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Factionalism in the Democratic Party 1936-1964

By

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Abstract

The period of 1936-1964 in the Democratic Party was one of intense factional conflict between the rising Northern liberals, buoyed by FDR's presidency, and the Southern conservatives who had dominated the party for a half-century. Intertwined prominently with the struggle for civil rights, this period illustrates the complex battles that held the fate of other issues such as labor, foreign policy, and economic ideology in the balance. This thesis aims to explain how and why the Northern liberal faction came to defeat the Southern conservatives in the Democratic Party through a multi-faceted approach examining organizations, strategy, arenas of competition, and political opportunities of each faction. I conclude that an alliance between the labor movement and African-Americans formed the basis on which the liberal faction was able to organize and build its strength, eventually surpassing the Southern Democratic faction by passing the Civil Rights Act of 1964. This passage forced the realignment of Southern states as Southern Democrats sided with Republicans at the national level. However, the party position changes that precipitated liberal Democratic support for the bill began much earlier, starting in the 1930s, another key conclusion of this thesis.

<u>Acknowledgements</u>

I would like to start by thanking my thesis advisor, Dr. Andrew Battista for the long hours he poured into refining this work. His expertise on the topic was invaluable, his encouragement throughout must be commended as well, and his willingness to adapt to a vast array of complex programs was greatly appreciated. My second reader Dr. Kimberly Wilson played a similar role in helping to perfect this project. Her expertise in comparative politics gave this work a crucial nuanced perspective. The entirety of the Political Science Department at East Tennessee State University helped craft my will to endeavor this project. I am also grateful to Dr. Michelle Hurley, Dr. Dinah DeFord, Mrs. Meghan Stark, and Mr. James Lewis of the Ronald McNair program at ETSU for providing me with the skills and perseverance necessary to complete this thesis. A major thank you is owed to Dr. Karen Kornwiebel, the entire ETSU Honors College, and the ETSU College of Public Health for their coordination and flexibility. Furthermore, I would like to thank my previous institution, Northeast State Community College, for which there are too many individuals to list, but whose total contributions to my education were critical. Additionally, I would like to thank Mrs. Sheila Lowe and Mr. Nathan Gouge for giving and reigniting in me the basic passion to learn, respectively. My esteemed friends and colleagues, Mrs. Paige DiPirro and Mr. Cooper McCoy, students of the University of Virginia, were also a constant font of knowledge and consultation from which to draw on. Finally, I would like to thank my family for supporting me throughout this process and aiding me throughout the entirety of my collegiate and life experience.

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I.   Introduction

The Democratic Party during the New Deal era (more intensely after 1936) underwent a period of intense factionalism between Northern liberals and Southern conservatives. This factional strife largely culminated with the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Voting Rights Act of 1965, which helped to define the liberal faction as the leading one in the Democratic Party and led the Southern conservatives to realign to the Republican Party. Thus, this period of factionalism between 1936-1964 in the Democratic Party is one of the greatest sources of the political landscape that persists today. While the significance of this period has long been established, a full account of the result is still lacking, begging the questions: "Why did factional politics in the Democratic Party progress to favor the Northern liberal wing over the Southern conservative wing by 1964?" and "How exactly did these changes occur?"

The importance of answering these questions rests in providing a better understanding of how factions within a party battle, progress, change, and die out. Answering these questions might also illuminate the dynamics of current factional battles taking place in both the Republican and Democratic parties in the aftermath of the 2016 election cycle. More specifically, within the realm of American politics, answering this question can provide a context for how factions operate in a two-party system and the effects political opportunities can have on factions. This is needed as work on factional conflict, especially in the American case, has been poorly developed, with scholars often opting to examine conflict between rather than within the two parties. This would also benefit the study of parties because the nature of factional conflict is key to shaping party outcomes. In justifying the specific period, this era was one of the few times in American politics in which one party held electoral dominance for such a prolonged period of time. This allowed for greater factional politics than is generally observable. Secondly,

the Democratic Party factions of this period were organized and developed clear strategies, allowing for a sharp analytical focus on factional conflict. In terms of direct consequences, this period is also key to one of the largest geopolitical shifts in U.S. history with the eventual transition of the Southern conservatives to the Republican Party.

The question this thesis seeks to examine is *"How and why did the Northern liberal faction of the Democratic Party eventually triumph over the Southern conservative one in the period of 1936-1964?"* The basic hypothesis I will propose to answer the above question is that a surging labor movement allied with African-Americans to effectively challenge the Southern conservative influence in the Democratic Party. This alliance was greatly bolstered by the collapse of economic conservatism in the depression era, which allowed New Dealers in the North and West to make electoral gains sufficient to rival Southern power for a time.[1] This promoted policy gains for the liberal faction, but also began to weaken the congressional advantages that the Southern faction had long held in the party. As the balance of power became more uneven, civil rights legislation became increasingly driven by Democrats until the signing of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which effectively triggered the most visible signs of realignment of the Solid South.[2] This hypothesis doesn't dismiss other factors such as electoral imperatives or black activism on its own, but merely states the labor movement in alliance with African-Americans as the prime factor in enabling the triumph of the Northern liberal faction over the Southern conservative one in the Democratic Party. Black activism, it should be noted, played a powerful role in critiquing the U.S on civil rights during WWII and the Cold War and in leading

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[1] Brewer, Mark D., and Jeffrey M. Stonecash. *Dynamics of American Political Parties*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009, 88.

[2] Brewer and Stonecash, 96.

allies to emerge in the State Department.[3] A powerful voting bloc in the Democratic Party in the North, black activism was important in moving the party leftward, but it should be noted that African-American voters support for the Democratic Party was still somewhat inconsistent until the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Labor unions, concentrated in the North and an even more consistent Democratic ally, united both African Americans and working-class whites on both bread and butter economic issues and racial justice issues.[4] Also, the attempts of labor to gain footholds in the South likely encouraged some of the earliest defections in the Southern conservative wing of the Democratic Party to the Republican Party. These effects were pivotal in ensuring the triumph of the Northern liberals over the Southern conservatives within the Democratic Party.

II.   Literature Review

Since factional conflict is a core theme of this thesis, there are several key words that should be defined first, beginning with the word faction. The word "faction" has long had a pejorative connotation, likely dating to James Madison's definition in the *Federalist No. 10*. In contemporary political science and in this thesis, "faction" is used in a morally neutral and analytical sense.

For modern scholars defining faction, there are fewer differences in substance than there are in specificity. Starting with the more generalized definitions, V.O. Key provides a definition

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[3] Borstelmann, Thomas. *The Cold War and the Color Line: American Race Relations in the Global Arena*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003, 2-8.

[4] George Gallup, "How Labor Votes," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, March 1951, p. 124.

for faction as "any combination, clique or grouping of voters and political leaders who unite at a particular time in support of a candidate."[5] Nicole Rae came to a simple definition as well in defining faction as an organized group within a political party. He accepted the definition well knowing the criticism of it being too broad.[6] For Frank Belloni and Dennis Beller, meanwhile, factions are any relatively organized group that competes with rivals for power advantages within the larger group of which it is a part.[7] Daniel DiSalvo provides the most specific definition of faction as a party subunit which exhibits four qualifications: ideological consistency, organizational capacity, temporal durability, and an ability to undertake significant action to shift a party's agenda or reputation along the left-right ideological spectrum.[8] In tying the above views together, these authors aren't in disagreement in definition but rather simply use different levels of specificity ranging from Rae's and Key's more general definition to DiSalvo's most specific one.

For the purpose of this thesis, the term "faction" will be defined as a subunit of a political party which exhibits four qualifications: ideological consistency, organizational capacity, an ability to endure and exist effectively beyond an isolated event, and which also clearly exerts an impact to shift a party's agenda and/or reputation. This definition is largely adapted from Daniel DiSalvo's representation of faction, with a few key differences. The reason for choosing

[5] Aldrich, John. *Why Parties? The Origin and Transformation of Political Parties in America*. Chicago Univ. Press, 1995, 237-238.

[6] Rae, Nicol C. *Southern Democrats*. New York: OUP USA, 1995, 7-8.

[7] Belloni, Frank P., and Dennis Beller. "The Study of Party Factions as Competitive Political Organizations.*" The Western Political Quarterly* 29, no. 4 (1976): 531-49. doi:10.2307/448136

[8] DiSalvo, Daniel. *Engines of Change: Party Factions in American Politics, 1868-2010*. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2012, 5.

DiSalvo's definition is primarily how specific he chose to be. Criteria such as ideological consistency and exerting an impact on a party's agenda are crucial in narrowing the focus of party players within the period of this thesis. The key difference from DiSalvo's definition lies in changing the temporary durability criterion that he laid out. Temporal durability is too broad a term and has been replaced with "an ability to endure and exist effectively beyond an isolated event."

Beyond the definition of what a faction is, there are several questions that require answering. What causes factions? What types of factions are there? What do they do? DiSalvo answers the first question in the context of American Politics. He claims that there are four primary causes of factions: strategic incentives of a two-party system, ideology, geography, and major events such as war and economic crises. While most of these concepts are straightforward, strategic incentives of a two-party system center around political forces having the incentive to work through existing parties via factions rather than pose a separate third party challenge.[9] More specific to this thesis, V.O Key saw factionalism in the Democratic Party to be more multi-factional in non-competitive Democratic states and more bi-factional in more competitive ones with a Republican presence, implying a more systematic causation. [10] Again, the authors listed above are not truly at conflict here. Much of DiSalvo's reasoning is in line with Belloni and Beller even though DiSalvo has divided his groupings into more specific categories.

Next, what types of factions are there? Nicol Rae distinguished only two main categories: clientelist and ideological. The factions that were clientelist tended to be center-right, favored a

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[9] DiSalvo, 17-20.

[10] Key, V. O. *Southern Politics in State and Nation*. New York: Vintage Books, 1962, 298-311.

system of patronage or client-based relationship, and were generally powerful and disciplined. Ideological factions were generally left-wing, focused on difference in policies, and were harder to reconcile, creating stiffer divisions.[11] DiSalvo, who saw factions as ideological by definition, differed by dividing (American) factions along two lines: where they manifested power (Presidency/Congress) and what their broad goal was (Status Quo/Change). Rarely factions may influence both the presidency and Congress, just as they may sometimes advocate a middle ground between the status quo and change.[12] Others like Scott Morgenstern have divided factions by level of organization and relationship to the greater party. In this context, categories such as loosely organized tendencies to somewhat independent factions to highly organized and independent factions are determined on a sliding scale.[13]

Finally, what do factions do? DiSalvo lists five answers to this question. A faction acts as a conveyor belt for ideas, infusing parties with new positions or policies. They frequently play a role in each presidential election race by shaping platforms and ideology. Factions shift the distribution of power in Congress. Lastly, they shape both presidential governing strategies and the American state itself.[14] Factions can also change the opportunities, incentives, and constraints of an opposing party by shifting the political will, ideology, or other details of the electorate. Belloni and Beller phrased this question slightly differently in analyzing the functions of factions. In their view, functions can be examined within three points of reference: the

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[11] Rae, 8.

[12] DiSalvo, 11-16.

[13] Morgenstern, Scott. "Organized Factions and Disorganized Parties," Party Politics 7 no. 2 (2001): 235-256.

[14] DiSalvo, 7-11.

individual, the party, and the political system. For individuals, factions function in a way that can prolong their influence often past the duration of a single election. Factions may also present more leadership opportunities than the general party apparatus and provide an outlet for contouring the party through voter influence. In the sense of the party, factions function as an expression of the variance of views and interests within.

While literature clearly exists on the topic of factions, several problems still remain. The topic of factionalism is extremely stratified with the greatest focus coming in theoretical parameters and speculation. More specified attempts at American factional politics is underdeveloped, largely due to the presence of the two-party system, which has encouraged study of party conflict much more than that of factions. This can be attributed in great degree to the winner-take-all electoral system that makes the United States somewhat unique amongst developed nations. Even in strong works on American factionalism such as Daniel DiSalvo's *Engines of Change,* systematic explanations of individual factions fail to fully capture the specificities of factional battles. Nicol Rae's *Southern Democrats* gives a strong political and historical account of one faction but does not capture much of the actual conflict as a key focus. In fact, factional conflict altogether seems to be rarely covered and even further lacking in the American political sense.

The framework for analyzing factional conflict in this thesis will be through four lenses: (1) the organizations, (2) strategies, and (3) arenas of competition (including presidential nominations, party organization, and Congress) that each faction exhibited as well as the evolution of these factors over time; (4) political opportunities that exert a significant impact on the course of factional conflict will also be included. These political opportunities include but are not limited to social movements, international factors, and imperatives of the competing party.

Documents used to ascertain conclusions in this thesis will be through a variety of sources to include: organizational charters, party platforms, historical accounts, congressional rules, speeches, policy initiatives, newspaper editorials, and electoral statistics. Beyond the lenses of examination, this thesis will be categorized into three distinct periods: FDR and the New Deal (1936-1945), Truman's Presidency and Opposition Politics (1945-1960), and Kennedy & Johnson (1960-1964).

