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### The Republican Party: A Narrative of Good and Evil

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THE REPUBLICAN PARTY: A NARRATIVE OF GOOD AND EVIL

By

Lawrence Cranor

Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate College of  
Arkansas Tech University  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of  
MASTER OF ARTS IN HISTORY  
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## Abstract

In 2020, there is a misconception that the Republican Party is still the party of Abraham Lincoln. The goal of this paper is to prove that statement incorrect and explain how it came to be incorrect by providing a detailed, methodical chain of evidence. It will separate the Party's perceived image from reality. This paper will analyze pre-Cold War Republican Party and establish the party's traditional policies before abandoning centrism in the 1960s and 1970s. Then the emerging Republican Party will be compared with the pre-1960 party. This paper will reflect on Republican Party power dynamics, economic strategies, social priorities, and foreign policy. To illuminate both Republican rhetoric and policy implementation, the paper will concentrate on times of Republican control of the Executive and/or Legislative Branches of government: 1920-1930, 1952-1960, 1968-1972, 1980-1992, 2001-2007, and 2017-2019.

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## I. Introduction

In the latter half of the twentieth century, the Republican Party established a new orthodox narrative of the virtuous right that increasingly characterized alternative political positions, foreign and domestic, as not merely undesirable but evil. This good versus evil narrative allowed it to differentiate from its traditional centrist policies. This process began at the onset of the Cold War and became more pronounced during the party's political realignment of the 1960s. During the Eisenhower administration, Republicans realigned their foreign policy out of fear of the Cold War becoming all-out nuclear war. Through the 1960s and 1970s, the Republican Party increasingly centered its focus on social conservatism. It also adopted campaign tactics that incorporated a "southern strategy" designed to convert Southern Democrats into Republican voters.<sup>1</sup> President Reagan's implementation of supply side economics reestablished the party's financial priorities as well. Through these changes, the party's moderate voice faded, and a new party orthodoxy marked by a stark narrative of good versus evil took hold.

There have been many authors who have discussed the evolution of the Republican Party during the Cold War and influenced this work and its thesis. In *Congressional Realignment, 1925-1978* (1982), Barbara Sinclair analyzed the major agenda changes of the United States Congress in the mid twentieth century. She concluded that major agenda changes were caused by environmental stimuli like the Great Depression, World War II, the Cold War, social movements, or a landslide in the electoral college. She emphasized at the same time that politicians influenced how

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<sup>1</sup> The southern strategy was a political strategy employed by the Republican Party to gain support from white southerners, who traditionally voted with Democrats, by subtly appealing to their racist tendencies.



Americans interpreted environmental stimuli. Sinclair's work reveals how Republicans, as well as Democrats, during the Cold War began to create a narrative around environmental stimuli that was based in national security concerns and a desire for greater social conformity.<sup>2</sup>

In *The Devil We Knew* (1993), H.W. Brands analyzes why the United States acted the way it did during the Cold War. He asserted that environmental stimuli like the economic and strategic concerns that the Cold War presented were responsible for its behavior, but he also asserted that the United States was reacting to how the rest of the world viewed it. Some actions, he also reminded readers, were politically motivated, having more to do with elections than addressing a specific problem. He concluded that with the proper environmental stimuli, politicians created narratives that persuaded Americans to invest in their party worldview over their common identity as Americans.<sup>3</sup>

In *From George Wallace to Newt Gingrich* (1996), Dan Carter analyzed the politics of race in America with a distinct focus on it in relation to conservatism. He asserted that the conservative movement's counterrevolutionary message in response to the social movements of the 1960s manifested in the politics of anger, accommodation, symbols, and righteousness. Carter concluded that America sought to release its frustrations on an "blamable other," and that politicians did not need to refer to a specific skin color to gather a voting base. Instead they used symbolic language that gave them the ability to deny claims of racism, but their intent to use it to build party loyalty was unmistakable.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Barbara Sinclair, *Congressional Realignment, 1925-1978* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1982), 3-17.

<sup>3</sup> H.W. Brands, *The Devil We Knew* (New York, New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), v-viii.

<sup>4</sup> Dan Carter, *From George Wallace to Newt Gingrich* (Louisiana: Louisiana State University Press, 1996), xi-xv.; Carter, *From George Wallace to Newt Gingrich*, 120-123.

In *With God on Our Side* (1996), William Martin analyzed how the Republican Party not only adopted religious Americans in the 1970s, but how religion came to define the party by the 1990s. Martin asserted that a Second Great Awakening in the United States exacerbated spirituality to the point that people believed their relationship with God obligated them to oppose any infringement on that relationship including in political realms. Furthermore, he claimed that religious conservatives would also deem any authority that acted without their consent or that they did not elect as illegitimate.<sup>5</sup>

In *Reaganomics: Rhetoric vs. Reality* (1982), Frank Ackerman explained and critiqued supply-side economics. He asserted that Reagan's solution to the economic turmoil of the 1970s was actually worse than the problem itself because it required deductions in most people's standards of living. Furthermore, he claimed that Reaganomics misrepresented and scapegoated the role of government in the economy, and excess military spending gave Republicans a patriotic-sounding excuse to cut social welfare programs.<sup>6</sup>

These authors all discuss the evolution of a political narrative within the Republican Party in a variety of different contexts. My purpose in this work is to bring these together to discuss the changing Republican narrative as a whole. The conservative religious symbolism and rhetoric discussed in Martin, I argue, is related to the racial symbolism and rhetoric discussed in Carter and both are framed by the experiences of conservatives, in foreign and domestic contexts, as discussed in works such as Sinclair's and Brands'. Additionally, the racial symbolism and rhetoric discussed in Martin is reflected in the economic aspects that Ackerman discussed as supply-side economics

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<sup>5</sup> William Martin, *With God on Our Side* (New York, NY: Broadway Books, 1996), 1-3.

<sup>6</sup> Frank Ackerman, *Reaganomics: Rhetoric vs. Reality* (Boston: South End Press, 1982), ix-xiii.

negatively affected African Americans more than anyone else.<sup>7</sup> This paper will examine the Republican Party's adoption of a good versus evil narrative as a unifying theme that is indicative of an increasing intolerance of dissent, moderation, and compromise.

This paper uses leading Republican politicians, often presidents as representatives of the party and tracks the evolution of the party through party platforms, key legislation, and rhetoric. It accomplishes this in three major parts. First, it defines the traditional centrist policies of the Republican Party. It does this by examining the party's defining trait, rugged individualism, and how it impacted the party's stance on power dynamics, economic strategies, social priorities and foreign policy from 1920 until 1960. Part one ends in 1960 because, while the Republican Party had begun to adopt the new narrative, it had not yet completely consumed the party. It was not until the end of Dwight Eisenhower's presidency that the party took a significant turn toward a new right orthodoxy. Second, this paper analyzes how the Republican Party adopted the good versus evil narrative at the onset of the Cold War and in response to the countercultural revolution of the 1960s, a succession of Republican defeats, and into the paranoid presidency of Richard Nixon. Third, this work tracks the Republican Party's usage of the narrative to continue to move away from centrist policies in the post-Cold War world and into the first decades of the twenty-first century.

The 1920s epitomized traditional Republican Party policies. The Republican presidents of the 1920s, Warren Harding, Calvin Coolidge, and Herbert Hoover, all came of age at the turn of the twentieth century at a time when President Roosevelt and Taft were renowned trust busters. In contrast, the 1920s Republicans desired a government

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<sup>7</sup> Carter, *From George Wallace to Newt Gingrich*, 62.

that was domestically and internationally unobtrusive, fiscally responsible, and advocated for small government or voluntarism. They thought Wilson's expansion of presidential power during wartime was a slippery slope into authoritarianism and sought to restrict the power of the Executive branch. These men worked to curtail progressive policies that restricted businesses in the early 1900s. They also thought government should work with businesses instead of against it. This relationship would be mutually beneficial for both parties and boost the economy. This increased the average quality of life of Americans but also encouraged many to succeed on through hard work alone. They saw the Wilson administration segregate the Treasury, Post Office, the Navy, the Interior and many other federal offices during World War I and opposed it, not by denouncing Democrats, but by supporting policies that benefited the oppressed. They saw Wilson's League of Nations proposal and rejected it in favor of isolationism to prevent the United States from being obligated to police European countries. Subsequently, they also sought nativist immigration policies after the demand for national unity and homogeneity during WWI.<sup>8</sup>

By the early 1930s, a Democratic resurgence and the introduction of sweeping social programs to combat the Great Depression had eroded Republican influence in government. Much like the Southern Democrats, the old guard conservative Republicans abhorred New Deal social programs because they were too intrusive, but due to the severity of the Great Depression, some recognized them as a necessity. By the end of the Great Depression, even Herbert Hoover, a president who revered volunteerism, supported federal relief. Robert Taft, Ohio's esteemed Republican Senator and the eldest son of

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<sup>8</sup> Eric S. Yellin, *Racism in the Nation's Service: Government Workers and the Color Line in Woodrow Wilson's America* (Chapel Hill: North Carolina Press, 2013), 1-8.; Robert, Wiebe, *The Search for Order* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1967), 286-302; John Higham, *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2002), 264-299.

President William Howard Taft, specifically saw the necessity of a limited number of social welfare programs and advocated for their implementation in a manner acceptable to traditional Republicanism; that is, as efficiently as possible to prevent the costs from compiling over a long period of time. Taft's work on the Taft-Hartley Act and the Housing Act of 1949 are both exemplary of traditional Republicans' ability to adapt and apply their philosophy to a legislature dominated by the opposition. Both bills increased government size but did so in order to protect individual rights by fostering equal opportunity.<sup>9</sup>

As during the Great Depression, World War II and the Cold War created an atmosphere where extravagant spending was a necessity and Republicans had to adapt. In both cases, Republicans kept as close to their traditional centrist policies as possible while accepting the new realities. Republican President Dwight Eisenhower expressed the need to lead the country "down the middle of the road between the unfettered power of concentrated wealth...and the unbridled power of statism or partisan interests."<sup>10</sup> To do this, he brought a "New Look" to national security policy in 1953. Eisenhower's plan had four objectives: maintain the United States economy while building the military, threaten the use of nuclear weapons to deter aggression, use the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) to carry out covert missions against Soviet controlled nations, and strengthen allies so they were less vulnerable to the spread of Communism. Abroad, this meant using nuclear diplomacy to avoid "brushfire wars" like the Korean War and instating the Eisenhower Doctrine to provide economic relief to middle eastern countries.

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<sup>9</sup> Roger Biles, *The South and the New Deal* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2006) 33-35.; James Patterson, *Mr. Republican: A Biography of Robert A. Taft* (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 1972), 352-368.

<sup>10</sup> Chester J. Pach, Jr., "Dwight D. Eisenhower: Domestic Affairs," Millercenter, University of Virginia, September 22, 2020. <https://millercenter.org/president/eisenhower/domestic-affairs>.

At home, this meant maintaining New Deal programs so families could put more money into the economy and raising taxes to keep up with military expenditures. These actions seemed contrary to traditional Republicanism but marked a willingness to adapt to fit the unique circumstances that the Cold War created.<sup>11</sup>

The Republican Party arguably had been split into four factions since the 1900s: liberals, moderates, conservatives, and stalwarts. Eisenhower's modern Republicans were more liberal and moderate, while conservatives and stalwarts supported Robert A Taft. Both men, however, exemplified the tendencies of traditional Republicanism but remained pragmatic in facing the political, economic, social, and military realities of the Great Depression, World War II and the early Cold War. At the same time, they maintained a coalition of supporters that ranged from the right to the vital center.

Liberal Republicans, sometimes later referred to as Rockefeller Republicans, were the successors to Teddy Roosevelt's Progressive Republicans and remained strong in the party through the mid-twentieth century. They supported social programs including social safety net New Deal programs, civil rights, infrastructure development, and government restraints on monopoly. Moderates, or Modern Republicans, were a product of Eisenhower's rise to the presidency in 1952 and the backlash from the failed voluntaristic Republican policies following the economic crash of the 20s. Moderates supported the increased size of government as a necessary evil and sought to bridge the gap between the country's ideological differences. This correlated with an unrivaled stability and a

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<sup>11</sup> Pach, "Dwight D. Eisenhower: Domestic Affairs," <https://millercenter.org/president/eisenhower/domestic-affairs.>; Chester J. Pach, Jr. and Elmo Richardson, *The Presidency of Dwight D. Eisenhower* (Lawrence: University of Kansas, 1991), 75-89.

flourishing economy after WWII but led to criticism from both the right and left for not going far enough in either direction.<sup>12</sup>

Conservatives and stalwarts remained the unwavering traditionalists within the Republican Party, with Stalwarts more interested in legislation advantageous to small businesses, and conservatives to large corporations. Both factions preferred an isolationist foreign policy, though some wavered with the onset of the Cold War in 1945. Afterward, the Stalwarts became cautious, but accepting of stronger relations with foreign governments. Stalwarts accepted the New Deal because they deemed it a necessity for economic stability while conservatives generally did not accept any increase in government size. Conservatives sought the New Deals' complete repeal because they believed it would lead to Communism and argued it undermined the rugged individualism that characterized the party and nation. In this area, conservative Republicans' values often aligned more with Southern Democrats than the party's center.<sup>13</sup>

The Cold War radicalized the conservative wing of the Republican Party between 1945 and 1991. The key principles of this evolution were the rejection of liberalism and an idolization of rugged individualism. Liberalism, specifically state welfare expansion and uncurtailed speech and association, the conservatives charged, would lead to totalitarianism and Communism. They saw the spread of New Deal policies throughout the 1930s as a result of liberals' expanded government and deemed it a failure.

Conservatives became social and cultural critics who saw conservatism as leading a

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<sup>12</sup> Geoffrey Kabaservice, *Rule and Ruin: The Downfall of Moderation and the Destruction of the Republican Party, From Eisenhower to the Tea Party*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 19-22.

<sup>13</sup> Kabaservice, *Rule and Ruin*, 20-24.

restoration of moral values and had less to do with the economic conservatism of the 1920s. In seeking to protect America's morality, they were even willing to impede on the individual liberties of those who were not of a like mind. This crack in the party between liberals and conservatives in 1945 grew to a chasm by the 1960s as conservatives gained representation in the party. Eventually, conservatives differed so much from their predecessors in government power dynamics that offshoots like the American Libertarian Party rose to house those who would not and/or could not conform to the new party orthodoxy.<sup>14</sup>

Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, conservatives reinvented themselves to gain seats in the Republican Party by creating a cultural counterrevolution. As William Berman points out in *America's Right Turn*, the frustration 1960s and 1970s voters had with a struggling economy, high taxes, a large national debt, and the Vietnam War combined with Republicans' ability to redirect voter anger at Democrats and African Americans resulted in Republican success in elections. While social issues played a crucial role in the conservative takeover of the Republican Party, the key decider in any election was the state of the economy during the incumbent's presidency. Republicans' ability to redirect voters' anger from the economy and communists to Democrats and African Americans helped convert Southern Democrats into Republicans. In turn, the migration of Southern Democrats into the Republican Party and the further alienation of liberal Republicans made the Republican Party a monolithically conservative organization.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> George Nash, *The Conservative Intellectual Movement in America* (Wilmington: Intercollegiate Studies Institute, 1976), 34-48.; Nash, *The Conservative Intellectual Movement in America*, 73.

<sup>15</sup> William Berman, *America's Right Turn: From Nixon to Clinton* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998), 3-4.



As the years progressed, Republicans relied more heavily on mass media to promote the image and character of individual candidates. By the 1980s, Republicans could advocate for controversial legislation without damaging their campaigns as long as voters still held a positive image of the candidate's "character." Republicans alienated minority communities and economic liberals while upholding an image of the traditional, moral, conservative leader. They concentrated on singular issues, like anti-abortion legislation, to demonstrate their moral superiority and commitment. Instead of building a centrist coalition in the party, they resolved to define an exclusive and ideologically committed conservative orthodoxy. These new conservatives shifted away from the mid-century Republican Party's stances on power dynamics, economic strategies, social issues, and foreign policy to benefit an increasingly exclusive demographic. Instead of limiting the size of government, the party contributed to its growth at the times when it held the White House and Congressional majorities. Instead of fighting for more individual rights, it demonized minority communities and those who did not share the party's ideological orthodoxy. Instead of isolationism, it fostered American militarism, interventionism, and, at worst, imperialism.

## **II. Republican Ideological Roots**

Traditional Republicanism stemmed largely from a singular founding principle: rugged individualism. Rugged individualism is the belief that most individuals can succeed on their own, free of government assistance. Rugged individualism developed out of two main historical roots: an admiration for the rights of man shown in the rejection of monarchy and establishment of a constitutional republic and the frontier spirit

established in the settling of the western United States. Alexis de Tocqueville described American individualism as “a reflective and peaceable sentiment that disposes each citizen to isolate himself from the mass of those like him and to withdraw to one side of his family and his friends, so that, after having thus created a little society for his own use, he willingly abandons society at large to itself.”<sup>16</sup> Traditional Republicans embodied this tendency, extolling the belief that individuals should succeed independently, and government influence constituted a burden to liberty and should be minimal.<sup>17</sup>

From the rugged individualist’s perspective, the government was necessarily structured with a system of checks and balances to protect individual liberties regardless of how large it grew. The division of power between local, state, and federal government and the separation of executive, legislative and judicial responsibilities kept the power of people and the individual paramount. The first ten amendments of the Federal Constitution principally protected individual liberties from government interference. Freedom of speech, religion, assembly, right to bear arms, right to a fair trial, and the rest were sacred and immutable. As rugged individualists, traditional Republicans not only upheld the constitution, but aspired to the values that created it.

The settling of the western frontier of the United States added to the rugged individualist ethos. By 1850, the United States had acquired a vast continent to settle and explore. This created unprecedented opportunities for those without inherited wealth to settle land and begin accumulating individual property. The strenuous conditions they faced, the rugged individualist argued, equalized the citizenry, regardless of previous

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<sup>16</sup> Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, ed. Harvey C. Mansfield and Delba Winthrop (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 482.

<sup>17</sup> David Davenport and Gordon Lloyd, *Rugged Individualism: Dead or Alive?* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press Publication, 2017), 1-24.

experience. These frontier settlers, for a time, were almost entirely free of government. They survived in small self-made communities. With the closing of the frontier, the spirit of rugged individualism continued in the conquest of new industries and non-contiguous territories. Henry Ford and Sam Walton thus inherited the rugged individualism of Daniel Boone and Jedidiah Smith.

The traditional Republican Party's faith in rugged individualism stemmed from both a real and romanticized appreciation of American history. Inherent in it was the desire to protect individual liberties from restraining government encroachment. It assumed equal opportunity for the common man to build his life anew from the ground up and innovate to conquer new frontiers. It was a shared mindset that preserved the community and culture.

Rugged individualism was influential in the founding of the Republican Party just before the Civil War and solidified through the era of the American Industrial Revolution. Throughout the 1860s, Republicans increased the military by over 2.5 million men, invented national banking, currency, and taxation, provided schools and homes for impoverished Americans, and freed four million slaves. All of this increased the power of the federal government, which was seemingly uncharacteristic of Republicans who wanted to protect the individual. However, they did all this out of a desire to protect and foster rugged individualism for every American. National banking, currency, and taxation supported economic stability and schools provided a better quality of life. More importantly, these actions encouraged rugged individualism because they provided equal opportunity for the average American to achieve financial success.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Heather Richardson, *To Make Men Free: A History of the Republican Party* (New York: Basic Books, 2014), ix.

Therefore, Republican ideology was less a question of government size, taxes, or military strength; it was a question of how the party could protect and foster rugged individualism for the American people.

In the late 1800s, progressive Republicans adopted a more hostile approach to corporations. They believed that corporations were becoming so powerful that they hurt the individual's opportunity for achieving success. Republican President Theodore Roosevelt believed that certain corporations must be regulated for the United States to return to "an economic system under which each man shall be guaranteed the opportunity to show the best that there is in him." Roosevelt called for government to regulate business, prohibit corporate funding of political campaigns, and impose income and inheritance taxes in a policy he called the "square deal" for Americans. By the 1920s, rugged individualism remained the cornerstone of Republican Party values, with government serving mainly to help equalize opportunity, not outcomes, for American citizens.<sup>19</sup>

### **III. Traditional Republicanism's Coming of Age**

In the 1920s, Theodore Roosevelt's Progressive Republicans were nearly extinct and traditional Republicans sought to protect rugged individualism by establishing a small and unobtrusive federal government. The idea was to step back from the regulation of the Progressive era and encourage rugged individualism by providing a sizeable economic incentive for the individual. Where it did choose to exert influence, the Republican dominated government of the 1920s sought to stimulate the economy and promote business in the United States.

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<sup>19</sup> Richardson, *To Make Men Free: A History of the Republican Party*, ix.

