raise 1 million dollars and did so in "record pace." The strategic division focused on polling and determined the key states the candidate should campaign in. John Mitchell led the strategic division and unlike in 1960 the Nixon campaign in 1968 pinpointed key states that the candidate should campaign in. 413 Other states were thrown to the side as either considered as a lock for Nixon or as won by one of the other two candidates. 414 John Mitchell also oversaw the creative division, which dealt with the candidate's speeches, research, television, and general public relations. Throughout the years leading up to the 1968 election, Nixon hired talented writers and

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⁴⁰⁸ Reeves, 28.

⁴⁰⁹ Klein, 16.

⁴¹⁰ Klein, 16.

⁴¹¹ Klein, 17.

⁴¹² Klein, 17.

⁴¹³ Klein, 17.

⁴¹⁴ Klein, 17.

creative thinkers for his campaign. While Mitchell was far removed from giving creative advice, he served as the gatekeeper to what kind of situations or information the candidate would be exposed to. Most importantly, Mitchell wanted people to know their place in the chain of command. Whenever Richard Whalen, the author of *Founding Father*, a biography of John F. Kennedy's father Joe Kennedy, offered to advise Nixon on an area he specialized in, Mitchell quickly dismissed the writer and Whalen quit the campaign. ⁴¹⁵ By serving as the gatekeeper, Mitchell and Nixon avoided the convolution of opinions that Nixon received during the 1960 campaign. Certainly, Mitchell must have read or heard about the chaotic events that took place at the University Club during the months leading up to the 1960 election, where disorganization reigned and the candidate was exposed to a multitude of opinions in regards to which way the campaign should go. ⁴¹⁶

One division that Mitchell technically oversaw but had limited control over was the travel division. The travel division was the most important division of the 1968 campaign. After all, Nixon's schedule in 1960 remained hectic and unorganized, and Nixon frequently spoke and appeared at rallies with little or no rest. The travel division remained in the control of H.R.Haldeman, and John Ehrlichman served as his assistant. The travel division never let the candidate out of their sight and ensured that Nixon travels on the campaign trail went smoothly. The 1960 campaign exhausted Nixon and this led to many of his ill-fated decisions and less than stellar performance on the campaign trail. Haldeman told Theodore White that during the 1960 election the campaign put Nixon out there "sick and under medication" and then proceeded to run "his tail off." Haldeman wanted to avoid this scenario and under all circumstances wanted

⁴¹⁵ Safire, 59.

⁴¹⁶ See Chapter 3.

⁴¹⁷ Klein, 18.

⁴¹⁸ White, 1968, 154.

than one thing a day, you make a mistake."⁴¹⁹ Haldeman essentially adopted the strategy that always suited Nixon well. Since his early days of running for the House of Representatives or the Senate, Nixon needed rest between his campaign stops. Haldeman secured rest and the wellbeing of the candidate. Haldeman also looked out for Nixon's image while on the road. When chaos erupted at the 1968 Democratic National Convention, Haldeman prevented Nixon from going on television that evening, fearing that the image of Nixon should not appear in the same newscast as images of the riots in Chicago. ⁴²⁰

The Democrats in 1968 nominated Vice President Hubert Humphrey as their candidate. Haldeman knew that Humphrey, as an incumbent, enjoyed certain advantages in regards to travel and communications. H.R. Haldeman made it his mission to match the White House in regards to traveling and communications. Haldeman equipped the chartered campaign plane named *Tricia*, the name of Richard Nixon's younger daughter, with state of the art communications equipment including teletype machines, a Xerox machine, which Herb Klein called the "magic carpet," and various phone lines. Haldeman, furthermore, made sure that the press plane named *Julie*, the name of Richard Nixon's older daughter, also featured expensive equipment. During the 1968 election, Theodore White wrote that when a reporter left the Nixon campaign in order to join the Humphrey campaign if felt "as if leaving a well-ordered and comfortable mansion for a gypsy encampment." John Ehrlichman assisted Haldeman in the effort on organizing Nixon's campaign stops.

⁴¹⁹ White, *1968*, 154.

⁴²⁰ White, *1968*, 374.

⁴²¹ Klein, 19.

⁴²² White,*1968*, 381.

The creative division only ranks slightly behind the travel division in importance. It has been often noted that Nixon conquered television in 1968. Although, as previously mentioned, many of the Nixon TV specials had their roots in previous campaigns. The television staff went above and beyond in their effort to show the candidate in a positive light on national television. As early as the summer of 1967, the television group which included Len Garment and Ray Price decided that they would try to translate the 'Man in the Arena' strategy to television by putting together panels of citizens asking the candidate questions and broadcasting these sessions on local television. 423 The group also recruited Harry Treleaven, a veteran of the George H.W. Bush campaign for congress in Texas, to help them in their endeavor. 424 Furthermore, Roger Ailes, whom Nixon met on the set of *The Mike Douglas Show*, joined the campaign television division. 425 The division clearly showed a keen awareness of Nixon's strengths as a campaigner. Long statements were barred and instead Nixon appeared in his element debating audience members and voicing his opinion on national issues in quick segments. Ailes, according to Garment, created the setting for the segments and "combined elements of informality with distance and suspense."426

The organization of the 1968 campaign shows how far Nixon had advanced since his defeats in 1960 and 1962. The organization, furthermore, shows the competence and the keen awareness of the people who surrounded Nixon in 1968. Above all, Nixon's 1968 campaign organization featured many of the same elements that won Nixon many previous elections. Team Nixon in 1968 had a clear command structure, a cast of men dedicated to the candidate and a supreme understanding of the candidate's strength and weaknesses. While Nixon's organization

⁴²³ Garment, 130.

⁴²⁴ Garment, 131.

⁴²⁵ Garment, 131.

⁴²⁶ Germent, 133.

vastly improved since 1960, his overall campaign message also improved. Aided by the horrific events of the late 1960s, Nixon regained his ability to capture the mood of the nation and used it to the full advantage during the 1968 campaign in order to win the election. While appearance and organization mattered, the substance of the campaign message put Nixon over the top. Once again aided by his men, Nixon strategically divided, conquered, and polarized the nation's electorate in the fall of 1968.

One cannot analyze the 1968 election without discussing the issues of the Vietnam War, and civil unrest at home affected the campaign and the candidates. Nixon's speeches talked about winning the peace in Vietnam and restoring law and order on the streets. Once again, Nixon received the opportunity to tie his opponent to larger national issues. Hubert Humphrey, Nixon's main competitor, became vice-president under Lyndon Johnson after the 1964 election. Thus, Humphrey served in government during the chaos and tragedy that plagued the late 1960s. Nixon knew that he could essentially do the same to Humphrey as Kennedy did to him in 1960, lambast him and tie him to the failures of the past. Nixon's three messages on the campaign trail were peace with honor in Vietnam, a reinstitution of law-and-order, and serving as a unifier of a divided nation.

The United States had been involved in Vietnam in one way or another since the Truman administration. The United States made it its mission to contain communism at home and abroad in the immediate postwar years. Eisenhower's, Kennedy's and especially Lyndon Johnson's administration escalated the war. After the Tet offensive, at the end of January 1968, the situation in Vietnam grew dire. Robert McNamara, stepped down from his job as Secretary of Defense to take a job with the World Bank, his successor Clark Clifford told Johnson that

Vietnam had developed into a "sink-hole." ⁴²⁷ The Johnson administration quickly reconsidered their strategy of funneling more and more troops into Southeast Asia and Johnson "reluctantly agreed" to disengage from the war in Vietnam. ⁴²⁸ As the American people grew impatient with what eventually evolved into America's longest war, Johnson made his announcement not to seek reelection in March of 1968. Richard Nixon even before Johnson's announcement had made Vietnam a point of emphasis during the primary campaign. Although none of the three men running for president opposed the war, Nixon gained an edge on the war issue. As Historian H.W. Brands notes, "by hinting at a new strategy, which he declined to detail on grounds that it would unpatriotically undercut the president." ⁴²⁹ While Humphrey also sought peace, his rallies where often the target of anti-war protests. Nixon did not have to deal with Republican doves attacking him and thus he could propose strategy regarding Vietnam without receiving any party backlash. Nixon's strategy of offering few to no details and constantly promising that if he America trusted him he would bring peace worked as Humphrey had trouble disassociating himself from the seemingly incapable Johnson administration and its handling of the war effort.

During the 1968 election, the issue of restoring "law and order" in the United States was bigger than the issue of the Vietnam War. Nixon drew stark contrast to Humphrey on the issue of restoring peace at home. Nixon's ability to appeal on an emotional level to the electorate aided him in his past campaigns. Nixon benefitted from the events that took place in 1968. The American people in 1968 not only witnessed the assassinations of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Robert Kennedy, but also were gripped by the images from of riots and protests that swept across the United States. The three candidates outlined their own strategy on how to restore law and order in the United States. *The New York Times* in October of 1968 published an article outlining

⁴²⁷ H.W. Brands, *American Dreams: The United States Since 1945*, (New York: Penguin Books, 2010), 157.

⁴²⁸ Brands, 157.