III.   An Introduction to the Democratic Factions in 1936

The Democratic Party, during FDR's election to the presidency in 1932, was largely a Southern conservative party with a smaller liberal faction in the North. It is important to note that ideological differences between these factions centered primarily on racial issues. The views of the two factions on economic issues were based more on their social and regional interests. For the Southern wing, the presidency wasn't a feasible aspiration, nor had it been since the Civil War. By accepting a Northern liberal or even moderate Democrat, they could have a president who would not be a threat to Southern conservative culture and the ideals of segregation/white supremacy. They also did not perceive federal economic intervention to be a direct threat as their economic views were not based in ideology as much as strategy. In fact, Southern Democrats could be considered as ideologically ambivalent in economics, seeking two main goals: the preservation of white power in the South and the modernization of their own regional economy. Senator Ed Smith (D-SC) summarized the Southern wing's most common ideology in the quote "I have but one platform on which I shall live and die- my loyalty to the constitution, my loyalty

to state's rights, and my loyalty to white supremacy."[15] States' rights, while important for

Southern Democrats, were a thinly veiled desire for the federal government to stay out of the

issues of segregation and racial problems. Some Southerners did acquire an appreciation for

fiscal conservatism best outlined by Senator Richard Russell (D-GA) "We are generally opposed

to excessive spending of public funds. We try to be very cautious in considering legislation

which might lead the country down the road to state socialism."[16] Southern Democrats could be

expected to oppose excessive spending, while pushing for welfare (only if means tested), grants

for states, and local control of government. For the liberal wing, which would be the main

opposition to Southern Democrats in the New Deal Coalition, the Democratic Party provided a

more ideologically ambivalent party on economic issues.

FDR's win in 1932 came with an added benefit for his normally minority wing of the

party, the landslide elections shifted many conservative Republican seats to Democrats and many

of these new Congresspeople on both sides of the aisle were more open to liberal economic ideas

that would make up the New Deal agenda. FDR, it should be noted, cared little for the party and

much more about ideology, stating to a close aide in 1932, "We shall have eight years in

Washington, at the end we may or may not have a Democratic Party, but we will have a

progressive party."[17] The Southern wing of the Democratic Party had benefitted greatly from

many early New Deal programs like the Civilian Conservation Corps and the formation of the

Tennessee Valley Authority, both of which had added jobs and strengthened infrastructure in the

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[15] DiSalvo, 50.

[16] Witcover, Jules. *Party of the People: A History of the Democrats*. New York: Random House, 2003, 365.

[17] DiSalvo, 51.

South. FDR and the liberal wing thus had ample Southern support for early union bills like the National Labor Relations Act of 1935 as it passed on a voice vote in the house and 63-12 in the Senate. Southern Democrats saw unions as a non-threat to racial interests given the exclusionary stance of the American Federation of Labor (AFL), which was dominant at the time; this stance would change with the emergence of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) in the years to come.[18]

Southern Democrats had no legitimate reason to fret about prospective legislation given that what they lacked in presidential power, they made up for and more with congressional control. Southern Democrats were also in a pivotal role in the balance for power between the liberal Democratic wing occupying the presidency and the minority Republican Party. While they chose to work with their own party on most issues in FDR's first term, they grew much more welcoming to the Republicans in the later years forming what would become known as the "conservative coalition."[19] This alliance, also known as the partnership of "corn and cotton" (referencing the Midwestern Republican base and the Southern Democrats), was centered on Republicans providing opposition to civil rights bills upon request by Southern Democrats and the Southern wing providing votes against economic progressivism.[20] This reality meant that the liberal wing in control of the Democratic presidency from FDR to LBJ had to be mindful of Southern interests.

IV.   FDR and the New Deal: 1936-1945

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[18] Katznelson, Ira. *Fear Itself: The New Deal and the Origins of Our Time*. New York: Liveright Publishing, 2014, 144.

[19] DiSalvo, 103.

[20] Disalvo, 166.

Organizations

Perhaps the most influential organization in ratcheting up the conflict between the Southern conservatives and Northern liberals was the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO). The CIO was created in 1935 to organize the modern mass production industries, such as automobiles and steel, that the craft production unions that dominated the American Federation of Labor (AFL) refused to organize. The AFL, given its more specialized worker base, had long been tepid on civil rights despite pushing a largely egalitarian message. The CIO from its inception towered as one of the few white-led organizations in support of civil rights. This support drew both from a need for reciprocal African American support for industrial unions as well as the dominant left-wing ideology of union leaders who believed racial divisions undermined class consciousness.[21]

Combining economic and racial concerns quickly made the CIO the most important mobilization instrument outside of the Democratic Party itself in support of liberalism. In taking this step, two main reactions followed. First, African Americans who had seen economic gains alongside most other Americans during the New Deal found a lasting place in the Democratic Party's liberal wing. This provoked a response by Southern Democrats not only angered at the liberal wing for its endorsement of civil rights, but now at the broader labor movement which it saw as a vehicle for the advancement of civil rights. Up to this point, the Northern liberal faction could be considered fiscally progressive while ambivalent (or even semi-hostile) to civil rights while the Southern conservatives were fiscally ambivalent looking mostly to the preservation of Jim Crow. With the introduction of the CIO as a major player on the political stage, the liberal

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[21] Schickler, 4.

faction now was increasingly dominated by an encompassing vision of economic and racial

liberalism while the Southern conservatives altered their ideology to more economically

conservative or at the very least, anti-labor stances.

Crucial to increasing tension between the liberals and the Southern conservatives was the

attempted purge of Southern conservatives in 1938 by FDR. In this conflict, the CIO was one of

the biggest financial backers. The CIO went as far as to target conservative Northern Democrats,

even ones that Roosevelt had not personally targeted.[22] In the end, the purge was a total failure as

nearly every Democrat targeted retained their seat and was now even more apt to act against the

president and the liberal faction. Still, if there were any lingering questions about the main

support organization for the liberals prior to the purge, the CIO had locked that up by the end of

1938.

One of the other big contributions of the CIO to factional politics came in the form of

support for Henry Wallace as vice-president. Wallace captured the Democratic nomination for

vice-president at the 1940 convention with the backing of the liberal wing, especially labor.

Southern conservatives saw Wallace as a threat to their ideology in nearly every capacity given

his outspoken support for both the labor movement and civil rights. The CIO's political action

committee (PAC), headed by Sidney Hillman in 1944, pushed heavily for Wallace to be

renominated and nearly overcame an alliance of Southern conservatives and big city bosses only

to fall short on a second ballot. [23] It should be noted that Wallace was the heavy favorite among

rank and file party members illustrating (and largely spearheading) the liberal faction's growing

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[22] Schickler, 57.

[23] Catledge, Turner. "Truman Nominated for Vice Presidency." *The New York Times*, July 22, 1944.

influence.[24] Wallace's denial from the vice-presidential ticket may have been a loss for the liberal wing, but it did effectively galvanize and further encourage liberals to build infrastructure within the party.

The CIO PAC, formed in 1943 as the first of its kind political action committee, can't be overstated in its importance to factional politics. While there were many organizations with vested interests and actions in the political realm, they generally stayed within the parameters of their own interests and members. The CIO PAC was notable in that it was open to the public, encouraging support from persons outside of CIO membership. The scope of political action that the PAC undertook was quite revolutionary as well becoming involved deeply in platform, policy, and candidate consideration. By courting the public, the CIO PAC essentially passed the Democratic National Committee in many respects as the main organizational branch of the Democratic Party in the North, taking on many fundraising, mobilization, and other integral political activities.[25]

The American Federation of Labor (AFL), despite its larger size and extensive history, was not as influential to liberals, especially after 1936, when compared to the CIO. Still, it was an ardent supporter both financially and otherwise of New Deal liberalism.[26] While both organizations were critical to the New Deal, their competition against each other weakened public support and exposed more vulnerability that business forces were able to take advantage

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[24] Bain, Richard C., and Judith H. Parris. *Convention Decisions and Voting Records*. Brookings Institution, 1974, 276-277.

[25] Zieger, 181-182.

[26] Kazin, Michael. *The Concise Princeton Encyclopedia of American Political History*. Princeton University Press, 2011.

of later on. The strength and weaknesses of labor as an aggregate force may be best seen in the

passage of the Wagner Act in 1935 and Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 and the congressional

setbacks past that point. With 1938 being the year the CIO cut ties with the AFL, it can be

concluded that the split further divided the Democratic party, weakened labor's political

defenses, but also helped cement African American support.

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) also

emerged as a key player for the liberal wing of the Democratic Party. Founded in 1909, one of

the main goals of the NAACP in its early years was to pursue federal anti-lynching legislation.[27]

In 1934, one of the best chances for federal action was proposed with the Costigan-Wagner bill,

which the NAACP pushed vigorously for.[28] With support in Congress close, the NAACP and

other liberal actors pushed FDR to support the legislation, but he refused fearing Southern

backlash in the 1936 election. Roy Wilkins, a longtime associate and future leader of the

NAACP summed up the general view of FDR and Eleanor Roosevelt when he stated "Mr.

Roosevelt was no friend to the Negro. He wasn't an enemy, but he wasn't a friend. The personal

touches and the personal fight against discrimination were Mrs. Roosevelt's; that attached to

(Mr.) Roosevelt also…and he reaped the political benefit of it."[29]

Eleanor Roosevelt, adored by much of the public, especially liberals, was key in keeping

relations healthy between the liberal but politically wary FDR and the NAACP. In 1939, she

agreed to present the Spingarn Medal to Marian Anderson, an African American opera singer, at

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[27] Janken, Kenneth Robert. *Walter White: Mr. NAACP*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 2006, p.2.

[28] "NAACP History: Costigan Wagner Bill." NAACP. Accessed September 25, 2018. https://www.naacp.org/naacp-history-costigan-wagner-act/.

[29] Witcover, 375-376.

the upcoming national convention of the NAACP. The Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) had denied approval for Anderson to attend a concert at Constitution Hall, triggering Roosevelt to act by resigning from the organization and issuing a blistering, though implicit dissent published prominently in newspapers nationwide.[30] While the NAACP had its qualms with FDR from time to time, the presence of Eleanor Roosevelt along with such figures as Interior Secretary Harold Ickes (1933-1946), a former Chicago NAACP leader, ensured that the liberal wing had an active organizational ally in the NAACP.

<div align="center">Strategy</div>

It is notable that few prominent non-party organizations backed the Southern conservative ideology of the Democratic Party. The reason lies in the fact that the conservative faction had long held the majority power and defined the reputation of the Democratic Party. Southern conservatives knew the presidency was out of reach as it had been for the better part of a century, but it still had dominant influence over the presidential candidate until 1936 when the two-thirds rule was abolished at the Democratic Convention.[31] This rule change must be underscored as it allowed the Democratic Party to redefine itself via its presidential nominees who increasingly mirrored the Northern liberal faction after this point. Even with that loss of power though, Southern conservatives dominated Congress including its powerful committees

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[30] Arsenault, Raymond. *The Sound of Freedom: Marian Anderson, the Lincoln Memorial, and the Concert That Awakened America*, 2010, 158.

[31] "It (the two-thirds rule) had required a candidate to garner two-thirds of the delegate votes in order to secure the Democratic presidential nomination and had therefore long functioned as the South's de facto veto over any potential candidate." (Schulman, Bruce J. *From Cotton Belt to Sunbelt: Federal Policy, Economic Development and the Transformation of the South: 1938-1980.* Durham: Duke University Press, 1994, 44-46.)

such as the House Rules Committee, which was successfully able to delay and destroy much of the early civil rights legislation. Southerners ability to dominate the committee system came from their geographic advantage in Congress; Southern Democrats often ran uncontested and thus had long stays which allowed them to rise up the ranks in committees. FDR's landslide victories brought with them a large influx of liberal Democrats, but these seats were often competitive with Republicans in the North and West. Southern Democrats faced little competition as Republicans were uncompetitive and liberal Democratic challenges were unsuccessful with a few rare exceptions.

Southern conservatives' core principle was preserving Southern sovereignty over racial issues and they were therefore wary of a liberal president. FDR understood this and largely kept to economic issues which the South benefitted from in many ways. Thus, the Southern conservative faction supported or at least tolerated the popular president and the liberal wing. That is, until the increasingly intertwined black-labor alliance started making more of an impact threatening Southern racial norms. As will be explained later, the timing of this also paired with outside backlash from a proposed court packing as well as a subsequent attempted purge of Southern conservatives. These moves shifted Southern strategy to be much more antagonistic, to the point of forming the "conservative coalition," an alliance between Southern Democrats and Republicans in Congress which effectively ended much of later New Deal aspirations by the late 1930s, especially in the realm of civil rights and labor.