Despite its somewhat divergent turn of the century trends, Republicans in the 1920s were increasingly convinced that the federal government was bloated with unnecessary expenditures because President Wilson failed to dissolve wartime policies after World War I (WWI). The 1920 Republican Party platform stated,

We advocate a thorough investigation of the present organization of the Federal departments and bureaus, with a view to securing consolidation, a more business-like distribution of functions, the elimination of duplication, delays and overlapping of work and the establishment of an up-to-date and efficient administrative organization.<sup>20</sup>

The Republicans sought to ensure the federal government was not abusing Americans' individual liberties by misusing tax dollars. To do this, Republicans passed the Budget and Accounting Act of 1921, which required the President to submit an annual budget to Congress, expanded the President's control over the budget by establishing the Bureau of the Budget, and established the General Accounting Office to perform audits of all government expenses to evaluate efficiency. This groundbreaking bill epitomized the GOP's focus on better management of government resources and reduced spending.

President Warren Harding filled his cabinet with millionaire businessmen and engineers to prioritize government efficiency and work with businesses. The most notable men in Harding's cabinet were Andrew Mellon, one of the wealthiest men in America in 1921, and the future President, Herbert Hoover. These two men were significant because they remained in the Executive Branch until the 1930s, but by 1927, House Minority Leader John Nance Garner (D) declared "Mr. Mellon has dominated the financial, economic and fiscal relations of the United States for the past four years. Every

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<sup>20</sup> Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, "Republican Party Platforms, Republican Party Platform of 1920," The American Presidency Project, University of California, September 22, 2020, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/republican-party-platform-1920>.

Republican in the administration has been doing his bidding.”<sup>21</sup> Harding appointed Mellon to Department of Treasury in 1921 to balance the federal budget. Mellon’s plan was to lower taxes for businesses and individuals to incentivize people to pay their taxes while simultaneously stimulating the economy.<sup>22</sup> This came in the form of the Revenue Acts of 1921, 1924, and 1926. These acts cut the top marginal tax rate from 73% for those who earned over \$1,000,000 a year in 1921 to 24% for those who earned over \$100,000 in 1929.<sup>23</sup> Additionally, the Revenue Acts cut the tax rate for those making under \$4,000 from 4% in 1921 to 0.375% in 1929.<sup>24</sup> In theory this reduced the federal government’s power over Americans while simultaneously increasing tax revenue because people could now afford to pay their taxes.

Republicans’ support for the small government, low tax priority was decisive. Only one Republican out of 300 in the House of Representatives voted against the Budget and Accounting Act of 1921. The Revenue Act of 1924 received 184 votes from Republicans with only 9 against.<sup>25</sup> Growing Republican consensus on these votes reflected a belief that government power could be more efficiently managed to ease tax burdens and limit government power.

1920s Republicans also sought cooperation between government and business to stimulate the economy. President Harding encouraged the Federal Trade Commission,

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<sup>21</sup> Rusnak, Robert J. "Andrew W. Mellon: Reluctant Kingmaker." *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 13, no. 2 (1983): 269-78. Accessed June 18, 2020. [www.jstor.org/stable/27547924](http://www.jstor.org/stable/27547924).

<sup>22</sup>Eugene Trani., “Warren G. Harding: Domestic Affairs,” Millercenter, University of Virginia, September 22, 2020. <https://millercenter.org/president/harding/domestic-affairs>.

<sup>23</sup> Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, “Andrew W. Mellon,” Federal Reserve History, Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, September 22, 2020, [https://www.federalreservehistory.org/people/andrew\\_w\\_mellon](https://www.federalreservehistory.org/people/andrew_w_mellon).

<sup>24</sup> “Table 23. U.S. Individual Income Tax: Personal Exemptions and Lowest and Highest Bracket Tax Rates, and Tax Base for Regular Tax, Tax Years 1913-2015” Internal Revenue Service, accessed September 22, 2020, <https://www.irs.gov/statistics/soi-tax-stats-historical-table-23>.

<sup>25</sup> “TO AGREE TO THE REPORT OF THE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE ON H.R. 6715 (43 STAT 253-6/2/24), TO REDUCE AND EQUALIZE TAXATION AND TO PROVIDE REVENUE.,” GovTrack, accessed September 22, 2020, <https://www.govtrack.us/congress/votes/68-1/h109>.

Justice Department, and the Interstate Commerce Commission to work with corporations instead of regulating them.<sup>26</sup> Congress also passed several laws throughout the 1920s that benefited businesses, which resulted in exponential growth in industry. The Air Mail Act of 1925 allowed the Post Office Department to contract out airmail routes for private companies, and in 1926, the Air Commerce Act authorized commercial airlines. As a result, the number of planes flown in the United States grew from 6,000 in 1926 to 173,000 in 1929.<sup>27</sup> The automobile industry expanded to 26 million vehicles by 1929, and its expansion meant that the government had to invest in updating the United States' highway system. To do this, many states introduced a gas tax between two to five cents per gallon, which raised millions of dollars a year.<sup>28</sup> Herbert Hoover's philosophy on the relationship between government and business was that it should be a voluntary partnership for mutual benefit. He called this philosophy associationalism. In this way he bridged the gap between conservatives and progressives.<sup>29</sup>

The 1920s Republican Party's prioritization of governmental power and economic strategy initially resulted in an extraordinary economic success. By 1924, Republicans were boasting a reduction of public debt by \$2.5 billion, and a reduction of public expenditures by \$2.1 billion per annum in their party platform.<sup>30</sup> By 1927, there was a

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<sup>26</sup> Eugene Trani, "Warren G. Harding: Domestic Affairs," <https://millercenter.org/president/harding/domestic-affairs>.

<sup>27</sup> U.S. Centennial of Flight. "The Pioneering Years: Commercial Aviation 1920-1930." [https://www.centennialofflight.net/essay/Commercial\\_Aviation/1920s/Tran1.htm](https://www.centennialofflight.net/essay/Commercial_Aviation/1920s/Tran1.htm), Accessed April 11, 2020.

<sup>28</sup> Robert Scott, "1920s Automobiles, Auto Industry Consolidation and Vehicle Mass Production," 1920-30, last accessed September 22, 2020, <http://www.1920-30.com/automobiles/>.

<sup>29</sup> Andrew J. Polsky and Olesya Tkacheva, "Legacies versus Politics: Herbert Hoover, Partisan Conflict, and the Symbolic Appeal of Associationalism in the 1920s," *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society* 16, no. 2 (2002): 215.

<sup>30</sup> Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, "Republican Party Platforms, Republican Party Platform of 1924," The American Presidency Project, University of California, September 22, 2020, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/republican-party-platform-1924>.

budget surplus of \$1.15 billion.<sup>31</sup> By 1929, the United States' GDP (Gross Domestic Product) had grown to \$977 billion from \$687 billion in 1920.<sup>32</sup>

Republicans in the 1920s also desired to solve social issues that impeded individual liberties and opportunities of Americans. President Coolidge was never outspoken against organizations like the Ku Klux Klan because he believed it would lose support over time without his influence. However, Coolidge publicly supported the ideals that the Klan opposed. In a speech dedicated to John Ericsson, Coolidge stated,

...[W]hen once our feet have touched this soil, when once we have made this land our home [that is, become Americanized], wherever our place of birth, whatever our race, we are blended in one common country. All artificial distinctions of lineage and rank are cast aside. *We all rejoice in the title of Americans.*<sup>33</sup>

Similar messages from Coolidge could also be found in "The Progress of a People," "Equality of Rights," "The Spiritual Unification of America," "Authority And Religious Liberty," "The Genius of America," and "Tolerance And Liberalism." The central theme in all of these speeches was the idea of encouraging unity to drive out the evils of social discord.

Other Republicans shared Coolidge's sentiment. In the 1920, 1924, and 1928 Republican Party Platforms, Republicans advocated for a federal anti-lynching law that would turn the act of lynching into a federal crime. Republicans almost succeeded in making lynching a federal crime with the Dyer Anti-Lynching Act of 1922. The bill

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<sup>31</sup> Office of Management and Budget. "Table 1.1 – Summary of Receipts, Outlays, and Surpluses or Deficits (-): 1789-2025," last accessed September 22, 2020, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/historical-tables/>.

<sup>32</sup> Kimberly Amadeo, "1920s Economy: What Made the Twenties Roar," The Balance, Dotdash, last modified April 13, 2020. <https://www.thebalance.com/roaring-twenties-4060511>.

<sup>33</sup> Jerry Wallace, "The Ku Klux Klan in Calvin Coolidge's America," Calvin Coolidge Presidential Foundation, Calvin Coolidge Presidential Foundation Inc., last modified July 14, 2014, <https://www.coolidgefoundation.org/blog/the-ku-klux-klan-in-calvin-coolidges-america/>.



passed the House of Representatives with a two-thirds vote, but it was filibustered by southerners in the Senate.<sup>34</sup> Only four Republicans in the House voted against the Dyer Anti-Lynching Bill.<sup>35</sup> Republicans, moreover, were outspoken in their 1920 platform for women's suffrage. By 1922, John L. Cable (R) of Ohio introduced the Cable Act, which allowed women to marry foreign men and keep their citizenship. The bill was promptly passed and signed by President Harding in September that year. By 1924, 120 women sat as delegates at the Republican National Convention.<sup>36</sup> In February, Homer P. Snyder (R) of New York proposed the Indian Citizenship Act of 1924, which granted Native Americans full United States citizenship. It was signed into law by President Coolidge less than six months later. In 1924, Republicans also introduced and passed a Child Labor Amendment in the House of Representatives, which would allow Congress to regulate the extent children under the age of eighteen could participate in the workforce. The bill passed in the House with only eight Republicans voting against it but was never ratified by all the states.<sup>37</sup>

The 1920s Republican Party, in keeping with the policies of Teddy Roosevelt, also advocated for resource conservation and renewable resources in their platforms and passed legislation that reflected that sentiment. In 1924, the Clarke-McNary Act allowed the Forest Service to more easily purchase land within national forest boundaries and

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<sup>34</sup>Francis, Megan Ming. "Anti-Lynching Legislation and the Sinking of the Republican Ship in Congress." Chapter. In *Civil Rights and the Making of the Modern American State*, 98–126. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014. doi:10.1017/CBO9781139583749.004.

<sup>35</sup> "TO RESOLVE INTO THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE TO CONSIDER H.R. 13. (P.1338-1) EQUAL PROTECTION OF THE LAWS AND TO PUNISH THE CRIME OF LYNCHING. (P.1338-1).," GovTrack, accessed September 22, 2020, <https://www.govtrack.us/congress/votes/67-2/h162>

<sup>36</sup> "The History of Women in the Republican Party," National Women's History Museum, July 18, 2016, <https://www.womenshistory.org/articles/history-women-republican-party>.

<sup>37</sup> "TO AGREE TO THE RESOLUTION OF THE COMMITTEE ON RULES THAT THE HOUSE GO INTO COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF H.J. RES. 184, PROPOSING AN AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES RELATING TO CHILD LABOR. (P. 7174-2).," GovTrack, accessed September 22, 2020, <https://www.govtrack.us/congress/votes/68-1/h62>.

provided continuous production of timber while broadening efforts to produce and distribute tree seedlings. The Oil Pollution Act of 1924 established regulations on coastal waters for seagoing vessels with the potential to discharge fossil fuels. The act gave the Secretary of War authority to evaluate the potential of toxicity and allowed for the distribution of criminal punishment if the act was violated. In 1928 the government passed the McSweeney-McNary Act authorized a nationwide forest research program to survey forest resources, the Boulder Canyon Project Act to build the Hoover Dam for hydroelectricity, and the Migratory Bird Conservation Act to establish a commission to “consider and approve any areas of land and/or water recommended by the Secretary of the Interior for purchase or rental by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and to fix the price or prices at which areas may be purchased or rented.”<sup>38</sup> Republicans’ preservation of natural resources for all to share, advocacy of liberty, and opportunity for all Americans exemplified traditional Republican concepts of rugged individualism.

Most traditional Republicans valued natural resources as America’s greatest assets and desired to protect them. However, a faction of Republicans, particularly from before Theodore Roosevelt’s era, believed the opposite. They saw those resources as an opportunity to foster rugged individualism. Jobs could be created harvesting natural resources like lumber or oil to boost the economy and industrialization of the country. For example, the 1896 Republican Party Platform states, “to those of the mine and the fields, as well as to those of the shop and the factory, to hemp and wool, the product of the great industry sheep husbandry; as well as to the foundry, as to the mills, we promise

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<sup>38</sup> “Migratory Bird Conservation Commission,” United States Fish and Wildlife Service, October 2019, <https://www.fws.gov/refuges/realty/mbcc.html>.

the most ample protection.”<sup>39</sup> Nonetheless, after Theodore Roosevelt, the party’s stance on natural resources became conservation rather than exploitation.

The Republican Party’s foreign policy in the 1920s primarily revolved around American isolationism. Republicans adamantly opposed the United States joining the League of Nations to avert involvement with another war, and they believed the League’s objectives could be accomplished with the United States working independently. When referring to the League’s goals, the 1920 Party platform stated, “We believe that all this can be done without the compromise of national independence, without depriving the people of the United States in advance of the right to determine for themselves what is just and fair when the occasion arises, and without involving them as participants and not as peacemakers in a multitude of quarrels, the merits of which they are unable to judge.”<sup>40</sup> This same sentiment is repeated in their 1924- and 1928-party platforms. The only times Republicans felt it necessary to involve with other countries was through business transactions.

Republicans actively sought to center foreign policy around protecting the United States’ economy. The Emergency Tariff Act of 1921 and the more permanent Fordney-McCumber Tariff of 1922 raised tariff rates on exported goods to protect American commercial interests as Europe recovered from World War I (WWI). Only eight Republicans voted against it.<sup>41</sup> The tariff also allowed the president to adjust rates up to

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<sup>39</sup> Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, “Republican Party Platforms, Republican Party Platform of 1896,” <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/republican-party-platform-1896>.

<sup>40</sup> Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, “Republican Party Platforms, Republican Party Platform of 1920,” <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/republican-party-platform-1920>.

<sup>41</sup> “TO AGREE TO THE RESOLUTION OF THE COMMITTEE ON RULES THAT THE HOUSE GO INTO COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF H.J. RES. 184, PROPOSING AN AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES RELATING TO CHILD LABOR. (P. 7174-2).” GovTrack, accessed September 22, 2020, <https://www.govtrack.us/congress/votes/68-1/h62>.

50% as he saw fit.<sup>42</sup> This act was designed to help farmers whose crops had waned in prices in the years following WWI, but it backfired later in the decade when other countries simply raised their tariffs in response.

The 1920s Republican Party favored nativist immigration policies that reinforced its isolationist platform. In *Strangers in the Land*, historian John Higham defines nativism as anti-foreign spirit in the United States. Higham asserted that the Republican Party had had taken up nativist policies because “the war virtually swept from the American consciousness the old belief in unrestricted immigration.”<sup>43</sup> However, Higham also notes that nativism was particularly bad at the beginning of the 1920s for three reasons: an economic downturn in 1920, the return of immigration in May of 1920 after it had been halted during the war, and prohibition and the rise of crime. These conditions led to a stark rise in nativism where, according to Higham, “the Eighteenth Amendment attempted an unprecedented regimentation of morality by law,” and immigrants were associated with immorality.<sup>44</sup>

The Emergency Quota Act of 1921 restricted the annual number of immigrants admitted from a country to 3% of the number of immigrants from that same country living inside the United States. The Immigration Act of 1924 set the number of nationalities allowed in the United States to a quota of 2% of the people in the United States as of the 1890 national census and completely excluded people from Asia.<sup>45</sup> In the

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<sup>42</sup> Edward Kaplan, “The Fordney-McCumber Tariff of 1922,” EH.Net Encyclopedia, edited by Robert Whaples, March 16, 2008, <https://eh.net/encyclopedia/the-fordney-mccumber-tariff-of-1922/>.

<sup>43</sup> John Higham, *Strangers in the Land: Patters of American Nativism* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2002), 301.

<sup>44</sup> Higham, *Strangers in the Land: Patters of American Nativism*, xi-xii.; Higham, *Strangers in the Land: Patters of American Nativism*, 267-268.

<sup>45</sup> “The Immigration Act of 1924 (The Johnson-Reed Act),” Office of the Historian, accessed September 23, 2020, <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1921-1936/immigration-act>.

1924 Republican Party Platform, party loyalists justified the acts by claiming that they were designed to protect inhabitants of the country, both citizen and alien, from a potential economic fallout from a flood of immigrants into the United States after WWI.<sup>46</sup> Some claimed these policies were racist, but they were also rooted in economic interests. A substantial number of immigrants had the chance to decrease wages, increase poverty, and create cultural conflicts for Americans and aliens who already resided in the United States. Therefore, their response was akin to nativism or nationalism as much as racism.

The 1920s Republican Party desired to run a small, efficient, unobtrusive, and frugal federal government focused on creating equal opportunities for its citizens and distancing itself from entanglements in foreign affairs. The party's philosophy of rugged individualism was at the root of its platforms. Its numerous tax cuts, tariffs, government-business cooperation, anti-lynching and anti-immigration legislation were indicative of a faith in maintaining equality of opportunity for American citizens without imposing the tyranny of government heavy handedness. Nevertheless, a decade of success holding a majority control in two branches of government left Republicans increasingly stubborn and uncompromising. When the Great Depression exposed the glaring inequalities of haves and have nots in the United States and destroyed many Americans' hopes for success despite their willingness to work, the GOP's central strategies lost traction. The result was nearly two decades of Democratic Party ascendance to federal power.

#### **IV. The Great Depression**

In October of 1929, the United States stock market crashed and set in motion a depression that would last over a decade. For rural farmers, who throughout the 1920s

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<sup>46</sup> Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, "Republican Party Platforms, Republican Party Platform of 1924," <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/republican-party-platform-1924>.

had endured waning profits, floods and droughts, the crash was immediate and harsh. In Mississippi from 1929 to 1932, cotton sales plummeted from \$1.5 billion to \$45 million. Peanuts fell from 5 cents per pound the previous decade to 1.6 cents in 1932, and the income from tobacco fell by two-thirds. In Alabama, coal mines laid off workers and began to shut down altogether reducing the coal yield to 30% of previous years. Banks across the United States failed after overextending themselves throughout the 20s, and businesses closed causing unemployment to rise to 15.9% in 1931. The national suicide rate rose from 14 per 100,000 in 1929 to 17.4 in 1932 and peaked at 26.1 in Minneapolis.<sup>47</sup>

During the first two years of the Great Depression, Herbert Hoover hoped to use his philosophy of associationalism and stay true to the rugged individualism that characterized policymaking in the 1920s. According to Roger Biles, Hoover championed volunteerism and emphasized the significance of a decentralized government and individual initiative instead of social programs. Hoover's strategy at the beginning of the Great Depression relied heavily on volunteerism at a local level: the federal government was not to be involved in direct relief for the destitute.<sup>48</sup>

Hoover created the President's Organization for Unemployment Relief (POUR) to encourage local welfare efforts, but POUR did not mandate local efforts. The Reconstruction Finance Corporation (RFC) lent money to banks, insurance companies, railroads, and other companies to stifle the domino effect from stagnating business to layoffs, but these organizations were reeling from depression losses and had no way of

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<sup>47</sup>Biles, *The South and the New Deal*, 18-19.; Tony Badger, *The New Deal: The Depression Years, 1933-40* (New York, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1989), 11-18.

<sup>48</sup> Biles, *The South and the New Deal*, 32.

generating the resources needed to provide relief to the millions in need. He encouraged the formation of the National Business Survey Conference under the United States Chamber of Commerce to maintain wage levels and continue stock purchases. He encouraged and signed a tax cut in 1929 to stimulate the economy, but the effects were negligible because taxes were already low. Hoover finally took bold action in July of 1932 with the Emergency Relief and Reconstruction Act, which provided \$300 million to the RFC for loans to states and cities and \$322 million for federal public works. This was significantly more federal involvement than Hoover's predecessors had put forth during the recession in the early twenties. He valued rugged individualism but understood that the government could not stand idly by during such a serious economic collapse. However, volunteerism was inadequate, and the Emergency Relief and Construction Act was too late to be effective.<sup>49</sup>

With Hoover as President, state and local governments were tasked with spearheading relief efforts. In the South, Conservative Democrats handled social programs similarly to Republicans in that they opposed them. By the 1930s, many newly created relief programs had failed. Walter Monteith, mayor of Houston Texas, boasted that his city provided zero assistance to the unemployed and issued no worker bonds in 1931. Governor William Murray of Oklahoma hated the idea of assistance so much he threatened National Guard intervention to stop St. Anthony's Hospital from feeding unemployed people.<sup>50</sup> Farmers in England, Arkansas threatened to loot stores if they were not given food in the winter of 1931. They were given \$1,500 worth of food. By the end

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<sup>49</sup> Biles, *The South and the New Deal*, 32.; Biles, *The South and the New Deal*, 33.; Badger, *The New Deal: The Depression Years, 1933-40*, 45.; Joseph Siracusa and David Coleman, *Depression to Cold War: A History of America From Herbert Hoover to Ronald Reagan* (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger Publishers, 2002) 10.

<sup>50</sup> Biles, *The South and the New Deal*, 23-24.

of winter, the Red Cross had helped 2.7 million farmers, but it was not nearly enough, and local efforts continued to be woefully ill-equipped or non-existent.<sup>51</sup>

Conservative politicians advocated for increased fiscal responsibility from their constituents and government instead of federal and state assistance. The Texas legislature cut appropriations by 21% while North Carolina cut salaries to reduce government operating costs by \$7 million.<sup>52</sup> By 1935 Houston had a surplus of \$386,000, but was unwilling to use it to intervene because it went against a common tenet of the 1920s: rugged individualism.<sup>53</sup> People were expected as rugged individualists to work hard and succeed on their own. The Depression, however, ruined opportunities for success, especially for the poor. Still, sentiment from conservative Republicans and Southern Democrats alike consisted of avoiding social programs until they were needed.