⁴²⁹ Brands, 165.

each individual strategy. Nixon constantly lambasted the Federal Government on the campaign trail and held it responsible for the civil unrest in the streets. Nixon promised that as president he would seek community help in enforcing laws, and he called for a nationwide volunteer effort in which private citizens and business cooperate in order to solve the racial tensions that plagued the country. 430 Nixon also, like he did with the issue of Vietnam, played on the hope of the American electorate and promised to improve the situation of not only the poor, but also black Americans. 431 The creative division also knew that Nixon could hammer away at the civil unrest seemingly induced by the actions of the Johnson administration. William Safire worked in the rate of robberies and murders that took place into Nixon's speeches and even worked in the phrase "...one rape every seven minutes." ⁴³² If Nixon played on the hopes of the American electorate, he also played on their deepest fears. Nixon instructed his staff in the final weeks of the campaign to "double up" and "directly zero in on the difference between" the two candidates. 433 On the trail, this translated into a simple formula in which Nixon talked about law and order, inflation, and foreign policy. Nixon controlled the message of law and order as Humphrey continued to propose massive expenditures by the federal government in order to deal with the crime in the streets. 434 The American people saw Lyndon Johnson's Great Society falling apart. It remained unlikely that Humphrey's message had much appeal to the now frightened and disillusioned voter who witnessed the protests, riots, and destruction on their television screens. Nixon, once again, struck the right balance of fear and hope and gave the American electorate a clear choice. Once again, the strategy of 'us versus them' worked perfectly.

⁴³⁰ Max Frankel "Whose Law and Order?", The New York Times, 13 October, 1968, E2.

⁴³¹ Frankel, E2.

⁴³² Safire, 82.

⁴³³ Safire, 78.

⁴³⁴ Frankel, E2.

As with all of the events during the 1968 election campaign, the final days of the campaign took an interesting turn. With three weeks left until Election Day, Nixon took a brief break from campaigning and flew to Key Biscayne in order to discuss strategy with John Mitchell and the inner circle of the campaign staff. Unlike 1960, where the candidate constantly traveled due to his ill-advised promise of campaigning in every state, Nixon actually took a break. Nixon felt confident that the campaign was headed into the right direction. The Nixon campaign had raised more money than the Humphrey campaign and the vice-president remained behind in the polls. Nixon, however, worried about Lyndon Johnson appearing on the campaign trail and actively campaigning for Humphrey. On October 8, 1968, Johnson gave Humphrey a slight boost by giving a radio address in favor of the candidate. Nixon knew that Johnson still yielded massive political power and that the president reserved a keen dislike for him. The campaign staff worried as well about a potential Johnson intervention.

The Nixon campaign especially feared a potential bombing-halt in North Vietnam.

Combined with peace talks initiated by Johnson, Nixon's campaign took proactive steps in preventing such an event from happening. If Johnson could take the issue of Vietnam off the table in the final weeks of the campaign, Nixon could potentially lose the election. In the meantime, Humphrey also continued to climb up in the polls, as more and more disenfranchised Democrats realized that their chances of winning with third-party candidate George Wallace remained slim at best. Wallace had remained a force, especially with disenfranchised southern democrats and blue-collar workers. On the trail, Nixon advised voters that if they casted a ballot for Wallace they wasted their vote. Instead of following Nixon's suggestion to vote Republican,

⁴³⁵ Ambrose, *Nixon Vol.2.*, 199.

⁴³⁶ Ambrose, Nixon Vol.2., 199.

⁴³⁷ Ambrose, *Nixon Vol.2.*, 200.

⁴³⁸ Ambrose. *Nixon Vol.2.*, 200.

many voters started to flock towards the Humphrey camp. ⁴³⁹ On October 31, 1968, just five days before the 1968 presidential election, Johnson initiated a conference call with all three candidates and informed them of his breakthrough with the North Vietnamese leadership. ⁴⁴⁰ Johnson informed the candidates that if he stopped the bombing of North Vietnam the North Vietnamese government promised to engage in peace talks with the South Vietnamese government. After Nixon hung up the phone, he remembered how his "anger and frustration" grew inside of him, and subsequently asked himself if he had "done all this work and come all this way only to be undermined by the powers of an incumbent who had decided against seeking re-election?" ⁴⁴¹ Johnson's announcement sent shockwaves through Nixon's campaign organization. However, the way Nixon and his campaign staff handled the situation shows how committed the campaign was towards winning the election and how it would not stop at nothing even if it meant breaking the law, in order to win.

The Nixon campaign needed to react to President Johnson's proposed bombing halt.

Months of campaigning were on the line and inaction by the campaign could only further accelerate the momentum by the Humphrey campaign. Richard Nixon, in his memoirs, does not elaborate on how the Paris peace talks fell apart. Instead, he offers the more mundane description that "the Democrats' euphoria was dampened on November 2, when President Thieu announced that his government would not participate in the negotiations Johnson was proposing."

According to Nixon, Thieu, the leader of the South Vietnamese government, "fostered the impression that Jonson's plan had been too quickly conceived and too shakily executed."

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⁴³⁹ Ambrose, *Nixon Vol 2.*, 205.

⁴⁴⁰ RN, 322.

⁴⁴¹ RN, 322.

⁴⁴² RN, 328.

⁴⁴³ *RN*, 328.

However, how Thieu arrived at the decision to back away from the peace talks is a far more complex story that entails the viciousness of the Nixon campaign in 1968.

Anna Chan Chennault, the widow of "wartime hero General Claire Chennault," played a part in convincing the South Vietnamese government to back away from the Johnson's administrations proposed peace talks. 444 Chennault, an American citizen since the 1950s, had close ties to many of the powerful in Southeast Asia. 445 She was a close friend of Richard Nixon and cochairman of the Republican Women for Nixon and, together with Mamie Eisenhower as her partner raised \$250,000 for the Nixon campaign. 446 According to historian Stephen Ambrose, John Mitchell called Chennault days before the official announcement of a potential peace conference in order to make sure that Chennault told her friends in the South Vietnamese government that a Nixon administration would propose a better deal. 447 Chennault, subsequently, set out to convince the South Vietnamese government not to pursue negotiations. The Nixon campaign, risked the entire campaign effort with this move, "their feeling on Monday morning before the election was, simply, that if they lost the election, Mrs. Chennault might have lost it for them." 448

The Johnson administration knew of Chennault's actions, but Johnson did not consider the early moves a serious threat. However, when news broke that eleven South Vietnamese senators supported Richard Nixon and repudiated the Paris agreement, Johnson became furious. Ale Nevertheless, Johnson's hands were tied because outing Nixon in public for interfering with the peace process would have meant acknowledging that the FBI tapped the

⁴⁴⁴ White, *1968*, 444-445.

⁴⁴⁵ White, *1968*, 444-445 and Ambrose, *Nixon Vol 2.*, 207.

⁴⁴⁶ Ambrose, *Nixon Vol 2.*, 208.

⁴⁴⁷ Ambrose, *Nixon Vol 2.*, 209.

⁴⁴⁸ White, *1968*, 445.

⁴⁴⁹ White, 1968, 444.

phone of Anna Chennault, who as a citizen enjoyed certain protections under the law. ⁴⁵⁰ The Humphrey campaign faced a similar dilemma because although his staff urged him to out Nixon, Humphrey refused to acknowledge that Nixon himself had any knowledge of Chennault's activities. ⁴⁵¹

The Nixon campaign had not only outmaneuvered the Humphrey campaign, they also outfoxed the White House. The Chennault incident illustrates the aggressiveness of the people surrounding Nixon and furthermore should be seen as evidence of the win at all cost attitude that eventually forced Nixon to step down from the office of the Presidency amidst the Watergate scandal. John Mitchell, H.R.Haldeman, and John Ehrlichman stopped at nothing, not even interfering with international affairs, in order to win election for their man. During the closing days of the 1968 election, Humphrey appeared to inch closer to Nixon in every major poll. 452 Furthermore, Humphrey's campaign got a number of last second donations and actually outspent the Nixon campaign on television. 453 In 1960, Nixon closed the gap on Kennedy in the final week of campaigning, now as the frontrunner he had to hang on to the lead. November 5, 1968 promised to be another long day and night for Richard Nixon.

On November 5, 1968, Nixon's 1968 election campaign officially ended. In all 50 states, Americans went to the polls in order to cast their ballots for Nixon, Humphrey, or Wallace. Richard Nixon could only wait for the results. The electorate had certainly changed since November 1960. Nixon, however, must have known that many of the same people who voted against him then were returning to the polls. On this day in 1968, Richard Nixon would learn if the improvements he made since his ill-advised press conference in 1962 paid off. Nixon had

⁴⁵⁰ Ambrose, *Nixon Vol 2.*, 210.

⁴⁵¹ White, *1968*, 445.

⁴⁵² Safire, 86.

⁴⁵³ RN, 329.

returned to the *modus operandi* in regards to campaign organization and strategy, still there must have been a certain doubt in regards to his chances at winning the election in the back of the candidate's mind. At 7:05 pm, Nixon arrived at the Waldorf Towers in New York City, the exact same building where just a year earlier he and his staff had discussed the strategy leading into the 1968 election. 454 Nixon did not watch the first returns because all televisions were switched off inside his suite. Only Haldeman received permission to disturb the candidate, who remained alone in his suite, whenever major developments occurred. Down the hall from Nixon's suite, John Mitchell remained in control of the campaign operation and analyzed every election result. Mitchell remained in direct contact with all Republican organizations across the United States. 455 As the votes were counted late into the night, Nixon left his suite and gathered his staff to a meeting. 456 An election victory soon seemed likely and Nixon grew more and more confident. At 3:15 am on November 6, Nixon called his staff in for one last meeting. Nixon smoked a cigar, drank beer, and ate a sandwich. Nixon wanted to unwind and talk about the campaign. 457 Six years had passed since Nixon witnessed defeat, eight years since he lost to John F. Kennedy. Victory seemed inevitable. Hubert Humphrey went to bed around the same time Nixon had summoned his staff for one last time. Nixon wanted to wait until the next morning to have his press conference. On November 6, at 12:30 pm Nixon held a press conference proclaiming victory over Humphrey and George Wallace. 458 Nixon won 301 Electoral College votes compared to Humphrey's 191. 459 Nixon captured the popular vote by a little over 500,000 votes

⁴⁵⁴ White, *1968*,455.