With the advent of World War II, most factional battles dimmed. Southern conservatives benefitted from Republican gains in Congress which ate into liberal Democratic power. While the war years were relatively uneventful in terms of factional battles, they did involve some key actions including the passage of Smith-Connally Act, an anti-union act aimed at limiting striking,

passed in 1943 over Roosevelt's veto.[32] The greatest strategic victory for the Southern faction

may have come in 1944 with the removal of Henry Wallace from the ticket. In order to

accomplish this, Southern conservatives partnered with big city bosses loyal to FDR but worried

about Wallace's supposed radicalism. While Democratic factions were well-defined after 1938,

swing influences remained in the party. City bosses supported many broad goals of the New Deal

but held some sympathies with the more conservative or moderate forces that had helped

candidates like Al Smith in the 1920s.[33] For them, there wasn't a risk that a Southern Democrat

would be chosen, and the removal of Wallace guaranteed a pick favorable to city machines,

which came in the form of the Pendergast Machine and Harry Truman.

The liberal wing of the Democratic Party took a much different strategy as an outside

force looking to take control of the party. Liberals knew that FDR had a chance to transform the

party, but also recognized that much needed to be done to weaken conservative power

institutions many of which were in Congress. The uncompetitive nature of the South meant long

stays for Southern conservatives, leading to many chairmanships of committees. Aside from

pushing for stronger labor laws, a nod to their most important constituency, liberals immediately

took aim at eliminating the two-thirds rule at the 1936 Democratic Convention. The two-thirds

rule in essence required Southern approval of the presidency, as many delegates were from

Southern states. With FDR backing the repeal of the rule under pressure from liberals, the vote

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[32] Witcover, 399.

[33] Savage, Sean J. *Truman and the Democratic Party*. Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 1997, 25.

carried in a move that shifted the Democratic Party from a historically regional party to one with lasting national appeal.[34]

The biggest mistake for the liberal faction came in the form of FDR's attempted purge of conservative Democrats in 1938. The failure of the purge triggered a number of undesirable outcomes for Democrats including: loss of liberal seats in Congress to Republicans, greater political polarization of opinions toward the CIO/unions, and a stronger conservative coalition with Southern Democrats increasingly backing Republicans on economic issues. For liberals, the purge had been about both adding more supportive congressional members, and clearing the way for a liberal presidential candidate in 1940.[35] Developments overseas changed those plans though, giving liberals another two terms of FDR. As important to liberals was the shift of the vice-presidency from the Southerner John Garner to the labor/left hero Henry Wallace in 1940. Many of the criticisms FDR fielded from liberals in his own party dissolved with the pick as Henry Wallace treaded into issues like civil rights and was unapologetically pro-labor, going as far as to help Latin American countries with labor contracts.[36]

The creation of the Fair Employment Practices Committee (FEPC) in 1941 was won by A. Phillip Randolph, the African-American leader of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters union, who had leveraged the threat of a march on Washington to urge Roosevelt's action.[37] This

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[34] Schulman, 44-46.

[35] Witcover, 380.

[36] Shimamoto, Mayako. *Henry A. Wallace's Criticism of America's Atomic Monopoly, 1945-1948.* Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2016, 6.

[37] Collins, William. "Race, Roosevelt, and Wartime Production: Fair Employment in World War II Labor Markets", *American Economic Review* 91:1 (March 2001), pp. 272–286.

action underlines part of the broader strategic movement undertaken by black leaders during war time to use grassroots and political leverage to achieve preliminary goals of the civil rights movement. Other examples of this are evident in African-American leaders comparing Jim Crow to Nazi Germany during WWII and during the Cold War with the Soviet Union.

As WWII raged around the world, liberals had a prime opportunity with an extremely popular wartime president. FDR, though, famously said that he was now "Dr. "Win-the-War," which was unfortunate for the liberal faction as it turned attention away from social reform.[38] The war years also brought the devastating removal of Henry Wallace from the vice-presidential ticket in 1944, which began a period of distrust among some ardent liberals of the party. One strategy never adopted, but long discussed by FDR and liberal insiders (Republicans and Democrats) was the idea of realigning the parties into liberal and conservative ones. FDR said in response to the proposal by losing GOP candidate Wendell Willkie, "I agree with him 100 percent and the time is now- right after the election. We ought to have two real parties -one liberal and one conservative. As it is now, each party is split with dissenters…we can do it in 1948…From the liberals of both parties Willkie and I together can form a new, really liberal party in America."[39] That strategy if followed could have created the most drastic party realignment in US history, but instead a few months later FDR passed away, ending an era in the country and the Democratic Party.

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[38] Witcover, 398.

[39] Witcover, 407.

Arenas of Competition

The Democratic factions in 1936 were clear in terms of where power was held and who held it. Southern conservatives held Congress and along with it many committees such as House Rules Committee, likely the most influential in delaying civil rights legislation. In fact, at the height of Southern power in the early-mid 1930s, Southerners held chairmanships of 9 of the 10 most influential House committees (Agriculture, Banking, among others) and nearly half of all Senate committees as well.[40] Liberals could instead tout the presidency when FDR was in power and afterwards following the repeal of the two-thirds rule at the 1936 Democratic convention. Likewise, the liberal wing could tout significant influence in organized labor and increasingly in African American organizations.

In terms of the party apparatus itself, liberals benefitted greatly from the appointment of James Farley to Democratic National Committee (DNC) chair. Farley, who chaired FDR's campaign in 1932, was an esteemed strategic mind who excelled at his ability to gather the Catholics, unions, and big city machines, while maintaining the South. Farley had previously fought for civil rights as chair of the New York Athletics Commission and his presence allowed liberals a key ally who could push the agenda while simultaneously playing strategy enough to keep the South content.[41] Of the political mistakes FDR would make, Farley voiced his opposition on both the Southern purge as well as the Supreme Court packing plan. Farley's contributions included the use of the patronage system to successfully push through many of the

[40] Stewart, Charles. "Committee Hierarchies in the Modernizing House, 1875-1947." *American Journal of Political Science* 36, no. 4 (1992): 835-56. doi:10.2307/2111350.

[41] Scroop, Daniel Mark, *Mr. Democrat: Jim Farley, the New Deal, and the Making of Modern American Politics* University of Michigan Press, 2006.

first 100 days reforms in 1933, which bolstered liberals to continued gains in subsequent elections. Eventually, Farley and Roosevelt would fall out of favor over the 1940 election process. His absence compounded the issues liberals would have during wartime Congresses.[42]

Following Farley, the DNC would have two more short term leaders before the job was passed to Robert Hannegan. Hannegan, with his political roots in St. Louis aligned with the more moderate city boss forces and worked vigorously in 1944 to ensure that Henry Wallace did not recapture the vice-presidential nomination.[43] This action shouldn't be confused as a shot at the liberal faction, though it was certainly a blow. Hannegan favored liberals over conservatives and was a proponent of labor, but along with many political elites feared that Wallace would be unappetizing to the public and potentially dangerous to their influence.

Another key clash for the liberal and conservative factions was over civil rights planks decided at each Democratic convention. Prior to 1944, Democrats faced limited external pressure for a strong civil rights plank mostly from African American groups. In 1944, African-Americans scored a major victory when the CIO, the largest organizational apparatus for liberals, endorsed the need for a strong plank. In fact, media coverage of the plank often referenced the "CIO plank" which included an FEPC with enforcement power, end to poll taxes, and voting rights protections. Southern conservatives were expectedly outraged and the ensuing fight in the platform committee delayed action for two days, forcing Roosevelt to intervene with a compromise platform.[44] The black-labor alliance may not have won the fight, but this was a clear

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[42] Witcover, 385.

[43] Savage, 25.

[44] Schickler, 214.

signal that national party leaders now had to contend with grassroots pressure from a united liberal faction on the issue of civil rights.

The battle for Congress between the factions in the Democratic Party had two parts. First was the competition for seats, committee chairmanships, and rules. The second part was the battle for specific legislation on labor, civil rights, economic philosophy, and other key issues. To get a full picture of the importance and outcome of congressional control it is best to look at both parts of the battle.

Most simply, in terms of raw congressional seats, Democrats saw significant losses (18 Senate seats/111 House) from 1936-1945 and this should clearly be seen as a major victory for the Southern conservatives who were by 1940 more favorable to Republicans in many senses.[45] That may beg the question why realignment didn't take place earlier, but while Southern conservatives had lost influence in the Presidency and had little in common with liberals, the Democratic Party still was where their power was crucially concentrated in the form of congressional strength.

The New Deal, sometimes perceived as a groundswell of liberal legislation, is only accurate as far as the first half of FDR's presidency. By 1938, many liberal victories had been won but the years to follow ranged from tepid wins to depressing setbacks. One of the last major liberal victories came as far back as 1938 with the signing of the Fair Labor Standards Act, the revolutionary legislation establishing a minimum wage, 40-hour work week, and banning forms of child labor.[46] After that point, liberal victories came more from political opportunities, the

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[45] Witcover, 409.

[46] Samuel, Howard (December 2000). "Troubled Passage: The Labor Movement and the Fair Labor Standards Act" *Monthly Labor Review*. United States Bureau of Labor Statistics. Retrieved 24 August 2018.

presidency, or other forums than Congress. World War II, while hurting liberals in enacting more politicized legislation, prevented conservative gains from translating into many legislative victories. Still, conservative legislation like the 1943 Smith-Connally Act struck directly at labor and were but a taste of what Southern conservatives had in store for the labor movement.

In terms of the New Deal era, Southern conservatives' most notable use of their decentralized committee powers was in partnering with Republicans to launch a series of investigations against the National Labor Relations Board, CIO, and other labor actors in the late 1930s.[47] A critical tool for Southern Democrats was the Senate filibuster. The filibuster rule meant that a two-thirds majority had to be established for cloture. This rule was continuously utilized by Southern Democrats when civil rights legislation was introduced.[48] The strategy was a calculation of political capital and prioritization. Southern conservatives' core issue was preventing civil rights legislation from passing, thus filibusters weren't politically risky in most cases. Northern liberals, while favoring civil rights legislation, couldn't risk endangering economic, regulatory, or welfare legislation by trying to wait out filibusters.

One other arena of competition generally downplayed because of the time period is public opinion. Polling as known today had its origins in the 1930s, but many of the polls of that era are now discounted by historians, political scientists, and others for errors, discrimination, and general inadequacy. While they may deserve skepticism, they illustrate a key point in the factional battle between liberals and Southern conservatives. A poll taken by Gallup in 1937 had those identifying as "economically liberal Roosevelt voters" favoring anti-lynching legislation by

[47] Schickler, 71-72.

[48] "Filibuster and Cloture." U.S. Senate: Contacting the Senate Search. April 18, 2017. Accessed September 25, 2018. https://www.senate.gov/artandhistory/history/common/briefing/Filibuster_Cloture.htm.

a 60-28 margin. Other poll results compiled into a correlation table by Eric Schickler in *Racial Realignment* further support this notion.[49] These polls illustrate a key win for liberal Democrats in making the core Democratic base sympathetic to civil rights issues by 1937. While Southern conservatives had political devices to stop and slow legislation for years to come, the transition in public opinion meant the core beliefs of rank and file Democrats were becoming more at odds with Southern conservative goals.

Political Opportunities

Three crucial political opportunities played greatly into the factional battles at this time. First, the conservative Supreme Court, which had arguably been Roosevelt's biggest foe in enacting New Deal legislation, shifted its adversarial rulings following the threat of FDR's court packing scheme. Whether this was in response to the plan or not, the shift in rulings moved public opinion enough for Congress to defeat the bill. [50] The defeat was momentous in its own right, but symbolic in the sense that Southern conservatives were more likely to act against FDR after that point. The conservative attacks against FDR up to this point had largely centered on radicalism and the dangerous drift towards authoritarianism and this event turned this line from a weak effort to a legitimate concern for the public.

The second event was World War II. The war may have cemented FDR's legacy, but it played out less advantageously for the liberal faction in the Democratic Party. Liberals often

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[49] Schickler, 106.

[50] Leuchtenberg, William E. "When Franklin Roosevelt Clashed with the Supreme Court – and Lost." Smithsonian.com. May 01, 2005. Accessed January 11, 2018. https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/when-franklin-roosevelt-clashed-with-the-supreme-court-and-lost-78497994/.

relied on FDR's support on initiatives and in campaigning to turn swing support. With the

conservative coalition reaching maturity, liberals needed their leader's help more than ever.

Unfortunately for them, the successful war efforts came at the expense of congressional seats and

labor legislation.[51] The war wasn't all negative for liberals though. Labor's legal foundations

may have been under siege, but the actual size of the labor movement grew from just 10 million

in 1941 to nearly 15 million by the end of the war.[52] This massive growth would push unions,

especially the CIO, to push even further into politics in the years to come. Wartime mobilization

left many factory jobs open in the North leading to a mass migration of African-Americans (1.5

million left the South during the 1940s), increasing the political importance of the voting bloc to

liberals.[53] Liberal activists also seized on the war to call out the hypocrisy of fighting Nazi

Germany while simultaneously upholding the Jim Crow system of the South.[54]

The death of Franklin Delano Roosevelt on April 12, 1945 signaled an end to an era in

American history, but also in factional politics. Liberals who had been insulated to some degree

by the popularity of their president were now more vulnerable. The idea of realigning the parties

through coordinated action didn't die with FDR, but any feasible hope of achieving that end in a

timely manner was dashed.