## **V. A Coalition of Like Minds**

The Democratic Party came to dominate the executive and legislative branches in the 1930s and 1940s. Hoover and the conservative Republican Party's response to the Great Depression had been so inadequate that the question of who would be the president in 1932 was not between a Republican or Democrat, but which Democrat. Franklin Roosevelt triumphed, advocating for social programs under the New Deal. Roosevelt's popularity with Southern Democrats and northern liberals prevented obstruction from Republican Congressmen at the beginning of the 1930s. Roosevelt's platform also lacked any mention of Civil Rights, public housing, or wages and hours, which would have

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<sup>51</sup> Badger, *The New Deal: The Depression Years, 1933-40*, 17.

<sup>52</sup> Biles, *The South and the New Deal*, 31.

<sup>53</sup> Biles, *The South and the New Deal*, 24.



caused strife with Southerners. On top of that, the South looked to benefit the most from New Deal spending and policies.

Southern Democrats had no problem supporting Roosevelt in the early days of his administration when the New Deal focused on direct response to the Great Depression, but they began to splinter as time passed. By 1935, Roosevelt advocated for the National Labor Relations Act and the Social Security Act. The former allowed for labor unions to organize and strike within the United States, which threatened traditional customs like management-set hours and wages for private businesses. The latter established Social Security, Unemployment Insurance, and the Aid to Dependent Children program. These appalled conservative Republicans and Southern Democrats alike who saw it as an overreach by the federal government. Additionally, in 1936 Roosevelt began appealing to African Americans by allowing African American delegates and press to attend the Democratic National Convention, which infuriated southerners. In 1937, Roosevelt attempted to pack the Supreme Court with Democrats because it had ruled the National Industrial Recovery Act, the Agricultural Adjustment Act, and the Guffey Coal act unconstitutional. Roosevelt's attempt to pack the Supreme Court in many ways symbolized the beginning of the end of Democratic unity in the south.

Southern Democrats and Republican conservatives worked together to combat what they believed as overreach from the Executive Branch after 1937. Southern Democrats and Republicans criticized the President on his refusal to condemn sit-down strikes and began to denounce New Deal bills publicly and slow their advance in Congress. The Fair Labor Standards Act narrowly passed in the Senate but was struck down in the House by an anti-New Deal coalition. Senate conservatives, moreover,

filibustered an antilynching bill introduced by Senator Robert Wagner of New York. During a special session called by Roosevelt to address the recession and reconsider bills from the previous year, John L. Lewis and Josiah Bailey penned a conservative manifesto. Lewis was an American leader of organized labor and Bailey was a North Carolinian Senator. The intention of the manifesto was to outwardly express conservative principles while simultaneously criticizing New Deal programs. Roosevelt resolved to purge the creators of the manifesto and a few who agreed with it but was unsuccessful.<sup>54</sup>

Republican conservatives were in power throughout the 1920s but took a subordinate role after the economic crash of 1929. However, the administration's overreach in protecting the New Deal allowed for some decisive Republican victories in 1938. Still, the need to compromise to meet the demands of the Depression pushed Republicans into a new balance. Southern Democrats and conservative Republicans grew in influence in response to FDR and the New Deal, but it also led to a new tolerance within the party for a basic social safety net.

## **VI. The Rise of Mr. Republican and WWII**

Robert A. Taft became the most influential conservative Senator throughout the 1930s and 40s, and was respected by Republicans and Democrats alike. Taft, the eldest son of President William Howard Taft, grew up in the White House before becoming a lawyer and running for office. From 1921-1931 he served in Ohio's House of Representatives, and from 1931-1933 he was an Ohio state Senator. However, his most influential role in government was as the United States Senator from Ohio from 1939 to his death in 1953. Often referred to as Mr. Republican, Taft gained a following that

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<sup>54</sup> Biles, *The South and the New Deal*, 146-147.

advocated for his nomination as a presidential candidate throughout the 1940s. He became the embodiment of Republican values in the war years, and his philosophy and methodology came to define the Republican Party. Robert Taft's philosophy consisted of three principles: equal justice under law, equality of opportunity, and human liberty. Specifically, he valued the right to a fair trial, economic growth based on individual work and equal opportunity, and freedom of choice were his most pressing concerns.<sup>55</sup>

Taft held fast to the 1920s Republican standard of an efficient, unobtrusive federal government that fostered business expansion and economic growth. Taft's philosophy on individual liberty and opportunity for the common man essentially meant that Americans had the right to create a business and succeed at it without being penalized for that success by the government. In 1920, he argued that the ideal president would "return to normal relations between government and private enterprise." His reference to normal referred to the relationship between government and business prior to the progressive era. To Taft, supporting individual liberties and opportunities for the common man meant diminishing government regulation of private enterprise and business. This philosophy encompassed the largest of corporations down to the smallest family owned businesses, but Taft maintained "the small businessman is the key to progress in the United States."<sup>56</sup>

Taft initially abhorred the idea of social programs because, to him, they overstepped government power and were too expensive. In the early 1930s, he adamantly wrote, "my inclination is very much opposed to any system which provides for the payment of the money to men for doing nothing." He believed the heart of the New Deal

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<sup>55</sup>Patterson, *Mr. Republican*, 191-192.; Patterson, *Mr. Republican*, 332.

<sup>56</sup> Patterson, *Mr. Republican*, 191-192.; Patterson, *Mr. Republican*, 85-86.

was long-term deficit financing and wrote to Herbert Hoover that “no nation ever has continued indefinitely an unbalanced budget without ultimate collapse.”<sup>57</sup>

Taft, however, was willing to veer from his ideological stances when data suggested a more pragmatic solution. Taft was one of the few Congressmen who would rely on data to support his ideals on how the United States should be governed. When his research unequivocally supported a policy he was initially opposed to, he worked wholeheartedly on compromise. For example, in 1936 he defended parts of the New Deal including old age pensions, unemployment insurance, and regulation of stock exchanges. By 1944, Taft believed that government must assist small businesses to sustain them in economic downturns but not hinder them by creating federal regulations. His willingness to change his viewpoint and compromise led him to support two controversial bills: the Taft Hartley Act and the Housing Act of 1949.<sup>58</sup>

The Taft-Hartley Act was designed to restrict the activities and power of labor unions in the United States. The act responded to the National Labor Relations Act under the New Deal. Taft-Hartley originally passed through Congress, but Truman vetoed it and sent it back to committee. Taft needed to convince a supermajority to override the veto. He insisted, “The final bill must define unfair union practices to match the unfair management activities listed in the National Labor Relations Act.”<sup>59</sup> Taft levied that both employers and employees should be able to seek court injunctions or organized action should they be treated unfairly. Taft proposed a compromise that allowed employers to sue unions for damages from certain practices and for states to adopt right to work laws

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<sup>57</sup> Patterson, *Mr. Republican*, 135.; Patterson, *Mr. Republican*, 190.

<sup>58</sup> Patterson, *Mr. Republican*, 170.; Patterson, *Mr. Republican*, 190.; Clarence E. Wunderlin Jr., “The Image of the Entrepreneur and the Language of the Market: Robert A. Taft, Market Rhetoric, and Political Argument, 1933-1944,” *Libertarian Papers* 4, No. 2 (2012): 22-26.

<sup>59</sup> Patterson, *Mr. Republican*, 357.

preventing union shops while still recognizing workers' collective bargaining rights. Taft succeeded in his compromise, and the Senate succeeded in overriding Truman's veto.<sup>60</sup>

The Taft-Hartley Act stemmed from a desire to protect opportunities for the individual. In this case, he thought the employer and the employee should be protected equally. Taft believed legal recourse for both employees and employers should exist, but it should be used sparingly and primarily in case of a national emergency. Even then, Taft suggested that Congress would need to vote for special presidential powers to handle the situation.<sup>61</sup>

Another example of Taft's willingness to compromise when data compelled him occurred in 1943. Taft led a subcommittee on housing and urban redevelopment under the Special Committee on Postwar Economic Policy and Planning. His Democratic colleagues on the subcommittee were certain there was need for large scale housing reform, but Taft had to be sure. He sent out questionnaires to national housing bodies and private organizations to do research. This resulted in the accumulation of thousands of pages of testimonies which compelled Taft to side with the Democrats. Taft's subcommittee issued a report that called for 12.5 million housing units to be built over a 10-year period with the government financing 500,000 within the next four years.<sup>62</sup>

Taft faced an uproar of criticism from Republicans and Democrats alike. Democrats said the act failed to do enough, and Republicans went so far as to call him a socialist. Still, Taft succeeded in finding middle ground. He argued that it preserved the

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<sup>60</sup> Patterson, *Mr. Republican*, 358.

<sup>61</sup> Patterson, *Mr. Republican*, 356.

<sup>62</sup> Patterson, *Mr. Republican*, 316-318.

family by providing an adequate living environment. It took nearly five years, but the bill passed and became known as the Housing Act of 1949.<sup>63</sup>

The influence of statistics and his ability to persuade other Republicans with them suggested that Taft's Republican Party highly valued evidence in its decision making, even when it went against ideological inclinations. It also revealed a certain malleability and diversity within the party. Many Republicans shunned social programs because they were traditionally seen as financially irresponsible and an overstep of government power into the lives of the individual. However, Taft Republicans were willing to compromise and find satisfactory solutions to immediate conditions like the Great Depression and World War II that could be embraced by both parties. Their willingness to compromise on these issues was not contradictory of their beliefs because they believed that all Americans should have an equal opportunity to succeed and bills like the Taft-Hartley Act and the Housing Act of 1949 helped ensure that.

Taft's budgetary philosophy, however, was reminiscent of 1920s Republicans in that it put fiscal responsibility first. In 1939, President Roosevelt mocked Taft by offering him a "very handsome prize" to show how the government could balance the budget. Taft explained that the budget could be cut by \$2 billion by eliminating waste, abolishing conflicting agencies, slashing funds for relief and for farmers, and above all by "*wanting* to reduce spending."<sup>64</sup> Taft's reply reflected traditional Republican values of cutting social programs and efficiently restructuring government to be more cost effective. But Taft differed from later Republicans' lower-taxes-at-all-costs platforms. Taft even stated

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<sup>63</sup> Patterson, *Mr. Republican*, 319-320.

<sup>64</sup> Patterson, *Mr. Republican*, 190.

that while efficiencies should bring the budget back to balance, higher taxes would be preferable to the \$9 billion in debt the United States had accrued at the time.<sup>65</sup>

Taft was more willing to solve social issues with federal legislation than later Republicans as well. He discussed racial discrimination with Walter White, leader of the NAACP, and favored a controversial federal anti-lynching bill. He also approved of designating a homeland for Jews in the United States.<sup>66</sup> In 1945, Taft introduced a bill to create a Federal Fair Employment Practices Commission to create equal opportunities for minorities in the workforce. This commission came after Roosevelt's similar attempt at a commission in 1941 but had far broader implications. The bill allowed for a study of discrimination by geographic area and provided for additional employment by region to increase the number of employees from the group being discriminated against.<sup>67</sup> In this instance his philosophy on individual liberties and opportunities for the common man outweighed his concerns about government interference. Taft stated, "The whole history of America reveals a system based on individual opportunity, individual initiative, individual freedom to earn one's living in one's own way, and to conduct manufacturing, commerce, agriculture, or other business; on rugged individualism."<sup>68</sup> This sentiment extended to minorities, and if businesses were denying minorities this fundamental American system, then Taft deemed it necessary for the government to intervene.

Concerning foreign policy, Taft believed an isolationist approach remained in the United States' interest. Taft's philosophy was guided by protecting individual liberties, opportunities for the common man, and preservation of the family. He associated these

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<sup>65</sup> Patterson, *Mr. Republican*, 190.

<sup>66</sup> Patterson, *Mr. Republican*, 174-175.

<sup>67</sup> David Engstrom, "The Taft Proposal of 1946: the (Non-)Making of American Fair Employment Law," *Green Bag* 9, (2006): 183.

<sup>68</sup> Patterson, *Mr. Republican*, 192.

with American values and resigned himself to protecting them as national rather than universal principles. In the late 1930s, Taft denounced any discussion of war in Europe that the United States was not directly antagonized into joining. He had no interest in protecting other countries, even if they were democratic. Taft stated, “my whole idea of foreign policy is based largely on the position that America can successfully defend itself against the rest of the world.”<sup>69</sup> He believed that war would “expand the role of the federal government, pyramid its spending, and lead to abuses of individual constitutional rights.”<sup>70</sup> Taft warned, “We have moved far toward totalitarian government already. The additional powers sought by the President in case of war, the nationalization of all industry and all capital and all labor, already proposed in bills before Congress, would create a Socialist Dictatorship which it would be impossible to dissolve once the war is over.”<sup>71</sup>

The Republican Party, despite its factions, was bound together by an interest in benefiting the common man by protecting rugged individualism. As rugged individualists, the Republican Party valued self-reliance and independence of the individual and of the country. It sought to create an efficient and cost-effective federal government. It valued policies centered around equal opportunity, business interests, and economic growth. It valued facts and statistics when making decisions. It discouraged social programs as too intrusive and sapped citizens’ incentive to work. Similarly, Republicans valued racial minorities as citizens of the United States, but valued an isolationist and nativist foreign policy that put Americans first. Nevertheless, through the

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<sup>69</sup> Patterson, *Mr. Republican*, 200-201.

<sup>70</sup> Patterson, *Mr. Republican*, 200.

<sup>71</sup> Patterson, *Mr. Republican*, 192.; Colin Dueck, *Hard Line: The Republican party and U.S. Foreign Policy Since World War II* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), 43-44.



Depression and World War II years, the party was as adaptive, and as center seeking as it was ideological.

After World War II, the growing sentiment among Taft's colleagues was that America should take on a larger role as a world power. This involved rebuilding war torn countries and even intervention of American military forces. Some Republicans even supported the United States joining the United Nations. Taft held fast that the United States should not police the world and should prioritize national reform.

In 1942 Taft attended a conference in Chicago to express his opposition to Wendell Willkie's internationalism. Taft warned that crusading, American imperialism, and the possibility of militarists and industrialists who could force a Pax Americana on the rest of the world. Taft, though, could not convince his fellow party members. In a letter to his cousin, Hulbert Taft, he claimed "We are heading for a direct fight for control of the party machinery. I believe it would be fatal to the future of the Party if Willkie and Luce... together with the wealthy crowd in the East, succeed in their aim."<sup>72</sup> Taft stayed consistent with his belief throughout the war's end, but he failed to convince the majority otherwise. Some factions of the Republican Party agreed with Taft, but a new generation embraced the internationalist tendencies of the early Cold War.<sup>73</sup>

## **VII. Eisenhower: The Synthesis of Traditionalism and Adaptation**

World War II and the onset of the Cold War created an environment that commanded change from the Republican Party. The use of nuclear weaponry to end the war in Japan stoked fear of the possibility that America's enemies might attain more and better nuclear arsenals to overcome American nuclear superiority. Under such concerns,

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<sup>72</sup> Patterson, *Mr. Republican*, 286.

<sup>73</sup> Patterson, *Mr. Republican*, 286-287.

the Republican Party could no longer remain as inwardly focused and nationalist as it once was. President Dwight D. Eisenhower and the 1950s Republican Party maintained many of the GOP's traditions, but the party continued to grow and adapt its traditional philosophy to new situations. This pragmatism returned the Republicans to power in the 1950s, but the party's inability to distinguish itself from the Democrats became its biggest liability by the 1960s.

The Republican Party during Dwight D. Eisenhower's presidency adapted traditional Republican policies to handle new realities. During the early Cold War, the Republican Party shifted to meet the international threat of Communism head on. An interest in protecting individual and familial rights remained, but the perceived threat was as much external as internal. Internationalism thus became a cornerstone of GOP platforms. The pragmatic change reflected Taft's general willingness to accept present realities over ideological presumptions rather than maintain the party's traditional isolationism. The new threat of nuclear war with the Russians prioritized an increasingly militarized foreign policy. Philosophically, Republicans remained committed to rugged individualism, but Party members came to see communist statist and communal ideology as the most pressing threat to their idea of Americanism. Plus, the international leader of Communism, the Soviet Union, was capable by 1949 of developing the same type of nuclear weapons the United States used to end WWII.

The first Republican president since 1932, Dwight Eisenhower advocated for legislation that increased government power to fight the Cold War, but like Taft, he aimed to make it as efficient as possible. In the 1952 Republican Party platform, Republicans stated, "We shall also sever from the public payroll the hordes of loafers,

incompetents and unnecessary employees who clutter the administration of our foreign affairs. The confusions, overlapping, and extravagance of our agencies abroad hold us up to the ridicule of peoples whose friendship we seek.”<sup>74</sup> Nevertheless, Eisenhower supported expanding Social Security despite the party’s reservations. In his first State of the Union Address, he advocated that the “old-age and survivors insurance law should promptly be extended to cover millions of citizens who have been left out of the Social Security system.”<sup>75</sup> He created the Department of Health Education and Welfare in 1953 to provide essential human services. He intended these programs to be in place for rugged individualists who became ill, aged, or had simply lost their job at no fault of their own. By doing this, he eased Americans mind and ensured the stable growth of the United States economy making sure the circular flow of income through the economy did not fault should widespread job cuts occur.

Meanwhile, Eisenhower’s budget priorities shifted as he followed his party in securing the country against the communist threat. In 1954, he signed the Communist Control Act criminalizing any existence, membership, or support of the Communist Party in the United States. Only one Republican voted against it. In 1956, he signed the National Interstate and Defense Highways Act largely to promote business and create an interstate highway system that would be effective in evacuation and military use should the Soviets ever invade the United States.

In the 1952 Republican Party platform, Republicans advocated for a “reduction of expenditures by the elimination of waste and extravagance so that the budget will be

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<sup>74</sup> Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, “Republican Party Platforms, Republican Party Platform of 1952,” The American Presidency Project, University of California, September 22, 2020, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/republican-party-platform-1952>.

<sup>75</sup> “Chronology,” Social Security Administration, last accessed September 23, 2020, <https://www.ssa.gov/history/1950.html>.

balanced and a general tax reduction can be made.”<sup>76</sup> This policy ran in accordance with 1920s traditional Republican Party policies, but Republicans faltered on it due to budgetary concerns of the rising national defense and social program expenditures. Eisenhower not only kept the high taxes of previous Democrat administrations, but he raised taxes to fund these expenses with the Federal Unemployment Tax Act. Towards the end of Eisenhower’s presidency in 1960, tax rates for the wealthiest Americans were upwards of 91.0%. The tax rate for the poorest Americans was still 20.0%.<sup>77</sup> These actions led to Eisenhower balancing the federal budget three times in his eight years in office, but the size of government continued to increase under his watch.

Republicans in the 1950s feuded over the economic implications of Eisenhower’s strategy. Old guard Republicans wanted to cut taxes and programs, but Eisenhower and moderate Republicans wanted to keep taxes high and use them to fund social programs and communist containment. The moderates believed that some government investment could stimulate the economy by raising the standard of living in the United States. The social programs would ease the burden of spending on necessities in each household and allow that money to be spent elsewhere, thereby increasing the circular flow of income. Eisenhower also increased the minimum wage from 75 cents to \$1 by advocating for and signing an amendment to the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) in 1955. Throughout Eisenhower’s presidency, personal income increased by 45%.<sup>78</sup> This was reminiscent of

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<sup>76</sup> Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, “Republican Party Platforms, Republican Party Platform of 1952,” <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/republican-party-platform-1952>.

<sup>77</sup> “Federal Income Tax Brackets and Maximum Tax Rates: 1950-1980”, Stanford University Online, last accessed September 23, 2020, <https://web.stanford.edu/class/polisci120a/immigration/Federal%20Tax%20Brackets.pdf>.

<sup>78</sup> Chester J. Pach, Jr., “Dwight D. Eisenhower: Domestic Affairs,” <https://millercenter.org/president/eisenhower/domestic-affairs>.

Taft's desire to establish a minimum threshold to create equal opportunity by providing the same starting point.