⁴⁵⁵ White, *1968*, 457.

⁴⁵⁶ White, *1968*, 458.

⁴⁵⁷ White, *1968*, 459.

⁴⁵⁸ White, 1968, 461.

⁴⁵⁹ Historical Presidential Election Results 1968, U.S. Electoral College, http://www.archives.gov/federal-register/electoral-college/scores.html#1968 (accessed January 29, 2013)

with 31,785,480 votes to Humphrey's 31,275,166. Nixon completed the unthinkable, a gigantic political comeback. The years of preparation paid off and Richard Nixon was finally president.

The 1968 campaign reconfirmed to Nixon if he surrounded himself with the right people and superior organization he remained one-step ahead of his opponents during a campaign. The men of his 1968 campaign provided Nixon with important information, helped Nixon to remain on message, and showed keen awareness of the candidate's strengths and weaknesses. Team Nixon in 1968 provided the candidate with a strategic advantage over his opponents, constantly outsmarting and out organizing anyone who came in the way of a Nixon presidency.

For the past six years, the people surrounding Nixon provided him with assistance in order to maintain power within the political arena. Now, in the White House, Nixon wanted to maintain this advantage. Thus, the Nixon White House concerned itself more with staying in power than using than using the power invested in them by the American electorate to advance and progress the Nation at large. In previous campaigns, those who helped Nixon returned to their previous occupations in the private sector. Often this was out of necessity rather than ill will. The man of the Committee of 100 returned to their occupation in business and maintained Nixon's political power in his district, while he remained in Washington advancing his political standing. Murray Chotiner remained by Nixon's side until he got in trouble.

In 1969, Nixon brought his well-tested campaign machine into the White House. John Mitchell became attorney general, H.R. Haldeman became chief of staff, while John Ehrlichman became special counsel to the President and chief domestic adviser. Many others joined the administration from the campaign, including William Safire, Pat Buchanan, Bob Finch, Herbert

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⁴⁶⁰ Historical Presidential Election Results 1968, U.S. Electoral College, http://www.archives.gov/federal-register/electoral-college/scores.html#1968 (accessed January 29, 2013)

Klein, and Len Garment. The Nixon White House might have been the best-prepared White House in regards to campaigning as the key pieces who secured Nixon the victory in November of 1968 moved with him from the campaign headquarters in New York to 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, D.C. However, this would present special issues once they were in Washington.

CHAPTER 7

The Downfall of the Modus Operandi

In 1972, Richard Nixon made history and became the first president to actively campaign for reelection since Dwight Eisenhower in 1956. However, just two years later Nixon again made history when he was the first president to resign from the office. The downfall of Nixon's administration is well documented. Many of the biographies and historical monographs written about the 37th President pay extensive attention to the story surrounding the break-in at the Democratic National Headquarters at the Watergate Office Building in Washington, D.C. in June 1972. In regards to this work, the issue of Watergate needs to be understood through the prism of Nixon's political campaigns. Regardless of the actual motivations behind the break-in, the break-in occurred because Team Nixon, now in the White House, operated outside of the *modus* operandi. One cannot avoid the issue of Watergate in any analysis of Richard Nixon's career. This work shows that part of the reason for the Watergate break-in stemmed from the disorganization of the 1972 reelection campaign. In Richard Nixon's 1972 reelection campaign, Nixon's campaign organization and strategy morphed into an operation that did not resemble any of his previous campaigns. This chapter examines how the *modus operandi* that Nixon cherished ran amuck and broke apart in the years and months following his inauguration as the 37th President of the United States.

Before one can analyze the campaigns that were fought from inside the White House, one needs to be aware of the general attitude that reigned over Nixon's administration and his closest advisers. An attitude filled with hate, fear, and paranoia crept into the White House and ultimately caused the administration to adapt to a mentality of 'us versus them' when it dealt with the press, public, and those not in favor of a Nixon presidency. Although Richard Nixon

won the 1968 presidential election, he did not win a mandate. In the popular vote, Nixon only garnered 510,314 more votes than Hubert Humphrey did. 461 The segregationist Alabama governor George Wallace still carried most of the Deep South despite Nixon's efforts to play on the racial fears of white Southerners during the campaign. Moreover, Nixon almost saw his entire campaign derailed by President Johnson's efforts, in the final days of the 1968 campaign, to negotiate a bombing halt in the Vietnam War that could have provided serious momentum in favor of Hubert Humphrey. After Nixon's victory, chaos in the streets of America still feverishly raged as the protests against the Vietnam War intensified and the issue of Civil Rights still remained for the largest part unresolved. Throughout Nixon's political career, he remained cynical of Washington D.C. and its inhabitants. This skepticism only increased after Nixon's loss in 1960, in which, for the most part, the Republican Party abandoned him and learned to despise him and casted him off as a bad loser unfit to win the big election. The nation's capital remained filled with 'Franklin Society' types, and those who doubted Nixon's chances at winning in 1968. The Californian political system, in which the political parties had very little influence, made Nixon into an outsider who relied on a very close circle of trusted advisers in regard to political decisions. Ever since 1960, this circle of trusted advisers only became progressively smaller reaching its epitome after Nixon took the oath of office in 1969. Nixon, once again, saw himself as the underdog and an outsider, a man that many Beltway insiders did not respect.

Nixon enjoyed the company of a select few in the Oval Office. In the beginning, it was John Mitchell, H.R. Haldeman, and John Ehrlichman, who had the privileged in having the president's ear. Later during the first year of the administration, Charles Colson would enter this closed circle and managed to emerge as the president's point man on a majority of issues. In

⁴⁶¹ Historical Presidential Election Results 1968, U.S. Electoral College, http://www.archives.gov/federal-register/electoral-college/scores.html#1968 (accessed January 29, 2013)

foreign policy, Nixon's passion since his early days in Congress, Henry Kissinger served as his adviser, and the president essentially took foreign policy out of the State Department. Above all, however, Nixon and his circle did not waste a minute after the inauguration to make sure that everyone knew that the administration had enemies that needed to be dealt with. 'Us versus them,' an attitude that served Nixon well on the campaign trail, quickly infiltrated the White House. Nixon believed he could trust no one outside of his circle. The victory on election night was too narrow, and the victory he worked at least six years to achieve was almost grabbed from him in the final days of the campaign. For Nixon, this meant that the White House should stop at nothing in order to protect himself from ever losing the presidency. This translated into what would later become known as the infamous "Enemies List," a document containing the names of those actively opposing the Nixon administration. In 1969, Nixon's staff already succumbed to the fact that there were people out there who wanted to hurt the president. William Safire later recalled that those who did not support the president, particularly in the press, would be made into villains against whom the Nixon administration would rally their supporters. 462 Ultimately, this rallying cry to identify supporters resulted in the "Silent Majority Speech." However, it did not stop at just policy or speechmaking or rallying the support of millions of Americans and hurling it at those opposed to the president.

Nixon's enemies were fought tooth and nail. In 1969, Nixon approved wire-taps in order to stop leaks to the press. 463 Richard Nixon, furthermore, unbeknownst to his staff, installed a sophisticated recording system in the Oval Office. While all presidents dating back to Franklin Roosevelt used a recording system, Nixon's recording system assured him peace of mind to not be held responsible when he acted on the advice of one his staffers and gave him the opportunity

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⁴⁶² Safire, 308.

⁴⁶³ White, 284, and Safire, 475.

to assign blame when he acted on their advice. Furthermore, the recording system shows that Nixon's vision of who was one of his enemies had blurred in the sense that he now wanted every word from his advisers on the record. The attitude of fear and paranoia that Nixon created and his advisers cherished is important to understand when looking at the campaigns that followed, as it was in part responsible for the infighting between Nixon's staff that actively contributed to the chaotic organization of the 1972 reelection campaign. The president gave the orders to protect him and to keep him in office. He worked too hard to get where he was and those near to him knew it. His closest staff, as always in it for Nixon and not for their own personal gain, would now make it their mission to make sure that he remained in office.

The first test for the new Nixon administration in regard to campaigning came during the 1970 midterm election. The first year and a half of the Nixon administration were plagued by a slow economy, a slower progress towards peace in Vietnam, and continued civil unrest in the streets of America. Throughout the 1968 campaign, Nixon promised peace, prosperity, and the restoration of law and order in his speeches. In 1970, these issues seemed for the most part unresolved. Nixon thus had to campaign for Republican candidates across the nation against the backdrop of student protests across many college campuses and a war that seemed far from over. Nixon, moreover, in his grand strategy to bring an end to the war, looked like he was only escalating the war further. On May 9, 1969, *The New York Times* reported that the Nixon administration expanded the war in Vietnam by ordering additional bombing campaigns into Cambodia. The report based its findings on an unnamed source inside the White House.

⁴⁶⁴ William Beecher, "Raids in Cambodia by U.S. Unprotested; Cambodia raids go unprotested", *The New York Times* 9 May, 1969,1.

further exasperated the growing protest movement among many college campuses. 465 On May 4, 1970, at Kent State University, the protests against the Vietnam War turned bloody when National Guardsmen killed four students and injured eight. 466 The peace, prosperity, and law and order that Nixon promised was nonexistent.