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[51] Witcover, 398.

[52] Zieger, Robert. *American Workers, American Unions, 1920-1985*, Johns Hopkins Univ Press. 1986.

[53] Gregory, James N. *The Southern Diaspora: How the Great Migrations of Black and White Southerners Transformed America.* Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina, 2005, 13.

[54] Warren, Frank A. "A World of Hope, a World of Fear: Henry A. Wallace, Reinhold Niebuhr, and American Liberalism." *The Annals of Iowa* 60, no. 2 (2001): 194-196.

Summary/Analysis

The New Deal era was instrumental in defining the factional battles between Southern conservatives and liberals in the Democratic Party. Liberals, as the insurgent actor, found an organizational apparatus through the CIO and the broader labor movement. They critically aligned with a civil rights position which brought African American support for years to come, but also alienated Southern conservatives. The symbiosis of these two groups formed a critical black-labor alliance where blacks were pivotal in expanding labor's numbers while labor became the initial and fiercest mainstream support for the civil rights movement. Liberal strategy focused not only on strengthening their apparatus but also waging a successful effort to repeal the two-thirds rule clearly defining their power in the presidency. Liberals also gained much of the Democratic Party's national infrastructure such as support of the DNC chair James Farley. While key wins such as the Wallace vice-presidency illustrated growing power, the loss at the hands of city bosses showed limits to liberal ambitions.

The hypothesis this thesis presents is similar in many respects to claims advanced by Eric Schickler in his book, *Racial Realignment*. The central claims in his book suggests realignment (of the Democratic Party) emerged in the 1930s, started with mid to low level actors at the state and local level, and was straddled by national leaders who were some of the last to shift. In addition, Schickler also advances the idea of labor and African Americans as having intersecting trajectories and altogether central to the realignment of the Democratic Party.[55] While the book

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[55] Schickler, Eric. *Racial Realignment: The Transformation of American Liberalism, 1932-1965*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2016, 3-5.

focuses on racial realignment of the parties as opposed to conflict between factions, the theory of

a black-labor alliance and many smaller details are largely in line with the ideas this thesis

advances.

Southern Democrats came into the New Deal with power based in internal factors such as

congressional control, especially committees. Their strategy aligned with their interests, favoring

the New Deal when it provided economic benefits, but seeking out Republicans to form the

conservative coalition when the black-labor alliance became an increasing threat to Southern

culture. While they were helpless to watch liberals sweep into Congress in the early New Deal,

they greatly limited the second half of the Roosevelt presidency halting much of later legislation

while Republican gains returned Southern congressional dominance.

From the start of 1936 to FDR's death in 1945, factional power consistently fluctuated at

the federal level. Liberals started the period as the new actor, but with incredible grassroots

support. Conservatives were able to eliminate much of the congressional influence that liberals

held but couldn't stop the public change of perception and subsequent membership changes that

the Democratic Party underwent in those years. These changes were driven largely by the power

and growth of the labor movement, which shifted resources, demographics, and the ideology of

the liberal faction. It is in this key development that liberals were to eventually triumph, though

Southern conservatives would delay and mitigate this process greatly in the years to come.

V.   **Truman and Oppositional Politics 1945-1960**

Organizations

The CIO, greatly bolstered by wartime growth, made its most ambitious move in 1946

with the launch of Operation Dixie. The operation's central goal was the unionization of the

South, but the effort was a total failure as racial friction and Jim Crow laws shielded the South from the union threat.[56] The failure of Operation Dixie didn't just provide a setback for the CIO and liberals, it helped to galvanize Southern Democrats into passing some of the most extreme anti-union legislation in the Taft-Hartley Act of 1947, detailed in the *Arenas of Competition* section.

After the passage of Taft-Hartley, there was little unions could do to stop further attacks on their power. Union membership continued to grow modestly for a few years but declined after 1954, and with it union influence in politics.[57] The CIO would merge with the AFL in 1955 to create the AFL-CIO which maintained significant sway for the next 10-15 years in the Democratic Party.[58] While this change was pivotal in keeping labor a significant actor, it came too late in many respects. It is important to differentiate union influence and union support within the Democratic Party; the latter being sustained among liberal Democrats without interruption.[59]

The Monday Night Group was formed in the wake of 1946 midterm elections when Democrats lost control of both houses. Clark Clifford, a former advisor to FDR, was joined by several other Truman cabinet members in the group, whose aim was to demonstrate and leverage

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[56] Disalvo, 167.

[57] Hirsch, Barry, David MacPherson, and Wayne Vroman. "Estimates of Union Density by State." *Monthly Labor Review* 124, no. 7 (July 2001).

[58] Dark, Taylor E. "Organized labor and the presidential nominating process: Reconsidering the 1980s." *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 26, no. 2 (1996): 391-401.

[59] Saad, Lydia. "Americans' Support for Labor Unions Continues to Recover." Gallup.com. August 17, 2015. Accessed October 22, 2018. https://news.gallup.com/poll/184622/americans-support-labor-unions-continues-recover.aspx?utm_source=alert&utm_medium=email&utm_content=morelink&utm_campaign=syndication.

Truman's liberalism.[60] The group's greatest contribution was in the form of a strategic document

called the Rowe-Clifford Memorandum which was released in 1948. The memorandum called

for the pursuance of issues that would make Republicans appear obstructionist, such as price

controls, strong housing action, tax revisions, and civil rights legislation. On civil rights

especially, the divide between the factions was clearly outlined as liberals feared Republican

efforts to offer a FEPC, anti-poll tax bill, and an anti-lynching bill in the next session and wanted

to strike first on these issues. However, liberals had to be cautious of going far on civil rights as

it would "obviously cause difficulty with our Southern friends." [61] While the Monday Night

Group was ultimately overshadowed by many other organizational actors in this era, the Rowe-

Clifford Memorandum was crucial to Truman's upset victory in 1948 as it shifted the focus from

Truman's unpopularity as president to the unfavorable ideology and perceived obstructionism of

congressional Republicans.[62]

Around the same time the Monday Night Group came into existence, the Americans for

Democratic Action (ADA) was also formed. Their ideology spawned from a vaguely articulated

confidence in bureaucratic experience from the Progressive Era and was strengthened by the

successes of the New Deal. The ideology was articulated by leaders like Reinhold Niebuhr,

Arthur Schlesinger, Walter Reuther, and Hubert Humphrey.[63] Wilson Wyatt, the first chair of the

ADA, outlines the overall ideology quite well "(We Reject) the view government's only

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[60] Witcover, 422.

[61] Witcover, 424.

[62] Witcover, 436.

[63] Disalvo, xi.

responsibility is to prevent people from starving or freezing to death. We believe it is the job of

government to lift the level of human existence…"[64] Though the group in many ways

represented the left-wing of the Democratic Party, it was strongly interventionist and anti-

Communist in foreign policy, pitting it to the right of the Progressive Citizens of America

(PCA), which held figures like Henry Wallace and W.E.B Dubois amongst its membership.[65]

One of the first big contributions the ADA made was in supporting a strong civil rights

plank at the 1948 Democratic Convention. While liberals had fought a good fight at the

conventions previously, 1948 marked the first time a strong civil rights plank was adopted.[66] The

ADA played a more significant role in assuring Truman's win in 1948 by teaming with the

DNC's newly formed media arm to cast the Progressive Party's candidate Henry Wallace as a

Communist attack on Democrats.[67] Other contributions by the ADA in factional politics included

Eleanor Roosevelt's joining of the group in 1953 to repel Joseph McCarthy's red scare

investigations and the rejection of the moderation strategy advanced by Lyndon Johnson toward

Republicans in the wake of the 1956 election.[68]

The Democratic Advisory Council (DAC) was another creation of the liberal scholars in

the presidential wing of the party. The DAC'S stated purpose was to give voice to party leaders

and members, though it was widely seen as a declaration of independence by key liberal leaders

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[64] Disalvo, 53.

[65] Black, Allida. *Casting Her Own Shadow: Eleanor Roosevelt and the Shaping of Postwar Liberalism*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1996, 169.

[66] Witcover, 431.

[67] Savage, 118.

[68] Gallagher, Steven. "Walking the Tightrope: Americans For Democratic Action in The South, 1947-1963" PHD Dissertation, University of Florida, 2008, 209-211.

of the presidential wing from congressional Democrats. Formed from the 1956 landslide election

loss of Adlai Stevenson, the group was led by DNC chair Paul Butler and included such names

as Hubert Humphrey and Eleanor Roosevelt.[69] Though leaders of the Southern Democrats were

invited, the group was a source of intra-party friction from the start. Lyndon Johnson, for

example, saw the DAC as an obstacle to seek compromise with Republicans and Southern

Democrats.[70] Butler was also very vocal in response and later drew criticisms from Truman, who

took indirect swipes at Eleanor Roosevelt and "Self-appointed guardians of liberal thinking." She

responded by saying the party had to be one "Where majority rule and where principles are the

basis of the party."[71]

1957 was marked by a sharp recession which the DAC quickly utilized to attack the

Eisenhower administration, but a key civil rights bill was also passed through creating a federal

Civil Rights Commission with broad investigatory powers and authorizing the federal

government to bring voting rights cases with penalties for violators, which the DAC praised.[72]

Important to note regarding the civil rights bill was a DAC statement released on reasonable

limitation of debate, a shot at the Southern Democrat's weapon of choice in the Senate, the

filibuster.[73] 1957 was also important because it provided the Little Rock 9 case in which

Eisenhower was forced to nationalize the National Guard to allow black students to enter a

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[69] Witcover, 470-471.

[70] Ibid, 471.

[71] McKeever, Porter. *Adlai Stevenson: His Life and Legacy*. New York: Quill, 1991, 130-131.

[72] Witcover, 472.

[73] Democratic Advisory Council. 1957. "Statement by the Democratic Advisory Council on the Action to Provide for the Reasonable Limitation of Debate in the United States Senate."

school over the objections of Democratic Governor Orval Faubus.[74] The DAC was also in the forefront of pushing for this action as an example of the factional nature of the group and the party. Following the Democratic wave in the 1958 midterms, Paul Butler backed off attacks on Johnson after a meeting in 1959.[75] The DAC would also be moderated in time by Harry Truman's unifying presence and the hawkish Dean Acheson, who was often opposed by other liberals and can be considered another major stepping stone in the Democratic Party taking a more central role in foreign policy.[76]

Another major organizational player arose in 1959 from the influx of liberal Democratic legislators elected in the previous election, the Democratic Study Group (DSG). The DSG, while ambitious in notion, took the pragmatic aim of targeting reform in the committee system to weaken Southern Democratic control.[77] These actions would be pivotal to liberal victories in the years to come. The DSG also lobbied the Democratic leadership to appoint liberals to serve on influential committees and to back legislation to expand the role of the federal government. They even produced and disseminated first-rate research for members and the press, exposing conservative tactics and offering weekly legislative updates on their key issues.[78]

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[74] Witcover, 472.

[75] Ibid, 474.

[76] Chace, James. *Acheson: The Secretary of State Who Created the American World*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2007, 379.

[77] Disalvo, 103.

[78] Zelizer, Julian E. *The Fierce Urgency of Now: Lyndon Johnson, Congress, and the Battle for the Great Society*. Penguin, 2015, 26-27.

The NAACP rocketed in prominence in the 1940s and held a membership of 600,000 by 1946.[79] With more resources and support, the group pushed for a successful integration of the military in 1948 and, helmed by Thurgood Marshall, argued successfully in the landmark Supreme Court case *Brown v Board of Education* outlawing segregation in 1954. Beyond that, the NAACP also worked hard in the South to register black voters and support the push for civil rights that had begun to heat up.[80] The NAACP, while officially non-partisan, was aligned with liberal Democrats in political goals and aided them indirectly by the black voter registration drives in the South. The alliance of values shared by the NAACP and liberal Democrats is perhaps best exemplified by the party affiliation of black voters which surged to 66% in the 4 years following military integration.[81]

Strategy

The strategy for both the liberal and conservative faction in the Democratic Party after World War II centered around labor. The liberal faction was driven primarily by labor resources and a breakthrough in the South could have yielded drastic political gains. Southern conservatives were still focused on preserving white supremacy and the exterior threat of labor and civil rights now threatened their own domain with the commencement of Operation Dixie by the CIO. The subsequent failure of the operation along with the passage of Taft-Hartley can be

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[79] "Nation's Premier Civil Rights Organization." NAACP. Accessed October 07, 2018. https://www.naacp.org/nations-premier-civil-rights-organization/.

[80] Williams, Juan. *Eyes on the Prize: America's Civil Rights Years, 1954-1965*. New York: Viking Penguin Inc., 1987, 208.

[81] Stanley, Harold W., and Richard G. Niemi. "Partisanship, Party Coalitions, and Group Support, 1952-2004." *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 36, no. 2 (2006): 172-88. http://www.jstor.org/stable/27552213.

seen as an indicator of how forceful conservatives in the South were in preserving the status quo. Southern conservative strategy during this time didn't change much, their dominance remained mainly in congressional committees and institutions as opposed to organizations. Along with the above strategy, the rise of black voters in the North helped the liberal faction push a more assertive approach on civil rights initiatives.