The Republican Party's drive to solve social issues, however, stagnated under the Eisenhower administration. In the 1952 Republican Party platform, Republicans condemned bigotry that discriminated against race, class, or religion as un-American. They even went so far as to emphasize the power of federal government over state government:

We believe that it is the primary responsibility of each State to order and control its own domestic institutions, and this power, reserved to the states, is essential to the maintenance of our Federal Republic. However, we believe that the Federal Government should take supplemental action within its constitutional jurisdiction to oppose discrimination against race, religion or national origin.<sup>79</sup>

However, despite this posture, Republicans failed to invoke federal social change during Eisenhower's presidency; instead, they preferred to adhere to the status quo and state sway over social legislation. They followed through with Truman's executive order to desegregate the military by 1953. And in 1954, they generally supported *Brown v. Board of Education*, where the Supreme Court of the United States ruled racial segregation in public schools unconstitutional. This ruling was divisive across the nation, but especially so in the American South. The divisiveness culminated on September 4, 1957 when Arkansas's governor, Orval Faubus (D), ordered the state's National Guard to stop the integration of Little Rock High School. Eisenhower, known for an unwillingness to confront controversial issues, eventually federalized the Arkansas National Guard's 10,000 soldiers and sent the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division of the United States Army on September 24<sup>th</sup> to enforce the integration of the high school, but it was too little too late

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<sup>79</sup> Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, "Republican Party Platforms, Republican Party Platform of 1952," <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/republican-party-platform-1952>.

for many African Americans. Despite the intervention to enforce *Brown*, Republicans overwhelmingly supported a 1957 Civil Rights Act that left racial legislation and enforcement largely to the states.<sup>80</sup>

By the mid-1950s, Republican foreign policy became fully internationalist and militarized as it sought strategic diplomacy with other nations to prevent the spread of Communism. Eisenhower's "New Look" national security policy was designed to be cost effective and proactive. It used United States military expansion to fuel the economy, relied on nuclear weapons to dissuade potential aggressors, authorized the CIA to covertly influence foreign nations if they were deemed a threat, strengthened allies, and sought to gain more allies. Eisenhower used it to persuade China to convince North Korea he was willing to escalate the Korean War to nuclear levels. He used it again in 1954 when China threatened to invade Taiwan. The United States continued to produce nuclear arms to deter war with the Soviet Union and reached 20,285 nuclear warheads by 1960. The United States also enacted the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) in 1954, the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO) in 1955, and built smaller security treaties with Japan, South Korea, the Republic of China, and the Philippines in an attempt to stave off the spread of Communism. In 1957, Eisenhower introduced the Eisenhower Doctrine to extend economic aid to middle eastern countries threatened by the spread of Communism.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> Chester J. Pach Jr. and Elmo Richardson, *The Presidency of Dwight D. Eisenhower* (Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas, 1991) 26.

<sup>81</sup> Robert S. Norris and Hans M. Kristensen, "Global nuclear weapons inventories, 1945-2010," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* 66, no. 4 (July 2010): 81.; John Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment* (New York, New York: Oxford University Press, 1982, 2005), 145.; Chester Pach Jr., "Dwight D. Eisenhower: Foreign Affairs," Millercenter, University of Virginia, September 25, 2020. <https://millercenter.org/president/eisenhower/foreign-affairs>.

Traditional Republicans advocated for an unobtrusive federal government, frugal fiscal policies, and an isolationist foreign policy, but under Taft and then Eisenhower, Republicans learned how to compromise to meet the needs of the Depression, World War II, and the Cold War. Some of these policies were in stark contrast to what the Republican Party had previously advocated for, but they were not unthinkable in an increasingly threatening and unstable world. At the same time, the Cold War also provoked a tendency toward extremism within the party that would reset the party's future course.

### **VIII. Traditional Republicanism's Fatal Wound**

The Cold War increased the Republican Party's investment in an image of strength and ideological orthodoxy that was ultimately part of a general shift of the United States politically to the right. The party's increasing need to be perceived as powerful in the face of existential threats simplified and sharpened Republican messaging. The result was a growing unwillingness to compromise and movement away from centrist policies.

The Cold War was fought as much in the hearts and minds of the participants as on the battlefield. The Cold War, at its core, pitted political and socio-economic ideologies against each other. It was a test of communist and liberal democratic philosophical systems. In this unique conflict, the essential battleground was perception, the mental image of the superior governmental system. Convincing the world that the orthodox Republican brand of liberal democracy was the best way to defeat Communism and other enemies of the state—became the party's driving motivation in the 1950s.

Building an image of power to face the immediate threat involved both communicating real power as well as the perception of power. In some cases, perceived power could be built through the demonstration of actual military or economic assets. The successful atmospheric testing of nuclear weapons, for example, demonstrated real power capabilities of both the United States and the Soviet Union. Yet in other instances, power was more matter of persuading the world of abstract causal links between political philosophy and national strength. For example, the claim that one's political system best eliminated the oppression and subjugation of its citizens involved a projection of cause and effect where the evidence was less falsifiable. Cold War ideologies were to some degree political hypotheses that could be partially tested in reality but could never provide evidence of the absolute human freedom and happiness that each side claimed. As in a grand military parade, Cold War leaders sought strong displays of power, but the show of strength was partially real and partially facade. The parade was essentially an exaggeration of the reality, with only a limited claim to evidence.

During the Cold War, the United States' overall strategy to contain Communism hinged to a large degree upon this perception of power. The Republican turn to the right reflected the need to display strength and unity in the face of the enemy and invest in a hardline symmetrical containment of Communism. This was especially so in 1949 after the most populous nation on earth, China, became Communist and the Soviets successfully tested an atomic weapon.

George Kennan had outlined the strategy known as containment in his "long telegram" just after World War II. According to historian John Gaddis, the purpose of containment was "to prevent the Soviet Union from using the power and position it won



as a result of that conflict [World War II] to reshape the postwar international order.”<sup>82</sup>

Kennan’s strategy of containment consisted of four primary points:

- (1) No further efforts would be made to conceal disagreements with the Russians; rather, these would be aired openly, frankly, but in a non-provocative manner.
- (2) There would be no more concessions to the Soviet Union: The United States would, in effect, “draw the line,” defending all future targets of Soviet expansion, but without any attempt to “liberate” areas already under Moscow’s control.
- (3) To facilitate this goal, the United States military strength would be reconstituted and requests from allies for economic and military aid would be favorably considered.
- (4) Negotiations with the Soviet Union would continue, but only for the purpose of registering Moscow’s acceptance of American positions or of publicizing Soviet intransigence in order to win allies abroad and support at home.<sup>83</sup>

Kennan argued for an asymmetrical defensive strategy based in strongpoint defense. Kennan’s strategy consisted of defending the parts of the world from Communism that were easily defensible. If the United States was successful in defending these points, it would deter any military encroachment by the Soviet Union, but also cease Communism from spreading. Communism would cease to spread because the successful defense of strategic points would demonstrate American commitment to its interests without overextending itself economically and militarily, making western capitalism appear efficient and superior.

After the 1949 Soviet nuclear tests and the fall of China to Communism, Kennan’s strong point strategy was squelched by a turn to a more symmetrical approach to containment reflected in National Security Council Memorandum, Number 68 (NSC-68). NSC-68 was a 66-page document drafted by the Department of State and the Department of Defense and presented to President Harry Truman in April of 1950 that

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<sup>82</sup> Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 4.

<sup>83</sup> Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 21.

detailed a new plan for national security. NSC-68 still sought to subdue the spread of communist ideology, but unlike Kennan's asymmetrical strategy, NSC-68 advocated meeting the communist threat wherever it appeared and advocated a massive investment in American military might. The United States military would project an image of strength by utilizing the United States' actual power to protect non-communist countries from Communism. The overall effect was to simplify Cold War messaging about the United States' enemy and the country's commitment to fighting it. Though not created by a Republican administration, the symmetrical approach to containment served as a reflection of and outlet for the Republican argument that to be soft on Communism was tantamount to treason.<sup>84</sup>

NSC-68's symmetrical nature meant that investment in military strength was potentially limitless, even during times of peace. It was both an investment in actual power, as well as an investment in perceived power and became a cornerstone of Eisenhower's presidency. It also resulted in a nuclear arms race between the Soviets and Americans. By the end of the Eisenhower administration, it had become clear that mutually assured destruction was the most likely outcome in the event of nuclear war. Perceived power thus became more important than actual power as conditions changed.

For Eisenhower, economic prowess was also a realistic demonstration of national might. The United States helped prevent the spread of Communism throughout Europe with the Marshall Plan in the early Cold War, avoided a return to the Depression after World War II, and mounted a general return to prosperity in the 1950s. This served as real evidence of American economic strength. But while overall GNP comparisons were

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<sup>84</sup> Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 87-124.

clear evidence of capitalist strength, the balance of Republican and Democratic economic policy contributions to prosperity and stability was as much a matter of perception as fact.<sup>85</sup>

Compared to the Soviet Union, the United States was not perceived as undeniably more powerful in all areas and even appeared weaker in some areas during the Cold War. Immediately after World War II, the United States was undeniably the most powerful nation on the planet because of its undamaged infrastructure and monopoly on nuclear weapons. However, in 1949 the Soviet Union acquired nuclear weapons and China was overtaken by communists, which fractured the idea of American superiority. Later, the Soviet launching of Sputnik in 1957 even suggested that the U.S. was behind the Soviets in the space race and missile delivery technology. The rise of Communism in several Third World countries also testified to American weaknesses. Each country that was lost to Communism “threatened America’s self-esteem.” Moreover, as historian H.W. Brands argued, Americans became insecure despite their relative prosperity and strength.<sup>86</sup> Americans embraced the self-conscious fear that their countrymen were subject to Communist infiltration and persuasion. As these fears increased, Cold War Republicans began lumping all brands of Socialism and Communism together as a monolithic threat and denounced any left of center policies as a slippery slope to radical Marxism.

After World War II, historians such as Arthur Schlesinger Jr., argued that Americans gravitated around a vital political center in order to fight the Great Depression, World War II and the Cold War.<sup>87</sup> Republicans and Democrats shared

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<sup>85</sup> “A Companion of Soviet and US Gross National Products 1960-83,” Central Intelligence Agency, last accessed September 23, 2020, [https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/DOC\\_0000498181.pdf](https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/DOC_0000498181.pdf).

<sup>86</sup> H.W. Brands, *The Devil We Knew*, 56.

<sup>87</sup> Arthur Schlesinger Jr., *The Vital Center: The Politics of Freedom* (New York: The Riverside Press, 1949) vii-10.

significant similarities that allowed for compromise, especially concerning national security issues. In *The Age of McCarthyism*, Ellen Schrecker, however, demonstrates that the Cold War in time contributed to an increasingly intransigent and uncompromising political orthodoxy on the right that increasingly deteriorated the center. These changes, she argued, largely took place between 1946, when Winston Churchill gave his famous Iron Curtain speech, and in 1950 when Senator Joseph McCarthy indicated he had a list of over 200 spies during a speech at the Ohio County Women's Republican Club in Wheeling West Virginia. While a defining transition for Republicans, it affected Democrats and the larger body politic as well. In 1947, President Truman instated the Loyalty-Security program to expel communists from the United States government even though he was elected with Franklin Roosevelt, who ran on left leaning social programs like the New Deal and Social Security. That same year, the House of Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) investigated Hollywood for harboring communists, and blacklists targeted anyone who advocated for left of center social programs that were popular in the United States a decade earlier. By 1949, communists were being expelled from the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO). Republican Senator Joe McCarthy's campaign accusing people of treason for any left leaning connections ultimately simplified the Republican message by demonizing the left communist leaning and exemplified a new tone for the party.<sup>88</sup>

McCarthy's speech in Wheeling was filled with hyperbolic rhetoric that framed the United States and the Soviet Union as good and evil. McCarthy stated, "That this is the time for the showdown between the democratic Christian world and the communistic

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<sup>88</sup> Ellen Schrecker, *The Age of McCarthyism* (Boston: Bedford / St. Martin's, 2002), 221.; Schrecker, *The Age of McCarthyism*, 229.

atheistic world? Unless we face this fact, we shall pay the price that must be paid by those who wait too long.”<sup>89</sup> McCarthy received national attention for his speeches even though it was clear his accusations were grossly unsupported with evidence. The good and evil narrative, however, remained powerful in the Republican Party. Many conservatives were emboldened by McCarthy’s strategy and began to exude nativism and nationalism by advocating for a more aggressive crack down on Communism.

The American Communist Party’s membership peaked at the end of the 1930s after the Great Depression and the rise of fascism in Europe. Its numbers in the United States went from 7,500 at the beginning of the 1930s to 55,000 at the end. Even this rise in membership was an incredibly small and insignificant number out of the 131 million American citizens in 1939. Those numbers only decreased throughout the 1940s as WWII raged and the Cold War began. Nevertheless, fear held a tight grip on Americans’ minds, and they felt a natural desire to fight back against the perceived threat. McCarthy’s and other anticommunist’s charges caused people to be jailed, alienated from their communities, harassed, and lose their jobs with little evidence of their actual ability to pose a danger to their neighbors. This extreme anti-Communism resulted in two significant precedents: Americans willingly subdued their rights to speech and association out of fear, and they did so with encouragement from politicians. Under these conditions, the Republican Party’s nativist tendencies were reinvigorated after WWII just as they had after WWI, but the enemy was even more ominous and insidious. The title of ‘American’ thus became exclusive to those who agreed with the party’s definition.<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> Joseph McCarthy, “Enemies from Within,” February 9, 1950, Wheeling, WV, [https://liberalarts.utexas.edu/coretexts/\\_files/resources/texts/1950%20McCarthy%20Enemies.pdf](https://liberalarts.utexas.edu/coretexts/_files/resources/texts/1950%20McCarthy%20Enemies.pdf).

<sup>90</sup> Leverage Beales, “STATISTICAL ABSTRACT OF THE UNITED STATES 1940,” ed. Kathleen H. Dugan (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1941), 2.; Schrecker, *The Age of McCarthyism*, 7.

Historian Ellen Schrecker and others concluded that McCarthyism generally shifted United States politics to the right. As a result, conservative denunciation of all leftist policies as aiding the communists gained political purchase. Up to ten thousand people lost their jobs as a result of McCarthyite accusations of association with Communism. Louis Hartz argued that Americans' fear motivated them into doing something uncharacteristic of Americans: restricting their own first amendment rights. Freedoms of speech and association were curbed in the name of security, order and tradition. In 1950, Pat McCarran, a United States Democratic Senator from Nevada, lobbied for the Internal Security Act. The Internal Security Act placed severe restricts on the political activities of communists in the United States. Truman vetoed the bill, but Congress overrode the veto. In 1951, the Supreme Court ruled in *Dennis v. United States* that the leader of the American Communist Party, Eugene Dennis, did not have First Amendment rights if he intended to plot to overthrow the government. What was considered as 'overthrowing' the government was anything that could be lumped in with the Soviets. By the end of the 1950s, it became impossible to stray outside the socially prescribed Republican line of thinking both inside and outside of the party without fear of being labeled a communist.<sup>91</sup>

The Republicans of the new shift to the right continued to idolize rugged individualism while defining a general ethos of patriotic Americanism as a bulwark against Communism.<sup>92</sup> This generally included support for the traditional nuclear family,

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<sup>91</sup>Schrecker, *The Age of McCarthyism*, 104.; Louis Hartz, *The Liberal Tradition in America: The Classic on the Causes and Effects of Liberal Thought in the U.S.* (New York, New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company, 1983), 11.; Alonzo Hamby, "Harry S. Truman: Domestic Affairs," Millercenter, University of Virginia, September 22, 2020. <https://millercenter.org/president/truman/domestic-affairs.>; *Dennis, et al. v. United States*, 341 U.S. 494, 336 (1950).

<sup>92</sup> Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 2008) 3-15.

Protestant Christianity, America first policies, and a rejection of changing social norms involving race, gender, and associated issues like abortion rights. In contrast to earlier Republicans, the members of the new right were aggressive internationalists on foreign policy and were increasingly suspicious of any manifestations of social change, including the civil rights movement. They also continued to call for smaller government but, they were not necessarily advocates of laissez-faire across the board. They accepted a degree of social security and contributed significantly to growing military budgets. And they defended their policies as maintaining law and order in the face of both internal and external threat.

The growing influence of religion over the Republican Party coincided with the new shift to the right. In the 1920s, evangelicals claimed Darwinian evolution threatened Christianity and should not be taught in public schools. The argument was less partisan than regional prior to the 1950s. Former United States Secretary of State and three-time Democratic presidential candidate William Jennings Bryan stated, “all the ills from which America suffers can be traced back to the teaching of evolution. It would be better to destroy every other book ever written, and save just the first three verses of Genesis.” In the famous Scopes Trial where Bryan made his argument, high school teacher John T. Scopes was accused of violating Tennessee’s Butler Act, which made teaching human evolution unlawful in state funded schools. The defense argued that the law was unconstitutional because it ran counter to Tennessee’s constitutional mandate to “cherish literature and science” and the U.S. constitutional guarantees of religious and intellectual freedom. Scopes was nevertheless found guilty. Despite the Evangelical victory in court, their movement gained little traction outside of the rural South. The movement resurged,

however, with the United States shift to the right after the Cold War and as Republican conservatives renewed their alliance with Southerners.<sup>93</sup>

In the 1950s, Republicans increasingly argued that the party was exclusively able to insure the United States' moral purity as well as the actual and perceived power against threats, foreign and domestic. The party presented its message with the simplicity of a good versus evil narrative that was as symmetrical as containment policy under NSC-68.<sup>94</sup> The 1952 Republican Party platform alluded to the new narrative: "We shall again make liberty into a beacon light of hope that will penetrate the dark places."<sup>95</sup> But in the 1956 platform, the section titled "Declaration of Faith" served as an opening for evangelical Republican policies. The section began with a reference to the Christian God and ends by quoting Eisenhower: "Under God, we espouse the cause of freedom and justice and peace for all peoples. Embracing these guides to positive, constructive action, and in their rich spirit, we ask the support of the American people for the election of a Republican Congress and the re-election of the Nation's devoted and dedicated leader."<sup>96</sup> The party strongly implied that a vote for Eisenhower and the Republicans was a vote for God and country.

Eisenhower increasingly suggested that Americans' faith was the key distinction between the United States and the Soviet Union. Individual human rights were divine, and the Soviets infringed upon these rights as atheists and autocrats. Eisenhower posited

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<sup>93</sup> Martin, *With God on Our Side*, 13-15.

<sup>94</sup> John Gaddis, *We Now Know* (New York, New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 286.

<sup>95</sup> Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, "Republican Party Platforms, Republican Party Platform of 1952," <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/republican-party-platform-1952>.

<sup>96</sup> Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, "Republican Party Platforms, Republican Party Platform of 1956," The American Presidency Project, University of California, September 22, 2020, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/republican-party-platform-1956>.



that Americans must be dedicated to individual human rights, including religion, as a bulwark against Communism.<sup>97</sup>

Over the next decade, evangelicals became a more and more important Republican constituency. Evangelicals spearheaded GOP policies involving public schools, from sex education to the teaching of evolution. Historian Matthew Sutton asserted that the student revolts, the second wave of feminism, the civil and gay rights movements, the Watergate scandal, and the loss of American prestige after Vietnam in the 1960s and 1970s pushed evangelicals to get involved with politics out of fear that their way of life was under siege. In doing so, they scoured the nation looking for politicians to align with before ultimately investing in Republican President Ronald Reagan in 1980. Jerry Falwell, along with other religious leaders like Billy Graham in the Reagan years organized what they considered the moral majority. The enemies of evangelicals became the enemies of the Republican Party.

Cold War fear simplified Republican ideology into a good versus evil or ‘us’ versus ‘them’ mentality in the 1950s and 1960s. By the 1970s, Republicans’ desire to protect Americans’ individual liberties and equal opportunity out of an appreciation for rugged individualism had transformed into hoarding those rights for orthodox loyalists including anti-communists and religious evangelicals.

## **IX. Nixon’s Crusade**

Richard Nixon was a central figure in the Republican Party’s turn to the right in the 1950s and 1960s. Nixon’s approach demonstrated the increased focus on the perception of power to the individual politician, which increasingly characterized the

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<sup>97</sup> William I. Hitchcock, “How Dwight Eisenhower Found God in the White House” last accessed November 19, 2018, <https://www.history.com/news/eisenhower-billy-graham-religion-in-god-we-trust>.

whole party in the 1950s. In Nixon's first campaign in 1946 for the House of Representatives, he campaigned against Jerry Voorhis. Voorhis, who was elected in 1936 in a Democratic wave that swept the nation after FDR's successful first term, would prove an exceptionally difficult incumbent to beat. Nixon's principle strategy was to charge Voorhis with communist sympathy. Nixon, who served in the Navy, portrayed himself as a war veteran, a rugged individualist, and as a patriot in contrast to Voorhis who he claimed was under the influence of the Soviet Union. In a resounding upset, Nixon won the election with 65,586 votes to Voorhis's 49,994.<sup>98</sup> In 1946, Nixon helped to pioneer a Republican strategy that revolved around the simplified image of the good patriotic American against the evil communist-sympathizing enemy. Nixon continued this strategy in office as a member of House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC). In 1948, Nixon and the other members of HUAC were assigned to investigate the case of Alger Hiss. The committee charged Hiss, who was the assistant to the Assistant Secretary of State and served as one of President Roosevelt's advisers at the Yalta Conference, with being a Soviet spy. Hiss adamantly denied the charges in front of HUAC. However, Nixon was not convinced of his innocence and pressed onwards.<sup>99</sup>

The Hiss Trial became national news as Nixon and HUAC continued their investigation. The press, the American public, and Truman condemned the investigation as a partisan attack on a former Democratic administration official. However, Hiss perjured himself, making misstatements about his relationship with government witness Whitaker Chambers. Though short of finding evidence that proved that Hiss was a spy at the time, the perjury was damning and added to the Republican narrative that Democrats

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<sup>98</sup> Richard Nixon, *The Memoirs of Richard Nixon* (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1978), 40.