Many of the same issues relevant in 1970 were the same as in 1968. Nixon and his team went back to their strategic playbook for the 1968 campaign and reused the rhetoric of peace with honor and law and order. For Nixon, this presented a prime opportunity. Overall, however, Nixon did not care that much about campaigning for embattled Republicans. Although Nixon wanted a congress that he could work with, he knew that he should use the campaign in 1970 to position himself for his reelection campaign in 1972. For the most part, Nixon's vice-president Spiro Agnew played the role of active campaigner for Republicans during the 1970 midterm election. Nixon, according to Stephen Ambrose, wanted to "stay above the battle" and assume the role that his former boss Dwight Eisenhower played during the midterm elections in the 1950s. He was a single played during the midterm elections in the 1950s.

When Nixon hit the campaign trail in late 1970, he spoke of law and order and relished in the anger the protesters showed towards him. This was all part of a larger strategy that involved realigning the electoral map in the sense that Nixon wanted to unite those who were with him against those who were against him. Previously, in November 1969, the president went on television to address the nation in regards to the war in Vietnam, what later became known as the 'Silent Majority' speech, because that is what Nixon called his supporters, was a direct taunt

⁴⁶⁵ Michael T. Kaufman, "Campus Unrest Over War Spreads With Strike Calls; Editors of 11 College Newspapers Urge Nationwide Walkout to Protest Move In Cambodia and New Bombings Campus Unrest Over War Spreads; Strikes Asked", *The New York Times* 4 May, 1970, 1.

⁴⁶⁶ John Kifner, "Four Kent State Students killed by Troops", *The New York Times* 5 May, 1970, 1.

⁴⁶⁷ Ambrose, *Nixon Vol.2*, 375.

⁴⁶⁸ Ambrose, *Nixon Vol 2.*, 390.

towards those angered at the President. In the speech, Nixon called upon those that were not protesting his decisions but instead remained silent in their support for the President. Towards the end of the speech, Nixon took a direct shot at the protesters by stating, "let us be united for peace. Let us also be united against defeat. Because let us understand: North Vietnam cannot defeat or humiliate the United States. Only Americans can do that." On the campaign trail, Nixon continued to antagonize those who were protesting him and subsequently continued to play the 'us versus them' tactic that so often had helped him in the past. At one point, after a rally in Southern California, which was heavily protested, he climbed on top of his car and struck his signature pose with both arms extended showing the 'v-for-victory sign', one reporter overheard Nixon saying: 'That's what they hate to see." Indeed Nixon was right, soon after Nixon climbed on top of the car rock and eggs were tossed at the president. ⁴⁷¹ Nixon knew what he was doing.

Always with an eye toward the 1972 campaign, it were these kinds of images that showed the American people what had become of the American society, Nixon knew he needed to appeal to those appalled by the sight of a sitting president drenched in eggs and assaulted by rocks.

While Nixon campaigned for his own image, Republicans lost across the country. The Nixon administration had made minimal progress on bringing peace to Vietnam and order to the streets. Republican candidates for the U.S. House and Senate had equally as little to show their respective electorate and could not lean on the achievements of the Nixon administration. The result was a massive repudiation of Republican candidates all across the country. After the election, Democrats continued to maintain the majority in both houses. In the U.S. Senate

⁴⁶⁹ Richard M. Nixon: "Address to the Nation on the War in Vietnam," November 3, 1969, edited by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, The American Presidency Project.

http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=2303. (accessed December 5, 2012)

⁴⁷⁰ Ambrose, *Nixon Vol 2.*, 394.

⁴⁷¹ Ambrose, Nixon Vol 2., 394.

Democrats held fifty-four seats, while Republicans had forty-four seats, with the remaining two seats belonging to independents. ⁴⁷² In the U.S. House, Democrats made the biggest gains on election night and maintained a 255 representatives to 180 representative advantage. ⁴⁷³

After the campaign in 1970, the dynamics dramatically shifted inside the White House. Previously, John Mitchell served as Nixon's point man especially during the campaign for the presidency in 1968. Now Mitchell served as Attorney General and became the major spokesperson for the Nixon administration. As Mitchell adjusted to his new assignments, H.R. Haldeman "became the man in the White House closest to the President." Haldeman enjoyed a certain degree of autonomy and, just as he did during the 1968 campaign, served as the gatekeeper to Nixon. Eventually, Haldeman replaced Mitchell as the main sounding board for the president. 475 However, the Nixon-Haldeman relationship, in which Haldeman enjoyed complete control of whom and what the president would listen to, was relatively short-lived. The arrival of Charles "Chuck" Colson, not only changed the dynamics of the White House, it also changed the configuration of Richard Nixon's campaigns. Nixon's previous campaigns were hard fought and featured dirty tricks; however, they never broke the law to the extent the Nixon campaign in 1972 did. Above all, previous Nixon campaign enjoyed a clear chain of command with one campaign manager at the top. For Nixon's reelection fight in 1972, multiple people formed their own micro campaigns. The neglect by those in charge to properly communicate between the campaigns ultimately ended the modus operandi and caused the events that led to Nixon's resignation.

⁴⁷² John Gray Geer, *Public Opinion and Polling around the World Vol.2*, (ABC-CILO, 2004), 125.

⁴⁷³ John Gray Geer, *Public Opinion and Polling around the World Vol.2*, (ABC-CILO, 2004), 125.

⁴⁷⁴ Ehrlichman, 76.

⁴⁷⁵ Ehrlichman, 79.

Chuck Colson arrived a year after the rest of the Nixon administration moved into the White House. Colson's original duty included serving as an outside liaison for the Nixon White House. Colson served as the spokesperson for Nixon White House for "all the organized constituencies that have an interest in government, going all the way from labor unions to the NAM (National Association of Manufacturers) to the conservationists." However, Colson's duty soon changed, and Nixon "discovered that he'd hired this new fellow who could be called in to take on the rough chores others wouldn't do." Holie others were asked to reduce the size of their staff, Colson's staff was increased with personal approval of the president. Colson, the former lawyer and campaign aide for Massachusetts Senator Leverett Saltonstall, rose up the ranks inside the Nixon White House, which only added to the dangerous mix of jealousy and hatred that already existed between the staff.

After the midterm election in 1970, Nixon and his key staffers met in Key Biscayne, Florida in order to discuss politics. ⁴⁷⁹ At the meeting, Mitchell, Ehrlichman, Haldeman, Finch, and Colson all agreed that the campaign in 1972 needed to operate differently from the 1970 campaign especially from an organizational standpoint. ⁴⁸⁰ John Mitchell, one of the staunchest critics of Nixon's performance in 1970, a campaign that H.R.Haldeman directed, said during the meeting that it felt like Nixon ran for Sheriff. ⁴⁸¹ After Agnew crisscrossed the country and preached law and order, many felt that Nixon in the later months of the campaign only repeated the same message. The group agreed that Nixon in 1972 would run as the president, and like

⁴⁷⁶ Exit Interview with Charles W. Colson, January 12, 1973, transcript, Richard Nixon Presidential Library, http://www.nixonlibrary.gov/virtuallibrary/documents/exitinterviews/colson.php. (accessed December 5, 2012) ⁴⁷⁷ Ehrlichman, 79.

⁴⁷⁸ Ehrlichman, 79.

⁴⁷⁹ Theodore H. White, *The Making of the President 1972*, (New York: Harper Perennial Political Classics, 2010). 48

⁴⁸⁰ White, *1972*, 49.

⁴⁸¹ White, *1972*, 49. And Safire, 271.

Eisenhower in 1952 and 1956, the president remained above petty politicking. One group member recalled to Theodore White "the decision was to get politics the hell out of the White House and across the street." The argument should be made that if things stayed this way, Richard Nixon would have avoided his tragic downfall. Soon thereafter Nixon decided to stay out of the 1972 campaign and "take the advice of nearly all those around me." 483

Things within the campaign organization started to change and the *modus operandi* started to fall apart after the 1970 meeting in Key Biscayne. In previous campaigns, Nixon always offered input and ideas on the strategy. In 1972, Nixon would leave his reelection campaign to his trusted staff. Nixon now trusted the *modus operandi* so much that it ran completely without the candidate. Soon after the meeting in Key Biscayne, The Committee for Re-Election of the President, officially called CRP, but most often referred to as CREEP, was born. The organization featured John Mitchell at the top directing a reelection effort, like in 1968, totally divorced from the Republican Party and its national committee. In addition, a Finance Committee was setup in order to raise the money needed to re-elect the president. During the 1968 campaign, John Mitchell became dissatisfied by the manner his campaign staff spent money on the trail. The staff in 1968, received credit cards in order to pay their expenses; however, the credit cards led to Nixon staffers overspending and after the election, the campaign received, according to Theodore White, \$3,000,000 in credit card bills. 484 Mitchell did not want this to happen again and instead demanded that his staff pay in cash for their expenses, "the campaign would operate, where it could, on cash advances to people sent on specific assignments."485 CREEP, furthermore, featured its own polling and advertisement unit. 486 It

⁴⁸² White, *1972*, 49.

⁴⁸³ Nixon, *RN*, 496.

⁴⁸⁴ White, *1972* , 296.

⁴⁸⁵ White, 1972, 296.

seemed like once again John Mitchell would rule with complete autonomy over Richard Nixon's campaign. This soon changed.