The liberal faction in the Democratic Party had drastic alterations occur in the late 1940s and early 1950s that shifted both the goals and leadership of the faction. One of the first issues that consumed liberals in the Truman presidency was Truman himself. Truman was a liberal, but a moderate one coming into 1945.[82] Liberals were placated in the fact that such firebrands like Henry Wallace remained in the administration, but that would last only until Wallace was fired over Soviet Union foreign policy disputes in 1946.[83] The departure of Henry Wallace could have led to a decrease in liberalism in the Democratic Party, but the consolidation of power in the presidency aided, but also moderated liberal strategy.

Much of the focus for liberals, especially with the attacks on labor, shifted to organization and successful attempts at this came mainly from labor leaders like Walter Reuther. The entry of the ADA as a player helped solidify organization, but also brought an interventionist wing into the party that deviated from Wallace and other liberals who sought peace with the Soviet Union.[84] This shift was solidified in the 1948 election for a number of reasons. First off, Truman's desegregation of the military and veto of Taft-Hartley (which passed anyway) had won

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[82] Savage, 20.

[83] Witcover, 420.

[84] DiSalvo, 53.

back many liberals.[85] The ADA's successful victory in the fight for a strong civil rights plank helped reinforce this notion. Henry Wallace's decision to run on the Progressive Party ticket drew only the leftist most elements out of the Democratic Party and was further minimized by the Red Scare, which forced many Democrats to attack Progressives as communists.[86] By 1950, organizations affiliated with the liberal wing had greatly expelled communist influence; these included the NAACP, CIO, and The New Republic, for which Henry Wallace had once been editor.[87]

The liberal wing also had issues with consistency in strategy as evidenced by Truman's supposed mandate after 1948. After his upset victory in 1948, Truman became far more liberal in his vision, laying out the Fair Deal, which included proposals for national health insurance, more civil rights legislation, and aid to public education.[88] Truman miscalculated any mandate he may have had as the conservative coalition blocked nearly all proposals he had made.[89] In fact, Truman's presidential term would also see the Wage Stabilization Board dismantled in another blow to labor and liberals.[90] In many ways, the victory of Eisenhower as a moderate Republican did more to benefit liberal Democrats than the Truman years had as they focused on internal organization, subverting Southern advantages, and saw several civil rights goals met.

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[85] Witcover, 422.

[86] Savage, 118.

[87] Beinart, Peter. "A Fighting Faith." The New Republic. December 13, 2004. Accessed October 22, 2018. https://newrepublic.com/article/61389/fighting-faith.

[88] Witcover, 437.

[89] Witcover, 443.

[90] "The Goverment's Strike." *TIME,* August 4, 1952.

The political dynamics of a popular, moderate Republican president impacted strategy for both factions in the Democratic Party. Eisenhower was a self-described "progressive Republican" or "progressive moderate" as evidenced by his continuation of New Deal ideas like Social Security and his own expansive initiatives such as the Interstate Highway System.[91] He also endorsed many civil rights initiatives during his tenure in office.[92] For Southern Democrats, the Eisenhower era was focused on stopping civil rights, but these efforts weren't as successful against a Republican party mostly in step with their president, especially with liberal Democrats providing support. Still, the control of congressional committees and effective use of the filibuster delayed many civil rights initiatives during the 1950s.[93]

Liberal Democrats had less to worry about as most New Deal economic programs survived and civil rights initiatives passed. The ability to nominate a presidential candidate was under their control, but this became an intra-factional conflict as 1956 approached. By this point, Adlai Stevenson was arguably the national leader of the liberal faction but compared to his predecessors he was open to attacks as a moderate and uninspiring figure.[94] Stevenson faced off against Estes Kefauver, a Southern liberal figure and Averell Harriman, a liberal governor from New York, in a convention that would pit rival endorsements from Eleanor Roosevelt (Stevenson) and Truman (Harriman).[95] In the end, Stevenson won the nomination easily, but was

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[91] Ambrose, Stephen E. *Eisenhower: The President (1952-1969)*. London: Allen & Unwin, 1984, 220.

[92] Mayer, Michael. "The Eisenhower Administration and the Civil Rights Act of 1957." *Congress and the Presidency* 16, no. 2 (1989): 137-54.

[93] Finley, Keith M. *Delaying the Dream: Southern Senators and the Fight Against Civil Rights, 1938-1965*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2010.

[94] Witcover, 465.

[95] Witcover, 463.

trounced in the general election.[96] After 1956, liberals again looked to strengthen organization with the development of the DAC and DSG in the months and years following the loss. These organizations focused on eliminating Southern institutional advantages and formulating liberal strategy for subsequent elections.[97]

Another important strategic development was the growing influence of the black vote in the North. After a million blacks had left the South in the 1940s, an additional 1.5 million did so in the 1950s.[98] Most of this movement was driven by better job opportunities, often in unionized industries. The increasing importance of the African-American vote in the North coupled with its connections to the labor movement, one of the largest organizational apparatuses for the liberal wing and already pro-civil rights, changed the congressional makeup in the North and allowed for a more assertive tone on civil rights. The demographic changes in the North were coupled with several other factors such as the competition with the Soviet Union and subsequent political pressure for action leveraged by civil rights supporters. In the South, the rise of Martin Luther King aided in organizing the 1955 Montgomery Bus Boycott and the organization he helped found, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), attempted to harness moral authority and organize the power of black churches.[99] These organizing efforts would pay huge dividends in the 1960s as the civil rights movement reached its peak.

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[96] Heale, M. J. *The United States in the Long Twentieth Century: Politics and Society Since 1900*. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015, 137.

[97] DiSalvo, 103.

[98] Hamby, Alonzo. "Harry S. Truman: The American Franchise." Miller Center. July 28, 2017. Accessed November 21, 2018. https://millercenter.org/president/truman/the-american-franchise.

[99] Marable, Manning, and Leith Mullings. *Let Nobody Turn Us Around: Voices of Resistance, Reform, and Renewal: An African American Anthology*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2009, 391-392.

Arenas of Competition

One of the biggest changes in the arenas of competition for the factions came with the congressional Reorganization Act of 1946. The act was intended to consolidate the cumbersome committee system and strengthen congressional oversight of executive agencies.[100] While the intentions of the bill were not explicitly political, it strengthened the advantage of Southern Democrats in congressional committees by condensing their power. The bill reduced the number of committees in the House from 48 to 19 and Senate from 33 to 15.[101] A powerful example of this was the House Rules Committee which came under the chairmanship of Howard Smith (D-VA) in 1954. Smith was ardently opposed to civil rights and with the condensing of the committee system, he was able to influence the fate of many civil rights bills proposed at the time. The Virginia Congressman used his position to control the floor agenda and consideration of bills.[102] The uphill battle on civil rights legislation at the time was exemplified in the Civil Rights Act of 1957 which had to be watered down in the Senate Judiciary Committee, in order to survive the record-breaking 24-hour filibuster by Strom Thurmond.[103]

The most decisive legislative victory for either side came with the passage of the Taft-Hartley Act in 1948. With the growth of labor during WWII and its increased importance as an organizational apparatus for the liberal wing, the battle over labor legislation was pivotal to the

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[100] "The Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946." US House of Representatives: History, Art & Archives. Accessed October 22, 2018. https://history.house.gov/HistoricalHighlight/Detail?id=35725.

[101] Carlin, John P., Bradley P. Moss, Rory Cooper, and Joanne Silberner. "Truman Signs Legislative Reorganization Act, Aug. 2, 1946." POLITICO. August 02, 2010. Accessed November 22, 2018. https://www.politico.com/story/2010/08/truman-signs-legislative-reorganization-act-aug-2-1946-040522.

[102] Disalvo, 102.

[103] Caro, Robert A. *The Years of Lyndon Johnson: The Passage of Power*. New York: 1982, Chapter 39.

direction of the factions and the resources they would possess. The bill had several provisions that effectively contained the labor movement including the banning of several striking methods, closed shops which required employers to hire union members, union security clauses, and the lifting of employer neutrality clauses.[104] Southern Democrats had now struck a severe blow to organized labor, as union participation rates would level out before dropping steadily in the decades to follow.[105]

Despite congressional setbacks, liberals found victories too. At the 1948 Democratic Convention, President Truman sought to again readopt the moderate 1944 civil rights plank.[106] Three different Southern planks were voted down while the liberal, ADA-backed plank passed 651-582, triggering a walkout by some Southern delegations.[107] The adopted plank stated that the Democratic Party "commits itself to continuing its efforts to eradicate all racial, religious and economic discrimination" and called on Congress to support Harry Truman on guaranteeing: the right of full and equal political participation; the right to equal opportunity of employment; the right of security of person; and the right of equal treatment in the service and defense of our nation.[108] While the convention ended in a Southern walkout that threatened a liberal presidency, the plank was a key victory for liberals on civil rights.

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[104] Gruenberg, Mark. "Taft-Hartley Signed 60 Years Ago." *Political Affairs Magazine*, June 11, 2007.

[105] Hirsch, Barry, David MacPherson, and Wayne Vroman. "Estimates of Union Density by State." *Monthly Labor Review* 124, no. 7 (July 2001).

[106] Hamby, Alonzo. "1948 Democratic Convention." Smithsonian.com. August 01, 2008. Accessed January 12, 2018. https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/1948-democratic-convention-878284

[107] Witcover, 431.

[108] "1948 Democratic Party Platform." The American Presidency Project. Accessed November 22, 2018. https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/1948-democratic-party-platform.

The 1948 presidential campaign threatened to be one of Democratic nightmare. An unpopular president was leading a party that had been united more in the leadership of FDR than on any concrete policy.[109] The Progressive Party, comprised of left-wing defectors from the Democratic Party, was headed by Henry Wallace, the former vice-president and leader of the Democratic liberal wing.[110] The Dixiecrats, comprised of some of the most racially conservative Democratic defectors, took the 1948 civil rights plank as a breaking point.[111] The effect of these third party campaigns on Democratic factionalism was mostly on the liberal faction, which was forced to attack Progressives as communist in order to avoid suspicion in the Red Scare and improve Democratic chances that fall.[112] This permanently alienated some elements of the faction, leaving it more pragmatic in economic issues and with a growing interventionist influence in foreign policy.[113]

The presidential election of 1952 displayed another snapshot of how the factional battle was unfolding. The Solid South had shown the first electoral signs of faltering from Southern Democrats, not because the ideology of the South was changing, but because the perception of the Democratic Party was increasingly liberal. Democrats lost the state of Tennessee and

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[109] Gallup, Inc. "Presidential Approval Ratings -- Gallup Historical Statistics and Trends." Gallup.com. Accessed January 12, 2018. http://news.gallup.com/poll/116677/presidential-approval-ratings-gallup-historical-statistics-trends.aspx.

[110] Witcover, 432.

[111] "Minor/Third Party Platforms: Platform of the States Rights Democratic Party - August 14, 1948." The American Presidency Project. Accessed January 12, 2018. http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=25851.

[112] Savage, 118.

[113] DiSalvo, 53.

narrowly avoided losses in South Carolina and Louisiana.[114] Southern Democrats had won major legislative victories, but with the face of the party belonging to liberals they were losing the battle in public opinion and elections.

Southern Democrats were able to stave off most of these presidential upsets in the 1950s. The battle for congressional control was a different story, though. In 1952, Southern Democrats held 66% of the party's seats in the Senate and 54% in the House. By 1958, Southern Democrats held just 35% of party House seats and 38% of the party's Senate seats.[115] This shift precipitated a change in the rule of cloture in the Senate from two-thirds of all Senators to two-thirds of Senators voting, which weakened the use of the filibuster, a favorite strategy of Southern Democrats in delaying civil rights legislation.[116] Southern Democrats would be able to gain back some of those losses in the years to follow, but the congressional advantage that Southern Democrats had enjoyed was increasingly being lost.

Political Opportunities

A few key political opportunities helped to shape the factional battle that unfolded in this period. Among these were several foreign policy events such as the Korean War and Soviet development of an atomic bomb. Another outside event came from the Supreme Court in the form of *Brown v Board of Education,* which helped to fuel increased civil rights activism such as the Montgomery Bus Boycotts and the Little Rock Nine case.

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[114] Witcover, 457.

[115] Brewer and Stonecash, 88.