<sup>99</sup> Nixon, *The Memoirs of Richard Nixon*, 42.

were soft on Communism. Nixon was essentially a forerunner of the even more extreme anti-communist Senator Joseph McCarthy.

In 1948, the Republican Party platform had not fully embraced the anti-communist message. It favored maintaining the military power of the United States and advocated, “for strengthening the United Nations and primary recognition for America’s self-interest.”<sup>100</sup> The party had not at that point fully accepted the new strategy of the anti-communist right and respectfully lost. However, by 1952, Nixon’s campaign strategy and the anti-communist sentiment became increasingly central to the Republican strategy.

## **X. Eisenhower and Nixon**

Dwight Eisenhower chose Richard Nixon as his vice-presidential running mate in 1952 largely because of Nixon’s anti-communist credentials. Eisenhower personally abhorred the extreme red-baiting of McCarthy but understood the growing relevance of the anti-communist base to the party. Eisenhower and Nixon campaigned on a moderate platform that distanced itself from 1920s Republicanism in order to appeal to the American political center, yet, at the same time, Nixon’s presence on the ticket tacitly condoned the anti-communist crusade.<sup>101</sup> The combination achieved the first Republican presidential victory in twenty years. The compromise came at a cost, however, within the party ranks. Members of the emerging right charged Eisenhower with me-tooism. Conservatives launched an effort to control the heart of the party, doubling down on an

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<sup>100</sup> Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, “Republican Party Platforms, Republican Party Platform of 1948,” The American Presidency Project, University of California, September 22, 2020, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/republican-party-platform-1948>.

<sup>101</sup> Broadwater, Jeff. *Eisenhower and the Anti-Communist Crusade*. North Carolina: The University of North Carolina Press, 1992.

unobtrusive federal government, lower taxes, and confrontation with the Soviet Union and domestic Communism.

Nixon's main job in the campaign and after was to protect Eisenhower's right flank and attack Republican opponents for being soft on Communism. This allowed Eisenhower to remain the stately, wise figurehead while his running mate took the lead in the good vs. evil narrative. Partly as a result, Eisenhower enjoyed an average approval rating of 69.6% in his first term and 60.5% in his second term.<sup>102</sup>

In the 1952 Republican platform, Republicans embraced the good versus evil anti-communist narrative much more than they had four years earlier. They denounced the strategy of containment as lagging, and instead stated,

On the prudent assumption that Communist Russia may not accommodate our own disgracefully-lagging program for preparedness, we should develop with utmost speed a force-in-being, as distinguished from paper plans, of such power as to deter sudden attack or promptly and decisively defeat it. This defense against sudden attack requires the quickest possible development of appropriate and completely-adequate air power and the simultaneous readiness of coordinated air, land, and sea forces, with all necessary installations, bases, supplies and munitions, including atomic energy weapons in abundance.<sup>103</sup>

The party effectively went from advocating for the maintenance of military power in 1948 to full on expansion in 1952.

Republicans criticism of "Communist Russia" and the "disgracefully-lagging program for preparedness" of the Democrats in the same sentence inferred a connection that was becoming all too common in Republican rhetoric. The Republican Party began framing the Democrats as the "others" almost as much as the communists. This trend

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<sup>102</sup> "Presidential Approval Ratings –Gallup Historical Statistics and Trends," Gallup, April 13, 2020, <https://news.gallup.com/poll/116677/presidential-approval-ratings-gallup-historical-statistics-trends.aspx>

<sup>103</sup> Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, "Republican Party Platforms, Republican Party Platform of 1952," <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/republican-party-platform-1952>.

only intensified after the conservative takeover of the party in the 1960s. For the Republican Party to win elections on a national level, it increasingly sought to appear powerful to its constituents in facing opposition at home and abroad.

Eisenhower's brandishing of nuclear weapons and Nixon's hardline anti-communism helped create a strategic template for future Republicans to use. They understood, as had McCarthy, that they could garner votes by spreading the fear that enemies of the state were threatening rugged individualism and the traditional American way of life. For some, like McCarthy, playing on this fear was to a large degree a cynical political tactic, but for many Republicans the threat was very real. Eisenhower advisor General James Doolittle, the hero of the first air raid over Tokyo, exemplified the latter in the Doolittle Report. Doolittle concluded that "we are facing an implacable enemy whose avowed objective is world domination by whatever means and at whatever cost."<sup>104</sup>

Doolittle's recommendation stated,

There are no rules in such a game. Hitherto acceptable norms of human conduct do not apply. If the United States is to survive, long-standing American concepts of 'fair play' must be reconsidered. We must develop effective espionage and counter-espionage services and must learn to subvert, sabotage and destroy our enemies by more clever, more sophisticated, and more effective methods than those used against us. It may become necessary that the American people be made acquainted with, understand and support this fundamentally repugnant philosophy.<sup>105</sup>

Eisenhower agreed with Doolittle in that the United States needed an adaptive strategy for the extenuating circumstances that could arise. However, he disagreed with the notion that the strategy be revealed to the public or used for political gain. This differed somewhat from Kennan's strategy for containment, which stated "No further

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<sup>104</sup> Brands, *The Devil We Knew*, 61.

<sup>105</sup> Brands, *The Devil We Knew*, 61.

efforts would be made to conceal disagreements with the Russians; rather, these would be aired openly, frankly, but in a nonprovocative manner.”<sup>106</sup> Eisenhower gave the CIA unrestrained permission to subvert the efforts of enemies of the United States, which resulted in the overthrow of the Iranian government in 1953 and Guatemalan government in 1954. Eisenhower and others justified these measures by labeling the leaders of these countries as communist allies and threats to the United States. In so doing, they set a dangerous precedent of the United States justifying extreme actions based on anti-communist fears.

Republicans hardened its line in 1956. That year the Republican platform stated, “We shall maintain our powerful military strength as a deterrent to aggression and as a guardian of the peace. We shall maintain it ready, balanced and technologically advanced for these objectives only.” The platform further declared, “We have the strongest striking force in the world -in the air-on the sea-and a magnificent supporting land force in our Army and Marine Corps.”<sup>107</sup> It went on to list technology that must be maintained and developed for the United States to remain preeminently powerful. It also, for the first time in a Republican platform, referred to the Soviet Communist Party’s authority as “evil power.”<sup>108</sup>

Nixon’s loss in the 1960 presidential election was a blow for Republicans who believed in the formula of balancing hardline anti-Communism with consensus vital center economic and social policies. Nixon advertised a tough on Communism approach with foreign relations using the Kitchen Debate between he and Soviet Union leader

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<sup>106</sup> Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 21.

<sup>107</sup> Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, “Republican Party Platforms, Republican Party Platform of 1956,” <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/republican-party-platform-1956>.

<sup>108</sup> Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, “Republican Party Platforms, Republican Party Platform of 1956,” <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/republican-party-platform-1956>.

Nikita Khrushchev as a rallying point. He made a commitment to individual rights, integration, and tax reform, but mostly he signaled a continuation of Eisenhower's policies.<sup>109</sup> This seemed to many Republicans to be a safe way to win the election. However, when it did not result in a victory, conservatives and the new right proposed a more aggressive strategy.

Conservatives had gained traction during the Eisenhower years by advocating for a more aggressive foreign policy and a reduction of taxes. Coming from the Eisenhower administration, Nixon also had to answer for an economy that was slowing, a communist revolution in Cuba, and several events from Sputnik to the U2 incident which made the United States look like it was behind the Soviets. Nixon's opponent, John Kennedy utilized these issues to claim that Republican complacency had let the United States fall behind the Soviet Union militarily and economically, despite its increasingly hard line. Kennedy's arguments made Republicans look like they made the United States weaker, exactly opposite of what the base had invested in, and Nixon lost. In Eisenhower's farewell address he warned of a military industrial complex where businesses with government contracts were powerful enough to lobby for political change that positively impacted that business. However, in the following years, conservatives ignored Eisenhower's warning, along with his moderation.

## **XI. Goldwater and the Turning Point**

In the 1960s conservatives gained control of the Republican Party's machinery. Eisenhower's departure from politics meant that the moderates had no leader. Nixon took

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<sup>109</sup> Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, "Republican Party Platforms, Republican Party Platform of 1960," The American Presidency Project, University of California, September 22, 2020, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/republican-party-platform-1960>.

a break from politics and temporarily quit after a failed run for California governor in 1962. Nelson Rockefeller, the 49<sup>th</sup> governor of New York, attempted to take up the mantle, but he paled in comparison to Eisenhower and Nixon because he lacked a military career. This led United States Senator Barry Goldwater from Arizona to lead the conservatives over the moderates in 1964. Nixon's loss in 1960 insured that Republicans would focus more on building the perception of their strength and orthodoxy in the 1960s.

Goldwater famously rejected a compromise with moderate Republicans and Democrats in 1964. In his presidential nomination speech, Goldwater stated, "I would remind you that extremism in the defense of liberty is no vice."<sup>110</sup> Goldwater advocated for the use of nuclear arms in Vietnam and Cuba but criticized the deployment of active United States ground forces in Vietnam because he believed the United States should take care of these matters aggressively and independently. Goldwater lost the election in a landslide, but his campaign marked a turning toward uncompromising rhetoric on foreign policy and social issues for the Republican Party.

Goldwater and the rise of conservatives drastically changed how the Republican Party presented its topics in platforms. In the 1960 election, the headings of the Republican Party platform used neutral titles like "National Defense," "Human Needs," "Housing," and "Agriculture," but the 1964 platform used loaded language to demonize Democrats. It included titles like "Failures of Foreign Policy," "Losing a Critical Lead," "Inability to Create Jobs," "Failing the Poor," and "Betrayal of the Farmer." In the "To

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<sup>110</sup> Barry Goldwater, "Address Accepting the Presidential Nomination at the Republican National Convention in San Francisco," The American Presidency Project, University of California, April 13, 2020. <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/address-accepting-the-presidential-nomination-the-republican-national-convention-san>.



Stay Free” section, it claimed, “Much of today's moral decline and drift—much of the prevailing preoccupation with physical and material comforts of life—much of today's crass political appeals to the appetites of the citizenry—can be traced to a leadership grown demagogic and materialistic through indifference to national ideals rounded in devoutly held religious faith.”<sup>111</sup>

The extent that the 1964 Republicans went to negatively characterize their opponents was unprecedented when compared with Republicans a dozen years earlier. The 1952 Republican Party was critical towards an incumbent Democrat in the White House, but it lacked the aggressive tone of the 1964 platform. For example, the 1952 platform’s headings included neutral titles similar to the 1960 platform: “Foreign Policy,” “Agriculture,” “Public Works and Water Safety,” and “Health,” and the platform criticizes Democrats by how they have governed: “They claim prosperity but the appearance of economic health is created by war expenditures, waste and extravagance, planned emergencies, and war crises. They have debauched our money by cutting in half the purchasing power of our dollar.” By 1964, though, the Republicans’ message had become more simplified and propagated a good versus evil narrative. When referring to the Johnson administration, the 1964 Republican Party platform stated, “It has failed to originate a single new major strategic weapons system after inheriting from a Republican Administration the most powerful military force of all time. It has concealed a lack of qualitative advance for the 1970's by speaking of a quantitative strength which by then will be obsolete. It has not demonstrated the foresight necessary to prepare a strategic

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<sup>111</sup> Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, “Republican Party Platforms, Republican Party Platform of 1964,” The American Presidency Project, University of California, September 22, 2020, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/republican-party-platform-1964>.

strength which in future years will deter war.”<sup>112</sup> Republicans denounced the Johnson administration’s national defense as if it were just as much a threat as the Soviet Union. At the time, Americans saw the Soviet Union as such an overt evil force that equating opposing political parties to them was an easy way to sway voters in favor of their party. It simply framed Americans, and specifically Republicans as good, and the Soviet Union and Democrats as evil. The Party platform stated, “we also pledge prudent, responsible management of the government's fiscal affairs to protect the individual against the evils of spendthrift government.” The threat Republicans used to propagate this mentality was slowly moving from an external, militaristic threat against the American way of life to an internal, political threat against the American way of life.

In 1964, Republicans targeted what they saw as domestic failures with hyperbolic rhetoric. They charged that the Johnson administration had “strangled the Republican rural development program with red tape and neglected its most essential ingredient, local initiative.”<sup>113</sup> They also claimed that Democrats were cruel towards the needy by claiming that federal taxes caused inflation, which they deemed the cruelest tax of all.<sup>114</sup> The new strategy for the Republican Party and conservatives involved not only building up their own perceived power as they had in previous years but also breaking down their opponents’ perceived power.

The Republican Party’s stance on social issues also began to align more with conservative, Southern Democrats in 1964. In 1958, after having just lost an election for

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<sup>112</sup> Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, “Republican Party Platforms, Republican Party Platform of 1964,” <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/republican-party-platform-1964>.

<sup>113</sup> Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, “Republican Party Platforms, Republican Party Platform of 1964,” <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/republican-party-platform-1964>.

<sup>114</sup> Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, “Republican Party Platforms, Republican Party Platform of 1964,” <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/republican-party-platform-1964>.

governor of Alabama, George Wallace (D) claimed, “no other son-of-a-bitch will ever out-nigger me again.”<sup>115</sup> Wallace was referring to his challenger, John Malcolm Patterson, who ran with the support of the Ku Klux Klan and campaigned on a platform that overtly opposed civil rights for African Americans. Wallace, who was endorsed by the NAACP, lost by just over 30,000 votes. In 1962, Wallace campaigned on a counterrevolutionary message opposed to social change and designed to appeal to white middle class Americans. This included an opposition to civil rights, abortion, and obscenity in literature and films. All of these, Wallace claimed, were a threat to Americans’ way of life.

Wallace understood the power of perception when he campaigned for President in 1964. Wallace campaigned against civil rights, but never used racial slurs in public. Instead, he insisted that states’ rights were being violated by an overreaching federal government. In June of 1963 Wallace blocked the entrance of two African American students into the University of Alabama in what is known as Wallace’s “Stand in the School House Door.” The stunt was only symbolic as the federal government nationalized the Alabama National Guard and removed the barrier to black students the same day. However, Wallace’s performance was broadcast on national television, and it demonstrated to many the federal government’s heavy hand.

Wallace also used the United States’ fear of Communism to discredit the civil rights movement. In a speech titled “The Civil Rights Movement: Fraud, Sham, and Hoax,” Wallace described communists’ goals to overthrow the United States government. He then argued that the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was unconstitutional because it

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<sup>115</sup> Carter, *From George Wallace to Newt Gingrich*, 2.

infringed on Americans' First Amendment rights and benefited communists' goals. Wallace also plainly stated, "There are Communist influences in the integration movement" and cited a picture of Martin Luther King Jr. and "a group of Communist and Communist leaders as evidence."<sup>116</sup> However, the people in the picture were decidedly not communist. One of the people in the picture, Fred Shuttlesworth, stated, "Generally, the House committees are governed by southerners who will label any organization subversive or communistic that seeks to further the American aims of integration, justice, and fair play. To a segregationist, integration means communism." Additionally, the nature of the protests that surrounded the Civil Rights movement led many, including FBI director J. Edgar Hoover, to believe that communists would try to infiltrate it and radicalize it.<sup>117</sup>

Beginning in the 1960s, religious conservatives from both parties had become increasingly concerned with politics. The Supreme Court in *Engel v. Vitale* (1962) and *Abington School District v. Schempp* (1963) decided that school sponsored bible readings and faculty officially facilitating or encouraging school prayer was unconstitutional. Schools teaching evolution, sex education, and adopting textbooks that many considered demeaning to traditional values also upset religious conservatives. Their response was to open private schools to avoid government encroachment altogether.

Goldwater was one of only six Republicans to vote against the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Like Wallace, Goldwater believed that it was an overreach by the federal government to dictate with whom businesses decided to associate and serve. However, the bill had overwhelming bipartisan support and was just as much a momentous piece of

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<sup>116</sup> Brands, *The Devil We Knew*, 111.

<sup>117</sup> Brands, *The Devil We Knew*, 112. See also Jeff Woods, *Black Struggle Red Scare* (Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 2004).

legislature for Republicans as it was for Democrats. The bill was introduced by Missouri Republican Representative Thomas Curtis in October 1962 and in the House by Republican Judiciary Committee members. Moderate Republicans from the Northeast like John Lindsay, Ogden Reid, and Nelson Rockefeller supported the bill. Overall, 80% of Republican congressmen and 60% of Democratic congressmen supported the bill.<sup>118</sup> Legislation like this was exemplary of traditional Republicans' stance on social issues. But by voting against it less than six months before the election, Goldwater drew a line that undermined party unity on the issue. The topic of civil rights was thus nearly absent in the 1964 Republican Party platform.

Four years earlier, the GOP platform had an entire section with six subsections dedicated to the advancement of civil rights. The 1964 platform only used the phrase 'civil rights' three times and only stated it would uphold the 1964 Civil Rights Act. This combined with charges that the Kennedy/Johnson administration had mishandled social security and other social welfare programs attracted Southern Democrat voters who had been dissatisfied with the party since the 1930s. Goldwater's identification with conservative, Southern Democrats ultimately led to electoral victories in Mississippi, Georgia, Alabama, Louisiana, and South Carolina. These five states and Goldwater's home state of Arizona were the only states to favor the Republican over Johnson. Goldwater had succeeded in capturing the support of southern conservatives, but at the cost of alienating centrists.

The 1964 election was, despite the massive electoral loss, a turning point for the Republican Party. The lack of a clear successor to Eisenhower had caused a power

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<sup>118</sup> Kabaservice, *Rule and Ruin*, 98-100.

vacuum to open in the party which caused a split in messaging between conservatives and moderates. After the election, Democrats outnumbered Republicans 68 to 32 in the Senate and 295 to 140 in the House. However, the majority of remaining Republicans were staunch conservatives.<sup>119</sup> They would lead future elections regarding the party's chosen policy and tactics. Their focus changed from anti-Communism domestic dissent. The 1968 election saw a continuation of the tone adopted in 1964, but the turmoil of that year made the Republican's rhetoric timely and much more effective in producing votes.

## **XII. Nixon's Southern Strategy**

Richard Nixon solidly converted disenchanted conservative Southern Democrats into Republicans in the 1968 and 1972 presidential elections by demonizing common enemies: the federal government, liberals, and cultural dissidents. The 1968 election featured Hubert Humphrey (D), Richard Nixon (R), and George Wallace (I). Wallace represented the conservative Southern Democrats who had become increasingly frustrated with the Democratic Party since the New Deal in the 1930s, and especially since the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Voting Rights Act of 1965. However, the Republican Party's moderate past and lagging party commitments staved off Southern Democrats' jump to the Republican Party. Meanwhile, centrist Republicans were still significant in the party ranks despite being increasingly alienated by Republican conservatives. Nixon's strategy was to tread the line by appealing to a conservative base that crossed over with Wallace's Southern base while still retaining the Party centrists. To do this, the Nixon campaign mastered the narrative of the new right.

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<sup>119</sup> Kabaservice, *Rule and Ruin*, 123.

Nixon's 1968 chief speechwriter Raymond Price claimed that a voter's decision in an election was a "gut reaction, unarticulated, non-analytical, a product of the particular chemistry between the voter and the *image* of the candidate." It is "not what's *there* that counts, its what's projected," and this projection "depends more on the medium and its use than it does on the candidate himself."<sup>120</sup> The Nixon campaign consulted Roger Ailes, an executive producer of *The Mike Douglas Show*, to assist with Nixon's television persona. Ailes associated Nixon's image on television with a boy who loved getting briefcases on Christmas when everyone else got footballs. He was a serious man with serious goals.<sup>121</sup>

In 1969, Harry Dent, the manager of Nixon's southern branch, requested that Nixon "develop a racial policy conservative enough to entice the South from Wallace, but not so radical as to repel the "nominally Democrat white middleclass vote in the swing states of California, Ohio, Illinois, Pennsylvania and New Jersey.""<sup>122</sup> Dent based his plan off of Keven Phillips's theory that used emotional issues of race and culture to achieve a "positive polarization" of American politics. The idea was that Republicans would end up with the majority of voters after their opponents were divided into warring factions.<sup>123</sup> Just the threat of Wallace endangering Nixon's aspiration for president in 1968 caused him to shift his stance on social issues permanently to incorporate a southern voting base.

The 1968 campaign featured a law and order narrative that charged the Democrats with allowing the United States to fall into chaos at home and abroad. Republicans

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<sup>120</sup> Joe McGinniss, *The Selling of the President* (New York: Trident Press, 1969), 38-39.

<sup>121</sup> Carter, *From George Wallace to Newt Gingrich*, 26.

<sup>122</sup> Carter, *From George Wallace to Newt Gingrich*, 44.

<sup>123</sup> Carter, *From George Wallace to Newt Gingrich*, 43-44.

promised to return the country to the prosperity of the 1950s and to traditional values.

The 1968 Republican Party platform focused on “Crisis of the Cities,” “Crime,” and “The Poor.” They stated that,

Lawlessness is crumbling the foundations of American society.