On Saturday June 12, 1971, Tricia Nixon married Edward Cox in the Rose Garden of the White House. After the ceremony Nixon danced for the first time in the White House, and after the guests left, family and close friends stuck around to watch the television specials about the wedding. 487 Nixon later wrote that "it was a day that all of us will always remember, because all of us were beautifully, and simply, happy." ⁴⁸⁸ The wedding of his younger daughter Tricia might have been the last happy day Nixon had in the White House. The next morning, June 13, 1971, Nixon noticed an article in *The New York Times* bearing the headline "Vietnam Archive: Pentagon Study Traces 3 Decades of Growing U.S. Involvement."489 Nixon read the story but did not care too much for it. After all, it did not concern his administration because the revealed documents only dealt with the Kennedy and Johnson administration. 490 What Nixon did not know was that the man who leaked the information was a former aide to his chief national security adviser Henry Kissinger.

Dr. Daniel Ellsberg, the source of the Pentagon Papers, once spoke at Kissinger's seminar at Harvard and served as a consultant to the NSC staff in 1969. 491 The next morning, Monday, June 14, 1971, Charles Colson arrived at the usual early morning briefing only to find Henry Kissinger furious at the leaks and demanding from H.R. Haldeman that the president take action immediately, otherwise he could no longer negotiate with foreign leaders. 492 The White House generally feared that this leak was only the beginning of a series of classified data about to hit the

⁴⁸⁶ Jeb Magruder, *An American Life: One Man's Road to Watergate*, (New York: Antheneum, 1974),152, 156. ⁴⁸⁷ RN, 507-508.

⁴⁸⁸ RN, 508.

⁴⁸⁹ Ambrose, *Nixon Vol.2.*, 446.

⁴⁹⁰ Ambrose, *Nixon Vol.2.*, 446.

⁴⁹¹ Ambrose, *Nixon Vol.2.*, 447.

⁴⁹² Charles W. Colson, *Born Again*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Chosen Books, 2008), 66.

newspaper stands. The leak occurred around the same time as the Nixon administration was engaging in secret negotiations with Red China. In the meantime, Ellsberg became the hero of the anti-war movement and started to gain acclaim with the national media. He Nixon administration must have known that they could not afford to lose the campaign against Ellsberg, if Ellsberg kept feeding the newspapers with classified information, it could undermine the entire foreign policy effort by the administration, which was crucial to securing victory in 1972. In the past Nixon's campaign staffs were able to overcome this sort of crisis. Now, in the White House, it seemed to Nixon that the administration needed a counterblast to Ellsberg's charges. To the Nixon administration, Ellsberg clearly represented an enemy ready to take down the president.

The White House, staffed with lawyers top to bottom, including the President, first sought a legal approach to solving the situation. However, the legal approach failed. While the *Times* discontinued the series, *The Washington Post, Los Angeles Times*, and *The Boston Globe* continued where the *New York Times* left off, the stories now started to pop up everywhere including the Soviet Mission at the United Nations. ⁴⁹⁵The Nixon White House discovered that Ellsberg's father-in-law, Louis Marx, remained a close friend of FBI director J. Edgar Hoover and thus he suppressed reports of FBI interviews with Marx about Ellsberg. ⁴⁹⁶ If the legal approach did not work, and the FBI dragged its l feet in the investigation, Nixon concluded that his men should independently seek a solution to prevent the leaks. Nixon gave orders to Ehrlichman to setup a group in the White House that could prevent the leaks and find out more information about Ellsberg, Ehrlichman passed down the order to his assistant Egil Krogh and

⁴⁹³ H.W.Brands, 181.

⁴⁹⁴ Ambrose, *Nixon Vol.2.*, 449.

⁴⁹⁵ Colson, 67.

⁴⁹⁶ Ehrlichman, 165.

David Young from the NSC staff. 497 Nixon, according to Chuck Colson, told him that he wanted Ellsberg exposed, "I want the truth about him known. I don't care how you do it, but get it done. We're going to let the country know what kind of hero Mr. Ellsberg is." Nixon supposedly concluded his diatribe by asking Colson, "Do you understand me? That's an Order." Colson who got wind of the previously established "Plumbers" group involved himself immediately and in a long memo to John Ehrlichman suggested that Krogh hire former FBI agent Gordon Liddy and a former CIA agent named E.Howard Hunt. 500

The creation of the "Plumbers" is not only important in regards to the Watergate breakin, it is also important to Nixon's campaign in 1972. After the creation of the "Plumbers," Colson, although not in direct control of the "Plumbers," now handled his own operation from inside the White House and soon would extend his surveillance to not only potential leaks but also Democratic opponents. Thus, Colson ran his own independent operation from Mitchell's committee to re-elect the president. Colson's activities angered Mitchell. At one point, Colson asked Secretary of State Bill Rogers to attack Democratic Presidential nominee Edmund Muskie and charge him with interfering in the ongoing peace talks. After Rogers delivered the attack, Mitchell phoned Colson and told him to not attack Muskie again. Mitchell believed that any attack coming from the Nixon White House would only bolster his chances and instructed then head of CREEP, Jeb Magruder, not to attack the senator from Maine. When Mitchell accepted the assignment of managing CREEP, he did not want Colson interfering with his decisions. An unnamed source close to Mitchell told Theodore White that Mitchell and his staff "wasted hours"

⁴⁹⁷ Ambrose, *Nixon Vol.2.*, 449.

⁴⁹⁸ Colson, 67.

⁴⁹⁹ Colson, 67.

⁵⁰⁰ Ambrose, Nixon Vol.2., 449.

⁵⁰¹ Colson,75.

⁵⁰² Colson, 75.

trying to figure out ways to keep Colson out of CREEP. 503 Thus, Colson developed his own intelligence system, which funneled information to the President and designed an "attack group," which met in the White House and dictated the movements of Nixon surrogates and composed their statements. 504 John Mitchell not only needed to deal with Colson running his own operation independent from CREEP, H.R. Haldeman also ran his own team out of the White House interested in helping Nixon win reelection. Haldeman and Mitchell shared mutual dislike for one another. As previously stated, Mitchell remained critical of H.R. Haldeman as a campaign manager. The rivalry between Mitchell and Haldeman ranged back to 1968. In 1968, Haldeman remained closest to the candidate because he traveled with the candidate while Mitchell remained in New York at campaign headquarters. While Haldeman traveled with the candidate and served as his personal gatekeeper in 1968, Mitchell still called all the shots in the campaign. Haldeman, together with his own staff, formed what would later be known as, the "dirty tricks team" which moved, like Colson's team, independently from CREEP and tried to bring chaos into the Democratic Primary leading up to the 1972 campaign. 505 Haldeman also managed to get Jeb Magruder to temporarily run CREEP while Mitchell still served as Attorney General. Magruder served as Haldeman's "Game Plan Man" inside the committee and thus Haldeman undercut Mitchell's command inside CREEP. 506 Previous Nixon campaigns operated under a clear chain of command. Now, in the last couple of months of 1971, Nixon would have conflicting and uncoordinated efforts fighting for his reelection. Theodore White summed up quite well in his book *The Making of the President 1972* when he wrote:

Each of these major personalities in the campaign of 1972 thus had his own role, his own field team, his own ambition. Later when the mythology of Watergate reached full flower in

⁵⁰³ White, *1972*, 274.

⁵⁰⁴ White, *1972*, 274.

⁵⁰⁵ White, *1972*, 276.

⁵⁰⁶ Safire, 635

1973, the theory of the grand conspiracy, to suborn and undermine both justice and democratic tradition, was to conceive of all these operations as if some diabolical band of planners had contrived one master adventure. But the campaign of 1972 from the Republican side was more like the backfield of a football team with no quarterback and four footballs to run with every ball carrier racing off on his own play and the coach, who understood best what the campaign was all about, was preoccupied with action elsewhere. 507

In the months leading up to the 1972 election the *modus operandi*, officially ended.

During the 1972 campaign, no one person remained in charge over the entire operation, and even though it won Nixon reelection, in the end it lost him the presidency. While Mitchell, Colson, and Haldeman executed their operations, "The Plumbers" group led by Howard Hunt and Gordon Liddy broke into Daniel Ellsberg's psychiatrist's office in order to find information that could possibly tarnish his reputation. The group found nothing, and in order to make it look like an attempted burglary instead of a covert operation smashed windows and spread paper and medications around as to make it look like people looking for drugs broke into the psychiatrist's office. ⁵⁰⁸

With the reelection campaign on the horizon, many of "the Plumbers" found themselves reassigned to CREEP including G. Gordon Liddy. According to White House Council John Dean in a conversation with the President in March of 1973, Liddy received an appointment with CREEP after Krogh recommended the former plumber to Dean in order to setup an intelligence gathering team within the reelection campaign. ⁵⁰⁹ Liddy, at CREEP, proposed multiple plans in order to gather intelligence. Jeb Magruder, however, all too often shut Liddy's ideas down, because, according to John Dean, "He didn't know whether this was the way the game played was played or not." According to Dean, Liddy and his old friend Howard Hunt saw Chuck

⁵⁰⁷ White, *1972*, 274.

⁵⁰⁸ Egil "Bud" Krogh, *Integrity: Good People, Bad Choices, and Life Lessons from the White House* (New York: Public Affairs, 2007), 73.

⁵⁰⁹ Stanley Kutler, *Abuse of Power: The New Nixon Tapes* (New York: Touchstone, 1998), 247.

⁵¹⁰ Kutler, 249.

Colson in order to convince him that they were not used at CREEP. 511 Colson, subsequently, called Magruder and told him to use the intelligence operation. ⁵¹² In the meantime, H.R.Haldeman, also agog for information and under the impression that CREEP already possessed a functioning intelligence operation, enforced pressure from the White House through backchannels on CREEP to carry out intelligence operations. 513 According to Dean, Colson did not coordinate with Haldeman in their constant pressuring of CREEP to produce intelligence, which is corroborated by their previously mentioned rivalry for Nixon's attention and independently run organizations. 514 Aghast from the pressure brought onto from the White House, CREEP, ordered the intelligence operations to proceed. ⁵¹⁵ Out of this blatant disregard for oversight the Watergate break-in occurred.

