

THE REPUBLICAN PARTY IN ARKANSAS, 1920-1982

VOLUME I

A Dissertation

by

BILLY BURTON HATHORN

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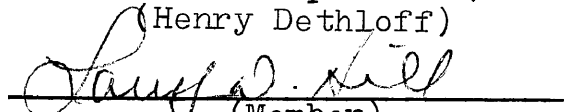
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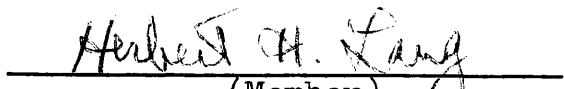
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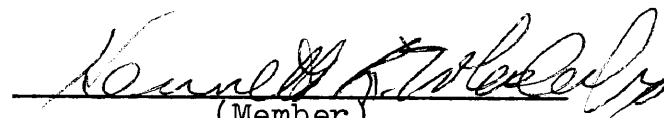
(Member)
(Larry Hill)



(Member)
(Brison Gooch)



(Member)
(Herbert Lang)



(Member)
(Kenneth Mladenka)

May 1983

ABSTRACT

The Republican Party in Arkansas, 1920-1982. (May 1983)

Billy Burton Hathorn, B.A., Louisiana Tech University;
M.A., Northwestern State University

Chairman of Advisory Committee: Dr. Garland Bayliss

Throughout the twentieth century, Arkansas, like other southern states, has been dominated by the Democratic Party. By 1952, however, Republicanism began to emerge in the South, especially in areas with relatively few blacks and in cities and suburbs. Arkansas was the last southern state to support a Republican presidential candidate, not joining the GOP resurgence at the national level until Richard Nixon's 1972 triumph. Yet, the state broke party ranks in 1966 and 1968, electing transplanted New Yorker Winthrop Rockefeller as the first Republican governor since Reconstruction. Republican John Paul Hammerschmidt also captured the Third District congressional seat in northwestern Arkansas and has held the position without interruption since 1967. In 1978, Republican Edwin R. Bethune won the Second District seat held earlier by the legendary Wilbur Mills. Bethune was re-elected in 1980 and 1982. In 1980, Ronald Reagan carried Arkansas by a 5,123-vote plurality but lost Bethune's district. Moreover, Republican Frank White, spurred by cracks in the

Democratic armor, toppled the heavily-favored Democratic Governor William "Bill" Clinton. Clinton became the second Arkansas governor in twenty-six years to be denied reelection, but he regained the position from White in 1982.

Until the Rockefeller era, the Arkansas GOP remained in the hands of a small cadre of conservatives, such as veteran National Committeeman Wallace Townsend. After Rockefeller became national committeeman in 1961, he gradually gained control of the party and began molding it into a more moderate political organization. In formulating his successful coalition, Rockefeller, almost alone among southern Republicans, turned to black and moderate white voters.

This study traces the development of the Arkansas GOP through the twentieth century, with emphasis on the last sixty-two years. The study focuses on political and related aspects of the two-party movement in a previously one-party bastion. The study accents personality and style in Arkansas campaigns, explains the relationship between national and state issues and analyzes the past and current political complexion of the state.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

For generations, it has been said that the South had placed its faith in three "institutions" -- hell, calomel and the Democratic Party. The concept of hell was dealt a blow at the John T. Scopes trial in 1925. New medicines began to challenge the effectiveness of calomel as a fungicide and purgative. In 1928, the Catholic New Yorker, Alfred E. Smith, shook the foundations of the traditional Democratic Party, previously dominated by its rural southern wing.¹ Yet, the South during most of the twentieth century remained securely within the party of its ancestors, an organization which had undergone significant political, economic and social evolution.

As a unit, geographers, demographers and historians have disagreed on exactly what constitutes the South. Generally, historians agree that the eleven former Confederate states form a unique sectional unit. Others may include such border states as Oklahoma, Missouri, Kentucky, West Virginia, Maryland or Delaware as within the South.

Format and style for this dissertation are taken from the Journal of Southern History.

¹John Samuel Ezell, The South Since 1865 (New York, 1975), 412.

Arkansas, the smallest in population of the former Confederate states, is a land of contrasts. The name "Arkansas" literally means "downstream people," and its populace has traditionally accented family ties. The state has been given to a "Puritanic Protestantism," as Catholicism has never been a significant force in Arkansas.² The eastern Arkansas border follows the Mississippi River opposite Tennessee and Mississippi, where the land is a flat, fertile delta long important agriculturally, especially for cotton, rice and soybeans. South Arkansas features hills, swamps and pine forests which support a usually prosperous timber and paper industry. The majority of the state's black population resides along this delta and southern rim and in the capital city of Little Rock.³

Some of the remaining frontier-like areas in America are located in the Ozark Plateau of northwestern Arkansas. There, physical and cultural isolation have partially preserved the old lifestyle often erroneously associated in the public eye with the "typical" Arkansan. The black population is minimal in this section of the state.⁴ In 1965, during House of Representatives debate over voting rights

² Neal Peirce, The Deep South States of America (New York, 1974), 124.

³ Ibid., 123.

⁴ Ibid., 124.

proposals submitted by President Lyndon B. Johnson, then Republican Congressman John V. Lindsay of New York questioned why 78 percent of the whites in Newton County, Arkansas, were registered to vote, but not one black was included on the rolls. Democratic Senator J. William Fulbright later offered Lindsay an explanation which proved rather embarrassing to the outspoken liberal, who at the time was running for mayor of New York City. Only two nonwhites lived in Newton County at the time, and Fulbright retorted that "there is some question in the collective mind of the Census Bureau as to whether either of them is a Negro."⁵

The Ozark Plateau, which covers roughly a quarter of the state, has long been mysterious and intriguing to outsiders, especially tourists. In the nineteenth century, most pioneers moving westward found alternative routes to avoid the thickly forested Arkansas hills.⁶ The Civil War had somewhat less impact in Arkansas than in other southern states due to the nature of the land in the northwestern quadrant. The beautiful but rugged Ozarks could sustain only the small farms, not the plantations prominent along the delta. Arkansas author Charles Morrow Wilson

⁵Quoted in Eric F. Goldman, The Tragedy of Lyndon Johnson (New York, 1969), 329.

⁶Lawrence Goodwyn, The South Central States (New York, 1967), 120.

noted that this terrain caused the majority of Arkansans to lack "any real feelings of belonging with either the Union or the Confederacy."⁷ The northwest corner, which encompasses most of the current Third Congressional District, has long been receptive to Republicanism, particularly at the presidential level in Newton, Searcy, Baxter, Boone, Carroll, Washington Sebastian, Benton and Madison counties.

Politically, Arkansas has been a "land of opportunity," to borrow the state slogan. Until 1977, the state paid its governor just \$10,000 annually, an amount so small that the late Republican Governor Winthrop A. Rockefeller donated his entire 1967 salary toward construction of a chapel at a state hospital.⁸ The salary was so low that Governor Dale L. Bumpers decided to run for the United State Senate in 1974, rather than to seek a third term, to receive the higher \$42,500 compensation.⁹ The salary, however, was sufficient for former Governor Orval Eugene Faubus (1955-1967) to construct a \$100,000 home in Huntsville in Madison County. Faubus explained that he is descended from Scots and was able to finance the residence as a result of wise investments from "savings."¹⁰ Yet,

⁷Quoted in Ibid., 121.

⁸Time, LXXXIX (May 12, 1967), 22.

⁹Ibid., CVI (November 18, 1974), 11.

¹⁰New York Times Magazine, October 9, 1966, 44.

Rockefeller, his long-time political rival, claimed the Faubus "mansion," as it was popularly termed by the press, cost at least \$280,000. The house spans three-hundred feet, exactly the length of Razorback Stadium in Fayetteville, where Faubus spent many Saturday afternoons in the fall.¹¹

In 1924, Arkansas paid its governor \$4,000; the amount increased to \$6,000 and reached the \$10,000 mark in 1947. In 1977, David Pryor became the first governor to receive the revised \$35,000 salary.¹² The governorship, despite the \$10,000 salary, has not been without a wide host of seekers. In 1966, Democrat James Douglas "Jim" Johnson of Conway in Faulkner County resigned his \$20,000-per-year Arkansas Supreme Court judgeship, to seek the party nomination, apparently pursuing the prestige and self-satisfaction of gubernatorial leadership.¹³ In 1970, United States Attorney General John Newton Mitchell, husband of a native Arkansan, created an uproar when he reportedly remarked that Governor Rockefeller could win a third term by simply "buying this election if he wants."¹⁴

¹¹Ibid.

¹²World Almanac and Book of Facts, 1978 (New York, 1978), 249; Ibid., 1925 (New York, 1925), 188; Ibid., 1948 (New York, 1948), 67.

¹³Time, LXXXVIII (November 4, 1966), 33.

¹⁴Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, October 23, 1970, 2589.

Mitchell denied making the comment, but Rockefeller's family fortune was nevertheless even more firmly fixed in the voters' perception. Public salaries have been meager in Arkansas municipalities as well. As late as 1966, no Arkansas mayor earned more than \$5,000 annually. Democratic Mayor William Laman of North Little Rock commented that "when I complain about the salary, they say, 'the money's there for you to take. If you're not smart enough to take it, you deserve your crummy salary.'"¹⁵ The \$35,000 salary brought no real financial relief to the Arkansas governor as a result of inflation and spiraling campaign costs. In 1982, the Democratic and Republican gubernatorial nominees each raised more than \$500,000 to finance their general election campaigns.¹⁶

Arkansas remains one of the few states -- Vermont, New Hampshire and Rhode Island are the others -- to retain the two-year gubernatorial term. Suggestions to expand the term to four years, as Texas did with its 1974 general election, have been rejected by voters. In 1980, Democratic Governor William "Bill" Clinton became only the second chief executive since 1954 to be denied a second

¹⁵"Arkansas: Opportunity Regained," Time, LXXXVIII (December 2, 1966), 27.

¹⁶Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, May 15, 1982, 1127; Human Events, XLII (May 1, 1982), 14.

term, which had previously been a state political tradition.

The Arkansas legislature consists of thirty-five senators and one hundred representatives, split about equally along rural and urban lines. Republicans in 1983 held ten legislative seats, a record for the Arkansas Grand Old Party in the twentieth century.¹⁷ Senators serve four-year terms; representatives, two years. Legislative sessions begin on the second Monday in January in odd-numbered years and may last as long as sixty calendar days. Special legislative sessions may be called as the governor requests without a time limit.¹⁸

The governorship was established by the 1836 Arkansas Constitution, drafted the year of statehood. The office today operates within the format specified in the existing Constitution of 1874. The governor, as in most states, shares power with elected executive officials -- the lieutenant governor, secretary of state, attorney general, land commissioner, auditor and treasurer. The Little Rock political scientist Calvin E. Ledbetter, Jr., a former Democratic member of the Arkansas House, claims this decentralization of authority is the "greatest single

¹⁷Arkansas Gazette, November 4, 1982.

¹⁸World Book Encyclopedia, Vol. 1 (1981), 658.

impediment to executive unity."¹⁹ While the governorship is institutionally weak in Arkansas, the legislature may override a veto by a majority vote. Yet the veto is seldom employed. Between 1953 and 1978, for instance, only ten gubernatorial vetoes were overridden, and all dealt with patronage during the Rockefeller era from 1967-1971.²⁰ The governor appoints the controller, adjutant general of the national guard and the chairmen and members of various commissions and departments. Many such appointments require Senate confirmation, a procedure which often thwarted Republican Governor Rockefeller.²¹

Arkansas has a unique political history -- loyally Democratic but sufficiently independent to have encouraged the development of a two-party system. From the days of Reconstruction, Arkansas Republicanism did not reach sufficient magnitude to elect a governor or a congressman until 1966, or to support the GOP presidential electors until as late as 1972. The state has yet to elect a Republican United States senator. Formed in Little Rock in 1867, the Arkansas GOP rarely polled a significant vote

¹⁹Calvin E. Ledbetter, Jr., "The Office of Governor in Arkansas History," Arkansas Historical Quarterly, XXXVII (Spring 1978), 71, 73.

²⁰Ibid., 69.

²¹John L. Ward, The Arkansas Rockefeller (Baton Rouge, Louisiana, 1978), 72, 74.

during its first half-century. By 1920, Republican Warren G. Harding polled 38.7 percent and carried ten of the state's seventy-five counties.²² The story of this unfolding Republican emergence in Arkansas is among the more important and interesting political developments of the twentieth century in the state.

²²Election Statistics, 1920 (Little Rock: Secretary of State).

CHAPTER II

ARKANSAS REPUBLICANISM, THE EARLY YEARS

The Arkansas Republican Party, officially created in 1867, had within five years split into factions which quarreled over patronage, policy and political strategy.¹ Powell Clayton, Sr., a native Kansan who served as a Republican governor and United States senator during Reconstruction, retained control of the party through the late nineteenth century. Clayton was also ambassador to Mexico during the administrations of Presidents William McKinley and Theodore Roosevelt and was the Arkansas Republican national committeeman through 1913.²

A rival Republican group was led by Harmon Liveright Rempel, a native New Yorker and son of German immigrants who had fled from the Rhineland in the Revolution of 1848. Rempel and his brother, Augustus C. Rempel, opened a lumber business in Newport, Arkansas, in 1876. After serving on the Newport school board and town council, Harmon Rempel was elected to the state legislature in 1886, turning

¹Tom Dillard, "To the Back of the Elephant: Racial Conflict in the Arkansas Republican Party," Arkansas Historical Quarterly, XXXIII (Spring 1974), 3-5.