[116] "Congress Profiles | US House of Representatives: History, Art & Archives." Congressional Profiles | US House of Representatives: History, Art & Archives. Accessed January 13, 2018. http://history.house.gov/Congressional-Overview/Profiles/87th/

With American fear of Soviet aggression on the rise, this was an area of less disagreement with both factions adopting more of an interventionist foreign policy.[117] As the US turned more interventionist, critics in the Soviet Union blasted Americans for hypocrisy on civil rights, allowing liberals to capitalize as they united with Republicans to pass civil rights legislation over the opposition of Southern Democrats.[118]

When the Supreme Court handed down the *Brown v Board of Education* ruling in 1954, it led to immediate outrage in the South. Southern Democrats issued the Southern Manifesto two years later urging defiance.[119] Throughout the second half of the Eisenhower term, the president consistently fell at odds with Southern Democrats when it came to civil rights issues. This led to high profile incidents like the Little Rock Nine, as schools across the South resisted desegregation.[120] In terms of factional outcomes, the greatest victory to come out of this was a portion of the Republican Party now had a greater reason to back the liberal Democrats in the efforts for civil rights to come. Perhaps even more important was that these victories came without a Democratic president. If a liberal Democrat had performed the actions Eisenhower did, it might have forced realignment earlier, pushed Republicans to be more antagonistic on the issue, or even delayed progress totally.

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[117] Russett, Bruce, and Donald R. Deluca. ""Don't Tread on Me": Public Opinion and Foreign Policy in the Eighties." *Political Science Quarterly* 96, no. 3 (1981): 381-99. doi:10.2307/2150551.

[118] Dudziak, Mary L. *Cold War Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy*. Princeton University Press, 2011.

[119] Witcover, 462.

[120] Witcover, 472.

Summary/Analysis

Harry Truman's presidency and the oppositional years under President Eisenhower provided victories and setbacks for both factions. Referring to points made earlier in this thesis, this era didn't define the factional conflict as much as reinforce the direction of the party that was set in the 1930s. Liberals continued to support economic progressivism and civil rights legislation while Southern Democrats continued to oppose them. Southerners held advantages in Congress and its subsequent committees, whereas liberal power came from the presidency, organized labor, and various civil rights organizations. The battle for power in the Democratic Party didn't see drastic shifts in trajectory; rather it saw a continued progression of liberal influence at the grassroots level translate into slow but steady victories against Southern Democrats. Southern Democrats weren't devoid of successful pushback, but when it came it was most often in the form of legislation, not in changing hearts and minds of Democratic voters.

In terms of organizations, this era saw the liberal faction bolstered by the Monday Night Group, ADA, DAC, and DSG. This proliferation of organization for liberals allowed for victories in Southern strongholds like Congress and helped to cement liberalism at the policy level. The Monday Night Group gave liberals an unlikely presidential victory, the ADA provided a win at the 1948 convention for a strong civil rights plank, and the DSG helped to secure revisions to cloture rules. Unions were dealt a major blow, but the fusion of the AFL and CIO still provided a significant apparatus for liberal organization.

The strategies of both factions fell victim to the consequences of overreach. Operation Dixie's failure in unionizing the South helped to gather support for Taft-Hartley, a bill that maimed the labor movement greatly. The choice of Southern Democrats to reject moderate solutions at the 1948 convention pushed liberals to successfully defeat them on the civil rights

plank. Liberals were ineffective at winning the presidency but used their time out of power to increase the organization of their faction. Southerners, though successful in early legislative fights, began to lose key congressional power and electoral strength. The growing black vote in the North was bolstered with union support, forcing liberal Democrats to acknowledge and push harder for civil rights progress. This was aided by condemnation of Jim Crowe by the Soviet Union and by the rise of Martin Luther King and the SCLC which was helping to build a powerful organizing apparatus for the civil rights cause that would yield massive results in the decade to come.

Political opportunities like the war in Korea and Soviet attainment of an atomic bomb ratcheted up the Red Scare, forcing liberal Democrats towards interventionist foreign policy. *Brown v Board of Education* and the widely covered civil rights battles that ensued continued to shift political conditions that made Republicans more open to civil rights, and liberal Democrats gladly gave support, while seeking to also limit the filibuster tactic of the Southern faction.

Competition like the 1948 election showed the stark division between the factions as the Progressive Party and States Rights (Dixiecrats) Party ran from Democratic defections. The arenas of competition saw gradual victories for the liberal faction, especially in Congress. By 1960, the congressional advantages that Southern Democrats had long held had been greatly reduced as the cloture rule was revised and liberals became the dominant faction in both houses of Congress. Southern Democrats did gain a temporary win in the form of the congressional Reorganization Act of 1946, but this too was moderated by 1960. Liberals also scored a victory in convention platforms in 1948 and faced no threat in the nominating process for president.

In total, the period of 1945-1960 serves to reiterate a key point of this thesis. The Democratic Party didn't become a liberal party with the Civil Rights Act of 1964 nor the Voting

Rights Act of 1965, rather the party saw the seeds of change planted in the 1930s as economic

progressivism and civil rights advocacy were united by the labor movement. The liberal faction

continued to rise from an insurgent actor to one that had roughly equal institutional power by

1960. Key events like the passage of Taft-Hartley, Supreme Court rulings, and congressional rule

changes didn't change the direction of factional conflict, but merely affected the speed at which

it occurred. Southern Democrats were effective in what they chose to target but failed in the one

area necessary for prolonged strength in democracies, public opinion.

VI.   Kennedy and Johnson 1960-1964

Organizations

Factional organizations reached their peak in the 1950s when the Democratic Party was

out of power. With Kennedy's election in 1960, the importance of many of these organizations

decreased, because the Kennedy family's wealth played an important role in organization during

the election campaign.[121] The Democratic Study Group continued to make important

contributions to the liberal faction as did other key civil rights organizations: Southern Christian

Leadership Conference (SCLC), Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), Congress

of Racial Equality (CORE), and the NAACP. The AFL-CIO's role, while being among those

whose influence was decreasing (albeit incrementally), is still discussed in a limited fashion.

The Democratic Study Group played an important role by organizing liberal Democrats

in the House of Representatives. The more specific contribution made in the 1960s and critical to

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[121] Gonyea, Don. "How JFK Fathered the Modern Presidential Campaign." NPR. November 16, 2013. Accessed October 29, 2018. https://www.npr.org/2013/11/16/245550528/jfk-wrote-the-book-on-modern-presidential-campaigns.

the Kennedy-Johnson legislative agenda was committee reform. In 1961, the DSG and Speaker

Sam Rayburn (D-TX) helped to push through major legislation expanding the number of

members on the House Rules Committee from 12 to 15.[122] The legislation only succeeded on a

217-212 vote and likely would have failed without the increased organizational capacity of the

liberal faction.[123] By expanding the number of members, the committee's power to limit civil

rights bills was mitigated.

The AFL-CIO faced internal conflicts ever since its creation in 1955, but these became

more evident in the 1960s. These conflicts stemmed from similar issues or at least mindsets that

had divided the AFL and CIO in the 1930s. George Meany, the leader of the AFL-CIO, came

from the AFL and was more conservative while Walter Reuther, former president of the CIO and

on the executive board of the AFL-CIO, was more liberal.[124] The two had rocky relations and

constantly clashed on civil rights, the Vietnam War, and general management of the

organization.[125] Martin Luther King Jr was among those who hoped for a labor-civil rights

coalition exemplified in his 1961 speech, "If the Negro Wins, Labor Wins."[126] The AFL-CIO

would reject a motion endorsing the 1963 March on Washington, with only Reuther and A.

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[122] Disalvo, 102.

[123] Sundquist, James L. *Politics and Policy: The Eisenhower, Kennedy, and Johnson Years*. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Inst., 1975, 476.

[124] Carew, Anthony. *Walter Reuther*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993, 77.

[125] Lichtenstein, Nelson. *Walter Reuther: The Most Dangerous Man in Detroit*. Urbana: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1997, 88, 323.

[126] Honey, Michael Keith. *Going Down Jericho Road the Memphis Strike, Martin Luther King's Last Campaign*. New York: W.W. Norton, 2008, 47.

Phillip Randolph, who would head the march, voting in favor.[127] George Meany was moved by Randolph's speech following the march and later supported the creation of the A. Phillip Randolph Institute, an organization for African-American trade unionists.[128] The AFL-CIO would also endorse the Civil Rights Act of 1964.[129]

Discussed briefly in the previous chapter was the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, founded in 1957 by several civil rights leaders, one of those being Martin Luther King Jr. The SCLC's purpose was to have a regional organization that could better coordinate civil rights protest activities across the South.[130] While founded in the 1950s, its most prominent efforts started in 1961 with the co-sponsored Albany Movement, a relatively unsuccessful set of demonstrations that resulted in arrests but failed to garner major attention. In 1963, the SCLC scored a major success during its Birmingham Campaign when non-violent protestors were set on by Bull Connor, police dogs, and fire hoses, provoking outrage for action across the nation. The SCLC would also co-sponsor the March on Washington that year and the Selma Movement in the years to come.[131] These actions were in addition to the important organizing efforts in churches and the broader African-American community in the South.

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[127] Lichtenstein, 88, 323.

[128] Flint, Jerry. "George Meany Is Dead; Pioneer in Labor Was 85." The New York Times. January 11, 1980. Accessed October 29, 2018. https://www.nytimes.com/1980/01/11/archives/george-meany-is-dead-pioneer-in-labor-was-85-outlived-friends-and.html.

[129] Dubovsky, Melvyn. *The State of Labor in Modern America*. University of North Carolina, 1994, 223.

[130] "Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC)." National Parks Service. September 10, 2013. Accessed November 22, 2018. https://www.nps.gov/subjects/civilrights/sclc.htm.

[131] Cho, Nancy. "Southern Christian Leadership Conference." BlackPast. Accessed November 22, 2018. https://blackpast.org/aah/southern-christian-leadership-conference-1957.

The, SNCC, CORE, and the NAACP also played a major role in aiding the liberal

factions' goals and politicians. Both the CORE and SNCC participated in the Freedom Rides of

1961.[132] All the organizations played instrumental roles in registering black voters in the South,

an action that was often dangerous for both the registrar and the voter.[133] In the South, CORE's

nonviolent action campaigns opposed Jim Crow segregation and job discrimination.[134] Outside

the South, CORE focused on discrimination in employment and housing, and in de-facto school

segregation.[135] The NAACP, which had focused more on legislation and litigation as opposed to

mass mobilization and direct action, was surpassed in importance during this time, but regained

prominence by successfully pushing the March on Washington and the major civil rights

legislation in 1964-1965.[136] In addition to the organizations listed above, the American Civil

Liberties Union (ACLU) and the National Urban League (NUL) made similar contributions.[137]

Strategy

By 1960, the strategic power and resources that each faction held had changed

considerably. Congress had not been particularly favorable for liberals since the 1930s, but Vice-

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[132] Meier, August, and Elliott Morton. Rudwick. *CORE: A Study in the Civil Rights Movement 1942-1968*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1975, 135-145.

[133] "Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) Actions 1960-1970." SNCC History and Geography. 2015. Accessed October 29, 2018. http://depts.washington.edu/moves/SNCC_map-events.shtml.

[134] Meyer and Rudwick, 374-408.

[135] Ibid, 374-408.

[136] Johnson, George D. *Profiles in Hue*. Xlibris, 2011, 352.

[137] Zunes, Stephen, and Jesse Laird. "The US Civil Rights Movement (1942-1968)." ICNC. January 2010. Accessed October 24, 2018. https://www.nonviolent-conflict.org/the-us-civil-rights-movement-1942-1968/.

President Johnson's connections along with the increased liberal organization that had swept into power with the 1958 midterms made Congress a near tossup between the factions. With Southern Democrats also losing control of the committee system slowly, the strategy of liberals played more to the strengths of the administration. For liberals, the blows to the presence of labor (which was still enormous though slowly decreasing) meant a greater reliance on civil rights organizations as outside organizers, which came with greater legislative responsibilities to be at odds with Southern Democrats.

Lyndon Johnson was a master of the Senate and his connections were pivotal in getting major initiatives passed through Congress. He proved highly effective for the Kennedy Administration. Kennedy knew that while the South's power had been reduced, their support was necessary for economic initiatives. The recognition of this importance was exemplified in one of the first major legislative initiatives to pass in the Kennedy Era, the Area Redevelopment Act of 1961. It was a largely, though not explicitly, regionalist development bill that greatly benefitted the Southern states and helped to increase support for other economic initiatives passed during the next few years.[138]

While the Kennedy-Johnson legacy is associated with success on civil rights, it is important to note the strategy that the administration and congressional liberals took on the issue. Kennedy issued statements through his brother Robert decrying the Freedom Riders method instead of the court system.[139] Of course, Kennedy famously deployed federal marshals to

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[138] Witcover, 502.

[139] Reeves, Richard. *President Kennedy: Profile of Power*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1993, 123-126.

protect the riders as well.[140] In 1963, the administration chose not to endorse or participate in the

March on Washington, although it would host a few of its leaders afterwards.[141] Martin Luther

King was often at odds with the administration on the pace of change, a microcosm of liberal

debate over tactics and timing.[142] The truth of liberal strategy under Kennedy was a mix of

pragmatism and incrementalism which can be questioned in morality, though less so in

effectiveness.

Southern Democratic strategy didn't necessarily change as much as it weakened. The

power of Southern Democrats had been vested in Congress and the committee system from the

moment factional conflict with liberals began. Despite the barrage of undermining that liberals

had levied, Southern Democrats still held considerable power in these institutions, just not at the

levels it had in decades previous. Committees including the House Rules Committee, still held

up civil rights bills and congressional Southerners still threatened the legislative agenda if civil

rights bills were even proposed.[143] It is likely this unilateral vision both attributed to the success

of delaying civil rights so long and yet the undynamic nature of such a stance that doomed the

faction over time.