The style of campaign organizations that made Richard Nixon successful, officially ceased to exist. The chain of command fell apart and Haldeman, Colson, Magruder, and Mitchell each had his own outlook on what the campaign should do in order to reelect the President.

Besides its non-streamlined organization, Team Nixon was still incredibly effective in running the campaign in 1972. At CREEP, Jeb Magruder was in charge after Mitchell's resignation and ran an effective operation. In the meantime, Haldeman's and Colson's independently run operations also operated smoothly and certainly helped Nixon to widen the gap in the polls between him and McGovern. All three organizations deserve a thorough analysis.

In April 1972, CREEP faced its first big test when the President announced that the United States resumed the bombing of Hanoi and Haiphong in North Vietnam. These bombings

⁵¹¹ Kutler, 249.

⁵¹² Kutler, 249.

⁵¹³ Kutler, 250.

⁵¹⁴ Kutler, 250.

⁵¹⁵ Kutler, 250.

came as a response to the North Vietnamese "Easter Offensive" that enlarged the battle in Vietnam. However, to the outside observer these actions seemed like Nixon was prolonging the war he had promised to end. John Mitchell, still served in the committee and proclaimed in a staff meeting after the President's announcement of the bombing campaign, that "This is a test of our campaign organization" and that "this committee has been in existence for a year, and now we find out if we can produce. I expect every one of you to give this all he's got."516 Mitchell was right. The campaign needed to show that they could swing public opinion and somehow make a move that seemed like an aggression look like it was a move toward peace. Nixon and Kissinger had not made it easy for the campaign, because only two years before they had ordered an invasion of Cambodia and Laos, which caused for massive protests. Nixon's image of peacemaker of which he spoke of in his inaugural address seemed to fade. CREEP, however, went to work and Nixon once again could rely on his men to repair his image and give the situation a positive spin. For CREEP, this meant to show in the media that America still supported the president and its actions. According to Magruder, CREEP managed to get dozens of his men to write postcards in support of the president's action, to television stations, and newspapers. In one instance, *The Washington Star* included a ballot in their issue where people could vote on Nixon's recent orders. Subsequently CREEP bought thousands of copies that afternoon in order to fill out the ballots and send them back with favorable responses. 517 CREEP succeeded and successfully convinced the public that aggression was needed in order to force peace in Vietnam. Furthermore, in May 1972, Nixon became the first president to visit the Soviet Union, further enhancing his image as a peacemaker and statesman.

⁵¹⁶ Magruder, 207.

⁵¹⁷ Magruder, 208.

CREEP concerned itself extensively with protecting and creating the president's image. CREEP's own polling and advertising units made sure that they knew the pulse of the country. A couple of months after its inception in 1971, CREEP conducted extensive polling not on simple matchups that Nixon potentially faced in the general election, but focused their polling instead on the attitudes of voters in key states. Throughout their polling before the campaign CREEP wanted to know how the people felt about Nixon's visit to China and Moscow, and what words they used to describe the president, all this in an effort to tailor the campaign to the president's strength and weaknesses. CREEP concluded that the campaign should be run not on "You like Nixon", but rather on "You need Nixon." Therefore, in coordination with the advertising unit the entire campaign stressed Nixon's performance rather than his personal appeal. 518 Another focus of CREEP was the youth vote. The 1972 election would mark the first presidential election in which people could vote starting at the age of eighteen. CREEP subsequently reached out to the youth by setting Young Voters for the President Committee filled with famous athletes, show business figures and student-body presidents and thus set up the foundation for Nixon's success with the younger voters in 1972. ⁵¹⁹ Overall, CREEP's basic efforts, while incredibly sophisticated, were relatively harmless. However, the constant thirst for knowledge and information had also infected the committee and it was the intelligence arm of CREEP that ultimately forced the president out of office. When Creep tolerated the initially Watergate breakin by, one of their employees, Gordon Liddy. 520 Moreover, CREEP's 'war chest' was open to use for all those actively involved in the fight for reelection including Haldeman and Colson's units.

⁵¹⁸ Magruder, 154.

⁵¹⁹ Magruder, 160.

⁵²⁰ Magruder, 209-210.

If CREEP's basic concern was the president and his image, Haldeman's and Colson's units were concerned with the president's opponents. In this regard, the 1972 campaign best represents the end of the *modus operandi*. Nixon's campaigns usually featured intelligence operation and the occasional "dirty trick" but they were always coordinated and controlled by the campaign manager. However, the 1972 campaign featured two uncoordinated units who sought to make it difficult for the Democrats on the campaign trail. H.R.Haldeman, even as chief of staff, saw himself as part of the campaign operation. While CREEP did a perfectly fine job in guiding the reelection campaign, Haldeman made it his mission to also contribute to the effort to make Nixon a two-term president. In the months after the Committee to Reelect was formed, Haldeman put forward his own organization designed to "disrupt, ridicule and harass the Democratic candidates" for the presidency. 521 Haldeman put his assistant Gordon Strachan in charge. Fellow University of Southern California graduates Dwight Chapin and Donald Segretti joined Strachan. "The Dirty Tricks Team" as it would become known, soon had a massive staff in several states and engaged in covert campaign chicanery such as publishing false statements on the Democratic candidate's letterheads, modifying schedules by canceling campaign events on the candidates behalf, and misleading the press. 522

The key to the Haldeman lead operation was, of course, that it could not be linked back to the White House. When *Washington Post* reporters Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein, in their Watergate investigation, eventually discovered Sergetti's involvement and subsequent salary paid by CREEP, it linked the operation to the White House and only furthered the investigation of the cover-up of the burglary. Furthermore, the operation initiated by Haldeman had very little impact on the Democratic primary since the Democrats already were in disarray over who would

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⁵²¹ Ambrose, Nixon Vol.2, 461.

⁵²² Ambrose, *Nixon Vol.2*, 477.

represent the party. Perhaps, one could make the argument that if one campaign manager would have reigned over Nixon's 1972 reelection campaign he would have scratched the efforts as they were both ineffective and expensive. Instead, Haldeman's operation enjoyed the approval of Nixon who enjoyed going after his opponents in this way. At one point, Nixon told Haldeman that Democratic senator and presidential nominee Edward Muskie might have some emotional issues and that Haldeman's unit should exploit them. ⁵²³

If Haldeman's unit delighted Nixon, it only made life for the men and women at CREEP more complicated. Haldeman's unit frequently used money raised by CREEP for the reelection campaign for their own contemptible purposes. Maurice Stans, a veteran of the 1968, returned to CREEP in 1972 and managed its fundraising operation. At the end of the campaign, Stans raised \$52,000,000 for Nixon's victorious effort. While initially no money was distributed without the signature of either Mitchell or Magruder, eventually money was distributed to all units of the Nixon reelection campaign including Haldeman's team led by Strachan and Chapin. While Stans did an impressive job in fundraising, he did a subpar job in keeping track of the money. Stans later recalled to Theodore White that being in charge of raising money for the Nixon campaign in 1972 reminded him of his job when he was the Director of Budget under Dwight Eisenhower: "the Army, the Navy, the Air Force would all come in with their requests for weapons. All of them wanted enough money to destroy Russia single-handedly, all by themselves." In 1972, CREEP, Haldeman's and Colson's units all wanted the money in order to destroy whomever the Democrats might nominated.

⁵²³ Ambrose, *Nixon Vol. 2,* 500.

⁵²⁴ White, *1972*, 278.

⁵²⁵ White, *1972*, 279.

⁵²⁶ White, 1972, 282.

While CREEP worked feverishly on the president's basic reelection campaign, and "The Dirty Tricks Team" pulled pranks on the Democrats, Chuck Colson's unit stayed in the background and executed its own malicious assault on Nixon's political opponents. Chuck Colson, as previously mentioned, was in a rivalry for Nixon's ear with Haldeman and Mitchell and had risen in statue ever since his arrival in the White House. During the campaign, Colson focused on intelligence and hired his own pollsters, separate from CREEP, in order to conduct polls on how Nixon fared against possible Democratic opponents. 527 In the early stages, he often went around Haldeman and Mitchell and personally delivered information related to the presidential campaign to Nixon. Colson made it his mission to direct campaign surrogates so that they would make eventual Democratic presidential nominee George McGovern look foolish with statements and attacks on his stances and character. Colson was extremely committed to securing Nixon's reelection. In August 1972, Colson wrote a memorandum to his staff reminding them of his commitment, "I am totally unconcerned with anything other than getting the job done. If I bruise feelings or injure anyone's morale, I will be happy to make amend on the morning of November 8, assuming we have done our job and the results are evident."528 Colson then closed the statement by stating: "Just so you understand me, let me point out that the statement in last week's UPI story that I was once reported to have staid that 'I would walk over my grandmother if necessary' is absolutely correct."529 Colson was tough and aggressive and wanted the president to remain on the attack and out his enemies as unpatriotic. When CREEP sought solutions to the antiwar demonstration on Capitol Hill, Colson suggested sending in young volunteers from the Nixon campaign in order to fight the protesters. When Colson's request got rebuffed, he told

⁵²⁷ White, *1972*, 274.

⁵²⁸ White, *1972*, 275.

⁵²⁹ White, *1972*, 275.