²Marvin F. Russell, "The Rise of a Republican Leader: Harmon L. Rempel," Arkansas Historical Quarterly, XXXVI (Autumn 1977), 242.

aside two general election opponents.³ In 1887, Rimmel was the leader of the fourteen Republicans in the Arkansas House; there were also four representatives affiliated with the Greenback Labor Party. The staunchly Democratic Arkansas Gazette noted that these "eighteen represent the various forms of opposition to the democracy, to which they give battle on all occasions."⁴ In 1894, Rimmel waged the first of his three unsuccessful campaigns for Arkansas governor.

In the campaign, Rimmel actively sought black backing which had been the backbone of the Arkansas GOP since Reconstruction. The Republicans even held night schools to train blacks how to vote the straight party ticket.⁵ Rimmel was branded as the hand-picked candidate of the unpopular Powell Clayton even though Rimmel appealed for support from Democrats and Populists to construct a revitalized GOP free from the taint of Reconstruction.⁶ Yet, when Rimmel reiterated his independence of Clayton, the

³Ibid., 237.

⁴Arkansas Gazette, January 11, 1887.

⁵Ibid., August 3, 1894.

⁶Ibid., August 11, 14, 1894.

Arkansas Gazette warned that Clayton was the "Republican boss of Arkansas, and a jealous boss, and Mr. Rummel, for his own sake, should avoid giving him offense."⁷ Democrat James Paul Clarke, who later served in the United States Senate, charged that "Clayton and his gang are shaping the course of the party and backing Rummel." In a joint appearance at Walnut Ridge in Lawrence County, Rummel apologized for the "past misdeeds" of Clayton and accented support for such issues as fiscal responsibility and the protective tariff.⁸ The Gazette in the last days of the campaign termed Clarke as the "able standard-bearer of Democracy" and dismissed Rummel as a "clever businessman and thorough gentleman" whose candidacy had been "indeed wasted" under the Republican label.⁹ Governor Clarke subsequently appointed his defeated Republican opponent to the Arkansas Board of Charities.¹⁰

After the 1894 defeat, Rummel ran again in 1896, and in 1900, when he polled a Republican gubernatorial vote that was 48 percent higher than the 1898 showing for Harry F. Auten, who waged an acrimonious "waving the bloody

⁷Ibid., August 11, 1894.

⁸Ibid., August 14, 1894.

⁹Ibid., August 31, 1894.

¹⁰New York Times, October 15, 1927.

shirt" campaign in the style of Powell Clayton.¹¹ In 1900, Rummel, at the age of forty-eight, opposed the Democratic attorney general, Jeff Davis, a "populist" who ignited the crowds with great enthusiasm. While Rummel received some Democratic endorsements, most came from the conservative wing of the party at odds with the prevailing "populists." In fact, some of the Democratic support may have done Rummel more harm than good.¹² Davis labeled Rummel "a nice man" but insisted he was in a "bad crowd," referring to the Clayton wing of the GOP. Davis also criticized the national Republican ticket, headed again by President McKinley, on such issues as imperialism, the gold standard and anti-trust legislation. In waging his 1900 campaign, Rummel received permission from Richard A. McCurdy, an executive with the New York Mutual Life Insurance Company, to take two months vacation from his duties as the firm's Arkansas general manager. McCurdy wired Rummel that he had his "consent, and I urge you to accept the Republican nomination for governor." This so-called "McCurdy Telegram" was astutely interpreted by Davis as a directive from a large insurance company to seize control of the state.

¹¹S.J. Clarke Publishing Company, ed., Centennial History of Arkansas, Vol. 2 (Chicago, 1922), 6; Arkansas Gazette, July 22, 1898; August 3, 1898; March 7, 1900.

¹²Russell, "The Rise of a Republican Leader: Harmon L. Rummel," 248-249.

While Davis undoubtedly knew that he had distorted the telegram, he was too shrewd of a politician not to recognize the value of such rhetoric in seeking votes.¹³ Davis also termed Remmel an "open friend of big business" and charged that the Republican had been "pro-black" in appointing a "kinky-headed negro" to his staff as the Arkansas federal revenue collector, a position Remmel held while retaining his insurance interests.¹⁴ McKinley appointed Remmel as collector, and in 1921, President Warren G. Harding renamed him to the position.¹⁵

Remmel claimed that his victory for governor would demonstrate to northern and eastern capitalists that Arkansas had become a "liberal and progressive" state suitable for large-scale investment. That pitch for economic benefits probably hurt Remmel among the discontented rural voters.¹⁶ Final returns gave Davis 88,637 votes, or 68.5 percent of the two-party total, to Remmel's 40,701,¹⁷

Periodically, Remmel clashed with Clayton and Clayton's lieutenant, Henry M. Cooper, for control over the

¹³Ibid.; Arkansas Gazette, August 4, 11, 1900.

¹⁴Arkansas Gazette, August 28, 1900.

¹⁵Clarke, ed., Centennial History, Vol. 2, 6.

¹⁶Russell, "The Rise of a Republican Leader: Harmon L. Remmel," 250.

¹⁷Arkansas Secretary of State, Biennial Report, 1899-1900 (Little Rock, 1900), 415.

Arkansas GOP. With Clayton's retirement as national committeeman in 1913, Rempel became the undisputed leader of the state party.¹⁸ He was elected national committeeman in 1916, 1920 and 1924, serving until his death in 1927. Rempel's nephew, Augustus Caleb "Gus" Rempel, also played an important role in the development of the party, serving for a time as state chairman prior to his death in 1920. Gus Rempel's wife, Nell Cates Rempel, was the Arkansas GOP national committeewoman from 1928-1952. Pratt Cates Rempel, son of Augustus Rempel and grand-nephew of Harmon Rempel, was president of the Arkansas Young Republicans, chairman of the Pulaski County Republican Committee and was elected mayor of Little Rock in 1951 and 1953, as a Republican candidate.¹⁹ In 1916, Harmon Rempel carried the GOP banner in the second popular election for United States senator in Arkansas under the Seventeenth Amendment, but he lost to Democrat William F. Kirby, 48,922 votes, or 30.7 percent, to 110,293, or 69.3 percent.²⁰ In 1906, President Roosevelt appointed Rempel as United States marshal for the Eastern District of Arkansas, although his old rival, then Senator Jeff Davis,

¹⁸Russell, "The Rise of a Republican Leader: Harmon L. Rempel," 257.

¹⁹Alexander Heard, A Two-Party South? (Chapel Hill, North Carolina, 1952), 111.

²⁰Robert A. Diamond, ed., Congressional Quarterly's Guide to U.S. Elections (Washington, 1975), 486.

tried to block his confirmation. He was reappointed to the marshal position by President William Howard Taft and served for ten years.²¹ In 1921, Rimmel was among a group of Republicans from across the nation who persuaded Harding to appoint Taft to the Supreme Court as chief justice. A prominent civic leader, Rimmel was for a time the chairman of the Arkansas Roads and Drainage Association, and he was appointed by Democratic Governor George W. Donaghey to the State Capitol Commission, which completed the existing statehouse in Little Rock.²² Yet, Rimmel's most important legacy to the state stemmed from his twenty-eight years as Arkansas Republican chairman and thirteen years in the national committeeman slot. Rimmel died on October 14, 1927, in Hot Springs at the age of seventy-five of pneumonia stemming from a paralytic stroke.²³

In the South, black voters remained largely Republican until 1936, but their loyalty to the party of Abraham Lincoln did not enhance them politically. As Republicans, blacks were unable to vote in pivotal southern Democratic primaries, and in general elections their influence was

²¹Clarke, ed., Centennial History, Vol. 2, 6, 7.

²²Ibid.

²³New York Times, October 15, 1927.

numerically ineffectual. Southern white Republicans were usually as race-conscious as their Democratic opponents, especially after 1920, when the "lily white" faction gained control over the state and national party organizations. These Republicans often made racist statements, and black Republicans who wanted to run for office had to chart an independent course, thereby assuring their defeat.²⁴ By 1908, the journalist-historian Ray Stannard Baker claimed that the southern GOP was a "more restricted white oligarchy than the Democratic Party." Baker dismissed the southern Republicans as a "closed corporation which controls or seeks to control all federal offices."²⁵ The emphasis on patronage grew from the inability of the GOP to effectively compete with the Democrats at the state and local levels.

Historians refer to the division in the southern GOP from about 1880 to 1930 as the conflict between the "Black and Tans" and the "Lily Whites," a contest which the white forces ultimately won. The Black and Tans held integrated conventions and usually ran biracial slates for office. Just after Reconstruction, the Black and Tans were normally in the majority, but after a series of actions

²⁴ Monroe Lee Billington, The Political South in the Twentieth Century (New York, 1975), 53.

²⁵ Quoted in C. Vann Woodward, Origins of the New South, 1877-1913 (Baton Rouge, Louisiana, 1952), 462.

which in effect disfranchised many blacks, the integrated faction lost its core constituency. Both Powell Clayton and Harmon Rammel supported the Black and Tans in Arkansas. In 1914, however, Rammel joined the Lily Whites after they won control of the party. The leader of the white faction at the time was Rammel's nephew, Gus Rammel.²⁶

The term "Lily White" was apparently coined by the black Texas Republican, Norris W. Cuney, who in 1888 first referred to an unusual coalition of former anti-bellum Whigs, reformers, businessmen and racists who opposed black suffrage. Originally, Republican presidents owed a patronage debt to the Black and Tans for their support in the national nominating conventions. The Lily Whites then began to send contesting delegations to the national conventions and won the eye of party leaders. As a result, Republicans began to dream of winning the South without the need for black voters, who had been disfranchised by the states through such means as closed primaries, poll taxes, literacy tests and the "grandfather clause." Booker T. Washington led an unsuccessful campaign against the Lily Whites in 1901-1904, but Theodore Roosevelt,

²⁶Russell, "The Rise of a Republican Leader: Harmon L. Rammel," 242-243, 248.

William Howard Taft, Warren Harding, Calvin Coolidge and Herbert Hoover still cultivated the Lily White support. Roosevelt, after initially favoring an integrated GOP in the South, designated the Lily Whites for patronage in an apparent bid to stem any presidential ambitions harbored by Ohio Senator Marcus A. Hanna, the Republican national chairman.²⁷

Lily White strength in Arkansas was displayed as early as 1896, when the Pulaski County Republican Committee failed to nominate any candidates for county office as a result of racial divisions. While the blacks agreed to an integrated slate, the Lily Whites insisted on an all-white ticket, and no consensus could be developed.²⁸ Until the rise of the Lily Whites, anti-Negro activity in Arkansas had been primarily local and without direction. As the blacks stopped voting, the Black and Tans declined in strength and influence. There were no blacks in the higher state elective offices after 1894, and therefore no one to defend black interests among the white leaders

²⁷Hanes Walton, Jr., Black Republicans: The Politics of the Black and Tans (Metuchen, New Jersey, 1975), xii, xiv; David C. Roller and Robert W. Twyman, The Encyclopedia of Southern History (Baton Rouge, Louisiana, 1979), 722; V.O. Key, Jr., Southern Politics in State and Nation (New York, 1949), 286.

²⁸Arkansas Gazette, August 12, 1896.

at the state level.²⁹ By 1905, about two hundred blacks in Pulaski County had formed a Frederick Douglass Republican Club, seeking to wrest control of the party from the white element. Yet, the momentum rested with the Lily Whites, who held meetings in segregated facilities sanctioned by the so-called "Jim Crow" laws. Such white Republicans as the Episcopal Bishop William Montgomery Brown believed that removal of the blacks from the GOP would help to dismantle the Democratic "Solid South." By 1914, the extent of white control over the state Republican convention was even strengthened. The Lily Whites, led by Gus Rimmel and a young Iowa-born Little Rock attorney, Wallace Townsend, convinced the state convention to seat a contested white delegation from Pulaski County, one which had been selected in county convention in the segregated Hotel Marion.³⁰

The 1914 Republican state convention twice rejected the recommendation of the party leadership represented by Harmon Rimmel. Harmon Rimmel had broken with his nephew over the seating of an integrated delegation from Pulaski County, noting that the Arkansas GOP had never before barred blacks. No sooner had the Harmon Rimmel forces

²⁹John William Graves, "Negro Disfranchisement in Arkansas," Arkansas Historical Quarterly, XXVI (Autumn, 1967), 210-220.

³⁰Dillard, "To the Back of the Elephant: Racial Conflict in the Arkansas Republican Party," 7-8, 10.

been overruled on the contested Pulaski delegation than did the convention nominate Mayor Andrew L. Kinney of Green Forest for governor, rejecting Rempel's choice of A.C. Curtis of Lonoke. A third candidate for governor, Little Rock attorney Harry H. Myers, was given the senatorial nomination by acclamation after he endorsed Kinney and affirmed his independence of party leaders. Earlier, Harmon Rempel had blocked Myers' candidacy as permanent convention chairman. Realizing he had been overwhelmed by the Lily Whites, Rempel in effect decided to join his opposition. In the convention keynote address, Judge Charles F. Cole of Batesville declared that Arkansas Democrats considered the state to be a "football which they may kick about as they please." Besides its denunciation of the Democrats, the GOP platform affirmed support for woman's suffrage.³¹

The disaffected black delegates, led by John E. Bush and the Reverend E.C. Morris, withdrew from active positions in the party but did not call for a full break. Morris warned, however, that:

There are 110,000 Negroes in the state of Arkansas who pay their poll tax, and these Negroes will remain Republican no matter what is done. It was the Negro vote that made a Clayton for governor. When you push us to the brink, don't shove us over.³²

³¹Arkansas Gazette, July 14, 15, 1914.