Arenas of Competition

By the early 1960s, most of the Southern Democratic power that remained was in the

committee system of Congress. The Democratic Study Group quickly made the House Rules

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[140] Brauer, Carl M. "John F Kennedy." In *The Presidents: A Reference History*, 490. 7th ed. 2002.

[141] Reeves, 580-584.

[142] Reeves, 467.

[143] DiSalvo, 102.

Committee a target by helping to introduce a bill expanding the number of members from 12 to 15.[144] The bill passed narrowly 217-212 and the committee would again be expanded two years later, but the Southern Democrats still retained enough power to defeat or delay many education and civil rights bills during Kennedy's administration.[145] The House Rules Committee would be weakened greatly in the latter months of 1964 into 1965.[146] The Southern Democratic influence in the committee system would outlive the faction itself in many ways, only losing power in the mid-1970s.[147]

The Kennedy presidency is often viewed as a successful one, but that notion can be questioned when examining the congressional achievements compared to the New Frontier agenda. In fact, Kennedy accomplished just 3 of the 11 goals set out in the program during his first two years in office.[148] Kennedy was able to manage a minimum wage increase and the Area Redevelopment Act which catered dominantly to the South, but many other domestic initiatives were defeated by the conservative coalition.[149] Congressional victories for liberals took a combination of Kennedy's assassination, Johnson's connections in and knowledge of Congress, Johnson's landslide victory in 1964, and the electoral landslide for Democrats in Congress that year to finally bring liberal goals to fruition. Key among the election results were Democratic gains in the North as LBJ would win every state outside of the South and Goldwater's home state

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[144] Ibid, 102.

[145] Ibid, 103-104.

[146] Ibid, 103-104.

[147] Ibid, 104.

[148] Disalvo, 130.

[149] Witcover, 502.

of Arizona.[150] Among the congressional victories for liberal Democrats after the Kennedy

assassination were the Clean Air Act (1963), Civil Rights Act (1964), Economic Opportunity

Act (1964), Food Stamp Act (1964), Social Security Act (1965), and the Voting Rights Act

(1965).[151]

The most pivotal legislation in the realm of civil rights was the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Originally introduced by President Kennedy in 1963, the original form of the bill provided

provisions to ban discrimination in public accommodations and to enable the US Attorney

General to join in lawsuits against state governments which operated segregated school systems,

among others.[152] Despite concerns from both the majority and minority leaders of the Senate, the

bill was introduced as Kennedy intended, first in the House. In the House Judiciary Committee,

led by Emanuel Celler (D-NY), the bill was strengthened adding provisions to ban racial

discrimination in employment, providing greater protection to black voters, and eliminating

segregation in all publicly-owned facilities. The bill was then referred to the House Rules

Committee where Chairman Howard Smith, an ardent opponent of civil rights, planned to hold

up the bill. [153]

The assassination of President Kennedy changed the fate of the bill however and the

threat of a discharge petition pushed Smith to allow the bill out of committee, where it was

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[150] Witcover, 530.

[151] "Key Legislation to Create the Great Society." Accessed October 29, 2018.
http://faculty.weber.edu/kmackay/great society.htm.

[152] Loevy, Robert, *The Civil Rights Act of 1964: The Passage of the Law that Ended Racial Segregation*, State University of New York Press, 1971, 171.

[153] Reeves, *President Kennedy*, 628-631.

quickly passed by the full House. In the Senate, clever maneuvering by Majority Leader Mike Mansfield allowed the bill to skip a hostile committee process and be introduced directly to the Senate floor.[154] Southern Democrats responded by launching a 54-day filibuster that was only ended when a bipartisan substitute bill was offered. The substitute bill was weaker in the powers it granted to the Attorney General to prosecute violations but kept most of the bill intact. After cloture was invoked and the bill was passed with revisions, it was referred back to the House where it was passed and then signed by President Johnson on July 2, 1964.[155] If there was any doubt on where the Democratic factions or the Republican Party stood on civil rights, the bill vote provided a summative breakdown. Republicans voted 81% for the bill, non-South Democrats voted 92% for the bill, but just 9% of Southern Democrats voted for the bill.[156] President Johnson famously would say in private upon signing the bill, "We have lost the South for a generation."[157]

The 1964 Democratic Convention once again provided for a battle between liberals and Southerners. This time the fight was over the seating of the Mississippi delegation which was split between the all-white Mississippi Democratic Party (Regulars) and the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP). The MFDP was formed out of disdain for the regular party which barred African-Americans from participation.[158] In 1964, the MFDP gained enough state and

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[154] "Narrative: The Civil Rights Act of 1964." The Dirksen Center. Accessed November 22, 2018. http://www.dirksencenter.org/print_basics_histmats_civilrights64_contents.htm#senate.

[155] Dallek, Robert. *Lyndon Johnson: Portrait of a President*. Penguin, 2004, 169.

[156] Brewer and Stonecash, 101.

[157] Brewer and Stonecash, 100.

[158] Zietz, Joshua. "Democratic Debacle." *American Heritage*, July 2004.

national attention to swell to 80,000 members, which they used as leverage to challenge the regulars at the 1964 Democratic Convention.[159] Martin Luther King Jr would go so far as to say "(I will) do everything in my power to urge (The MFDP) being seated as the only democratically constituted delegation from Mississippi."[160] The challenge would lead to nationally televised hearings which helped the MFDP gain sympathy following powerful testimonies by leaders like Fannie Lou Hamer.[161] However, LBJ feared the Southern backlash from the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and wasn't going to risk any further movement in the election so he offered a "compromise" that was in effect an endorsement of the regulars with token at-large representation for the MFDP.[162] The battle for representation in the Mississippi delegation would continue to be a factional battle in the Democratic Party for a decade following the incident.[163]

The 1964 elections were a watershed event in establishing a lasting liberal dominance in Congress. Liberals had held a lasting control for the better part of a decade, but it was a tenuous majority at times unable to accomplish much. Democratic members of the House elected prior to 1964 had a 63% liberal voting record, those elected that year had nearly an 80% liberal record.[164]

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[159] Byrd, Sheila Hardwell. "Freedom Party Gave Blacks a Political Voice." Los Angeles Times. July 25, 2004. Accessed October 29, 2018. http://articles.latimes.com/2004/jul/25/news/adna-freedom25.

[160] "Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP)." The Martin Luther King, Jr., Research and Education Institute. Accessed October 29, 2018. https://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/encyclopedia/mississippi-freedom-democratic-party-mfdp.

[161] Branch, Taylor. *Pillar of Fire*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1998.

[162] Lewis, John. *Walking with the Wind*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1998.

[163] "Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP)." The Martin Luther King, Jr., Research and Education Institute. Accessed October 29, 2018. https://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/encyclopedia/mississippi-freedom-democratic-party-mfdp.

[164] Brewer and Stonecash, 96-97.

Liberals now had a clear working majority in Congress with 66% of Democratic House members from the non-South and the Senate non-South numbers were growing as well.[165]

A final arena of competition to note was public opinion. The tepidness of the Kennedy administration toward direct action on Civil Rights may be partially absolved by the fact the March on Washington drew a 60% unfavorable rating.[166] 78% of whites that year admitted they would leave their neighborhood if many black families moved in.[167] A month after signage of the Civil Right Act, just half of all Americans supported it with nearly a third in opposition and a fifth unsure about it.[168] In the midst of the Cold War, a 1964 poll illuminated that fears of communist influence in civil rights organizations was a plurality opinion in the US.[169] These polls shed light on the uphill battle that liberals faced in achieving victories on civil rights.

Political Opportunities

The 1960s were undoubtedly one of the most tumultuous decades of the 20th century. It is no surprise, then, that political opportunities played a key role in factionalism during this time. The Kennedy/Johnson Administration's lukewarm strategy toward civil rights meant that they waited until sympathy was built up in the public sphere before acting in many cases. That is how many political opportunities ended up playing a major role in factional conflict. Foreign policy

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[165] Brewer and Stonecash, 96.

[166] "Public Opinion on Civil Rights: Reflections on the Civil Rights Act of 1964." Roper Center. October 20, 2015. Accessed October 29, 2018. https://ropercenter.cornell.edu/public-opinion-on-civil-rights-reflections-on-the-civil-rights-act-of-1964/.

[167] Ibid.

[168] Ibid.

[169] Ibid.

failures in the first year of the Kennedy era, several Supreme Court cases, and the Republican

nomination of Barry Goldwater for President in 1964 also contributed greatly.

Given how close the 1960 presidential election would be (49.72%-49.55% popular vote),

the first event of note was the jailing of Martin Luther King Jr following an attempt to integrate a

department store lunch counter in Georgia in February that year.[170] Then-candidate Kennedy

placed a call of support to Coretta Scott King while Robert Kennedy called Governor Ernest

Vandiver and obtained King's release from prison.[171] As news spread of this (and Nixon's

silence), black support for Kennedy crushed any doubts that lingered beforehand.[172] King would

later say that he was closer to Nixon than Kennedy before that point and was disappointed by

Nixon's inaction.[173] The African-American vote in 1960 carried decisively for Kennedy and the

total black vote accounted for more than the margin of victory in the states of Illinois, Michigan,

and South Carolina.[174] Considering Kennedy's 303 votes in the Electoral College, the loss of the

aforementioned three states (55) could have doomed a liberal presidency.[175]

The first year of the Kennedy presidency was defined partly by two major foreign policy

setbacks. The Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba was a disaster for the military and embarrassing for

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[170] Trende, Sean. "Did JFK Lose the Popular Vote? | RealClearPolitics." RealClearPolitics - Opinion, News, Analysis, Video and Polls. October 19, 2012. Accessed January 13, 2018. https://www.realclearpolitics.com/articles/2012/10/19/did_jfk_lose_the_popular_vote_115833-2.html.

[171] Witcover, 492.

[172] Witcover, 492.

[173] Levingston, Steven. "John F. Kennedy, Martin Luther King Call Changed History." Time. June 20, 2017. Accessed October 29, 2018. http://time.com/4817240/martin-luther-king-john-kennedy-phone-call/.

[174] Levingston, Steven. "John F. Kennedy, Martin Luther King Call Changed History."

[175] "1960 Presidential Election." Presidential Election of 1960. Accessed October 29, 2018. https://www.270towin.com/1960_Election/.

Americans at large, while the Soviets reaching space first only added insult to injury. These events did not benefit Southern conservatives, as Kennedy's response to these failures kept his approval rating above 72% for the first year of his presidency.[176] This was a key sign that Kennedy might have enough public support to push more controversial initiatives such as civil rights with success.

April of 1962 provided a key opportunity for Kennedy to shore up credentials among liberal Democrats following a labor dispute with US Steel. The company had decided to raise prices four times the amount of a recently negotiated wage hike, infuriating unions and the Kennedy Administration.[177] Other competitors in the industry quickly raised their prices as well leading Kennedy to order secretary of defense Robert McNamara to shift defense contracts and Robert Kennedy (then attorney general) to look into anti-trust violations.[178] These actions forced US Steel to ultimately fold and rescind the increases, granting President Kennedy a big victory among labor advocates and the country as a whole.[179]

The Supreme Court would send liberal Democrats a major victory in 1962 with the *Baker v Carr* ruling. The ruling effectively held that states, under the legal doctrine of "one person, one vote," must apportion legislative districts to weight each individual equally.[180] Given that many states in the South had overrepresented rural areas for many years, the ruling essentially gave

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[176] Gallup Inc, "Presidential Approval Ratings -- Gallup Historical Statistics and Trends."

[177] Bernstein, Irving. *Promises Kept: John F. Kennedys New Frontier*. Oxford University Press, 1993, 140-141.

[178] Ibid, 142

[179] Ibid, 143-144.

[180] Brewer and Stonecash, 96.

more power to urban populations, who were more likely to be liberal Democrats.[181] Many states would be forced to redraw their districts several times in the 1960s, presenting gains for liberals at the state level.[182]

The civil rights movement reached another fever pitch in 1963 with the Birmingham Campaign. When Martin Luther King Jr was jailed on April 12th, it forced the Kennedy administration to intervene to secure his release.[183] The administration refrained from getting further involved in the demonstrations and subsequent crackdowns until after Bull Connor released his police dogs and fire hoses on largely student protestors when the administration helped negotiate an agreement that included the desegregation of many public establishments.[184] President Kennedy was privately worried about how far the civil rights movement was pushing, and meetings between Robert Kennedy and top civil rights leaders were ill-received on both sides.[185] In the public eye, President Kennedy continued to be active on civil rights, earning praise for the deployment of military forces at the University of Alabama to assist black students

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[181] Ibid, 96.

[182] Eisler, Kim I. *A Justice for All: William J. Brennan, Jr., and the Decisions That Transformed America*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1993, 11.