Magruder that he was disloyal to the president, because Nixon wanted Colson's plan to be executed. 530

The campaign organization in 1972 remained chaotic and disorganized throughout the election, with its three branches that all fought for the same goal. Despite its disorganization, the 1972 campaign overcame Watergate and managed to secure Nixon's reelection. In the end the mismanagement and misallocation of campaign funds, the three separate branches, and personal rivalries between the staff were the driving force that led to Nixon's resignation.

On June 17, 1972, five men were arrested as they attempted to bug the National Democratic Headquarters in the Watergate Office Complex. Although the burglars were not immediately tied to CREEP or the Nixon White House, the break-in and the subsequent investigation led to the events that forced Nixon to resign from office. Six days after the Watergate break-in, the man who singlehandedly led Nixon's comeback, John Mitchell, resigned from CREEP.

In September 1972, the *Washington Post* revealed that Mitchell, while serving at CREEP, controlled a secret slush-fund that was used in order to pay for operations to gather campaign intelligence on Democratic opponents. When the *Washington Post* wanted Mitchell to comment on the story, he snapped and told the paper that "All that crap, you're putting it in the paper? It's all been denied. Jesus. Katie Graham (Katharine Graham, publisher of The Washington Post) is gonna get caught in a big fat wringer if that's published. Good Christ. That's

⁵³⁰ Magruder, 206.

Alfred E. Lewis, "5 Held in Plot to Bug Democrats' Office Here", *The Washington Post*, 18 June 1972. http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2002/05/31/AR2005111001227.html(Accessed December 5, 2012)

⁵³² Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein, "Mitchell Controlled Secret GOP Fund", *The Washington Post*, 29 September, 1972. http://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/mitchell-controlled-secret-gop-fund/2012/06/06/gJQAOcAKJV story.html (Accessed January 9, 2013)

the most sickening thing I've ever heard."⁵³³ Mitchell had betrayed himself, in a last-ditch effort to maintain his position of power in Nixon's White House he had given in to the pressure by those who filled his position as the President's closest aides and authorized the operations that led to Watergate. Above all, Mitchell's answer is a prime example of the 'us versus them' attitude present in Nixon's White House. Graham had been a longtime friend of the Kennedys and also in her position as a newspaper publisher symbolized those that were against Nixon. Graham was part of the 'them' and Mitchell realized that they had a leg up on the White House. John Mitchell was now gone from managing the campaign. However, the campaign remained on course and the story of the Watergate break-in and subsequent stories of CREEP's intelligence fund generated very little media attention in the immediate months that followed as the 1972 presidential election dominated the headlines.

Richard Nixon entered his last campaign with the *modus operandi* broken, and at least three different organizations vying for the president's reelection. For all the chaos inside Nixon's organization, the Democrats faced even greater problems in finding and nominating a candidate to take on the incumbent. After the chaotic events at the Democratic Convention in Chicago in 1968, the Democrats wrote new rules that ensured that the party became more diverse.

According to historian H.W. Brands, these rules allowed for minorities, women, and the youth to have a fair share in determining who would represent the Democratic Party in a presidential election. The newly formed collation spearheaded by many members of the counterculture of the 1960s, the young, and the anti-war movement nominated George McGovern. McGovern, a decorated bomber pilot during WWII and then senator of South Dakota, remained a staunch

⁵³³ Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein, "Mitchell Controlled Secret GOP Fund", *The Washington Post*, 29 September, 1972. http://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/mitchell-controlled-secret-gop-fund/2012/06/06/gJQAOcAKJV_story.html (Accessed January 9, 2013) ⁵³⁴ H.W. Brands. 182.

critic of the war that still raged in Vietnam. However, while McGovern appealed to the liberal wing of the Democratic Party, his message alienated Middle America and the "Silent Majority" that Nixon represented. The strategy for the Nixon campaign remained simple: divide and conquer.

The 1972 reelection campaign remained consistent with Nixon's last campaign in regards to the message it wanted to convey on the campaign trail. Many of the same messages Nixon used during the 1968 campaign, such as law and order and peace in Vietnam, were reused in 1972. Not only was McGovern accused as being in the wrong by the Nixon campaign, but the campaign also painted his messages and stances as un-American or unpatriotic. At the end of the 1972 campaign, the Nixon campaign managed to provide a clear contrast between Richard Nixon and his Democratic opponent George McGovern.

Two issues are important when analyzing the campaign messages of the 1972 reelection campaign. First, how the Nixon campaign managed to further George McGovern's image as a left-wing radical. Second, one needs to understand how the Nixon campaign managed to secure a new part of the electorate and actively invoked patriotism on the campaign trail. Overall, one will see that while the organizational aspect, crucial to the *modus operandi*, fell apart in 1972, the campaign still played to the strengths of the candidate in regards to messaging and branding.

In Nixon's political career, he never faced an opponent in an election so different from himself as George S. McGovern. In 1946 and 1952, the Nixon campaign managed to paint their respective opponents as left-leaning communist sympathizers. In those campaigns, the Nixon campaign exaggerated and sometimes unfairly spun the opponents' record so that it would suit their message. In 1972, the campaign did not need to exaggerate or spin anything instead it just needed to highlight some of George McGovern's own positions in order to differentiate

President Nixon from the Democratic challenger. William Safire called the 1972 campaign "the campaign that never was" and wrote, "as Barry Goldwater was Lyndon Johnson's gift of the gods, George McGovern was Richard Nixon's." Throughout the Democratic primary season, Nixon staffers rooted for McGovern to receive the nomination. During the Democratic primaries, McGovern made himself into an even more vulnerable candidate. While he enjoyed success at the grassroots level of the new Democratic coalition, seasoned veterans of the postwar Democratic Party, like Hubert Humphrey, continued to criticize McGovern over his proposed welfare schemes and cuts to the defense budgets. If the Democratic Party had no problem in making McGovern look like a radical populist, the Nixon campaign would have no trouble at all.

On the campaign trail, this translated into repeated attacks on McGovern's stances during the primary process that secured him the nomination. Furthermore, McGovern's radical stances allowed the Nixon campaign to enter unchartered territory for a Republican candidate in regards to support. The Nixon campaign could now appeal to unionized blue-collar workers, Catholics and southern Democrats that were crucial to old Democratic coalition. One Nixon campaign television advertisement in 1972 showed a hardhat wearing construction worker overlooking a crowd in the streets from his elevated construction site with the narrator pointing out that working Americans would bore the brunt for McGovern's welfare scheme. The Nixon campaign wasted no time in assembling and expanding the 'Silent Majority' that elected Richard Nixon in 1968.

Besides appealing to voters through differentiating the records and stances of Nixon and McGovern, the Nixon campaign also invoked patriotism on the campaign trail through their

⁵³⁵ Safire, 641

⁵³⁶ Safire, 641

⁵³⁷ Campaign Advertisement "McGovern Welfare," 1972. Museum of the Moving Image, The Living Room Candidate. http://www.livingroomcandidate.org/commercials/1972 (Accessed January 29, 2013)

messaging further appealing to those Americans not included in the new Democratic coalition. The invocation of patriotism helped the Nixon campaign to deal with the issue of the still unpopular Vietnam War. After all, in 1968, Nixon promised to bring an end to the war but in 1972 the war still continued. Thus, Nixon's opponents were made out to be unpatriotic because they did not support the troops in Vietnam, or supported amnesty for those that deserted. In the White House, staff would wear American-flag lapel buttons. Theodore White wrote that at the White House, "the flag button was like a varsity letter- the first team flaunted it." On the campaign trail, Nixon would repeatedly urge Americans to quit bashing the country. The message of patriotism and pride in country further appealed to the ever growing majority and furthermore, drove the McGovern campaign into a proverbial corner as they could not counter these attacks possibly out of fear in alienating the same coalition that helped them in receiving the nomination. McGovern's "essential message" became "I am them."

In regards to the previous campaigns, the 1972 reelection campaign remains unique because Nixon stood largely on the sidelines enjoying taking on matters of foreign policy and observing how the Democrats bungled their chances of defeating him. As William Safire later wrote, "Nixon's last campaign was his least campaign." Furthermore, with CREEP regulating most of the campaign and Colson and Haldeman each running his own respective teams, Nixon had no need to not trust the process and rely on his men to deliver the victory. Many of the old Nixon aides already disengaged from campaigning because to them "campaigning was something going on across the street and down the block, well organized, humming along,

⁵³⁸ White, *1972*, 219.

⁵³⁹ White, *1972*, 219.

⁵⁴⁰ Safire, 641.

⁵⁴¹ Safire, 640.

frighteningly well financed, detached."542 The argument could be made that Nixon's campaigns of the past always allowed the candidate some distance but never as much as it did in 1972. Nixon relied on the men and women at CREEP, his family, Colson, and Haldeman to deliver the victory. The nomination of George McGovern also made it easy for Team Nixon. McGovern's campaign came to a screeching standstill whenever his running mate Thomas Eagleton revealed that he once underwent electro-shock therapy. McGovern guaranteed that he stood by his pick for the vice-presidential slot. Mounting pressure from his staff, supporters, and the media forced him to reconsider his selection. 543 Eventually Sargent Shriver, trusted member of the Kennedy family and a key player in both Kennedy's and Johnson's administration, replaced Eagleton. Joshua M. Glassner's work The Eighteen-Day Running Mate: McGovern, Eagleton, and a Campaign in Crisis provides an excellent analysis on how the McGovern campaign dealt with the Eagleton situation. Even though the Democrats fought a weak campaign, and CREEP kept hammering away at McGovern and his supposed message of 'Abortion, Amnesty, and Acid,' in the end it was Richard Nixon's ability to accumulate a rock-solid record that provided the campaign and the candidate with a feeling of invincibility.