³²Ibid., July 15, 1914.

On occasion, blacks still appeared after 1914 as delegates or alternates from Arkansas to the Republican national conventions but in limited numbers.³³ The Black and Tans faction in Arkansas lacked strong leadership. In 1905, black Republicans in Pine Bluff sought to obtain the nomination of Ferdinand Havis, a black, as U.S. marshal for the Eastern District, but the post went to Harmon Rimmel.³⁴ Earlier, the blacks had sponsored Havis to be the postmaster at Pine Bluff but were again disappointed.³⁵ The black-white schism reached its zenith in 1920, at the Republican state convention in Little Rock as rival slates were sent by Pulaski and Hempstead counties. When the convention seated only the Lily Whites, angered blacks from Phillips County in the Mississippi delta walked out.³⁶ The Arkansas Gazette described the proceedings as follows:

As the blacks from Phillips County swept majestically out of the hall . . . the group was followed by all the sons of Ham, about fifty in number, and all the Negro spectators in the galleries.³⁷

³³Walton, Black Republicans: The Politics of the Black and Tans, 126, 173-174.

³⁴Arkansas Gazette, September 24, 1905.

³⁵Ibid., May 18, 1906.

³⁶Ibid., April 29, 1920.

³⁷Ibid.

Andrew J. Russell, a white delegate from Carroll County in northwestern Arkansas who had earlier run for governor, justified the seating of the Lily Whites. "When two races undertake to ride the elephant, one must ride behind," Russell exclaimed. Russell recalled that blacks had refused to support his gubernatorial campaign because as a state legislator in 1911, he had supported the "grandfather clause."³⁸ The Gazette, in summarizing convention proceedings reported that the credentials committee "performed the patriotic and congenial business of throwing out the Negro contestants from Pulaski and Hempstead counties," rhetoric far removed from the newspaper's civil rights crusade of the 1950s and 1960s. By the time of this 1920 convention, Harmon Rempel had clearly reasserted his party leadership, as the delegates praised the national committeeman as "Uncle Harmony."³⁹

The convention nominated the full Rempel-endorsed slate, including Wallace Townsend for governor, Charles Cole for United States senator, S.S. Langley of Pike County for attorney general and J.O. Livesay of Foreman in Little River County for associate Supreme Court justice. Townsend, a then thirty-eight-year-old attorney who had graduated from Hendrix College in Conway and the

³⁸Ibid.

³⁹Ibid.

University of Arkansas Law School at Fayetteville, eventually succeeded Harmon Rempel as national committeeman. He was also named registrar of the U.S. Land Office in Little Rock in 1922, and he remained active politically until 1961, when Winthrop Rockefeller replaced him as GOP national committeeman.⁴⁰

Black Republican leaders, including the physician J.G. Thornton and the attorneys Scipio A. Jones and J.A. Hibbler, denounced the actions of the 1920 convention and termed the white leaders as "political marauders and human leeches."⁴¹ Ironically, the blacks even commended Republican leader James A. Comer for his refusal to participate in "Lily Whiteism"; two years later, Comer became the spokesman for the Arkansas Ku Klux Klan.⁴² The blacks from Pulaski, Hempstead and Phillips counties held a separate convention at the Mosaic Temple in Little Rock and nominated J.H. Blount, a highly respected principal of a black school in Helena, as their independent general election candidate. W.L. Purifoy of

⁴⁰ Ibid.; James T. Patterson, Mr. Republican (Boston, 1972), 511; Who's Who in America, Vol. 25 (1948-1949), 2498.

⁴¹ Arkansas Gazette, April 23, 1920.

⁴² Ibid.; Charles C. Alexander, "Defeat, Decline, Disintegration: The Ku Klux Klan in Arkansas, 1924 and After," Arkansas Historical Quarterly, XXII (Winter 1963), 311-312.

Forrest City became chairman of the rival black convention, and Scipio Jones was named as factional national committeeman. The black group adopted a resolution calling on all who believed in "Republican principles to join us in the overthrow of Lily Whiteism." At least one of the black delegates, R.C. Samuels of Hempstead County, returned to the regular party after the 1920 bolt. When Samuels tried to address the regular convention, he was ridiculed despite his service to the party over a forty-year period. There is no record of the continued existence of the Black and Tans in Arkansas after 1920. It is probable that the rebel group did rejoin the regular party as in the case of Samuels.⁴³

The 1920 general election was rather heated in Arkansas as a result of the three-way gubernatorial campaign among Townsend, Blount and Democrat Thomas C. McRae, the senatorial race between Republican Charles Cole and Democrat Thaddeus Caraway and the presidential contest between Senator Harding and Democrat James M. Cox of Ohio. Each day the Arkansas Gazette lauded the Democratic candidates and even posted a running list of contributors to the party campaign fund, much as papers often do today in regard to the United Fund or a Christmas drive. The practice became nearly ludicrous when

⁴³Arkansas Gazette, April 29, 1920; Walton, Black Republicans: The Politics of the Black and Tans, 127-128.

the Gazette published a front-page story that Dr. J.E. Allsopp, director of the Baptist State Hospital, had contributed \$5 to the Democratic National Finance Committee. The newspaper quoted Allsopp, a transplanted New York Republican, as saying he was "ashamed" of the GOP ticket headed by Harding.⁴⁴

In the gubernatorial race, McRae largely ignored his opponents and instead concentrated on securing a large turnout for the national ticket. Blount admitted he would never defeat McRae but predicted he would "bury Townsend under such an avalanche of votes that the Lily White party will be a dead letter in the political history of Arkansas." Blount scored what he termed the mismanagement of the state Republican affairs by the Lily Whites but stressed his own GOP allegiance. "When you vote for me, you are voting for absolute fairness in the Republican Party," he told a Lincoln Republican League meeting in Pulaski County.⁴⁵ Townsend ignored Blount and ran in tandem with senatorial hopeful Cole. In a full-page advertisement, the Republicans denounced Arkansas Democrats for refusal to list the GOP candidate for superintendent of public instruction on the ballot. **The state** attorney general ruled that the Republican

⁴⁴Arkansas Gazette, October 22, 1920.

⁴⁵Ibid., October 18, 1920.

candidate, Dr. Ida Joe Brooks, could not be included on the ballot. Republicans claimed such a decision represented a reversal of the concept of woman's suffrage, just sanctioned by the Nineteenth Amendment. The GOP also called for higher teacher pay, elimination of useless state offices and commissions, readjustment of the tax structure and opposition to centralized power -- all general issues which either party might embrace today.⁴⁶

In the senatorial campaign, Cole took the Republican position on the League of Nations, noting he would not favor U.S. entry without the Senate reservations sponsored by Henry Cabot Lodge of Massachusetts. Cole also embraced the Republican high tariff proposal to replace the existing Underwood-Simmons rates, declaring that the "well-paid American laborers will never consent to open competition with pauper labor across the seas." Cole termed the Republican tariff policy "reasonable, fair and adequate," having "proved its own justification."⁴⁷ Yet, Cole was a token candidate for senator. The Ohio native who had resided in Arkansas since 1883 had already failed in Republican bids for Congress, superintendent of public instruction and attorney

⁴⁶Ibid., October 24, 1920; Arkansas Outlook, November 1976.

⁴⁷Arkansas Gazette, October 24, 1920.

general. Actually, the caliber of candidates on the 1920 GOP ticket in Arkansas was impressive. J.O. Livesay, candidate for associate justice, had been an elected prosecutor in Howell County, Missouri, in 1898, and he had moved to southwestern Arkansas in 1907. S.S. Langley, the attorney general nominee, had lost by just six votes in an 1894 race for county and circuit clerk in Pike County. An attorney, Langley had also been a mayor of Murfreesboro. Republicans were also enthusiastic about the prospects of John Worthington in the Third Congressional District race against Democrat John N. Tillman. In fact, the Republicans contested all seven Arkansas House races in 1920.⁴⁸

The Harding-Coolidge ticket made a modest effort to win southern support, but the GOP in 1920 was in such a convincing majority status that voters from the former Confederacy were not crucial to a probable Republican victory. Nevertheless, Harding campaigned in Chattanooga, Tennessee, on October 13, claiming his election would mean a "policy of helpful co-operation both to the North and the South."⁴⁹ Harding captured about 61 percent of the national vote and swept the electoral college, 404 to 127, even winning Democratic Tennessee and Oklahoma. In

⁴⁸ Ibid., October 31, 1920.

⁴⁹ Ibid., October 14, 1920; Shreveport, Louisiana, Times, October 14, 1920.

Arkansas, the Republican ticket received 71,117 votes, or 38.7 percent, to the Democrats' 107,409 votes, or 58.5 percent. Another 5,111 votes, or 2.8 percent, went to Socialist Eugene V. Debs. Moreover, the Republicans carried these ten counties, listed in descending order by percent:

Searcy (64.3)	Monroe (52.2)
Newton (63)	Pike (52.1)
Montgomery (58.7)	Nevada (51.4)
Madison (54.8)	Arkansas (50.9)
Lincoln (52.7)	Logan (50.4)

Harding polled 49.3 percent in Polk and Scott counties and exceeded 45 percent in Carroll, Clay, Garland, Howard and Ouachita counties. Newton and Searcy had also supported GOP presidential nominee Charles Evans Hughes in 1916.⁵⁰

In the gubernatorial returns, McRae handily prevailed, with 123,637 votes, or 66.6 percent, to Townsend's 46,350, or 25 percent, and Blount's 15,627, or 8.4 percent. While Blount, as he had boasted, undoubtedly hurt Townsend somewhat, the fact remained that the Republican nominee despite impressive credentials was not a competitive force in Arkansas politics. Townsend had also

⁵⁰Robert Hunt Lyman, ed., World Almanac and Book of Facts, 1926 (New York, 1926), 818; Svend Petersen, "Arkansas in Presidential Elections," Arkansas Historical Quarterly, VII (Autumn 1948), 203; Election Statistics, 1916 and 1920 (Little Rock: Secretary of State).

lost the gubernatorial race four years earlier to Democrat Charles Hillman Brough. In the senatorial returns, Cole polled 65,381, or 34.1 percent, to Caraway's 126,577, or 65.9 percent and ran slightly ahead of the combined Townsend-Blount totals. Democrats swept the other state and congressional races, but Republican Worthington received an impressive 46.7 percent in the Third Congressional District House race against Democrat Tillman. Worthington's showing was the best Republican vote in the district until John Paul Hammerschmidt of Harrison won the seat in 1966.⁵¹

In 1915, Powell Clayton, then retired from politics and eighty-two years of age, reflected on the dilemma facing Arkansas Republicans in the early twentieth century:

In addition to the Democrats' complete control and manipulation of the election machinery, as each biennial election drew near in Arkansas, some new version of the evils of Reconstruction was brought forth to distract the attention of the voters from the misdeeds of the Democratic Party ring, and to make it possible for them to avoid giving an account of their stewardship. The wildest and most fallacious stories have been told by them.⁵²

⁵¹Election Statistics, 1920; Diamond, ed., Congressional Quarterly's Guide to U.S. Elections, 399, 486, 741.

⁵²Quoted in William O. Penrose, "Power Politics is Old Hat," Arkansas Historical Quarterly, XI (Winter 1952), 243.

The early 1920s brought a startling re-emergence of the white supremacist Ku Klux Klan in Arkansas. In 1922, the group won control of the municipal and county governments in Little Rock and Pulaski County, and its statewide strength was estimated at nearly fifty thousand. Led by Grand Dragon James Comer, a Little Rock attorney, the Klan made striking political gains. There were widespread reports of Klan-induced beatings, lynchings and floggings.⁵³ Comer began his career as a Republican and was allied with the Black and Tans as late as 1920. He had supported Theodore Roosevelt's Progressive Party Black-and-Tan faction in 1912 as well, but by 1924, Comer turned Democrat and endorsed the Klan-backed Lee Cazort, Sr., of Johnson County for governor.⁵⁴ Governor McRae won re-election in 1922, receiving 99,987 votes, or 78.1 percent, to Republican John W. Grabel's 28,055, or 21.9 percent. Grabel, an Ohio native, was a Fayetteville attorney.⁵⁵ When McRae decided to retire in early 1924, a flock of Democrats announced for governor. At the time

⁵³Roller and Twyman, The Encyclopedia of Southern History, 71.

⁵⁴Russell, "The Rise of a Republican Leader: Harmon L. Rammel," 256; Arkansas Gazette, March 1, 1912; Alexander, "Defeat, Decline, Disintegration: The Ku Klux Klan in Arkansas, 1924 and After," 311-312.

⁵⁵Diamond, ed., Congressional Quarterly's Guide to U.S. Elections, 399.

there was no provision for a runoff primary in Arkansas, and Cazort appeared the potential party nominee by plurality. John Ellis Martineau, another primary candidate who himself would win the 1926 election on a "business progressive" platform, even predicted that Cazort's nomination could insure a Republican victory in the fall.⁵⁶ Another Democratic hopeful, Jim G. Ferguson, himself rejected by the Klan, charged the organization was in reality a "Republican political machine." Martineau's worst fears were spared: Cazort lost the nomination to Tom J. Terral, a former Klansman who had joined the group while living in his native Morehouse Parish, Louisiana.⁵⁷ In the primary, Cazort led in only sixteen counties, losing Pulaski, which had fallen under temporary Klan domination in 1922. In Pulaski, there was general dissatisfaction with Comer and unhappiness over the manner by which Cazort received Klan support. Cazort won the Klan endorsement in a series of regional polls conducted in secret by the group. The final results were never released, as Comer merely said that Cazort had been selected by a large margin.⁵⁸ Klan-backed candidates lost three of four legislative races in Pulaski too. Comer

⁵⁶Alexander, "Defeat, Decline, Disintegration: The Ku Klux Klan in Arkansas, 1924 and After," 327.