Republicans believe that respect for the law is the cornerstone of a free and well-ordered society. We pledge vigorous and even-handed administration of justice and enforcement of the law. We must re-establish the principle that men are accountable for what they do, that criminals are responsible for their crimes, that while the youth's environment may help to explain the man's crime, it does not excuse that crime.<sup>124</sup>

This call for law and order denounced Democratic support and encouragement of civil rights and anti-war protests and charged the party with radical communist and integrationist collusion. Republicans criticized Johnson’s Great Society policies as expensive and tyrannical federal overreach. Republicans denounced the Vietnam War by quoting Johnson’s 1964 campaign pledge that “We are not about to send American boys 9-10,000 miles away from home to do what Asian boys ought to be doing for themselves.”<sup>125</sup> In return, Republicans pledged to win the war in Vietnam, which they claimed was being mishandled.

Nixon and the Republican Party’s law and order campaign effectively broadened the good versus evil narrative to encompass more Americans. They increasingly included African American protesters as responsible for the United States’ turmoil. Republicans claimed that the United States had fallen into chaos throughout the 1960s because of the Democrats’ and Johnson’s alliance with a radical counterculture. They cited crime waves

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<sup>124</sup> Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, “Republican Party Platforms, Republican Party Platform of 1968,” The American Presidency Project, University of California, September 22, 2020, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/republican-party-platform-1968>.

<sup>125</sup> Kent Germany, “Lyndon B. Johnson: Foreign Affairs,” Millercenter, University of Virginia, September 22, 2020. <https://millercenter.org/president/lbjohnson/foreign-affairs>.



and violent protests across the nation to support this claim. Republicans harkened back to the 1950s as a time of relative peace and prosperity, preferring it the Democrat's tumultuous 1960s full of racial and cultural change. They offered little advancement of civil rights and, instead, promised to uphold the status quo by strengthening law enforcement. Indeed, the Republican Party platform of 1968 failed to mention black civil rights once when just eight years earlier it was a major topic that had six subsections dedicated to it.

Republicans referred to crime and crisis of the cities as disease. The 1968 platform stated, "Distrust and fear plague us all," and "millions of people are suffering cruelly from expanding metropolitan blight..."<sup>126</sup> To spread this narrative, the Nixon campaign produced an ad that claimed crime was nine times higher than what it was prior to the Johnson administration and equated a vote for Nixon was a vote for the viewer's life.<sup>127</sup> Inner city African American communities with their lawless Democratic allies, they implied, had taken over, spread havoc in the ghettos, and undermined the American way of life.

Nixon's opponents argued that his depiction of African American communities was racist. In his speech accepting the presidential nomination, Nixon countered, "And to those who say that law and order is the code word for racism, there and here is a reply: Our goal is justice for every American."<sup>128</sup> The Nixon campaign produced two ads that attempted to demonstrate this. One was aimed at America's youth and the other at

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<sup>126</sup>Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, "Republican Party Platforms, Republican Party Platform of 1968," <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/republican-party-platform-1968>.

<sup>127</sup>Nixon Campaign. "Crime," Television advertisement. 1968.

<sup>128</sup>Richard Nixon, "Address Accepting the Presidential Nomination at the Republican National Convention in Miami Beach, Florida," August 8, 1968, Miami Beach, Florida, 33:17, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/address-accepting-the-presidential-nomination-the-republican-national-convention-miami>.

bringing everyone together. Both attempted to showcase Nixon's inclusion of African Americans into 'every American.' However, both are exemplary of tokenism as they had a minimal African American presence on screen while still claiming Nixon represented every American.<sup>129</sup> Nevertheless, within a year of holding office, Nixon declared that while he was in favor of desegregation, he was against federally enforced integration.<sup>130</sup> Nixon walked a fine line for his constituents, some of whom were blatantly segregationist and others who were not necessarily invested in promoting racial inequality but still subscribed to the Republican law and order narrative.

Nixon's law and order campaign enhanced his image as a strong and committed leader. He was tough on crime and wanted to make America great again by seemingly bringing everyone together. He was acting in defiance of violent demonstrators and drug users that threatened America's youth. After winning in 1968, he reinforced this image in the 1972 election.

In 1972 Nixon's campaign again relied on a good versus evil narrative. In preparation, Nixon and his aides consulted with Roger Ailes as they had four years earlier and produced a White House Memo titled "A Plan for Putting the GOP on the News" that outlined a plan to boost Republicans' confidence in the administration. The purpose of the plan was to produce "pro-Administration" media to viewers in which "the thinking was done for you." The plan involved creating a network of news media that focused on stories of national priority that were also important to localities but without the censorship, proscriptions, or prejudice the Nixon administration believed the media held.

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<sup>129</sup> Nixon Campaign. "Together." Television advertisement. 1968.; Nixon Campaign. "American Youth." Television advertisement. 1968.

<sup>130</sup> Carter, *From George Wallace to Newt Gingrich*, 36.

Roger Ailes suggested the strategy be expanded as many members of the Republican Party as possible and to as many media sources as possible. He also offered that his company be the one to produce the project.<sup>131</sup>

In 1971, Lewis F. Powell, who served on the Virginia Board of Education in the 1960s and was later instated as a Supreme Court Justice under Nixon, claimed that the United States was under attack from communists, New Leftists, and other revolutionaries. These factions, he claimed, were being produced and encouraged by college campuses, secondary education, the pulpit, the media, intellectual and literary journals, the arts and sciences, and politicians with a White House memo titled “Attack on American Free Enterprise System.” The plan specified that the most active people within these factions were minorities. Powell outlined a plan to combat the communists and New Leftists that created counterrevolutionary media, intellectual and literary journals, and research that supported the American Free Enterprise System. The plan involved powerful men, sometimes rich businessmen or politicians, creating conservative thinktanks (the Heritage Foundation, Heartland Institute, Pacific Institute, Hoover Institution, etc.) to create academic sources to support their political stances. They would provide a basis for a counterargument towards the feared liberal institutions of America. The academic sources were published in privately owned publishing houses and distributed through media. This distributed McCarthyistic ideals out to Americans, but more importantly, the effort legitimized intellectual conservatives and social commentators in traditionally liberally dominated areas of academics and journalism.<sup>132</sup>

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<sup>131</sup> Powell, Lewis F. Jr., "The Memo" (1971). *Powell Memorandum: Attack On American Free Enterprise System*. 1. <https://scholarlycommons.law.wlu.edu/powellmemo/1>.

<sup>132</sup> In the 1970s, this primarily involved radio at first, but would later come to include television, including Fox News in 1996.

The Ailes Memo and Powell plan demonstrated the Nixon Administration's disdainful paranoia for alternative political theories, and an intent to use the power of perception to subvert perceived enemies of the state. Privately, Nixon stated, "Remember that any intellectual is tempted to put himself above the law," and "if they're from any Eastern schools or Berkeley those are particularly the potential bad ones."<sup>133</sup> In a conversation with his political adviser Chuck Colson about the media's outrage of the bombing of Hanoi, Nixon stated, "We all know this whole, you know, awful hysteria about the bombing has been a media-created goddamn thing."<sup>134</sup> Since the Hiss Trial, Nixon had come to identify media outlets and intellectuals as enemies of America and believed wholeheartedly that a plan to combat them was appropriate. The documents actively widened the scope of what was considered an enemy to America by including American institutions that were critical of the government or the Republican Party. Republicans used what they called counterrevolutionary institutions to mitigate the evil others in their good versus evil narrative. The growing list of enemies of the American way of life included but was not limited to Democrats, racial minorities, intellectuals, and media personalities or outlets.

Despite the ongoing turn to the right, Nixon still held onto moderate policies throughout his first term. The Family Assistance Plan (FAP) was Nixon's intended replacement for the Aid to Assist Families with Dependent Child (AFDC) welfare program. The plan stalled in Congress because of disagreements between conservatives

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<sup>133</sup> Ken Hughes, "A Rough Guide to Richard Nixon's Conspiracy Theories," Miller Center, University of Virginia, last accessed September 25, 2020. [https://millercenter.org/the-presidency/educational-resources/a-rough-guide-to-richard-nixon-s-conspiracy-theories#Jews\\_Intellectuals\\_and\\_Ivy\\_Leaguers](https://millercenter.org/the-presidency/educational-resources/a-rough-guide-to-richard-nixon-s-conspiracy-theories#Jews_Intellectuals_and_Ivy_Leaguers).

<sup>134</sup> Bill Plante, "Offensive Nixon Tapes Released," CBS News, June 23, 2009, video, 2:17, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vTX2FIRg63o>.

and liberals, and Nixon quietly scrapped it during his 1972 campaign, but it exemplified an ongoing appeal to centrists who supported a minimal welfare safety net.

Nixon's war on drugs in 1971 was among the policies that appealed to the conservative South while still holding the attention of Republican centrists. The war on drugs was among Nixon's proposed solution to the increasing problem of crime in the cities. Nixon aide John Ehrlichman described Nixon's motives:

You want to know what this was really all about. The Nixon campaign in 1968, and the Nixon White House after that, had two enemies: the antiwar left and black people. You understand what I'm saying. We knew we couldn't make it illegal to be either against the war or black, but by getting the public to associate the hippies with marijuana and blacks with heroin, and then criminalizing both heavily, we could disrupt those communities. We could arrest their leaders, raid their homes, break up their meetings, and vilify them night after night on the evening news. Did we know we were lying about the drugs? Of course we did.<sup>135</sup>

The Republican Party effectively projected misinformation about drug use to damage the perception of African Americans and subvert an opposing political party. It had chosen which individuals were worthy of rights and which were not. Ironically, they did this while framing themselves as the defenders of the rule of law.

In the 1972 election, Nixon and Republicans emphasized that a Democrat controlled United States would lead to a return of violent demonstrations, crime, welfare spending, and the rise of pornography. The 1972 Republican Party platform's section titles included "The Fight against Organized Crime," "Rehabilitation of Offenders," and "Drug Abuse" while mentioning crime twenty-two times and drugs thirty-seven times. In his presidential nomination speech, Nixon stated,

Four years ago crime was rising all over America at an unprecedented rate. Even our Nation's Capital was called the crime capital of the world. I pledged to stop the rise in crime. In order to keep that pledge, I promised in the election campaign

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<sup>135</sup> "A Brief History of the Drug War," Drug Policy Alliance, accessed September 25, 2020, <https://www.drugpolicy.org/issues/brief-history-drug-war>.

that I would appoint judges to the Federal courts, and particularly to the Supreme Court, who would recognize that the first civil right of every American is to be free from domestic violence.

I have kept that promise.<sup>136</sup>

Civil Rights was also conveniently absent from Nixon's presidential nomination speech and only mentioned in the party platform twice. Nixon denounced busing programs and affirmative action as federal overreach. In a campaign ad, Nixon justified busing by claiming it was harmful to African American and white children to once again project himself as a candidate for all Americans. However, in private, Nixon related "Black African" sex appeal to an "animal-like charm."<sup>137</sup> After Nixon's sweep in 1972, Republicans continued to abandon the pragmatic social stances of Eisenhower era party members.

It can be argued that Nixon's implementation of domestic policies was evidence of the persistence of moderate pragmatic compromise. For example, the Nixon administration created the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). These were clearly contrary to the standard Republican narrative that sought to reduce government influence. However, Nixon predicted that Congress would pass the bills regardless of if he chose to sign it or not. Therefore, he agreed to them as long as Republicans got to negotiate how they were implemented.

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<sup>136</sup> Richard Nixon, "Remarks on Accepting the Presidential Nomination of the Republican National Convention," August 23, 1972, Miami Beach, Florida, video, 41:30. <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/remarks-accepting-the-presidential-nomination-the-republican-national-convention>.

<sup>137</sup> Nixon Campaign. "Busing-T." Television advertisement. 1972.; Gary Bass, "They are a scavenging people: Declassified tapes reveal Richard Nixon's hate for Indians," *The Economic Times*, Coleman & Co., September 4, 2020, <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/international/world-news/they-are-a-scamenging-people-declassified-tapes-reveal-richard-nixons-hate-for-indians/articleshow/77927223.cms?from=mdr>.

Nixon's work on foreign policy similarly incorporated elements of centrist pragmatism and new right internationalism at the same time. Unlike other politicians, Nixon saw Communist China as a potential ally, and his reputation as an anti-communist allowed for negotiations and the China trip to occur. Nixon was the first president to significantly change foreign policy regarding China. Nixon had sympathetically written about China in 1967 stating, "There is no place on this small planet for a billion of its potentially most able people to live in angry isolation."<sup>138</sup> Then, as president, he legitimized the Chinese government to the world by referring to it by its actual name: The Peoples' Republic of China (PRC). He also communicated with the PRC through backchannels using other countries' leaders to express that he wanted the United States and China to have a closer relationship. Nixon's sympathetic gestures towards the PRC did not go unnoticed; in 1971 Mao Zedong invited an American table tennis team to China to return the gesture. This led to Nixon secretly sending his Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger, to China to set up a visit for Nixon himself.

Nixon's image as an anti-communist allowed him to not only interact with China but negotiate with its leader in person. Because of the perception people had of him as an anti-communist, he was lauded for being able to negotiate with communists. This arguably allowed for the negotiation of SALT I as part of the détente initiative to deescalate the Cold War as well.

Republicans and Nixon used foreign policy in the 1972 election to characterize themselves as diplomatic rugged individualists, and to portray Democrats and George McGovern as a frail communist enablers. The Republican Party Platform stated, "This

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<sup>138</sup> Richard M. Nixon, "Asia After Vietnam," *Foreign Affairs*, (1967): 121.

year we must choose between negotiating and begging with adversary nations.”<sup>139</sup> In one campaign ad Nixon’s passport was displayed while the narrator proudly proclaimed he had visited six continents and forty-seven different countries including the formerly secluded Communist China. This ad portrayed Nixon as a peacemaker, but Nixon was as fervently anti-communist as he ever was. The Nixon administration’s intention for the China Trip was to drive a wedge between China and the Soviet Union to destabilize global Communism. In October of that year, Kissinger announced that “Peace is at hand” in Vietnam. Kissinger’s remarks allowed the Nixon administration to frame American efforts in Vietnam in a positive light despite multiple failed attempts by his administration to end the war since 1969. Simultaneously, the Nixon Campaign released another ad with a narrator attacking McGovern by claiming he would reduce the size of each of the United States military branches by one third. It made clear that the Republican Party’s isolationist stances were in the past. It now needed to project strength abroad and characterize Democrats as weak.<sup>140</sup>

Ultimately, Nixon won the 1972 election in a landslide, carrying 49 states and receiving 520 electoral votes and 60.7% of the popular vote. He was the first victorious Republican President to carry Arkansas, Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia. Most liberal Republicans began to vote Democrat after the 1972 election, and the opposite was true for conservative Democrats who had begun to vote mostly Republican. Republican stalwarts who aligned more with Taft’s financial conservatism than the new social

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<sup>139</sup> Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, “Republican Party Platforms, Republican Party Platform of 1972,” The American Presidency Project, University of California, September 22, 2020, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/republican-party-platform-1972>.

<sup>140</sup> Nixon Campaign. “Passport.” Television advertisement. 1972.; Nixon Campaign. “McGovern Defense NBC Version Revised.” Television advertisement. 1972.; Ken Hughes, “Richard Nixon: Foreign Affairs,” Millercenter, University of Virginia, October 12, 2020. <https://millercenter.org/president/nixon/foreign-affairs>.



conservatives, created the Libertarian Party. Henceforth, the Republican party was monolithically conservative from a policy standpoint but still retained rhetoric that was able to capture the moderate vote. The absence of diverse factions within the Republican Party hastened the shift away from the moderate and centrist policies of the 1940s and 1950s.<sup>141</sup>

### **XIII. Nixon and Watergate**

Nixon's image as a strong but pragmatic compromiser abroad and at home had won him the election, but also provided cover for the increasingly radical internal security priorities of the administration that eventually came to light in the Watergate scandal. In 1973, less than a year after Nixon was inaugurated into office for the second time, the beginning of what would become known as the Watergate scandal leaked to the press. A group of burglars known as the "plumbers," broke into the office of Daniel Ellsberg's psychiatrist in 1971 to steal psychiatric records to smear Ellsberg with and then broke into the Democratic National Committee Headquarters in May of 1972 to find evidence of Democratic wrongdoing to use in the election. They were found guilty for both crimes. Nixon, it turned out, both knew about and endorsed the break in and actively sought to cover up the subsequent investigation. He justified it by claiming it was in the name of national security to keep federal investigators from analyzing his administration and reelection campaign too closely.<sup>142</sup>

In 1973, during the Watergate scandal, the Supreme Court ruled in *Roe v. Wade* that the U.S. Constitution protects women's right to choose to have an abortion without

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<sup>141</sup> "Bureau of Labor Statistics" U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, April 13, 2020. [https://data.bls.gov/pdq/SurveyOutputServlet.](https://data.bls.gov/pdq/SurveyOutputServlet;); "1972 Presidential Election," 270towin, accessed November 20, 2020, [https://www.270towin.com/1972\\_Election/index.html](https://www.270towin.com/1972_Election/index.html).

<sup>142</sup> Brands, *The Devil We Knew*, 121.

government restriction. Nixon made no public comment on the decision, which upset many religious conservatives who were outraged with the Supreme Court's ruling. However, in a private conversation with political adviser Chuck Colson, Nixon stated, "There are times when abortions are necessary, I know that, you know that's when you have a black and a white." To which Colson responded, "Or rape" and Nixon agreed.<sup>143</sup>

Nixon and the Republican Party had increased their perceived power by touting their accomplishments and using rhetoric to discredit opponents. However, Watergate tarnished the party in the eyes of Americans. The public saw Watergate as undeniably unpatriotic and unamerican and associated it with Republicans. Additionally, Nixon's silence on *Roe v. Wade* damaged the reputation he had built with religious conservatives since his days in the Eisenhower administration. Therefore, the image Nixon built up through his personal history in politics was now worthless. Even actual accomplishments like the China trip were ignored in light of the Watergate scandal. It was a complete backfire of Republicans' reliance on perception. Nixon's approval rating plummeted to nearly 20% in early 1974 before he ultimately resigned from office to avoid being removed.<sup>144</sup>

The 1976 Republican platform and Republican Presidential candidate Gerald Ford's attempt at winning over voters looked like nothing more than excuses for past errors. The 1976 Republican Party Platform stated, "We believe that liberty can be measured by how much freedom you have to make your own decisions—even your own mistakes." The acknowledgment of Nixon's actions as mistakes, whether they be

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<sup>143</sup> Bill Plante, "Offensive Nixon Tapes Released," CBS News, June 23, 2009, video, 2:17, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vTX2FIRg63o>.

<sup>144</sup> "Presidential Approval Ratings –Gallup Historical Statistics and Trends," Gallup, April 13, 2020, <https://news.gallup.com/poll/116677/presidential-approval-ratings-gallup-historical-statistics-trends.aspx>.

Watergate or silence on *Roe v. Wade*, were reason enough for voters to reject the Republican Party. Democratic Presidential candidate Jimmy Carter took full advantage of Nixon's mistakes. Carter flaunted his religion and traditional values to contrast with the depravity many associated with the Nixon administration. However, despite his religious nature, religious conservatives were still suspicious of Carter because he supported establishing the Department of Education and its role in regulating public schools.<sup>145</sup>

Many voters scattered from the Republican Party after Watergate, but those who stayed, as after the Goldwater presidential loss, were doubtless in their devotion towards it and willing to excuse the illegal abuse of power in the name of pursuing the true evils and enemies of the United States. Those who still approved of Nixon after Watergate and then voted for Ford were unlikely to change their opinion regardless of what happened. This further simplified the Republican message as those left drew an even harder line between good and evil. This rhetorical commitment culminated with the Reagan administration.

#### **XIV. Reagan, Religion, and Traditional Republicanism's Dénouement**

The 1980 election brought the Republican Party's good versus evil narrative in forming a perception of strength to an all-time high. Republicans chose former Hollywood film star Ronald Reagan for their presidential nominee who, according to Nixon, was just as conservative as Goldwater but could articulate his views in an eloquent manner.<sup>146</sup> Reagan's early professional life consisted of acting after he graduated from college with a degree in economics and sociology. He did a total of fifty

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<sup>145</sup> Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, "Republican Party Platforms, Republican Party Platform of 1976," The American Presidency Project, University of California, September 22, 2020, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/republican-party-platform-1976>.; Martin, *With God on Our Side*, 169.

<sup>146</sup> Nixon, *The Memoirs of Richard Nixon*, 263.

films in twenty-seven years; however, he was most well-known for his part in WWII. During WWII, Reagan starred in many training videos for the United States military. He also portrayed real soldiers as they were leaving for war and returning home from it. Reagan appealed to voters who valued the military as a symbol for strength, but, ironically, Reagan had no real military experiences. However, Reagan used his acting and rhetorical skills to communicate his conservative policies better than Goldwater and even Nixon ever could.

In 1980, religious conservatives organized with the intent of making political impact for the first time after the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) attempted to revoke the tax exemption status of private schools that did not racially integrate in 1978. The IRS's reasoning for removing private school's tax-exempt status was supported by *Green v. Connally* (1972). A district court had decided that a school that did not racially integrate failed to meet the definition of a charitable institution, which meant it was not eligible for tax exemption. This stemmed from a broader attempt by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) to expand the 1964 Civil Rights Act. They had already partially succeeded in this reasoning before in 1971 when they revoked the tax-exempt status of Bob Jones University.