[183] Fairclough, Adam. *To Redeem the Soul of America the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and Martin Luther King, Jr*. Athens, GA: Univ. of Georgia Press, 2001, 123.

[184] Eskew, Glenn. *But for Birmingham: The Local and National Struggles in the Civil Rights Movement*. University of North Carolina, 1997, 301.

[185] Reeves, 467.

enrolling.[186] He would submit his civil rights bill to Congress just a week later on June 19, 1963.[187]

Factionalism was largely the reason behind Kennedy's infamous Texas trip in November 1963. Conservative Governor John Connally and liberal Senator Ralph Yarborough were locked in a highly publicized dispute. Kennedy had barely taken Texas in 1960 and felt he needed to repair relations to have the party united for 1964.[188] Kennedy's plan was to have both politicians appear with him at stops, but Connally plotted to downstage Yarborough and Yarborough twice refused to sit next to LBJ, who was close friends with Connally.[189] The hopes for that day were of course shattered by the sound of gunfire as President Kennedy was shot and killed.[190] Kennedy's death created a boosted invulnerability for the remaining parts of his agenda, including the Civil Rights Act, which fell to one of the greatest political minds in Lyndon Baines Johnson to complete.

The election of 1964 was important for several reasons. Some of these reasons centered Mississippi Freedom Delegation fight at the 1964 Democratic Convention, covered in the *Arenas of Competition* section. Another was the nomination of Barry Goldwater on the Republican side. Goldwater was not by any means a typical Republican of the time. While the majority of Republicans held some sympathies or outright support for the Civil Rights Bill of 1964,

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[186] Witcover, 509.

[187] Reeves, 629-630.

[188] Caro, *The Years of Lyndon Johnson:* 307.

[189] Witcover, 513.

[190] Ibid, 514-515.

Goldwater had voted against it.[191] Goldwater was firmly on the right-wing of the Republican

Party at the time, but mainly on the issues of economics and foreign policy.[192] He was pro-civil

rights and had a record full of congressional votes to prove it, but saw the 1964 bill as an

overreach by the federal government.[193]

The consequences of the Goldwater nomination had dramatic implications for

factionalism on both sides of the aisle. Goldwater's focus in much of his campaign was on states'

rights, a rallying cry of Southern conservative Democrats for decades.[194] His hawkish attitudes

on foreign policy and extreme conservative economic views pushed many Republicans in the

Northeast to the Democratic Party.[195] Goldwater would be defeated in a landslide that year, but

his few victories came in the South and signaled that the Democratic Solid South was no

more.[196] If Nelson Rockefeller, a liberal Republican from New York, had captured the

nomination instead, it is feasible that much of the South would have stayed with the Democratic

Party and Republican liberals in the North would have retained much of their power. This likely

would have delayed the factional shift but would not have been enough to stop it.

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[191] Barnes, Bart. "Barry Goldwater, GOP Hero, Dies." The Washington Post. May 30, 1998. Accessed October 29, 2018. https://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/politics/daily/may98/goldwater30.htm?noredirect=on.

[192] Nowicki, Dan. "Conservatives Owe Much to Goldwater's Presidential Bid." USA Today. April 14, 2014. Accessed October 29, 2018. https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/2014/04/13/barry-goldwater-conservatives-gop/7683859/.

[193] Donaldson, Gary. *Liberalism's Last Hurrah: The Presidential Campaign of 1964*. Routledge, 2003, 20.

[194] Donaldson, 20.

[195] Goldberg, Robert Alan. *Barry Goldwater*. New Haven: Yale Univ Press, 1995, 232-237.

[196] Witcover, 530.

Summary/Analysis

The period 1960-1964 (often stretched to 1965) is considered by many to be the defining period of factional conflict whereby the liberal faction won, and Democrats lost the South. This notion is seemingly supported by LBJ's comments following the signage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. As has been supported through the course of this thesis, this period served only to exemplify the changes that had been ongoing in the party for three decades previous. The signing of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was part of a larger set of liberal victories that shifted control of the party and continued to set the pace for the end of the Southern faction, finally delivering the white South from conservative Democrats to the Republican Party.

Coming into 1960, the last vestiges of the Southern faction's strength came from the committee system and to a lesser degree Congress via the continued existence of the conservative coalition. Liberals were effective in weakening committee power three different times, but Southern conservatives remained effective in using the committee system for a decade after the period covered in this thesis. In enacting reforms to weaken Southern power, liberals continued to use the outside organizational apparatus of Labor (AFL-CIO), civil rights groups (SCLC/SNCC/CORE/NAACP), and internal organizations like the DSG. Still, it is important to acknowledge the magnitude of beneficial events that the liberals needed to enact their reforms. This included public support following Kennedy's death, LBJ's connections and knowledge of Congress, the landslide election of 1964, and the congressional gains that also came from 1964.

The most important takeaway from this period is that a liberal factional triumph is a determination. The Southern faction of Democrats was not eliminated nationally until 1980 and state factions persisted into the new millennia. The course of factional conflict was set in motion and even directed with the grassroots changes made in the party constituency during the 1930s.

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 is recognized in its importance by historians and political scientists because in presidential elections, the South saw its most recognizable shift in 1964. If that year is attributed importance, then the event that must be attributed as causal is the Civil Rights Act. This is largely true but misses the underlying party position changes in the Democratic Party that began with the strong emergence of the liberal faction in the mid-1930s.

The pace of factional conflict was affected by many complex factors, but most notably by three events of 1964: the signing of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the resolution of the competing Mississippi delegations at the Democratic convention, and the nomination of Barry Goldwater as the Republican candidate that year. The Civil Rights Act was an accelerant for weakening the Southern faction in the Democratic Party given the fact the goal of the faction was broadly to prevent civil rights. LBJ and prominent liberals' decision to seat the Mississippi regulars was in part a reaction to mitigate this Southern exit of the party. Barry Goldwater's victory in the Republican primary empowered the liberal faction of Democrats by providing Republican converts, while also providing Southern Democrats a clear alternative to join a Republican Party that was demonstrating a dramatic shift to the right.

VII.   Conclusion and Implications

In examining the original question this thesis posed, *"How and why did the Northern liberal faction(s) of the Democratic Party eventually triumph over the Southern conservative one in the period of 1936-1964,"* a summative evaluation of the hypothesis presented can now be made. The hypothesis advanced several claims: the alliance of the labor movement and African-Americans endangered conservative influence within the Democratic party, the alliance was bolstered by the collapse of economic conservatism in the depression-era, electoral gains by

liberals in the North and West led to policy victories and weakening of Southern advantages, and civil rights became increasingly driven by (liberal) Democrats until passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which effectively signaled the most visible sign of liberal victory.

The first claim related to the alliance of the labor movement and African-Americans. This was supported by the establishment of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), which made the labor movement representative of the pluralist society that the AFL had advanced in message, but not in reality. The CIO quickly became the organizational arm of the liberal wing and was strengthened before and during World War II, when African-Americans moved North in large numbers to fill the needed labor gap. This would materialize into some of the early civil rights battles within the party, namely convention planks. Conservative influence and interests were directly endangered by Operation Dixie, an attempt to unionize the South that failed. The subsequent conservative backlash included passage of the Taft-Hartley Act, which contained the power and influence of unions across the country.

The second claim states the alliance was bolstered by the collapse of economic conservatism in the depression era. The Republican Party never stopped having a fiscally conservative wing, but its presidential candidates in the 1940s and 1950s were clearly moderate in comparison to those before the depression. The majorities that Democrats enjoyed in the mid-1930s were responsible for passage of the National Industrial Recovery Act, National Labor Relations Act, and Fair Labor Standards Act. These all boosted organized labor, which proved powerful in securing civil rights legislation later. The conservative coalition of Republicans and southern Democrats would prove efficient in delaying many goals of the black-labor alliance but failed to ultimately stop most of the proposed goals.

The third claim spotlighted the electoral gains liberals made in the North and West which helped to undermine Southern advantages. This is evident throughout the course of this thesis as liberals slowly ate away at the Southern power institutions, such as the 1936 removal of the two-thirds rule at conventions, the revision of cloture rules in the Senate, and the slow weakening of powers in the congressional committee system. Most of the policy victories for liberal Democrats also came in the periods when Democrats held sway in the North and West, namely the mid-1930s and mid-1960s. These included the FLSA, NLRA, and Civil Rights Act of 1964 among others.

The fourth claim is likely the most controversial and advances the idea that civil rights became increasingly driven by Democrats until the Civil Rights Act of 1964. This claim was meant to illustrate that while the signing of the Civil Rights Act did cause realignment of Southern States from conservative Democrat to Republican, the underlying party position that precipitated the change occurred far earlier beginning in the 1930s with the emergence of the liberal faction. The adoption of a pro-civil rights plank at the 1948 Democratic Convention supports this notion as does Truman's desegregation of the military. Truman's Fair Deal agenda may not have been enacted, but it was staunchly pro-civil rights. The Eisenhower Presidency may refute parts of this claim as the Republican president, backed by liberal Democrats, was successful in passing limited civil rights legislation. Still, the most significant victories for civil rights came from the Kennedy and Johnson administrations with higher liberal (but not Southern) Democratic support than Republican.

Aside from the claims made, the structure of the thesis into sub-sections on organizations, strategies, arenas of competition, and political opportunities helped to illuminate other key points. Organization and strategy sections helped to prove the Southern faction as having power

based in institutions of governance like Congress, committees, and to a lesser degree, the party apparatus. Liberals, as the insurgent faction, found power first in the labor movement and later in a host of civil rights organizations. The Southern conservatives had the benefit of being united around the common goal of sustaining Jim Crow and thus opposition to civil rights. This singular vision formed the basis of the conservative coalition with Republicans, who sought additional votes to defeat economic progressivism. The liberal faction had much more nuanced goals that encompassed economics, civil rights, and education and exemplified a range of strategies as their power shifted throughout labor and civil rights organizations as well as the party apparatus itself. Liberals took advantage of their time out of power to boost organization of their faction in the 1950s; these boosts were critical to weakening Southern advantages and passing legislation in the 1960s.

The arenas of competition sections illuminated where pivotal battles between the factions occurred and some of the consequences that emerged because of them. In the battle for public opinion, liberal Democrats had already moved public opinion in support of civil rights by 1937. The 1944 battle for the vice-presidency was of major consequence for contouring the ideology of the liberal faction, as Henry Wallace and more traditional left-wing ideology was defeated by an alliance of Southerners and party bosses. Southern Democratic losses in Congress over the course of the 1950s led to openings for liberals to weaken Southern advantages that had prevented civil rights legislation in the past. The institutional advantages of the South proved to be greatly entrenched, but weak enough to exploit by 1964 when the Civil Rights Act was passed.

The political opportunities sections provided insight into the events from outside the main course of factional conflict that nonetheless held influence. FDR's court packing plan along with

the attempted purge of Southern Democrats was pivotal in shifting Southern Democratic attitudes enough to enter the conservative coalition in 1938. World War II was pivotal in building the labor movement's influence yet also drawing FDR's needed influence away from guiding the liberal faction's domestic strategy. The advent of the Cold War and second Red Scare forced liberal Democrats to cut ties with their once leader Henry Wallace and the Progressives. Supreme Court decisions like *Brown v Board of Education* stoked factional conflict, while others like *Baker v Carr* awarded victories for one faction over another. Barry Goldwater's nomination on the Republican ticket helped to define the pace of factional conflict and party realignment.

The implications of the findings in this thesis provide a solid case for a revision of the longstanding prominence of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, not in its direct effects, but in its importance to factional conflict for Democrats. The underlying grassroots changes that included shifts in public opinion and party organization that determined much of the course for factional conflict between liberals and Southern conservatives began in the 1930s. These changes were intertwined and inseparable from the contributions of the labor movement, which aligned with African-Americans to push the national party for civil rights action. The events that came after were more determinants of the pace of conflict than anything that may have shifted the actual end result of a liberal victory. This is evident in the ineffectiveness of Truman's presidency and the Eisenhower presidency, which proved to be times of great organizational gains for liberal Democrats, even with setbacks such as Taft-Hartley's passage and a de-facto decade out of power. While the Civil Rights Act of 1964 did play a part in factional conflict and did strike at the core of the Southern faction's purpose, it must be weighed against events like Goldwater's nomination that presented Southern Democrats a real alternative to abandon the party.

If this revision of importance is applied, it also lends credence to the underdevelopment of factional conflict as a field of study in American Politics. Beyond this implication, there are questions this thesis does not fully answer that may provide avenues for further research. Among these are: Why did Southern Democrats not focus on converting the conservative coalition into a new party system? Would this have been feasible? What would a Henry Wallace presidency have been able to accomplish? How would it have changed the course of factional conflict? What implications could an earlier realignment of the parties (as pondered by FDR and Truman) have had for policy? Can a third faction (moderates/establishment/party bosses) be outlined in this time period? If Kennedy was not assassinated, when would the Civil Rights Act get passed, and by whom? Many of these questions are hard to answer given that they involve hypothetical scenarios, but further questions centering around different periods of factional conflict may be afforded the model of examination used in this thesis to conduct analyses as well.

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