⁵⁷Ibid., 317.

⁵⁸Ibid., 313, 316.

rebounded by endorsing Terral in the general election, again being contested by Republican Grabiell, but Terral did not need the Klan leader's belated support.⁵⁹

Democrats loyal to the national party accused the Klan of seeking to "Republicanize" Arkansas because the group had so vociferously opposed the 1924 presidential nomination endeavor waged unsuccessfully by the Catholic Alfred Smith. It was Smith's candidacy in 1924 and again in 1928, which mobilized the Klan throughout the South into the Republican presidential column.⁶⁰ Comer, for instance, objected so strenuously to Smith's nomination in 1928 that even the addition of Arkansas Senator Joseph T. Robinson to the ticket could not melt his opposition.⁶¹ Ironically, it was the 1924 Smith campaign which contributed initially to the rebirth of the Klan and eventually to its downfall. By June 1929, nationwide Klan membership was estimated at only 82,000; by 1930, the figure stood at 35,000. In Arkansas, Klan membership dropped from about fifty thousand to less than one thousand.⁶² The organization never seriously recouped, but minor appearances occurred in the early and middle

⁵⁹Ibid., 318; Arkansas Gazette, August 15, 1924.

⁶⁰Alexander, "Defeat, Decline, Disintegration: The Ku Klux Klan in Arkansas, 1924 and After," 327.

⁶¹Ibid., 328.

⁶²Washington Post, November 3, 1930.

1960s.⁶³ In 1924, the Arkansas Klan was strongest in Boone (Harrison), Ouachita (Camden), Jefferson (Pine Bluff), Sebastian (Fort Smith), Faulkner (Conway), Union (El Dorado) and Mississippi (Osceola) counties, but it had dissipated in Pulaski over personalities. Numerous Pulaski Klansmen supported Martineau in 1924 because they disliked Cazort. According to Klansman H.N. Street:

Judge Martineau was the anti-Klan candidate. Yet he got lots of Klan votes. . . . The Klan did not want Cazort. I did not and voted for Martineau because I liked him personally.⁶⁴

President Harding and his successor, Calvin Coolidge, sought to establish a viable Republican base in the South. Before his inauguration, Harding had met with James Weldon Johnson, president of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, to express his hopes of "breaking the Solid South, or at any rate, to set up a functioning Republican Party in the southern states." Johnson later said that Harding told him that blacks should willingly "accept white leadership until such time as prejudice was worn down."⁶⁵ While Harding endorsed anti-lynching legislation and supported the

⁶³Alexander, "Defeat, Decline, Disintegration: The Ku Klux Klan in Arkansas, 1924 and After," 329.

⁶⁴Quoted in Ibid., 318.

⁶⁵Quoted in Richard B. Sherman, The Republican Party and Black America: From McKinley to Hoover, 1896 to 1933 (Charlottesville, Virginia, 1973), 145.

establishment of a commission to study racial problems, he did not feel a moral urgency or a definite political necessity to deal with such issues.⁶⁶ In fact, Harding, Coolidge and, later, Herbert Hoover attempted to downplay the racial question. Coolidge relied on the southwestern Virginia congressman, C. Bascom Slemp, to handle southern patronage, but the move toward two-party politics in the region made comparatively little progress.⁶⁷

Despite their mostly token status, Arkansas Republicans waged a major campaign effort in 1924. Joining Grabiell on the ticket was Charles F. Cole, the Batesville attorney who had lost to Thaddeus Caraway in the U.S. Senate race four years earlier and was now challenging Senator Robinson, probably the most widely respected Democrat in the state. Other Republican candidates included John W. White of Russellville for secretary of state, William T. Mills of Searcy for attorney general and John E. Lyons of Faulkner County for state land commissioner. Wallace Townsend, the twice-defeated gubernatorial candidate, became Grabiell's campaign manager.⁶⁸ Grabiell was given an ovation at a GOP rally in Kempner Theater in

⁶⁶Ibid., 148.

⁶⁷Malcolm Moos, The Republicans: A History of Their Party (New York, 1956), 383.

⁶⁸Arkansas Gazette, September 17, 22, 1924.

Little Rock in September but was unable to speak due to a throat problem. Instead the partisan gathering warmed to the rhetoric of former gubernatorial and senatorial candidate Harry Myers:

I grow to be a stronger Republican every day. We abolished slavery. Secondly, we saved the Union. Third, we established the free school system of America. Fourth, we freed silver, and fifth, we kept America out of the League of Nations.⁶⁹

Republican Chairman and National Committeeman Harmon L. Rimmel also delighted the gathering in a predictably Republican year at the national level:

The Democrats busted the country when they were in power, and they'll bust it again if you put them in power again. The Democratic tariff put the people out of business. It was the doggonedest piece of foolishness I ever heard of.⁷⁰

Rimmel also forecast that President Coolidge would poll 100,000 votes in Arkansas; when the returns were counted, the president had barely two-fifths of that amount.⁷¹

The Republicans defended themselves from Democratic attacks in full-page newspaper advertisements. One campaign commercial discounted Democratic claims of GOP corruption and instead charged that the "Democratic officeholders of the state of Arkansas have been proven to

⁶⁹ Ibid., September 24, 1924.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Ibid., September 28, 1924; Election Statistics, 1924.

to be defaulters, absconders and embezzlers." The advertisement further noted that a sharp increase in Republican voting in the South between 1912 and 1920 reflected the "vital and sound principles upon which the Republican Party is founded." The advertisement continued with the lament that in Arkansas "Republicans are leaders in all public movements, but when it comes to electing them to office, the voters have allowed the politicians to frighten them into keeping the old crowd in office."⁷² On May 11, the GOP adopted a platform calling for enforcement of prohibition, the protective tariff, fiscal management, better schools, reduced taxes and opposition to the Democratic decision to hold separate state and federal elections in 1924. That year, state elections were held on October 7, one month prior to the presidential and congressional races, ostensibly to remove state issues from the realm of national considerations. The platform also endorsed two nonpartisan amendments to the Arkansas Constitution calling for an increase in Supreme Court personnel and the issuance of bonds to pay existing indebtedness owed by municipalities. Both Grabiell and Rimmel received front-page newspaper attention when they backed the court amendment, which was supported by the Arkansas Gazette.⁷³

⁷²Arkansas Gazette, October 5, 1924.

⁷³Ibid., May 12, 1924; October 6, 1924.

Yet, the Grabiell campaign faltered at every turn. For the first time in history, the Gazette reported that many black voters would support the Democratic ticket. One black group met at the Mosaic Temple and expressed dissatisfaction with blacks being excluded from the GOP county conventions. One black leader warned that blacks had been "disappointed at every turn during the past year, and for the first time since the Civil War, we intend to desert the Republican Party in Arkansas."⁷⁴ Democratic nominee Tom Terral, meanwhile, proved to be an able campaigner. At the Democratic State Convention in September, Terral pledged economy, harmony, honesty and a continuation of the policies of popular outgoing Governor McRae. Terral also stressed his concern for rigid law enforcement and vowed to halt bootlegging operations. The convention endorsed the concept of the runoff primary as well to prevent candidates from winning party nominations by plurality, rather than majority votes.⁷⁵ Democratic presidential nominee John W. Davis enjoyed warm support in Arkansas among party leaders. Senator Caraway lauded Davis as a "winner" after conducting a northern campaign swing on behalf of the ticket. Caraway claimed that

⁷⁴Ibid., October 7, 1924.

⁷⁵Ibid., September 12, 1924.

Coolidge was unpopular with even the Republican Party, noting increased GOP opposition in Congress to various presidential proposals.⁷⁶ McRae himself campaigned for Terral and Davis, disputing GOP claims that northern Republicans won the Civil War. "The northern Democrats won the war. The northern Republicans stayed at home to gain control of politics," the governor exclaimed.⁷⁷ Almost forgotten in the 1924 campaign were the senatorial and House races. Robinson, who had been considered earlier in 1924 as a potential compromise presidential nominee, ignored Cole's challenge.

The 1924 state returns gave Grabiell only 25,152 ballots, or 20.2 percent, compared to Terral's 99,598, or 79.8 percent. Democrats also swept the other state races held on October 7 -- all by overwhelming margins. Republicans took solace in the defeat of Democratic Representative J.E. Eades of Conway County. Eades had introduced a bill in the legislature to repudiate the bonds issued by the highway districts across the state, an issue used by Republican Wylie Jones to unseat him. In addition, Boone County elected a GOP judge, and a second Republican legislator won in Newton County.⁷⁸

⁷⁶Ibid., August 31, 1924.

⁷⁷Ibid., October 7, 1924.

⁷⁸Ibid., October 9, 1924; Election Statistics, 1924.

In the presidential contest a month later, Coolidge prevailed nationwide with 54 percent, handily defeating Davis and Progressive nominee Senator Robert M. La Follette, Sr. Coolidge received 382 electoral votes to 136 for Davis and 13 for La Follette, who carried only his native Wisconsin. The Democrats swept every southern state, including Tennessee which had supported Harding in 1920. Coolidge did carry the border states of Kentucky and Davis' own West Virginia.⁷⁹ In 1924, the Republicans ran better percentage-wise in the South than the Democrats did in the North.⁸⁰

Coolidge ran more than nine percentage points behind Harding's 1920 showing in Arkansas, polling only 40,564 votes, or 29.3 percent and carrying only the two predominantly Republican counties of Newton (66 percent of the two-party vote) and Searcy (65 percent). Coolidge also drew 49 percent in Madison County. Davis led with 84,795 votes, or 61.2 percent, while La Follette trailed with 13,173 votes, or 9.5 percent.⁸¹ In the senatorial race, Robinson defeated Cole, 100,408 ballots, or 73.5 percent, to 36,163, or 26.5 percent. The best Republican

⁷⁹Presidential Elections Since 1789 (Washington, 1975), 87.

⁸⁰John Samuel Ezell, The South Since 1865 (New York, 1975), 411.

⁸¹Election Statistics, 1924.

showing in a House race was the 40 percent tally polled by J.S. Thompson in his Third District campaign against Democrat John Tillman. In 1926, Tillman prevailed again, defeating Republican Hardy Kuykendall, who received 35.6 percent.⁸² In 1928, the Third District Democrats nominated Claude A. Fuller, who unseated Tillman in the primary. Republican Sam B. Cecil managed 41.7 percent that year, losing to Fuller. In other House contests throughout the 1920s, Arkansas Democrats prevailed by margins ranging from about two-thirds to unanimity.⁸³

Republicans also fared poorly in the gubernatorial elections of 1926, 1928 and 1930. John Martineau, the Democratic nominee in 1926, who promised the state better roads and schools, defeated Republican M. Drew Bowers, 76.5 percent to 23.6 percent. In 1928, Democrat Harvey J. Parnell, who had succeeded to the governorship when Martineau resigned to accept a federal judgeship, defeated Bowers, 77.3 percent to 22.7 percent. More significantly, Parnell turned aside a little-known Little Rock lawyer to win the party nomination in 1928 -- Brooks Hays. Parnell went on to win a second term in 1930, defeating Republican J.O. Livesay, the Foreman attorney who had run

⁸²Diamond, ed., Congressional Quarterly's Guide to U.S. Elections, 486, 751, 756.

⁸³Ibid., 761.

unsuccessfully for numerous other offices.⁸⁴

The most spirited political campaign from a partisan rivalry in Arkansas during the 1920s was the presidential contest between Hoover and Smith. In retrospect, it seems possible that Hoover would have carried Arkansas in 1928, had not the Democratic nominee selected Senator Robinson as his vice-presidential choice. Robinson, who served as chairman at the Houston national convention, was a strong supporter of prohibition, in contrast to Alfred Smith, who promised to enforce prohibition but to also work for its repeal. Robinson was so determined to make certain that his native state remained loyal to the national party that he made eight enthusiastic speeches before seventy thousand Arkansans. At Arkansas State Teachers College in Conway, Robinson lauded Governor Smith's support of the New York teacher retirement program and recent increases in school appropriations.⁸⁵ At Little Rock on July 4, Robinson pleaded for religious tolerance, calling the Catholic Smith a man of "courage, fidelity and efficiency."⁸⁶ Later at Lonoke, Robinson

⁸⁴Ibid., 399; Arkansas Gazette, July 1, 1928; August 16, 1928; November 7, 1928.

⁸⁵Arkansas Gazette, July 18, 1928; Nevin E. Neal, "The Smith-Robinson Arkansas Campaign of 1928," Arkansas Historical Quarterly, XIX (Spring 1960), 3-4.