Religious leaders who held national recognition like Jerry Falwell, Robert Billings, Paul Weyrich, and James Dobson lead the organizational efforts. They created organizations like the National Christian Action Coalition to gather supporters and created newsletters like the *Christian School Alert* to spread their IRS's plan to other evangelicals. Broadcasters like Pat Robertson and Jim Bakker spread the message through their television shows, the *700 Club* and the *PTL Club*. Within weeks of

organization, the White House, the Director of the IRS, and members of congress received half a million pieces of mail concerning regulation on schools. Their efforts resulted in a meeting between religious leaders Jerry Falwell, Oral Roberts, Rex Humbard, Jim Bakker, D. James Kennedy, Charles Stanley, and Tim Haye and President Carter over breakfast on the anniversary of *Roe v. Wade*. Despite his religious affiliations, Carter disappointed his guests. He made an ambiguous statement about abortion and proclaimed the Equal Rights Amendment was good for the family at the surprise of the attendees. This breakfast combined with Carter's support for the Department of Education and the IRS revoking the tax exemption status of some private schools made the attendees conclude that Christians must no longer vote Republican, Democrat, or Independent, but for a candidate that fit their ideals. However, this conclusion was hollow and only sufficed as a justification for disassociating themselves with their traditional haven: the Democratic Party. They would soon find a new place to call home.<sup>147</sup>

Reagan understood that Nixon's success as a presidential candidate came from his implementation of the "Southern Strategy." He had to appeal to multiple groups that opposed each other through coded language in order to gain the trust of both. In 1968 and 1972 Nixon did it with the segregationist South; in 1980 Reagan would do it with religious conservatives despite his faith being nowhere near enthusiastic as theirs. At a gathering of evangelical leaders from the Moral Majority in 1979, James Kennedy had asked Reagan, "If you were to die tomorrow, Governor, and you wanted to go to heaven, what reason would you give God for letting you in?" Reagan responded by stating he

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<sup>147</sup> Martin, *With God on Our Side*, 189-190.

would not give any reason, but instead ask for mercy. Reagan's response immediately gained their approval.<sup>148</sup>

On August 21, 1980, Reagan attended a National Affairs Briefing, a Dallas event sponsored by the Religious Round Table and led by James Robison. Robison, televangelist and founder and president of the Christian relief organization Life Outreach International, spoke before Reagan. He professed to the crowd that they were at war and their traditional values were at stake. Organizers of the rally placed Reagan behind Robison so the crowd could see Reagan clap for Robison. When it was Reagan's turn to speak after Robison, Reagan stated, "you can't endorse me, but I endorse you." It was the perfect follow-up for the demographic in front of him. Over 60 million people were estimated to be watching Reagan. His response insured religious conservatives' support. Reagan and Republicans made sure to play to that strength as they realized it could be crucial to winning the 1980 and 1984 election.<sup>149</sup>

Reagan's policies were a return to the anti-communist crusade of the 1950s and the law and order campaigns of Nixon combined with 1920s rejection of social programs, uncompromising tax cuts, and government downsizing. Reagan was not concerned about increasing national debt with his economic strategy, however. Reagan told his advisers that "Defense is not a budget issue. You spend what you need."<sup>150</sup> While he increased military spending, he cut social welfare programs like education, food stamps, low-income housing, and school lunches for poor children.<sup>151</sup> He also endorsed the Economic

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<sup>148</sup> Martin, *With God on Our Side*, 209.

<sup>149</sup> Martin, *With God on Our Side*, 217.

<sup>150</sup> Lou Cannon, "Ronald Reagan: Foreign Affairs," Millercenter, University of Virginia, April 13, 2020. <https://millercenter.org/president/reagan/foreign-affairs>.

<sup>151</sup> Lou Cannon, "Ronald Reagan: Domestic Affairs," Millercenter, University of Virginia, April 13, 2020. <https://millercenter.org/president/reagan/domestic-affairs>.

Recovery Tax Act of 1981 and the Tax Equity and Fiscal Responsibility Act of 1981 to cut taxes with what he called a Supply-Side economics. Trickle-down economics was centered around creating jobs by cutting taxes for the wealthy. The idea was that the wealthy would use the extra capital to expand their businesses and create jobs for the middle class. He cut social programs and taxes on the wealthy because he believed in rugged individualism. Reagan thought that social programs had gone too far and caused a lack of motivation in Americans to ‘conquer new frontiers.’ He cut taxes for the wealthy to reinforce the idea that government should not penalize a rugged individualist’s success.

Not everyone benefited equally from Reagan’s economic strategy. The top 10% of earners got a 5% tax cut and the top 1% got a 15% tax cut. This resulted in the top 1% of earners increasing their income by 60% after taxes by the end of the 1980s. Earners between the 50<sup>th</sup> and 90<sup>th</sup> percentile saw little to no change in taxes, but the bottom 50% of earners actually saw tax increases. The bottom 20% of earners income decreased by 10% and the bottom 10% of earners experienced an 18% decrease in income. The initial result was disastrous. Unemployment rose to 11% by 1982 (the highest since the Great Depression) and the deficit rose to \$113 billion (four times higher than in 1980). In 1983, Reagan had to roll back some of his tax cuts to stimulate the economy.<sup>152</sup>

By 1985, the national debt had risen to \$1.8 billion dollars and would grow to \$2.7 billion by the time he left office, nearly three times what it was in 1980. Reagan’s response to this was to criticize the Great Society policies of President Lyndon B.

Johnson’s administration for increasing government spending. He conveniently ignored

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<sup>152</sup> Carter, *From George Wallace to Newt Gingrich*, 62-63.; Lou Cannon, “Ronald Reagan: Domestic Affairs,” <https://millercenter.org/president/reagan/domestic-affairs>.

his own advocacy for increased military spending. Reagan inconsistently claimed the Great Society had increased the deficit. In 1984 he claimed it increased the deficit by thirty-eight times by 1980. In 1985 it was fifty times. By 1988, it was back down to thirty-eight times and in his memoir, it was fifty-three times.<sup>153</sup> However, once his economic plans began to show an increase in the amount of wealth in the country after he insisted America “Stay the course,” he appeared stronger than ever because he proved his critics wrong by showing economic growth despite the rising national debt.<sup>154</sup> Reagan’s approval rating climbed from an average of 50.3% in his first term to 55.3% in his second term with his job approval rating rising to near 60% near the end of his second term.<sup>155</sup> This was in spite of the fact that most of that influx of wealth went to the top 1% of earners.

According to historian Dan Carter, the politics of race were played out in the economic arena during the Reagan Administration.<sup>156</sup> African American families in the bottom 20% of earners in the 1980s were poorer than their white counterparts, and African American families in the bottom 10% of earners earned only \$98 a week. However, Reagan revived Nixon’s war on drugs and used it similarly to how Nixon used law and order in his campaigns. The implication was that Reagan was able to advocate for fighting drug use in the United States, but the reality was that the war on drugs led to more African Americans being imprisoned. By 2001, this led to over 792,000 African

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<sup>153</sup> Bernard Bon Bothmer, *Framing the Sixties: The Use and Abuse of a Decade from Ronald Reagan to George W. Bush* (Massachusetts: University of Massachusetts Press, 2010), 56.

<sup>154</sup> Lou Cannon, “Ronald Reagan: Domestic Affairs,” <https://millercenter.org/president/reagan/domestic-affairs>.

<sup>155</sup> “Presidential Approval Ratings –Gallup Historical Statistics and Trends,” Gallup, April 13, 2020, <https://news.gallup.com/poll/116677/presidential-approval-ratings-gallup-historical-statistics-trends.aspx>.

<sup>156</sup> Carter, *From George Wallace to Newt Gingrich*, 64.



American men being imprisoned, which rivaled the number of men enslaved in America by 1820.<sup>157</sup>

Reagan and the Republican Party began to align their stance on social issues with that of religious conservatives but were careful not to alienate their current voting base. Reagan professed that the biblical story of creation be taught as an alternative to evolutionary theory. He complained that the Supreme Court had “expelled God from the classroom.” Reagan also proclaimed that “all the complex questions facing us at home and abroad have their answer in a single book.” The Republican Platform of 1980 made it clear to religious conservatives that the government would not impede on their beliefs. This involved focusing on the family, abortion, morality, and religious liberty. The 1980 Republican Platform addressed their concerns about education and morality directly:

Next to religious training and the home, education is the most important means by which families hand down to each new generation their ideals and beliefs. It is a pillar of a free society. But today, parents are losing control of their children's schooling. The Democratic Congress and its counterparts in many states have launched one fad after another, building huge new bureaucracies to misspend our taxes. The result has been a shocking drop in student performance, lack of basics in the classroom, forced busing, teacher strikes, manipulative and sometimes amoral indoctrination.<sup>158</sup>

The 1980 platform also used coded language to separate themselves from Nixon and contrast themselves with Carter. In the preamble, the platform stated,

All of these goals—and many others—we confidently expect to achieve through a rebirth of liberty and resurgence of private initiatives, for we believe that at the root of most of our troubles today is the misguided and discredited philosophy of an all-powerful government, ceaselessly striving to subsidize, manipulate, and

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<sup>157</sup> Graham Boyd, “The Drug War is the New Jim Crow,” ACLU, American Civil Liberties Union, August 2001. <https://www.aclu.org/other/drug-war-new-jim-crow>.

<sup>158</sup> Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, “Republican Party Platforms, Republican Party Platform of 1980,” The American Presidency Project, University of California, September 22, 2020, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/republican-party-platform-1980>.

control individuals. But it is the individual, not the government, who reigns at the center of our Republican philosophy.<sup>159</sup>

The 1980 Republican Platform maintained Nixon's Southern Strategy while also using morality and religious symbolism to frame themselves in a positive manner.

By 1984, appealing to religious conservatives had become even more pronounced. Republicans denounced taxation on "churches, religious schools, or any other religious institutions." They addressed the education system again by stating they were "mindful of our religious diversity" and openly supported students' right to engage in voluntary prayer in schools. The 1984 platform mentioned family 44 times, and religion and morality almost twice as much as the 1980 platform. Republican legislation was also shaped based on religious conservatives' influence. The National Minimum Drinking Age Act, Aviation Drug-Trafficking Control Act of 1984, and Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1986 all addressed religious conservatives' concerns about the moral direction of the country after the 1960s. Reagan's rhetoric, the Republican Platforms, and their legislation were designed in a way that presented them as the morally correct answer and anyone that opposed that could easily be painted as amoral or evil. Of course, their opposition to busing and abortion was hypocritical. They professed that they valued liberty and respected the rule of law but sought to overturn laws that provided rights to those they did not agree with.

Concerning foreign policy, Reagan revived the anti-communist crusade and militaristic buildup of the 1950s. The 1980 Republican Party Platform stated, "America's international humiliation and decline can be reversed only by strong presidential

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<sup>159</sup> Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, "Republican Party Platforms, Republican Party Platform of 1980," <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/republican-party-platform-1980>.

leadership and a consistent, far-sighted foreign policy, supported by a major upgrading of our military forces.”<sup>160</sup> Military leaders took this statement and Reagan’s “spend what you need” comment to heart. United States military spending rose from \$138.19 billion and 4.96% of GDP in 1980 to \$281.11 billion and 6.30% of GDP in 1986. Reagan, unaccepting of the concept of mutually assured destruction, proposed the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI). SDI was a proposed missile defense system designed to intercept intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBM).

Though not made public until Reagan’s 1985 State of the Union speech, the Reagan Doctrine defined how the United States dealt with non-Russian communists under his administration. The Reagan Doctrine advocated for supporting anti-communist rebels in other countries. The rebels were deemed freedom fighters and the United States’ support of them was intended to reaffirm American commitment to democracy with the rest of the world. The results were varied. Those who fought against the Soviets, like the mujahideen in Afghanistan, got advanced military weaponry with a budget of \$650 million. Others, like the anti-communist resistance in Cambodia, got nonlethal supplies. And still, others like the anti-communist guerrilla fighters in Mozambique got no help at all. The allocation of resources was disorganized at best, which ultimately led to the Iran-Contra affair.<sup>161</sup>

The Contras waged guerilla war against the Sandinista government in Nicaragua headed by Daniel Ortega. Congress declined United States aid for the Contras fearing another Vietnam. Harkening back to Eisenhower’s overthrow of Iran, Reagan authorized

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<sup>160</sup> Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, “Republican Party Platforms, Republican Party Platform of 1980,” <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/republican-party-platform-1980>.

<sup>161</sup> Chester J. Pach, “The Reagan Doctrine: Principle, Pragmatism, and Policy,” *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 36, No. 1 (2006): 76-82, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-5705.2006.00288.x>.

the CIA to train the Contras and supply them with arms in secrecy during his first year in office. By 1983, Reagan's support of the Contras had leaked to Congress and they forced him to sign legislation prohibiting military aid to the Contras. However, Reagan was unrelenting. He authorized National Security Council (NSC) member Oliver North to criticize Congress and continue supply the Contras while he courted legislators. By 1986, the ban on military aid to the Contras was lifted, but shortly after information about North illegally selling weapons to Iran to fund the Contras leaked. The controversy behind what became known as the Iran-Contra Affair immediately caused the halt of military aid to the Contras.<sup>162</sup>

During his presidency, Reagan was able to maintain a strong, moralistic image while demonizing opponents despite economic setbacks and foreign controversy. Shortly after his first election, Reagan was shot at six times resulting in a bullet puncturing his lung. However, Reagan recovered and was perceived as stronger because of it. Shortly after his attempted assassination, Reagan was giving a speech in West Berlin when a balloon popped in the crowd. Due to his recent assassination attempt, Reagan paused his speech because he, and everyone else, was scared it was gunfire. However, when he realized what the sound was, he responded "missed me." The crowd cheered for Reagan and it became one of the most memorable moments of his presidency. Republicans were even able to use the assassination attempt in their 1984 Party platform to help deify Reagan: "That is what we expect from a President who, wounded by an assassin, walked his way into a hospital and cheerfully assured the world that he and his country would not

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<sup>162</sup> Pach, "The Reagan Doctrine: Principle, Pragmatism, and Policy," 36, No. 1 (2006): 84, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-5705.2006.00288.x>.

be deterred from their destiny.”<sup>163</sup> Reagan was popular among voters because of his insistence that America “Stay the course,” and charisma on the international stage gave him the perception of wise and powerful leader who was in control.

In a speech at the National Association of Evangelicals in 1983, Reagan associated morality with American liberty. Reagan proclaimed that there were many “God-fearing, dedicated, noble men and women in public life” and that the basis of their ideals is a “commitment to freedom and personal liberty that, itself is grounded in the much deeper realization that freedom prospers only where the blessings of God are avidly sought and humbly accepted.” He went on to state that their morality is what puts them in opposition against a growing minority of Americans who have turned to “modern-day secularism.” He denounced abortion and stated, “Girls termed ‘sexually active’—and that has replaced the word ‘promiscuous’—are given this help in order to prevent illegitimate worth/birth (quickly corrects himself) eh or abortion.” He announced that he had submitted legislation to Congress that returned students’ right to pray in school as a solution to America’s growing amorality. He then claimed that America was in a “spiritual awakening and moral renewal,” before finally discussing the Soviet Union. He criticized the Soviet Union and those who advocated for nuclear disarmament. Referring to the Soviet Union, Reagan stated, “they must be made to understand: we will never compromise our principles and standards. We will never give away our freedom. We will never abandon our belief in God.” He ambiguously warned the crowd of a temptation to “label both sides equally at fault, to ignore the facts of history and the aggressive

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<sup>163</sup> Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, “Republican Party Platforms, Republican Party Platform of 1984,” The American Presidency Project, University of California, September 22, 2020, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/republican-party-platform-1984>.

impulses of an evil empire, to simply call the arms race a giant misunderstanding and thereby remove yourself from the struggle between right and wrong and good and evil.” He ended by emphasizing that the real crisis America faced was spiritual, not militaristic.<sup>164</sup>

Republicans’ good versus evil narrative allowed them to propose potentially controversial issues without political repercussions. Much like the previous platforms after Goldwater, the 1984 Republican platform included topics like “Welfare” and “Crime” that were associated with the failures of previous administrations.<sup>165</sup> However, now their platform also advocated for restricting abortion, terminating the Department of Energy, and privatizing education and Medicare. These issues would normally have been divisive amongst voters, but due to Reagan’s international fame, charisma, and ability to associate Republicans with morality and Democrats with evil, Republicans won the Executive Branch while only losing two Senate seats and gaining seats in the House of Representatives. Reagan’s perceived benevolence amongst voters allowed Republicans to rely entirely on his image to win the election, and bypass any complications related to their policies. Using the 1984 elections to introduce controversial policies knowing that Reagan’s perception would win them the election anyway is evidence that Republican priorities had shifted to relying on a good versus evil narrative more than traditional policies.

Cold War fear caused the Republican Party to simplify their messaging into a good versus evil narrative. The ‘evil’ in their narrative evolved from communists to

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<sup>164</sup> Ronald Reagan, “Address to the National Association of Evangelicals,” March 8, 1983, Orlando, FL, Video, 30:05. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FcSm-KAEFFA>.

<sup>165</sup> Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, “Republican Party Platforms, Republican Party Platform of 1984,” <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/republican-party-platform-1984>.

Americans and the ‘good’ became increasingly more exclusive to orthodox Republicans as the Cold War progressed. Those who were deemed evil by Republicans were denied their right to the rugged individualism the Party held so dear. Once rugged individualism became a ‘members only’ feature of the Republican Party, traditional Republicanism was no more because the Party no longer attempted to represent all Americans, just the ones they agreed with.

During George H.W. Bush’s presidency, the Berlin Wall fell in 1989, the Soviet Union’s Republic crumbled in 1990 after a failed assassination attempt on Gorbachev, and in 1991 the Cold War came to an anti-climactic ending. The enemy that forced the Republican Party to deviate from its traditional party stances was gone. So, the question must be asked: did the post-Cold War Republican Party revert to its pre-Cold War era principles after the war’s end? More research must be done, but preliminary findings indicate that, not only has it not reverted, but the Republican Party has continued to deviate from traditional Republicanism.

## **XV. Beyond the Cold War**

Despite his moderate voting record, George H.W. Bush continued the Republican Party’s new legacy of using perception and fear for political gain in the 1988 election. Bush had supported the Equal Rights Amendment and had defended *Roe v. Wade*, but quickly recruited Roger Ailes and Lee Atwater to handle his campaign tactics after polls suggested Michael Dukakis, the likely Democratic nominee, led him by fifteen to twenty points in the first half of 1988. Atwater was a political consultant to President Reagan and chairman of the Republican National Committee. One of Atwater’s friends described his campaign policy: “if you drive the other guy’s negatives up high enough, he won’t be a

credible candidate and you can blow by him.” Their first act was to discredit Dukakis’s mental state by circulating rumors that he had clinical depression in 1973 and 1978.<sup>166</sup>

The Bush campaign’s Willie Horton ad emphasized that Dukakis was soft on crime by showing a revolving door of prisoners entering and exiting a prison with a voiceover that told the viewer Dukakis vetoed the death penalty and allowed for furloughs on death row inmates. The ad emphasized that one of those furloughs led to the murder and rape of a couple. The ad never stated it was Willie Horton, but only one of the men in the revolving door was African American and he was the only one to look at the camera. Like Nixon, Bush conceded his moderate history to lump crime, African Americans, and Democrats together for political gain. However, unlike Nixon he failed to wholly commit to conservative policies once in office, which likely cost him reelection.

The Republican Party is synonymous with tax cuts, but for who? As President, George H.W. Bush tried to uphold Reagan’s legacy on tax cuts and government downsizing, but ultimately failed to uphold his campaign promises. The national debt had risen to \$2.8 trillion by 1989. During his presidential nomination speech Bush had stated, “Read my lips: no new taxes.” He desired to reduce the debt by cutting domestic spending, but Democrats held Congress and wanted to reduce the deficit by taxing the wealthy. Bush ultimately got domestic spending cuts but had to raise taxes to do it with the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1990. The bill increased the alternative minimum tax rates for individuals from 21% to 24% and increased the top statutory rate from 28% to 31%. It also created a 30% excise tax on the price of automobiles over \$30,000, boats over \$100,000, and \$250,000 for airplanes. It included the Budget

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<sup>166</sup> Carter, *From George Wallace to Newt Gingrich*, 68-69.



Enforcement Act of 1990, which was created to enforce the deficit reduction of the Omnibus bill by revising federal budget control procedures. Bush's tax hikes echo Taft's priorities: the national budget came before low taxes. However, Bush was not as respected as Taft or as popular as Reagan, and conservative Republicans criticized him for going back on his campaign promise and resolved to introduce future tax cuts without him after he lost the election.<sup>167</sup>

Conservatives reaffirmed their stance on economics and crime in 1994 with the Contract with America, a promised agenda Republicans would pursue should they regain majority in both Houses of Congress. The Contract with America included the American Dream Restoration Act and the Fiscal Responsibility Act. The former created a \$500-per-child tax credit and added a tax credit for married couples who would pay more in taxes in aggregate than if they were single. The latter required a balanced budget unless sanctioned by two-thirds of Congress but was ruled unconstitutional in *Clinton v. City of New York* in 1998. Both were intended to provide financial relief for middle income Americans who had been noticeably left out of Reagan's tax cuts. The agenda also included the anti-crime Taking Back Our Streets Act of 1995, which included stronger truth in sentences, exclusionary rule exemptions, death penalty provisions, funding for prisons, and additional law enforcement. The Contract with America renewed law and order campaign tactics and supply-side economics to recreate the popularity that Reagan enjoyed.