Although the first two years had not been kind to the Nixon administration, Nixon quickly turned the ship around and in foreign policy delivered one victory after another. Nixon, together with Henry Kissinger, managed to thaw relationships with Communist China and became the first President to visit Red China in February of 1972. Later in 1972, Nixon went to Moscow, the first President to do so, and developed a carefully negotiated treatment that drastically reduced the number of nuclear weapons and stabilized relations between the two Cold War foes. Nixon made history and subsequently secured the votes of the 'Silent Majority' he

⁵⁴² Safire, 640.

Joshua M. Glassner, *The Eighteen-Day Running Mate: McGovern, Eagleton, and a Campaign in Crisis* (Yale University Press: 2012), 2.

and his staff carefully constructed ever since the Republican National Convention in Miami in 1968. In the meantime, George McGovern, with his populist appeals, could not chip away at the impervious image of Richard Nixon created by CREEP and made credible by the candidate himself. The strategy of 'us versus them', of invoking a sense of patriotism, and further painting McGovern like a left-wing radical worked perfectly in 1972.

On November 7, 1972, Richard Nixon observed election returns in the White House. Across the nation, reports of a Nixon victory with big margins arrived in Washington D.C. The 'Silent Majority' turned out for Richard Nixon in 1972 and produced one of the biggest election victories in the history of the United States. Nixon won forty-nine out of fifty states. Nixon, furthermore, managed to receive the mandate he sought after winning the popular vote by 17,999,528 votes and receiving 520 votes in the Electoral College. 544 While Nixon won big in the general election, the races for the U.S. House and Senate took a different turn. Nixon, as previously mentioned, campaigned largely for his own reelection and left many Republican senators and congressmen behind. Subsequently, without the weight of the president behind them these candidates struggled. By the end of the night, Republicans gained 12 seats in the House, but lost two seats in the Senate. 545 Nixon, however, did not enjoy the victory. Nixon later explained in his memoirs that he could not pinpoint the melancholy that came over him that night, maybe it was a toothache that bothered him, maybe Watergate or the failure to win Congress or bring peace to Vietnam, or maybe because this was his last campaign. 546 Regardless of what caused the melancholy, Nixon never enjoyed the victory in his last campaign as the

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⁵⁴⁴ Historical Presidential Election Results 1972, U.S. Electoral College, http://www.archives.gov/federal-register/electoral-college/scores.html#1972 (accessed January 29, 2013)

⁵⁴⁵ Nixon, RN, 715.

⁵⁴⁶ Nixon, *RN*, 717

proverbial storm that brewed since June unleashed its full force on the president in the years that followed.

In his Inaugural Address on January 20, 1973, Nixon spoke of renewing Americans' faith in their own country: "Above all else, the time has come for us to renew our faith in ourselves and in America. In recent years, that faith has been challenged. Our children have been taught to be ashamed of their country, ashamed of their parents, ashamed of America's record at home and its role in the world." In the end, however, Nixon himself caused many Americans to feel ashamed for their country as his actions in the year and a half following his inaugural address increased Americans' cynicism and distrustfulness of their elected leaders and government. Ten days after his Inaugural Address, on January 30 1973, former Nixon aides G. Gordon Liddy and James W. McCord were convicted of multiple charges in regards to the Watergate break-in.

John Sircia, the judge in the Watergate case, remained vigilant on the burglars and threatened the burglars with maximum sentences if they did not tell the whole story. The events that followed are well chronicled in the annals of history. Watergate and President Nixon's fight for political survival are researched extensively in the historiography of the 37th President. Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein's *All the President's Men* still serves as an excellent narrative on the investigation that led to the President's downfall. Moreover, Stanley Kutler's books *The Wars of Watergate* and *Abuse of Power* also provide critical, well-researched insight on Nixon and Watergate. In addition, Bob Woodward's *The Secret Man* published in 2005, after former associate director of the FBI Mark Felt acknowledged his role as "Deep

⁵⁴⁷ Richard M. Nixon: "Oath of Office and Second Inaugural Address," January 20, 1973, edited by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, The American Presidency Project.

http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=4141. (accessed December 5, 2012)

⁵⁴⁸ H.W. Brands, 182.

Throat" in the *Washington Post*'s investigation of the cover up, provides an excellent overview of the events leading up to and after Watergate.

Watergate remains a campaign issue proving the fact that once Nixon dismissed his trusted system of political campaigning the proverbial wheels came off his I career. A dismissal of the traits that successful Nixon campaigns featured more than anything else brought the administration down. After 1968, Team Nixon that operated so successfully outside the political spectrum involved itself in petti personal rivalries and each individual tried to advance his own standing with Nixon. The men who made Richard Nixon, in their constant power struggle for the attention of the candidate and President, blatantly disregarded the rule of law and tried to outdo each other in winning reelection. Nixon, furthermore, in his attempt to run as 'the President', never accumulated a political powerbase inside the houses of Congress, and subsequently, faced a hostile Congress whenever the investigation into Watergate deepened. Nixon might have won his last campaign, but at what cost? In the process of making history with the opening of China, the Moscow talks, and ending the Vietnam conflict, Nixon stood idly by as his campaign operations took no chances at getting him reelected and closely guarded the White House and its reputation. In the end, Nixon, could not win the campaign for political survival.

On August 8, 1974, Richard Nixon became the first president to resign from the office.

Nixon announced his resignation in a nationwide televised address. Nixon named Vice-President

Ford as his successor. Ford became vice-president after Spiro Agnew resigned because of a

scandal completely unrelated to Watergate. On August 9, 1974, Nixon said his goodbyes to the

White House staff and later left for his home in San Clément, California.

CHAPTER 8

Conclusion

While Richard Nixon fought his last political campaign in 1972 and in the months following all the way to his resignation, his biggest campaign came in the years that followed his exit from the White House. In the years following his resignation, Nixon campaigned for his legacy. Nixon, throughout his political career, preferred to work with individuals who were motivated to give it their all for him and nobody else. Nixon, in his post-presidency, continued to surround himself with people who wanted to help Nixon rehabilitate his image and historical legacy. Aided by a controversial presidential pardon administered by President Gerald R. Ford, Nixon went on a campaign to restore his legacy. Nixon, furthermore, advised every president on matters of foreign affairs from Carter to Clinton.

Even after Nixon published his memoirs, he continued to write books. Nixon wrote ten books in his retirement. As more and more of the now infamous Nixon White House tapes have become public, Nixon stood tall and continued to take the heat. Nixon sat down with British television host and journalist Sir David Frost and recorded a series of interviews that aired in 1977. In the late 1980s, Nixon appeared on *Meet the Press*, and NBC's *Today* show, to reflect on his political career and give his opinion on the ever-declining Cold War. As previously stated, Nixon throughout his post-presidency had required the help of smart, energetic, and incredibly dedicated people. Some more famous names like Diane Sawyer and Monica Crowley helped the 37th president through most of his retirement. Others like his last chief of staff Jack Brennan, and, Nixon's chief editorial assistant, Frank Gannon, resembled many of the men who aided Nixon through his political career, always watchful of the candidate and willing to protect him and his legacy.

While this thesis provides a behind-the-scenes look of Richard Nixon's political campaigns, it shows that a man like Richard Nixon needed tremendous help in overcoming the obstacles associated with attaining elected office in the United States. Nixon is in no way unique in this regard, but he brought a new facet to campaigning in the post-war United States of America. Presidential campaigns in those years following WWII were often staffed with politicians, like in the case of Truman's campaign in 1948 and Eisenhower's in 1952, and 1956. Alternatively, campaigns were staffed and run by family and their close allies, like John F. Kennedy's presidential campaign in 1960. Johnson in his 1964 bid against Goldwater also relied heavily on the party machine and his opponent's missteps in order to get him elected.

Nixon, on the other hand, placed dedicated outsiders in charge of his campaigns for the presidency in 1968 and 1972. The man in command of Nixon's campaigns were not party faithful or family, but outsiders. Presidential campaigns that followed have often emulated this style of hiring outsiders to run the campaign and not relying on the party apparatus in order to secure election or reelection. Most recently, President Obama won reelection by, once again, relying on a few key men and women who operated, much like Nixon's campaign staffs, outside of the party. Furthermore, Presidents like Carter, Reagan, Clinton, and Bush Jr., all proverbially bucked the party machinery in their efforts to become president.

Nixon, however, did not intend to change campaigns in this regard, but rather, as this thesis shows, did not know any other way to fashion his campaign than in this manner. Through the process of cross-filing that existed in California, Nixon knew that relying on the party apparatus in order to secure election would be a losing proposition. Through the men and women of the Committee of 100, that organized and ran his 1946 congressional campaign, Nixon grew

keen to people with a business background rather than a political one. Nixon favored a style of campaigning that weakened and decentralized the influence of the political party.

Similarly, politicians of both major political parties have divulged, from time to time, in Nixon's political playbook in regards to dividing and conquering the electorate. While some politicians in the post-war United States did it before Nixon, he perfected the 'us versus them' style of campaigning. Nixon's way of dividing the electorate might be his most lasting legacy, especially in the more and more hyperpartistan political landscape of the 21st century United States.

When Richard Nixon died on April 22, 1994, the remaining living presidents all attended his funeral. President Clinton gave a eulogy in which he spoke highly of the 37th President. Richard Nixon was a political titan in the often-tumultuous post-war world. This thesis presents only part of the complex life and political career of Richard Nixon. However, this part of Nixon's life is extremely crucial to our understanding of him as he made a name for himself on the campaign trail.

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