⁸⁶Arkansas Gazette, July 5, 1928.

declared that Smith's Catholicism was a "simple and old-fashioned religion."⁸⁷ At Hope, the senator defended Tammany Hall by referring to the society's friendship with the South during Reconstruction. He also denounced party bolters, such as Senators Robert L. Owen of Oklahoma and Thomas Heflin of Alabama, in rousing speech at Hot Springs before the Garland County Democratic Central Committee. Robinson repeatedly termed Smith a "benefactor of the masses."⁸⁸

Due to Senator Robinson's influence, relatively few Arkansas Democrats defected to the Hoover camp. Dr. A.C. Millar, a Methodist minister and Democratic candidate for lieutenant governor, withdrew from his race because he was unwilling to support Smith. Millar, who predicted that the Republicans would carry six to eight southern states, also said he expected many Arkansas Democrats to "suffer political ostracism rather than sacrifice a sacred and vital principle," referring to the right to bolt parties.⁸⁹ Millar, who said that he had previously backed a Republican on only one other occasion, expressed regret that he could not support Robinson for

⁸⁷ Neal, "The Smith-Robinson Arkansas Campaign of 1928," 4-5.

⁸⁸ Arkansas Gazette, July 19, 1928; Arkansas Democrat, July 19, 1928.

⁸⁹ Arkansas Gazette, July 1, 1928.

vice-president. Yet Millar claimed that his favorable impression of Robinson could not overcome his fear that the Democratic pledge to enforce prohibition was "meaningless" due to Smith's position as a prominent leader of the "wets." Millar said his leadership of the Anti-Saloon League and commitment to prohibition made it impossible for him to support the Democratic loyalty oath. When Millar withdrew from the lieutenant governor race, the nomination went to Lee Cazort, Sr., the Klan-supported gubernatorial candidate of 1924. Cazort backed the Smith-Robinson ticket.⁹⁰

The Arkansas Gazette, long supportive of Robinson, detailed almost every event of the national Democratic campaign. Virtually every edition of the paper in the summer and fall of 1928 carried photographs and news items about Robinson and Smith. References to the Republicans were usually pushed to page three or beyond. The Gazette also engaged in race-baiting in the 1928 campaign. One headline read that "Negro Voters A Menace in South: Dixie Cannot Afford to Go Over to Republicans," referring to a speech delivered by Robert Lathan, editor of the Asheville, North Carolina, Citizen. Lathan, a staunch Democrat, charged that the South had worked too hard to disfranchise blacks to turn elections over to the

⁹⁰Ibid.; Neal, "The Smith-Robinson Arkansas Campaign of 1928," 6-7.

Republicans.⁹¹ Typical Gazette headlines proclaimed "Republicans Are Losing Confidence," "Republican Indiana A Doubtful State," and "Smith Victory Seen."⁹² Each day the paper ran a "column" which could be headlined as "Noted Arkansans Praise Robinson," an obvious attempt to promote the Democratic ticket. When the Columbia University educator John Dewey endorsed Smith, the Gazette devoted the whole left column of its front page to the announcement.⁹³ There were no major daily newspapers espousing the Republican viewpoint in Arkansas at the time.

In October 1928, Arkansas Democrats refused to place on the ballot for state or county offices and candidate who did not pledge to support Smith and Robinson. Earlier the "who's who" of state Democrats met at the Arlington Hotel in Hot Springs to map strategy for turning out the vote. A chairman was selected for each county -- the first serious Democratic effort at the state level on behalf of the national ticket since Reconstruction. Robinson, caught up in the euphoria of the meeting, was so

⁹¹Arkansas Gazette, July 10, 1928.

⁹²Ibid., August 8, 1928.

⁹³Ibid., November 2, 1928.

confident that he wrote Democratic National Chairman John J. Raskob, a former Republican and close friend of Smith's, that he could "dismiss Arkansas" from his list of worries.⁹⁴

The religion issue overshadowed the 1928 campaign in Arkansas. Both the Methodist Conference and the Arkansas Baptist Convention advocated the use of the pulpit to recruit opposition to the Smith-Robinson ticket. The Reverend Selsus Tull attacked Robinson in a heated political speech before a boisterous crowd of nearly ten thousand in Little Rock, claiming the Arkansas senator had shown "ingratitude" after labeling as "bigots" those Democrats intending to support Herbert Hoover.⁹⁵ Shortly afterwards, Tull, who was on the executive committee of the Anti-Smith Voters' League of Arkansas, was called to pastor a Baptist church in Temple, Texas, where he had previously served from 1915-1918.⁹⁶ Baptist minister Ben H. Bogard viewed Robinson's nomination as an "insult" to hold crucial southern support for the national ticket. In Fort Smith, fifteen Protestant ministers announced opposition to the Democrats because of Smith's stand on liquor sales. Dr. John Roach Stratton of the Calvary

⁹⁴ Neal, "The Smith-Robinson Arkansas Campaign of 1928," 6-7.

⁹⁵ Ibid., 7; Arkansas Gazette, July 27, 1928.

⁹⁶ Arkansas Gazette, August 5, 1928.

Baptist Church in New York, spoke in Little Rock, charging that Smith was reared in an "environment of saloons, gambling dens, race tracks and houses of ill-fame."⁹⁷

When rumors persisted that Stratton would be pelted with eggs by angry Democrats, Smith's supporters wisely requested that about one hundred additional policemen be placed on duty to avoid any clashes which might result in unfavorable publicity. The Reverend H.D. Knickerbocker of the First Methodist Episcopal, South, Church in Little Rock urged his congregation to support Hoover, who he said represented "the best in American life." When the church governing board rebuked Pastor Knickerbocker and defended Smith and Robinson, the minister promptly requested a transfer. The ministers were most critical of the Democratic State Central Committee for attempting to drive anti-Smith elements from the party.⁹⁸

The Smith-Robinson ticket had its most ardent Arkansas defender in former Governor Charles Brough (1917-1921), who in 1928 was president of Central College in Conway. A Ph.D. graduate of Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, Brough was well-known for his speaking talents

⁹⁷Neal, "The Smith-Robinson Arkansas Campaign of 1928," 7-8.

⁹⁸Ibid., 9; Arkansas Gazette, July 16, 1928; August 5, 1928; Arkansas Democrat, August 14, 1928.

on the Chautaugua circuit.⁹⁹ As governor, Brough had put Arkansas on a cash financial basis but was unable to convince the General Assembly to accept a budget system. He was instrumental in opening the Democratic primaries to women and created a state commission of charities and corrections. After a racial riot occurred in Elaine, Arkansas, in 1919, where at least twenty-five whites and one hundred blacks were killed, Brough sent the state militia to restore order. Twelve blacks were sentenced to be hanged as a result of the riots, but the Little Rock black Republican lawyer, Scipio Jones, secured reversals of the death penalties.¹⁰⁰

Brough was widely respected as a Baptist layman, but he ran into opposition from the pro-Hoover state Baptist leaders. The editor of the Arkansas Baptist Advance, Dr. J.S. Compere, informed Brough that he had received many letters from ministers who objected to Smith. While speaking in El Dorado on October 27, Brough was sent a telegram by Compere and Dr. J.S. Rogers, the executive secretary of the Arkansas Baptist Convention. The two strongly urged Brough to consider Baptist organizational

⁹⁹William Foy Lisenby, "Brough, Baptists and Bombast: The Election of 1928," Arkansas Historical Quarterly, XXXII (Summer 1973), 121-124.

¹⁰⁰Roller and Twyman, The Encyclopedia of Southern History, 71.

views and to halt his outspoken support for the national ticket. Instead, the energetic Brough accused Compere and Rogers of presuming to "dictate to a former governor in the matter of his support of the most distinguished son of the state," referring to Robinson.¹⁰¹

Brough accused Compere of converting the Baptist Advance into an organ for the Republican Party and further declared that the election of Smith would be a "mighty blow against religious intolerance." As a result, the El Dorado Sunday Times declared in a streamer headline that "Brough Defies the Church."¹⁰²

Anti-Smith Democrats criticized Brough on two other fronts as well. For one, they pointed to his opposition to a resolution at the 1924 Arkansas Baptist Convention which rejected the Darwinian theory of evolution. Brough was also rebuked for allegedly participating in the Lord's Supper with some Methodists in Hot Springs in 1918.¹⁰³

Despite his liberalism on some policy issues, Brough remained a firm segregationist. He emphatically warned southerners that Republican inroads in the South would jeopardize white rule. He told a Mississippi audience

¹⁰¹Lisenby, "Brough, Baptists and Bombast: The Election of 1928," 125-126.

¹⁰²Ibid.; El Dorado Sunday Times, October 28, 1928.

¹⁰³Lisenby, "Brough, Baptists and Bombast: The Election of 1928," 127-128.

that the Democrats stood for the "doctrine of Anglo-Saxon supremacy," which he said superseded the issues of religion or prohibition.¹⁰⁴ Brough criticized Hoover for having desegregated the Commerce Department while serving as secretary under Presidents Harding and Coolidge. Even after Hoover had taken office as president, Brough wrote Senator Caraway to congratulate the Arkansan for revealing that the wife of a black congressman was entertained at a White House tea.¹⁰⁵ Hoover was also attacked on the racial issue by Colonel Robert Ewing, publisher of the Shreveport Times, which circulates in southern Arkansas, and the Democratic national committeeman from Louisiana. Ewing termed Hoover "no friend of the South on flood relief," noting that the commerce secretary had originally endorsed federal appropriations to finance levee and drainage work. Once facing a Senate committee, Hoover instead called for joint state-federal funding, Ewing noted.¹⁰⁶

Robinson never became openly discouraged at the likelihood of a Hoover landslide. He campaigned from September 3 until November 5, making sixty speeches and

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 128; Conway Log Cabin Democrat, July 13, 1928.

¹⁰⁵ Lisenby, "Brough, Baptists and Bombast: The Election of 1928," 129.

¹⁰⁶ Arkansas Gazette, August 5, 1928.

fifty-seven platform appearances. In all, Robinson traveled over 25,000 miles across the South and West.¹⁰⁷ Robinson claimed that the Kansas editor, William Allen White, had once called Hoover a "fat, pudgy capon sitting on eggs." White denied making such a remark and offered to donate \$1,000 to the Democratic committee if Robinson could prove his claim.¹⁰⁸

While blacks generally supported Hoover, a black Little Rock physician, J.M. Robinson, organized the Arkansas Negro Democratic Association with the expressed purpose of supporting Robinson for vice-president. Younger, more activist blacks turned to the NAACP for leadership under the direction of state president Harold Flowers, a Pine Bluff attorney.¹⁰⁹ Hoover alienated some southern blacks by nominating the white supremacist John J. Parker to the Supreme Court, but the Senate rejected the appointee.¹¹⁰

Historian George H. Mayer claims that Robinson's selection did nothing to significantly boost Smith's chances of capturing the presidency. He terms the nomination "a

¹⁰⁷ Neal, "The Smith-Robinson Arkansas Campaign of 1928," 11.

¹⁰⁸ Shreveport, Louisiana, Times, October 3, 1928.

¹⁰⁹ Heard, A Two-Party South?, 194-195.

¹¹⁰ Dillard, "To the Back of the Elephant: Racial Conflict in the Arkansas Republican Party," 9.

final gesture to disgruntled southerners," adding facetiously that even the re-enslavement of blacks might not have helped Smith among dissident southerners in 1928.¹¹¹ Another historian, Hanes Walton, Jr., insists that Hoover had a "bagman," who bought black votes in the South at the GOP convention in Kansas City and, later, in the general election. According to Walton, the journalist Drew Pearson identified the alleged bagman as Rush Holland, a former assistant to Harding's disgraced attorney general, Harry Daugherty.¹¹² Hoover himself denied having purchased support in the South, claiming that "exposures of abuse in the sale of patronage necessitated" his reorganization of the southern GOP. In effect, Hoover ended patronage for the remaining Black and Tans on the federal level. Instead, Hoover hoped to attract southern whites to compensate for the lost black backing.¹¹³ Hoover condemned certain southern black politicians for "blackmailing" his administration into giving them offices to sell, specifically Perry Howard, a black assistant U.S. attorney general and the veteran Mississippi Republican national

¹¹¹George H. Mayer, The Republican Party, 1854-1966 (New York, 1967), 406.

¹¹²Walton, Black Republicans: The Politics of the Black and Tans, 159.

¹¹³Ibid., 160-161; I.A. Newby, The South: A History (New York, 1972), 388.

committeeman under prosecution at the time for fraud in the dispensation of government jobs. While Hoover endorsed the concept of racial equality and recommended the anti-lynching bill still pending in Congress, he did not suggest specific recommendations as to how the federal government might assist underprivileged blacks. The 1928 GOP platform, for instance, contained only one sentence regarding race relations.¹¹⁴ Hoover ran best in those areas of the South where social and economic change was having the greatest impact and where the grip of tradition was loosest, the cities and emerging suburbs.¹¹⁵

At the national level, Hoover polled 58.8 percent of the major-party vote and 444 electoral votes, compared to 87 for Smith. The Republicans swept every northern state except predominantly Catholic Massachusetts and Rhode Island and carried five southern states, Virginia, North Carolina, Tennessee, Florida and Texas.¹¹⁶

Like Harding eight years earlier, Hoover carried ten Arkansas counties, but only four supported both

¹¹⁴ Sherman, The Republican Party and Black America: From McKinley to Hoover, 1896 to 1933, 229-231.

¹¹⁵ Newby, The South: A History, 389.

¹¹⁶ Presidential Elections Since 1789, 88.