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<sup>167</sup> Lily Rothman, "The Story Behind George H.W. Bush's Famous 'Read My Lips, No New Taxes' Promise," Time, Time USA, LLC., December 1, 2018, <https://time.com/3649511/george-hw-bush-quote-read-my-lips/>; "Major Enacted Tax Legislation, 1990-1999," Tax Policy Center, accessed September 25, 2020, <https://www.taxpolicycenter.org/laws-proposals/major-enacted-tax-legislation-1990-1999#omnibus-budget-reconciliation-act-of-1990>.

In 2000, George W. Bush focused his campaign on morality by making compassionate conservatism its cornerstone. Compassionate conservatism involved using volunteer and faith-based organizations to alleviate poverty instead of the federal government. Bush created the Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives to do this. He also opposed abortion, same-sex marriage, and stem cell research. Bush supported voluntary prayer for students but believed that it should not be led by teachers. His campaign stances also featured tax cuts and decreasing military presence abroad to avoid American imperialism. Bush's campaign promises were a combination of moral policies to appeal to religious voters, tax cuts to appeal to fiscal conservatives, and foreign policy that echoed Taft's beliefs toward American imperialism. However, his stances dramatically shifted less than two years into his presidency.

On September 11, 2001 terrorists flew two planes into the World Trade Center buildings in New York City and one plane into the Pentagon. A fourth plane, believed to be intended for the White House or the United States Capitol, crashed in a field near Shanksville, Pennsylvania. Nearly 3,000 people died that day from an unannounced attack from an unknown enemy. Ten years after the Cold War's end, fear was once again struck into the hearts of Americans.<sup>168</sup>

The September 11 attacks drastically changed George W. Bush's and the Republican Party's policy stances. The Republican controlled United States Congress passed the Patriot Act in October 2001, created the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) in November, and passed the Homeland Security Act (HSA) in 2002 to protect the United States from another foreign attack. The Patriot Act expanded

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<sup>168</sup> Gary Gregg II, "George W. Bush: Foreign Affairs," Millercenter, University of Virginia, September 25, 2020. <https://millercenter.org/president/gwbush/foreign-affairs>.

law enforcement surveillance over Americans, eased interagency communication, and increased penalties for terrorism in the United States. This included denying anyone designated a terrorist the right to due process. The TSA was created to provide federal security for air traffic in the United States by screening passengers, putting armed Federal Air Marshals on planes, and providing dog handlers and explosive experts at airports. The HSA created the United States Department of Homeland Security to combat terrorism, provide border security, Immigration and Customs, cyber security, and disaster prevention and management.

Bush quickly formed a war cabinet following the World Trade Center attacks and reshaped his foreign policy. Three days after the attack Bush addressed a crowd at the site where the World Trade Centers used to stand. He was given a bullhorn, but the crowd said they could not hear him. He replied, "I can hear you!... The rest of the world hears you... and the people who knocked these buildings down will hear all of us soon!" On September 18, Congress passed a joint resolution authorizing military force against the perpetrators of the attacks. Two days later Bush declared, "Our war on terror begins with al Qaeda, but it does not end there. It will not end until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped and defeated." The war on terror was not an official declaration by the United States Congress on a foreign nation, but it did allow for troops to be sent wherever terrorists were believed to be. Just six months later in his State of the Union address Bush referred to North Korea, Iran, and Iraq as the "Axis of Evil" and declared all a threat to national security. Bush's messaging materialized into the Bush Doctrine in September 2002. The Bush Doctrine had three primary points it advocated for. First, it sought preventative war on foreign nations who were believed to be planning

attacks on the United States. Second, the United States would act alone if necessary. Third, the United States would spread democracy and encourage free markets, free trade, and individual liberties in the countries it liberated. The War on Terror led the United States to fight al-Qaeda, the Taliban, and Islamic terrorist groups all throughout the middle east, but primarily in Afghanistan and Iraq.<sup>169</sup>

The politicians who supported these actions no doubt had good intentions considering the historical significance of September 11, 2001, but they acted out of emotion. The domestic legislation passed in the months following 9/11 increased federal authority over Americans at home out of fear and fostered American imperialism abroad out of anger. Once again, Americans allowed for their own rights to be infringed upon out of fear, and the United States dabbled in American imperialism just as it had with Eisenhower and Iran. Traditional Republicans would be abhorred by these actions. Traditional Republicans like Taft made decisions strongly supported by evidence even at risk of political criticism. He was a stringent isolationist who even had reservations about how large a role the United States should have taken in the world after WWII. Furthermore, if the government's definition of a threat changed as it had during the Cold War, then the very institutions that were designed to protect Americans could turn against them.

While advocating for a War on Terror, Bush maintained a Reagan era economic strategy. George W. Bush signed the Economic Growth and Tax Reconciliation Act and the Jobs and Growth Tax Relief Reconciliation Act in 2001 and 2003. The acts reduced the top four marginal income tax rates, tax rates on capital gains, and on dividends. These

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<sup>169</sup> Gary Gregg II, "George W. Bush: Foreign Affairs," <https://millercenter.org/president/gwbush/foreign-affairs>.

bills also included provisions that increased the Child Tax Credit from \$500 to \$1000 and reduced taxes for married couples. They brought tax rates down by 3-5% for all Americans but benefited the top 1% of earners the most. The highest tax bracket covers Americans who make above \$374,000. This went from 39.6% to 35% so its within everyone else's margin of change, but because there is not another tax bracket above this, any tax cuts to this bracket are far more beneficial. By the time the tax cuts were fully implemented in 2010 this resulted in an income increase of 6.7% for the top 1%, 2.8% for the middle 20% of households, and 1% for the bottom 20% of households.<sup>170</sup> Traditional Republicanism sought to provide the means in which the average American could become financially successful, but still maintained the rights of Americans who had already realized that opportunity. Republican tax cuts since the Reagan era have overwhelmingly favored the top 1% of earners.

Along with favoring the top 1% of earners, George W. Bush's tax cuts also completely disregarded the national debt. In 2003, Bush's War on Terror reached Iraq and military spending was at \$437.4 billion. By the time he left office in 2009, it had nearly doubled to \$815.7 billion. Traditional Republicanism would charge that, because of extenuating circumstances, taxes must be raised to balance the budget. However, Bush did the opposite. He increased spending while lowering taxes. In 2005, Bush signed the Deficit Reduction Act to stifle the burgeoning national debt. The act cut spending to social programs like Medicaid and Medicare, but ultimately did little to stifle the increase in debt. The tax cuts cost nearly 2% of United States GDP and were intended to "pay for themselves" by delivering economic growth that generated higher tax revenue but

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<sup>170</sup> Emily Horton, "The Legacy of the 2001 and 2003 "Bush" Tax Cuts," last modified October 23, 2017, <https://www.cbpp.org/research/federal-tax/the-legacy-of-the-2001-and-2003-bush-tax-cuts>.

members of Bush's own Treasury Department estimated that the best case scenario was the tax cuts paying for 10% of their cost. During Bush's presidency, the national debt increased from \$5.65 trillion to \$10.02 trillion.<sup>171</sup>

In 2016 Republican Presidential nominee Donald Trump harkened back to the Reagan administration by running on a platform to "make America great again." To curtail the inflating budget, Trump and Republicans promised to repeal the Obama era Affordable Care Act of 2010 citing that it was too costly an expenditure and was a major reason national debt had risen to \$20 trillion by 2017. Trump promised law and order, a balanced budget, lower taxes, better trade partnerships with other countries, and the construction of a wall to separate Mexico and the United States.

The Affordable Care Act intended to expand access to insurance by forcing large employers to provide it, increase consumer protections, emphasize prevention and wellness, and lower the cost of healthcare. Republicans' bid to repeal the Affordable Care Act failed by one vote in the summer of 2017. Traditional Republicans like Taft and Eisenhower did not seek the repeal of New Deal legislation because they identified it as a necessity to ensure that every American had an equal opportunity at being a rugged individualist. Instead, they sought to make it as efficient as possible. Therefore, if post-Cold War Republicans adhered to traditional Republicanism, they would have given far more consideration to applying traditional Republican values to the Affordable Care Act rather than advocating for its total repeal because it helped ensure equal opportunity.

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<sup>171</sup> Emily Horton, "The Legacy of the 2001 and 2003 "Bush" Tax Cuts," CBPP, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, last modified October 23, 2017, <https://www.cbpp.org/research/federal-tax/the-legacy-of-the-2001-and-2003-bush-tax-cuts>.; Eric Reed, "What is the National Debt Year By Year From 1790 to 2019?," The Street, The Street Inc., last modified February 26, 2019, <https://www.thestreet.com/politics/national-debt-year-by-year-14876008>.

Instead of ensuring that Americans all had an equal opportunity to succeed, they were only interested in ensuring that the wealthiest people succeeded even more.

Despite failing to repeal the Affordable Care Act, Republicans continued with their proposed tax cuts and on December 22, 2017 Trump signed the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act. The bill cut the income tax rate by 2-4% for nearly all tax brackets. The lowest bracket received no change and the highest bracket received a 2.6% cut for earners making over \$510,300. The highest cut at 4% was for Americans making between \$39,476 and \$84,200. In 2019, the average American between the ages of 35 and 65 made around \$50,000, so the majority of Americans did receive the largest tax cut. However, because the tax brackets still only go to \$510,000, the 2.6% cut that the top 1% of earners got amounted substantially more money the higher their income is.<sup>172</sup>

The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act was intended to stimulate the economy by providing job growth via supply-side economics, but the results have been lackluster so far. The bill cut the corporate tax rate from 35% to 21% beginning in 2018. The business tax rates are permanent while the individual income tax rates will expire in 2025. Fewer companies gave out bonuses and raised wages as the government expected them to and many even began laying off workers. Apple pledged to add over 20,000 domestic jobs over the next five years. Walmart raised its starting wage to \$11, gave its workers a \$1,000 bonus, and expanded parental leave benefits. However, Bank of America cut 5,000 jobs, AT&T cut 10,000 union jobs, and Verizon cut 3,100 jobs despite their increasing profits.

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<sup>172</sup> Eric Reed, "What is the National Debt Year By Year From 1790 to 2019?," The Street, The Street Inc., last modified February 26, 2019, <https://www.thestreet.com/politics/national-debt-year-by-year-14876008>.; Kimberly Amadeo, "Trump's Tax Plan and How it Affects You," The Balance, Dotdash, April 16, 2020, <https://www.thebalance.com/trump-s-tax-plan-how-it-affects-you-4113968>.

Additionally, business investment growth fell by 2.5% in the third quarter of 2018. The bill stands to add \$1 trillion dollars to the national debt over the next ten years.<sup>173</sup>

Republican economic strategies since the Reagan administration contradict traditional Republicanism because they blindly advocate for lowering taxes without considering the national debt. It could be said that they were adhering to rugged individualism by attempting to foster the growth of business and that is in accordance with traditional Republicanism; however, Republican tax cuts since Reagan contributed to wealth inequality in America by benefiting the top 1% of earners and 1% of businesses more than everyone else. If the Party had stayed true to traditional Republicanism, then it would have focused more on helping the majority of Americans and advocated for higher taxes in times where the United States needed funding like during George W. Bush's War on Terror.

In the weeks leading up to the 2018 midterm election, a South American migrant caravan with over 7,000 people was spotted heading towards the United States border. Trump, who during his presidential announcement speech stated, "When Mexico sends its people, they're not sending their best," took it as an opportunity to appear strong and associate Democrats with crime right before the election. Trump called the caravan an invasion and said that the United States military would be waiting for them. He warned that "Democrats are inviting caravan after caravan of illegal aliens to pour into our country." He even warned that there could be terrorists amongst the group. On October 31, he tweeted "We will NOT let these Caravans, which are also made up of some very bad thugs and gang members, into the U.S. Our Border is sacred, must come in legally.

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<sup>173</sup> Jim Tankersley, "Trump's Tax Cut One Year Later: What Happened?," NYTimes, New York Times, December 27, 2018. <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/12/27/us/politics/trump-tax-cuts-jobs-act.html>.



TURN AROUND.” Right before the election on November 2, Trump told a crowd “if you don’t want America to be overrun by masses of illegal aliens and giant caravans, you’d better vote Republican.” The election resulted in Democrats regaining control of the House of Representatives and Trump and Republicans became noticeably silent on the migrant caravan. Trump’s tweet on October 31<sup>st</sup> was his last on the subject and he had seemingly moved onto contesting election results in battleground states.<sup>174</sup>

Trump’s use of the Migrant Caravan as a rallying cry to drive out the vote for Republicans was a blatant use of a good versus evil narrative for political gain. He attempted to provoke fear in the hearts of voters with exaggerated claims of danger, which he then attempted to link to Democrats. Nixon did the same with lawlessness and African Americans in the 1960s. However, unlike Nixon, Trump’s attempt failed, and Democrats won resoundingly in the midterms. Still, Trump pressed on with his stance on foreign policy.

In December of 2018, the government shutdown over a disagreement between Republicans and Democrats over funding for Trump’s border wall. Trump had famously claimed during his campaign that Mexico would pay for the wall but looked to Congress to fund the startup for the wall. The government shutdown lasted 35 days, the longest shutdown in United States history, and ended without aid for Trump’s wall. In February of 2019, He declared a national emergency over the wall to gather the funds. Trump

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<sup>174</sup> Time Staff, “Here’s Donald Trump’s Presidential Announcement Speech,” TIME, TIME USA, June 16, 2015, <https://time.com/3923128/donald-trump-announcement-speech/>; “Migrant caravan: What is it and why does it matter?,” BBC, November 26, 2018, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-45951782>; Jonathan Lemire and Catherine Lucey, “Remember the caravan? After vote, focus on migrants fades,” AP News, The Associated Press, November 13, 2018, <https://apnews.com/38870e6a25d5469292253b4b716ecc17>.

claimed that “we have an invasion of drugs and criminals coming into our country.”<sup>175</sup> In the summer, he asked Congress again for \$5.9 billion for a wall. This time he received \$1.4 billion, but it was far from what was needed. Using the national emergency, Trump appropriated \$5 billion from Customs and Border Protection, and \$10 billion from the Department of Defense. Construction of the wall began later that year in September.

On May 31, 2020 Trump declared that the United States would designate ANTIFA as a terrorist organization on Twitter. ANTIFA is a broad term used to anyone or group that is opposed to fascism but has no central organization. Trump’s declaration came less than a week after national protests and riots erupted when George Floyd, a 46-year-old African American man, died in police custody after being arrested for allegedly paying with a counterfeit \$20 bill at a grocery store on May 25. The arresting officer, Derick Chauvin, kneeled on his neck for nearly ten minutes. The Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement took the initiative to organize most of the protests. BLM is a decentralized social and political movement advocating for non-violent civil disobedience in protest against instances of police brutality and racial injustice. The protesters initially only demanded justice for Floyd, but quickly broadened their demands to encompass the officers accused of killing Breonna Taylor and the men who killed Ahmaud Arbery after Chauvin was arrested on May 29 and charged with third degree murder.<sup>176</sup>

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<sup>175</sup> Peter Baker, “Trump Declares a National Emergency, and Provokes a Constitutional Clash,” The New York Times, The New York Times Company, November 21, 2020, <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/15/us/politics/national-emergency-trump.html>.

<sup>176</sup> Evan Perez and Jason Hoffman, “Trump tweets Antifa will be labeled a terrorist organization but experts believe that’s unconstitutional,” CNN, last modified May 31, 2020, <https://www.cnn.com/2020/05/31/politics/trump-antifa-protests/index.html>.; “George Floyd: What happened in the final moments of his life,” BBC Online, July 16, 2020, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-52861726>.

On March 13, Breonna Taylor, a 26-year-old African American medical technician, was fatally shot eight times by the Louisville Metro Police Department (LMPD) during the execution of a no-knock search warrant on the wrong house. Their intended targets were drug dealers, who lived more than ten miles away from Taylor's home. As of writing this document, the offending officers have not been arrested.

Ahmaud Arbery, a 25-year-old African American man, was stalked and shot by three white men as he was jogging around his neighborhood in the middle of the day on February 23. There had been a series of robberies in the area and the reported offender was a tall, slender African American. The men were out looking for the offender but found Arbery instead. There were no arrests initially, but one of Arbery's assailants captured the entire incident on video. After the video was released on the internet on May 5, Arbery's assailants were arrested two days later.<sup>177</sup>

These incidents sparked a national discussion on the lack of racial equality and police brutality in the United States. Trump's declaration about ANTIFA came less than a week after Floyd's death and one day before he threatened to send federal troops into states to quell protests and/or riots under the guise of law and order. On June 1, Trump sent federal police to clear protesters outside the White House for a photo opportunity in front of St. John's Episcopal Church in Lafayette Square. The priests were not informed of the photo op and were tear gassed with the protesters. By June 6 the protests had grown to all 50 states, 5 U.S. territories, and 60 other countries. Over half a million people were estimated to have protested in the United States alone. At the end of June,

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<sup>177</sup> BBC Staff, "Breonna Taylor: Louisville office to be fired for deadly force use," BBC Online, June 20, 2020, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-53111709>.; BBC Staff, "Ahmaud Arbery: What do we know about the case?," BBC Online, June 5, 2020, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-52623151>.

Trump ‘mistakenly’ retweeted a video yelling “white power” at protesters. In July, the federal government deployed United States Marshals and Customs agents to Portland OR., Chicago IL., Seattle W.A., Albuquerque, N.M., and Kansas City, MO. to protect federal property. The officers created even more controversy when they began to abduct people in unmarked vehicles. The protests and rioting did not stop. By July 15, the Trump reelection campaign released a campaign ad blaming the Democratic Presidential nominee. The ad features out of context footage of Biden appearing to support the rise of crime in America with a narrator explaining that this is “Joe Biden’s America” even though the events are occurring before the election.<sup>178</sup>

## **XVI. Conclusion**

The Cold War saw traditional Republicanism’s death at the hands of a good versus evil narrative that became increasingly aimed at Americans opposed to the conservative orthodoxy. The Reagan Presidency served as its dénouement. The traditional Republican Party was comprised of multiple factions with differing viewpoints, but common interests. Namely, it desired to protect rugged individualism. Rugged individualism was a romanticist combination of frontier mentality of conquering new lands and constitutionality. To protect rugged individualism, traditional Republicans supported legislation that benefited businesses with the intent of improving the individual’s and family’s quality of life. They methodically collected information before making an informed decision. They discouraged social programs out of a belief that they discouraged the frontier mentality portion of rugged individualism. They valued African

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<sup>178</sup> Trump Campaign, “You won’t be safe in Joe Biden’s America,” Youtube, July 15, 2020, video, 0:30, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JK6K-sWTAtM.>; Jonathan Levinson, Conrad Wilson, James Doubek, and Suzanne Nuyen, “Federal Officers use Unmarked Vehicles To Grab People in Portland, DHS Confirms,” NPR, July 17, 2020, <https://www.npr.org/2020/07/17/892277592/federal-officers-use-unmarked-vehicles-to-grab-protesters-in-portland>.

Americans as people and believed they had the same liberties every American did. They were isolationists who prioritized trade over military conflict. Originally, they were uncompromising, but learned to adapt after the Great Depression and WWII. They came to consider some social programs and less isolationist foreign policy a necessity and worked to adapt their traditional Republican values to them making them as efficient as possible.

During the Cold War, Republicans' message became increasingly simplified by a good versus evil narrative as the United States shifted further to the right. The evil transitioned from Soviet Communists, to American-Communists, to African Americans, to Democrats, and finally to anyone who was amoral or opposed to Republicans. By the end of the Cold War they hoarded rugged individualism to themselves and pressed their beliefs on Americans and other countries that objected to them. They went from advocating for as little government influence as possible to actively seeking to restrict women's right to choose what happens to their bodies; from voting for anti-lynching laws in the era of Jim Crow to justifying segregation; from lowering taxes for the common man to raising them so they could reduce taxes for the 1%; from balancing the budget by any means to increasing spending while lowering taxes; from nativism to nationalism; from isolationism to internationalism; from ideological diversity to a monolithic organization. They did this while professing to be a faultless, patriotic, strong, and 'holier-than-thou' force who held exclusive rights to everything that was good. In short, by the end of the Cold War traditional Republicanism was no more. The Republican Party ceased to practice rugged individualism as they preached it and instead made it exclusive to those who shared their orthodoxy.

Post-Cold War Republican actions are also antithetical to traditional Republicanism, not an adaptation of it. They endlessly advocated for more military funding for wars taking place on every continent but North America while maintaining support for low taxes without budgetary concerns. They contradict traditional Republicanism's respect for minorities and their individual liberties. Fear made Americans restrict each other's rights during the Cold War, and after the 9/11 attacks, fear made Americans give government the power to restrict their rights. The Republican Party did not revert to traditional Republicanism after the Soviet Union fell and the Cold War ended because by the end of the Cold War, they had made their fellow Americans just as much the enemy as the Soviet Union was.

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