Harding and Hoover. Hoover received majorities in these counties, listed in descending order by percent:

Newton (71.1)	Washington (56.7)
Searcy (70.2)	Polk (54)
Madison (61.6)	Carroll (53.3)
Benton (59.2)	Hot Spring (53)
Montgomery (57.3)	Sebastian (52.1)

In the popular vote, Hoover received 77,751, or 39.3 percent in Arkansas, compared to Smith's 119,196, or 60.3 percent. A scattering of votes was cast for Socialist Norman Thomas and Communist William Z. Foster.¹¹⁷

Political scientist V.O. Key, Jr., found an inverse relationship between a state's Hoover vote in 1928 and the percent of blacks within the population. Each of the five southern states which supported Hoover had a relatively small black population. Within each state, the counties with the highest percentage of blacks generally cast Democratic ballots. In addition, the turnout was greater in 1928 than it had been in 1924.¹¹⁸ John Samuel Ezell concluded that Hoover's southern victories meant that the South would no longer "vote the devil if he were on the Democratic ticket." Ezell also claims that Robinson's presence on the ticket as well as newspaper and professional political support for Smith prevented an even

¹¹⁷Petersen, "Arkansas in Presidential Elections," 207; Election Statistics, 1928.

¹¹⁸Key, Southern Politics in State and Nation, 325.

larger Hoover victory. Only in Arkansas among southern states did the majority of "white counties" support Smith, probably the result of Robinson's influence. Moreover, all ten counties which supported Hoover were "white counties."¹¹⁹

The nine majority-black counties in Arkansas in 1928 supported Smith; of twenty-nine counties with 5 percent or fewer black population, twenty-one supported the Democrats, a factor Key attributed to Robinson. In the entire South of 266 counties with fewer than 5 percent black population, only 79 returned a majority for the Democrats. The 266 counties with fewer than 5 percent black population included 150 in Texas.¹²⁰ Eight Arkansas counties of peak Democratic strength gave more than 75 percent to Smith, in contrast to the state percentage of 60. All of the heavily Smith counties were located in the eastern delta, where the largest proportions of blacks reside. The ten counties supporting Hoover had low black populations, but all the heavily white counties certainly did not vote Republican in Arkansas in 1928. Without exception, all counties that supported Hoover were in western and northern Arkansas. Hoover also

¹¹⁹Ezell, The South Since 1865, 412.

¹²⁰Key, Southern Politics in State and Nation, 319.

polled at least 40 percent in twenty-two other counties. His worst performance was 12.5 percent in predominantly black Lee County, which at the time had few blacks who voted.¹²¹

The Republicans almost carried Garland County, taking 49.1 percent there, and polled at least 47 percent in Boone, Craighead, Crawford and Pike counties. Pulaski, the state's largest county in population, voted 34.6 percent Republican in 1928.¹²² Virtually the only Republican victory in the state was the re-election of State Representative Osro Cobb of Mt. Ida in Montgomery County. Cobb, then secretary of the Arkansas Republican State Central Committee, had been the youngest delegate to the 1928 GOP national convention. He was also the first Republican to serve in the legislature from Montgomery County, and he became a familiar face in state GOP circles over the next thirty-five years.¹²³

In analyzing the 1928 returns, the Arkansas Gazette dismissed Hoover's 39 percent showing, instead accenting the fact that at least 36,000 who voted for the GOP presidential electors failed to back Republican gubernatorial

¹²¹Ibid., 325; Election Statistics, 1928.

¹²²Election Statistics, 1928.

¹²³Arkansas Gazette, November 9, 1928.

candidate M. Drew Bowers.¹²⁴ The newspaper also appeared condescending to Arkansas blacks, claiming in a front-page article that:

Negroes of the state appear to have been confused by the issues and by the fact that their sympathies mostly were with Smith and Robinson, because many did not go to the polls.¹²⁵

Humorist Will Rogers, in commenting on the Hoover inroads in the South, remarked that "Yankees are swarming into the South like locusts, and the rascals bring their Republican politics with 'em."¹²⁶ Wilbur J. Cash commented that the "Republican rolls, once dedicated to niggers, hillbillies and other such pariahs, begin to smack of the Social Register."¹²⁷

The GOP inroads of 1928 quickly dissipated. Harry S. Truman, in his presidential memoirs, stressed that those southern Democrats who defected to Hoover were largely defeated in the 1930 elections. "That was the price they paid for going off the reservation in 1928," Truman quipped.¹²⁸

¹²⁴Ibid., November 10, 1928.

¹²⁵Ibid., November 7, 1928.

¹²⁶Quoted in George Brown Tindall, The Emergence of the New South, 1913-1945 (Baton Rouge, Louisiana, 1967), 251.

¹²⁷Wilbur J. Cash, "Jehovah of the Tar Heels," American Mercury, XVII (1929), 318.

¹²⁸Harry S. Truman, Memoirs by Harry S. Truman, Vol. 2 (Garden City, New York, 1956), 203.

CHAPTER III

DEMOCRATIC DOMINANCE IN THE 1930s AND 1940s

Between 1930 and 1940, Arkansas population grew by 5.1 percent, rising from 1,854,482 to 1,949,387.¹ Large migrations of "Okies" and "Arkies" moved westward during the 1930s, seeking relief from hard economic times. Thus the population drain from the state had become among the most acute in the nation by 1950, rivaled only by portions of Appalachia.² The plight of the Arkansas poor received national attention in 1936, when local welfare authorities refused to extend relief to a group of black and white sharecroppers in the Mississippi delta. Technically, the sharecroppers were offered jobs on other plantations but refused transfers. Hence, the men were declared ineligible for relief. The tenants claimed that their affiliation with the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, founded in 1934, in Tyronza, Arkansas, had been the real cause of their eviction.³ The union demanded written contracts, minimum wages of \$1 for a ten-hour day and

¹United States Commerce Department, 1970 Census of Population, Vol. 1, Part 5 (Washington, 1973), 7.

²Ben Wattenberg and Richard M. Scammon, This U.S.A. (Garden City, New York, 1965), 98, 115.

³New Republic, LXXXVI (April 1, 1936), 209.

formal recognition by the landowners. When twenty-one families representing more than one hundred persons were turned from their homes, Arkansas authorities were criticized by liberals throughout the nation. The matter was resolved when Democratic Senator Joseph T. Robinson intervened and convinced the Works Progress Administration to grant relief. The sharecropper plight became a part of the national conscience with the publication in 1939 of John Steinbeck's The Grapes of Wrath. To alleviate the problems of tenant farmers, Congress authorized the Farm Security Administration in 1937. By 1939, the farmer union, which had once represented 35,000 members in Arkansas, Oklahoma and Missouri, dissipated.⁴

The condition of blacks also remained bleak during the 1930s. Sporadic lynchings occurred after having reached a peak in the mid-1920s. In 1919, Congressman Leonidas C. Dyer, a St. Louis Republican, had introduced a bill to end the practice of arbitrary lynchings. Under the measure, which passed the House in January 1922, participants in mob actions were to have been charged with murder in the U.S. District Court with jurisdiction where the incident occurred. Most southern congressmen

⁴Ibid.; David C. Roller and Robert W. Twyman, The Encyclopedia of Southern History (Baton Rouge, Louisiana, 1979), 1153-1154.

objected to the bill on grounds of constitutionality and the threat of alleged "unchecked rape."⁵ Arkansas Congressman John N. Tillman warned that women in many parts of the South "where criminal Negroes live are in constant danger of a fate a thousand times worse than death."⁶ For a time, it appeared that northern Republicans would support the bill in sufficient numbers to break the southern filibuster in the Senate, but the measure died later in the year.⁷ James Weldon Johnson, an official of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, complained that GOP leaders appeared to feel that they had only to declare themselves for the Dyer bill and then permit southern Democrats to take the blame for its defeat.⁸ Johnson's associate, Oswald Garrison Villard, warned President Warren G. Harding that blacks were losing "their faith in both the old parties . . . and turning in other directions."⁹ The

⁵Richard B. Sherman, The Republican Party and Black America: From McKinley to Hoover, 1896-1933 (Charlottesville, Virginia, 1973), 178, 185.

⁶Quoted in Ibid., 185.

⁷New York Times, September 22, 29, 1922.

⁸Sherman, The Republican Party and Black America, 197.

⁹Quoted in Ibid., 198.

Republican platforms in 1928 and 1932 endorsed anti-lynching legislation, but the southern filibuster continued to block passage in the Senate. Gradually, anti-lynching forces molded public opinion against the practice, and the number of lynchings, which totaled twenty-five nationwide in 1930, for instance, dwindled to eight in 1932.¹⁰ By 1936, there had been a total through the years of 248 lynchings in Arkansas alone.¹¹

In politics, Democratic domination of Arkansas and the South was enhanced during the 1930s and 1940s. Unable to effectively compete in the 1930 gubernatorial campaign, Republicans sought to block the second-term bid of Governor Harvey Parnell by legal means, contending that the incumbent Democrat's campaign expenses had exceeded the \$5,000 amount then allowed under statute. When Parnell published his expenses as \$5,950.35 (later revised to \$4,950.30), State Representative Osro Cobb, the secretary of the Republican State Central Committee, wrote Attorney General Hal L. Norwood that the governor was indeed in violation of the law.¹² The GOP petition was dismissed in Pulaski Chancery Court in Little Rock

¹⁰Ibid., 199, 229, 253; Roller and Twyman, Encyclopedia of Southern History, 763-764; New York Times, December 28, 1930; January 1, 1933.

¹¹Time, XXVII (May 11, 1936), 19.

¹²Arkansas Gazette, October 14, 16, 1930.

on grounds that the court lacked jurisdiction. Representing the plaintiffs was the Little Rock lawyer Wallace Townsend, the GOP gubernatorial nominee in 1916 and 1920.¹³ Meanwhile, the 1930 campaign was clouded by the death of Democratic Congressman Otis T. Wingo of the Fourth District, who was popular among many Republicans. Cobb endorsed Wingo's widow, Effie Gene Wingo, and announced that he would seek the seat in a special election if Mrs. Wingo were not named as the Democratic standard-bearer. Democrats, acceding to Wingo's death-bed wish, selected Mrs. Wingo as the nominee. No Republicans even ran for Congress in Arkansas in 1930.¹⁴

Republicans instead concentrated on the gubernatorial candidacy of J.O. Livesay, the Foreman attorney who had long been active in party affairs. In a newspaper advertisement prior to the general election, the GOP claimed the Democrats had given Arkansas through the years "inefficiency, wanton waste, coercive machine rule and government for private gain at public expense." The Republicans pledged a "clean business administration, substantial tax reductions, honest audits, law enforcement, industrial leadership and real statesmanship." The notice pleaded with voters to "go to the polls and vote

¹³Ibid., October 15, 1930.

¹⁴Ibid., October 22, 24, 28, 1930.

for Arkansas instead of self-seeking politicians." In addition to Livesay, whom the GOP painted as a "natural orator of the old school," the Republicans offered a lieutenant governor nominee, C.H. Harding, a Pennsylvania native who was president of the Fort Smith Building and Loan Association.¹⁵ Livesay and Harding were overwhelmed by the Democrats. Parnell defeated Livesay, 81.2 percent to 18.8 percent, and Democrat Lawrence E. Wilson of Camden turned aside Harding.¹⁶ The Republicans also lost their precious seat in the Arkansas House, as Cobb declined to seek re-election from his Montgomery County base.¹⁷

As the depression worsened, President Herbert Hoover's hopes of winning a second term faded. Republican prospects in Arkansas were even bleaker, although the party did manage to field three candidates, including Livesay, who challenged Democratic gubernatorial nominee Junius Marion Futrell of Paragould. In the Senate race, John W. White of Russellville carried the GOP banner against Hattie W. Caraway, the Democrat who had succeeded her husband, Thaddeus Caraway. Republicans also offered

¹⁵Ibid., November 3, 1930.

¹⁶Election Statistics, 1930 (Little Rock: Secretary of State).

¹⁷New York Times, November 6, 1930.

Samuel Clark of Conway as the challenger to Attorney General Norwood. The Arkansas Gazette concluded that the GOP had "apparently conducted a less active campaign" than in earlier years and noted that the general election was in reality a "formality of electing Democratic nominees."¹⁸ Voter attention was placed mainly on the candidacy of Democratic presidential nominee Franklin Delano Roosevelt and five proposed state constitutional amendments, one of which, had it been adopted, would have permitted the GOP leadership to designate minority-party members to serve on county election boards and as precinct officials.¹⁹

Determined to produce a huge Roosevelt majority, the Democrats appointed finance directors in sixty-five Arkansas counties in 1932. The overall campaign was coordinated by Democratic National Committeeman Brooks Hays of Little Rock.²⁰ The returns clearly reflected the Democratic effort, as Roosevelt and his Texan running-mate, House Speaker John Nance Garner, polled 189,602 votes, or 86 percent, and carried all seventy-five counties. Hoover trailed with 28,467 votes, or 12.9 percent, while three others, Socialist Norman Thomas, Communist William

¹⁸Arkansas Gazette, November 6, 1932.

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Ibid., October 5, 1932.

Z. Foster and William "Coin" Harvey, the crusading advocate of free silver, polled a scattering of ballots. No twentieth century presidential candidate has surpassed Roosevelt's 1932 showing in Arkansas.²¹ The crushing Republican defeat was painted nevertheless in the best possible light by Hoover. In a letter to Arkansas National Committeeman Townsend, Hoover said the results should not be construed as a "discouragement to the Republican Party but rather as a challenge to continued zealous and aggressive work in behalf of its sound and enduring principles."²²

Livesay ran even worse than Hoover, polling only 8.9 percent in the gubernatorial contest against Futrell. Mrs. Caraway held Republican White to 10.5 percent in the Senate race, and Norwood easily won re-election as attorney general. Two Republican House candidates, Ira J. Mack of Newport in the Second District and A.L. Barber of Little Rock in the Fifth District, were overwhelmed by Democratic incumbents John E. Miller and Heartsill Ragon, respectively.²³

²¹Svend Petersen, "Arkansas in Presidential Elections," Arkansas Historical Quarterly, VII (Autumn 1948), 204.

²²Letter from Herbert Hoover to Wallace Townsend, November 30, 1932, in Wallace Townsend Collection at University of Arkansas at Little Rock Archives.

²³Robert A. Diamond, ed., Congressional Quarterly's Guide to U.S. Elections (Washington, 1975), 399, 486.

The "Roosevelt Revolution" quickly won the hearts and minds of most Arkansans, but the small band of determined Republicans remained arch-critics of the president. At the Arkansas GOP Convention in Little Rock in 1934, a scathing attack was made on the New Deal, branding the program as "radical socialism, desertion of sound money, appeal to class hatred, an attempt to regiment and control the daily lives of a free people and disregard for God-given laws." Republican leaders flayed the Democrats for their alleged "complete surrender to the liquor interests," reflecting the prohibitionist feelings of the Arkansas GOP officials. In calling for a strong two-party system, the GOP pledged to halt "waste and extravagance" in Arkansas government by demanding "nonpolitical compulsory audits of all public funds." The convention elected Osro Cobb as state chairman, succeeding the retiring Andrew J. Russell of Carroll County. It nominated Hamburg attorney George C. Ledbetter, a Tennessee native who had practiced law for seven years in Ashley County, as the gubernatorial candidate.²⁴ In the Third Congressional District, the party fielded a Baptist minister from Rogers, the Reverend Pat W. Murphy, to challenge the pro-New Deal Democrat Claude A. Fuller.²⁵

²⁴Arkansas Gazette, September 5, 1934.

²⁵Ibid.

The 1934 returns were again discouraging to the Republicans, as Governor Futrell won re-election, defeating Ledbetter, 89.2 percent to 9.4 percent. Murphy polled 33.7 percent in the House race against Fuller, but that showing was below the totals received by GOP candidates for the seat during the 1920s.²⁶

Republican delegates from Arkansas supported the party choices at the presidential conventions in the 1930s. All fifteen delegates supported Hoover in 1932, and the eleven-member group backed the 1936 nominee, Alfred M. Landon of Kansas, as well. Cobb and Townsend, as party chairman and national committeeman, respectively, dominated the GOP in Arkansas during the 1930s, and National Committeewoman Nell Cates Remmel was also influential. Members of the central committee included such figures as M. Drew Bowers of Pocahontas, the 1928 gubernatorial candidate, Cooper Hudspeth of Fort Smith, Victor M. Wade of Batesville, Charles R. Black of Corning, R.A. Jones of Hot Springs and J.S. Thompson of Gravette. There were also four black members of the committee in 1934, each of whom had remained in the party after the walkout of the Black-and-Tans in 1920.²⁷ Most Republican

²⁶Diamond, ed., Congressional Quarterly's Guide to U.S. Elections, 399, 776.

²⁷Ibid., 159-160; Arkansas Gazette, September 5, 1934.

activists were attorneys, businessmen or professional persons who viewed their party activities as either hobbies or crusades for "good government." Many were hard-working civic leaders. Some historians have claimed that southern Republicans at the time did not really desire to win elections. Such Republicans have been pictured as content to keep the party small so that they might exert maximum control over patronage.²⁸ Social scientist Alexander Heard wrote that such Republicans "have been big fish in little ponds, and they liked it."²⁹ Democrats were seen, on the other hand, by political scientist V.O. Key, Jr., as:

merely a holding-company for a congeries of transient squabbling factions, most of which fail by far to meet the standards of permanence, cohesiveness and responsibility that characterize the political party.³⁰

An analysis of the Wallace Townsend letters clearly reveals that while Townsend did relish his national committeeman position, which he held from 1928-1961, he also desired victory at the polls. In a letter to Paragould attorney Robert E. Fuhr, for instance, Townsend noted that he was "sincerely interested in the welfare and

²⁸Dewey W. Grantham, Jr., ed., The Democratic South (Athens, Georgia, 1963), 46.

²⁹Alexander Heard, A Two-Party South? (Chapel Hill, North Carolina, 1952), 97.

³⁰V.O. Key, Jr., Southern Politics in State and Nation (New York, 1949), 16.

growth of the Republican Party, even more than I am in any office that I might get out of it."³¹ Townsend had at the time announced that he would seek the Republican committee endorsement as U.S. attorney for the Eastern District of Arkansas, a position he filled in the Harding administration.³² Yet, the public perception for years has been that southern Republicans in the first half of the twentieth century did not really desire electoral victory.³³

After fielding only two major candidates in 1934, Arkansas Republicans in 1936 offered a lengthy slate. George Ledbetter, who lost the 1934 governor's race, opposed Senator Robinson, and Chairman Cobb challenged the Democratic gubernatorial nominee, Carl E. Bailey, who had won the primary to succeed Futrell. The party also ran candidates for lieutenant governor, secretary of state, attorney general, land commissioner and three of the seven U.S. House seats. As a former legislator, Cobb was initially perceived as perhaps a stronger candidate than his GOP predecessors. He followed Bailey's lead in backing a state amendment to reform criminal court procedures.

³¹Letter from Wallace Townsend to Robert Fuhr, February 18, 1921, Townsend Collection, UALR Archives.

³²Statement of position by Wallace Townsend, January 22, 1921, Townsend Collection, UALR Archives.

³³Wall Street Journal, March 31, 1964.

Claiming that state officials had been "prone to dilly-dally and pussyfoot with crime," Cobb hailed the amendment as a means to eliminate delays in the courts while safeguarding the right of a jury trial.³⁴

Arkansas Republicans worked for Landon in 1936, but they were unable to affect the overwhelming national trend toward the Democrats. Townsend was a friend of Landon's; six years after the presidential campaign, Townsend invited Landon to join him and Arkansas Republican leader John W. White for a "float trip over two or three days down the White River." Landon and his daughter, Nancy, a future U.S. senator from Kansas, took the float trip in that summer of 1942.³⁵

The 1936 returns bore the same bitter fruit for the Arkansas GOP: Landon polled only 32,039 votes, or 17.9 percent, in the state, compared to Roosevelt's 146,765, or 81.8 percent. Cobb, who had waged what the Arkansas Gazette termed an "intensive campaign," polled even fewer votes than Landon, 26,875, or 14.7 percent, to Bailey's 155,152, or 84.9 percent. In the Senate race, Robinson swamped Ledbetter, 81.8 percent to 16.4 percent. Other statewide and congressional Republican candidates also

³⁴Arkansas Gazette, November 1, 2, 1936.

³⁵Letter from Wallace Townsend to Alfred Landon, March 31, 1942, Townsend Collection, UALR Archives.

went down to crushing defeat.³⁶

Arkansas Republicans fared no better in 1938, even though some New Dealers in other parts of the nation became vulnerable at the polls by that time. In the gubernatorial contest, Republican Charles F. Cole of Batesville campaigned on the advantages of a two-party system, the common GOP theme. In a newspaper advertisement, the Republicans claimed that the one-party format had "seriously retarded the development of our state. We have the highest per capita debt of any state in the nation." The Republicans pledged to restore the "faith and principles of our founders and the abandonment of new, untried and dangerous theories in state and national affairs," a reference to the Roosevelt domestic program.³⁷ In the Senate race, Republican C.D. Atkinson of Fayetteville, challenging incumbent Hattie Caraway, claimed that the Democrat had "shut her eyes and swallowed the New Deal." If elected, Atkinson promised to be "free from the domination of the president," referring to Roosevelt's proposal to increase the size of the Supreme Court.³⁸ While hailing both Cole and Atkinson for their work in civic

³⁶Diamond, ed., Congressional Quarterly's Guide to U.S. Elections, 399, 486; Petersen, "Arkansas in Presidential Elections," 205; Arkansas Gazette, November 4, 1936.

³⁷Arkansas Gazette, November 6, 1938.

³⁸Ibid.

affairs, Cobb said the GOP would "cheerfully" accept the results.³⁹ Bailey subsequently polled 91.4 percent, and Mrs. Caraway drew 89.6 percent. No Arkansas Republicans ran for the U.S. House in 1938.⁴⁰

During the 1930s and 1940s, Arkansas Republicans never found a formula for successfully joining whites and blacks. As early as 1924, Townsend branded as "entirely without merit" a challenge filed by two blacks against four white delegates and four alternates elected at the state level to the national convention. Townsend noted that blacks were charging discrimination in voting, but he denied that the GOP had ever turned aside any black for racial reasons.⁴¹ The party remained in white hands, a situation Alexander Heard attributes to racial prejudice, jealousy over federal patronage and the need for "respectable white leadership."⁴²

Despite their minority status, southern Republicans had long held strength in mountainous northwest Arkansas.

³⁹Ibid., November 8, 1938.

⁴⁰Diamond, ed., Congressional Quarterly's Guide to U.S. Elections, 399, 486.

⁴¹Letter from Wallace Townsend to Republican State Central Committee, May 26, 1924, Townsend Collection, UALR Archives.

⁴²Heard, A Two-Party South?, 221.

Throughout their histories, Searcy and Newton counties have elected Republicans to local offices. Here indeed the often critical election is the GOP primary. Moreover, Madison County has at times been especially generous to Republicans seeking local offices.⁴³ Traditionally, the southern GOP had consisted of mountaineers, blacks, migrants from the North and descendants of some Populists and those opposed to various Democratic Party programs.⁴⁴ Author Jasper Berry Shannon, by contrast, saw the Democrats as:

an order into which one is born; it is a tradition which symbolizes a long-since outgrown past whose perpetuation is a part of a creed of loyalty to one's forbears, a species of ancestor worship without meaning in contemporary political action.⁴⁵

Republicans were optimistic as the 1940 nominating convention approaches; the party had made hefty gains in the 1938 national mid-term elections, and polls indicated that voters had reservations about a third-term candidacy of President Roosevelt. Leading candidates at the GOP convention were freshman Senator Robert A. Taft of Ohio and New York District Attorney Thomas E. Dewey, but both were relatively inexperienced on the national scene.

⁴³Key, Southern Politics in State and Nation, 281.

⁴⁴Heard, A Two-Party South?, 37.

⁴⁵Jasper Berry Shannon, Toward a New Politics in the South (Knoxville, Tennessee, 1949), 14-15.

After the delegates deadlocked between Taft and Dewey, the convention turned to the "dark horse" Wendell Lewis Willkie, an even less experienced candidate. Willkie, an Indiana native and utilities executive, was also a former Democrat. He defeated Taft, 655 to 318, before post-ballot switches. The Arkansas delegation, which initially voted seven for Taft and two each for Dewey and Willkie, cast ten for Taft and two for Willkie on the fifth ballot, when the momentum swung to Willkie. On the sixth ballot after switches, all twelve Arkansas delegates endorsed Willkie.⁴⁶

Though Townsend had worked actively at the convention for Taft, he was optimistic about Willkie's prospects in the general election. In a letter to a Republican friend in Minneapolis, Totton P. Heffelfinger, Townsend suggested that the two "meet when we celebrate the inauguration of Mr. Willkie next January."⁴⁷ The Arkansas GOP waged an active advertising campaign in 1940. Chairman Cobb, in a Lincoln Day address in Marshall, Arkansas, praised Vice-President Garner as an independent Democrat and lambasted Roosevelt's "game of deception and concealment"

⁴⁶ Diamond, ed., Congressional Quarterly's Guide to U.S. Elections, 161.

⁴⁷ Letter from Wallace Townsend to Totton Heffelfinger, July 13, 1940, Townsend Collection, UALR Archives.

regarding the third-term bid.⁴⁸ In advertisements urging Willkie's election, Arkansas Republicans listed "ten broken promises" blamed on the Democrats, including failure to reduce government costs, the continuing concentration of power in Washington and the recurring farm problem. The Willkie Democratic Club of Little Rock even contended that the GOP nominee "must be elected if our democratic form of government is to be preserved." The Republicans sought to disarm Roosevelt's claim that voters should not change presidents when war was threatening by stressing that the British switched prime ministers from Neville Chamberlain to Winston Churchill during wartime. The GOP ran "educational advertisements" instructing the voters on the mechanics of ticket-splitting. Willkie was hailed by his backers as the candidate for labor, preparedness, peace, employment and "bigger pay checks."⁴⁹

In the 1940 gubernatorial race, the Republicans offered Stuttgart Mayor Harley C. Stump, who claimed that the one-party system had hindered industrial growth in Arkansas. Stump, a World War I veteran who had been named as Stuttgart's "most valuable citizen," also accused the Roosevelt administration of underpaying WPA workers in the state. He claimed that a two-party system would

⁴⁸Arkansas Gazette, February 13, 1940.

⁴⁹Ibid., November 3, 4, 1940.

enhance the state's political bargaining position with Washington.⁵⁰

The 1940 returns were another in the continuing series of disappointments to Republicans, both nationally and in Arkansas. Willkie, like Landon four years earlier, carried only Newton and Searcy counties in Arkansas, losing to Roosevelt, 42,121, or 20.9 percent, to 158,622, or 78.6 percent.⁵¹ Stump was overwhelmed by Democratic nominee Homer M. Adkins, receiving only 8.2 percent and losing even in Stuttgart.⁵² In the Third Congressional District, Democrat Clyde T. Ellis of Bentonville, who had unseated Claude Fuller in the 1938 primary, won re-election over Republican Clyde M. Williams of Rogers, 71.1 percent to 28.9 percent.⁵³ Two Republicans were elected to the legislature, Custer Hamm and Curtis Swaim, representing Newton and Madison counties, respectively. A third Republican nearly won the legislative race in Searcy County as well.⁵⁴

The Census Bureau revealed that Arkansas in 1940 was

⁵⁰Ibid., November 5, 1940.

⁵¹Petersen, "Arkansas in Presidential Elections," 206, 207; Election Statistics, 1940.

⁵²Diamond, ed., Congressional Quarterly's Guide to U.S. Elections, 399.

⁵³Ibid., 791.

⁵⁴Arkansas Gazette, November 7, 1940.

74.8 percent white, 24.8 percent black and .4 percent foreign-born. The state was also listed as 22.2 percent urban, 57 percent rural-farm and 20.8 percent rural-non-farm. Whites in the Ozark Plateau had cultural and demographic characteristics similar to those in the Kentucky and Tennessee Appalachians. The Arkansas delta population, on the other hand, resembled the "black belt" of Louisiana or Mississippi.⁵⁵ The report revealed that Arkansas ranked eighth in the nation in the percent of its population that was black, but blacks were concentrated in less than half the land area of the state. Seven counties, for instance, had no blacks, while sixteen others had fewer than one hundred blacks each. The black population declined by 8.1 percent between 1920 and 1940. Arkansas was also the third most rural state in the nation in 1940, 77.8 percent, exceeded only by North Dakota and Mississippi.⁵⁶

This demographic situation created an insurmountable problem for Arkansas Republicans, who faced Democratic control of voting procedures and discrimination in the apportionment of legislative and congressional seats.

⁵⁵John B. Mitchell, "An Analysis of Arkansas' Population by Race and Nativity and Residence," Arkansas Historical Quarterly, VIII (Summer 1949), 115-116.

⁵⁶Ibid., 117-119, 123, 126.

Too weak to conduct statewide primaries, the party nominated by committee or convention and often could not even attract token candidates to fill available ballot positions. The lack of Republican candidates in Arkansas was most dramatic in 1942, when the party allowed Governor Adkins to win his second term without even the customary weak opposition. The GOP that year also declined to oppose any Democratic congressional candidates, including senatorial nominee John L. McClellan of Little Rock. McClellan in fact ran without GOP opposition in Arkansas for thirty years, not drawing a Republican adversary until his final campaign in 1972.⁵⁷

In the midst of world war, the Republicans were cautiously optimistic that the entrenched Democrats could be defeated in 1944. The party nominated Thomas Dewey, then the governor of New York, who received all except three of the 1,059 delegate votes on the first convention ballot. The twelve Arkansas delegates endorsed Dewey.⁵⁸ One Midwesterner voted for General Douglas MacArthur, a Little Rock native.⁵⁹ Rumors persisted that the Republicans might recruit Virginia Democratic Senator

⁵⁷Diamond, ed., Congressional Quarterly's Guide to U.S. Elections, 399, 486, 796.

⁵⁸Ibid., 162.

⁵⁹Petersen, "Arkansas in Presidential Elections," 206.

Harry Flood Byrd, Sr., to run as vice-president with Dewey, but the GOP eastern advisors rejected the move as politically unsound.⁶⁰ This was apparently the first of many subsequent efforts to draw the Byrd family into the GOP. As late as 1982, some Virginia Republicans still wanted Independent Senator Harry Byrd, Jr., to join the GOP and seek re-election. Instead, Byrd decided to retire.⁶¹ Dewey tapped conservative Ohio Governor John W. Bricker as his running-mate.

Bricker wrote Townsend to stress that the 1944 campaign would be conducted on a national basis:

I pledge to you as a Republican leader that this campaign will be actively carried to the far corners of this country, and I am sure that if we all do our part, the New Deal can and will be defeated.⁶²

Townsend remained outwardly friendly with all the major party figures in the 1940s, but he was philosophically more attuned to Taft, who passed up the 1944 convention struggle to concentrate on his re-election as senator. Once enthusiastic about Willkie's prospects, Townsend

⁶⁰ Stetson Kennedy, Southern Exposure (Garden City, New York, 1946), 149.

⁶¹ Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, June 12, 1982.

⁶² Letter from John Bricker to Wallace Townsend, July 19, 1944, Townsend Collection, UALR Archives.

by 1942 privately expressed regrets over Willkie's titular leadership of the national party. In a letter to his friend, Richard B. Scandrett, Jr., of New York, Townsend suggested that the 1940 presidential nominee should "show a little more consideration for the national committee."⁶³ A year later though Townsend wrote Willkie to express his praise for the former candidate's best seller, One World. "Your Little Rocks are enthusiastic in their praise of the book and the local dealers cannot supply the demand."⁶⁴

Sensing possible Republican gains in 1944, Arkansas Democratic leaders at first altered primary voting rules to restrict participation to those who had declared allegiance to the principles, purposes and objectives of the party. The leadership barred from the primaries those who had supported a Republican in the previous general election. Hence, Arkansans who backed a GOP presidential nominee found themselves technically ineligible to vote in the next scheduled Democratic primary. Democratic voters were required to certify their support for the "party principles," including the poll tax, segregation, anti-miscegenation laws and fundamental support for

⁶³Letter from Wallace Townsend to Richard Scandrett, April 27, 1942, Townsend Collection, UALR Archives.

⁶⁴Letter from Wallace Townsend to Wendell Willkie, April 22, 1943, Townsend Collection, UALR Archives.

"good government." While blacks were technically excluded from voting, a limited number were allowed to vote in the primaries if they swore allegiance to the "party principles." While the restrictions could not be readily enforced, they did serve to prevent some Arkansans from straying the party line in national elections.⁶⁵ As the campaign progressed, however, anti-Roosevelt Democrats secured a rule change which nullified the previous action and permitted Democrats to vote for rival party candidates in a general election without losing their party membership. Such a move was seen by Townsend as an advantage for the Dewey campaign.⁶⁶

The Republicans recruited Leon J. Wilson, the advertising director for the Clyde E. Palmer newspaper chain, which owned papers in Texarkana, Hot Springs, El Dorado and Camden, to serve as chairman of the Jeffersonian Democrats of Arkansas. This anti-New Deal group likened Roosevelt to a tool of labor leader Sidney Hillman and communist Earl Browder. Dewey himself as the campaign neared its close charged that Roosevelt had permitted the New Deal to become "dominated by communists."⁶⁷ Calling for a bipartisan foreign policy,

⁶⁵Kennedy, Southern Exposure, 119, 120; Key, Southern Politics in State and Nation, 427.

⁶⁶Arkansas Gazette, November 5, 1944.

⁶⁷Ibid., November 2, 1944.

Arkansas Republicans blasted Roosevelt for allegedly "coming to think of himself as the be-all and know-all of American government." The GOP also claimed that the New Deal had "damned the businessman with words and beset him with bureaucrats, consumed his time and money in needless questionnaires and taxed hope and enterprise out of him."⁶⁸

State Republicans fielded other candidates in 1944, including former Stuttgart Mayor Stump, making his second race for governor, this time against Democratic nominee Benjamin T. Laney of Camden. Victor Wade of Batesville carried the GOP banner against Democratic senatorial nominee J. William Fulbright of Fayetteville, who had served a single term in the U.S. House before unseating Hattie Caraway in the party primary. Other GOP candidates were Charles R. Black of Corning for lieutenant governor and Charles F. Cole of Batesville, the 1938 gubernatorial candidate this time seeking to be attorney general. Two Republicans, Lonzo A. Ross of Conway and Tom Sullins of Fayetteville, ran for the House. Ross challenged Brooks Hays in the Fifth District, while Sullins, an attorney, opposed Democrat James T. "Jim" Trimble, a Berryville circuit judge and successor to Fulbright in the Third District. Much of the ballot attention, however, was centered on the fight to enact a right-to-work law, a

⁶⁸Ibid., November 3, 1944.

campaign successfully led by the Arkansas Free Enterprise Association.⁶⁹

Dewey was confident that he could unseat Roosevelt. On election eve, he wrote Townsend to express the belief that the GOP was "more unified than at any period in recent years and as a result of this campaign is in a strong position to carry on the fight for free government."⁷⁰

The returns did not justify Dewey's optimism. Dewey did run better in every southern state than had Willkie four years earlier with the exception of Texas, where the 1944 anti-Roosevelt slates were divided.⁷¹ In Arkansas, Dewey received 63,551 votes, or 29.8 percent, compared to Roosevelt's 148,965, or 70 percent. Dewey carried four counties, adding Benton and Madison to the two won earlier by Landon and Willkie, Searcy and Newton.⁷² In no southern state did Dewey prevail.

After the election, Townsend wrote Dewey to congratulate the New Yorker for a "wonderful fight for free enterprise," adding that Arkansas Republicans were fully "in support of the policies which you advocated so

⁶⁹Ibid., November 6, 7, 1944.

⁷⁰Letter from Thomas Dewey to Wallace Townsend, November 7, 1944, Townsend Collection, UALR Archives.

⁷¹Roller and Twyman, Encyclopedia of Southern History, 400.

⁷²Election Statistics, 1944.

effectively." Townsend expressed hope that the two-party system would take root in Arkansas.⁷³ Later, Townsend pledged his personal support for Roosevelt in "conducting the war and negotiating the peace" and predicted that former Minnesota Governor Harold E. Stassen could emerge as the "leader of the party" by 1948.⁷⁴

In Arkansas elections, conservative Democrat Laney, who had praised Roosevelt's "peerless leadership of our war effort," overwhelmed Republican Stump, 86 percent to 14 percent.⁷⁵ Fulbright similarly defeated Wade, an insurance executive, 85.1 percent to 14.9 percent.⁷⁶ Actually, Fulbright ran 33,564 votes ahead of the Roosevelt-Harry S. Truman ticket in Arkansas. In the Third Congressional District, Trimble defeated Republican Sullins, 63.3 percent to 36.7 percent. In the Fifth District, Democrat Hays received about 87 percent in his contest with Republican Ross.⁷⁷ Trimble held the House

⁷³Letter from Wallace Townsend to Thomas Dewey, November 11, 1944, Townsend Collection, UALR Archives.

⁷⁴Letter from Wallace Townsend to Richard Scandrett, November 21, 1944, Townsend Collection, UALR Archives.

⁷⁵Arkansas Gazette, November 9, 1944; Diamond, ed., Congressional Quarterly's Guide to U.S. Elections, 399.

⁷⁶Diamond, ed., Congressional Quarterly's Guide to U.S. Elections, 486.

⁷⁷Ibid., 486, 801; Election Statistics, 1944.

seat until his defeat by a Republican in 1966; Hays, until his rejection in a 1958 general election against a write-in candidate, Dr. Dale Alford of Little Rock.

The death of President Roosevelt had no immediate impact on southern politics. Suggestions occasionally surfaced calling for a purely conservative Republican Party to challenge a liberal Democratic Party. Joseph Stephen Kimmel of Davenport, Iowa, for instance, wrote Townsend in 1945, suggesting that a new conservative party be established on grounds that Republicanism had too many drawbacks with some voters. "The newspaper cartoonists who portrayed Mark Hanna in 1896 with dollar marks all over his suit started this prejudice," Kimmel wrote.⁷⁸ Townsend replied to his friend Kimmel, urging not "a new party but a revitalized Republican Party." Townsend continued by emphasizing that:

southern Democrats are beginning to recognize the fact that their party has been taken away from them, and the prejudice against the name 'Republican' is losing its force, especially since the Democratic Party has bid for and captured the greater part of the Negro vote. We should emphasize the constructive thinking of the Republican Party, its advocacy of constitutional government and its championship of the protection and advancement of private initiative and private enterprise.⁷⁹

⁷⁸Letter from Joseph Kimmel to Wallace Townsend, February 15, 1945, Townsend Collection, UALR Archives.

⁷⁹Letter from Wallace Townsend to Joseph Kimmel, February 24, 1945, Townsend Collection, UALR Archives.

In 1946, the Arkansas GOP offered candidates for governor and five U.S. House seats. The main party endeavor was conducted in the Fifth District against incumbent Brooks Hays by attorney James R. Harris, who ran on a platform extolling his background as a World War II veteran. In a campaign advertisement, Harris criticized the Truman administration for what he termed "crippling controls, balmy bureaus, padded payrolls, soapless stores, bureaucratic bungling, frantic form-filling, paternal government and Pendergast politics," the latter a reference to the president's former association with the Pendergast "machine" in Kansas City.⁸⁰ Harris though failed to adversely link Hays with Truman; he received only 15 percent of the vote.⁸¹ The Hays-Harris rivalry did produce one new figure to the forefront of Arkansas Republicanism: Pratt Cates Rempel, Harris' young campaign manager. In his capacity as president of Arkansas Young Republicans, Rempel had worked closely with Townsend in seeking to expand the party. In early 1946, Rempel wrote Townsend to stress the need of organization in the northern and central portions of the state. With such activity,

⁸⁰James Harris campaign brochure, 1946, Republican Party Collection, UALR Archives.

⁸¹Diamond, ed., Congressional Quarterly's Guide to U.S. Elections, 806.

Rommel predicted that state Republicans could "show the national committee some concrete results in the 1948 elections."⁸²

In the 1946 gubernatorial race, Laney won his second term, defeating Republican W.T. Mills, who received less than 16 percent of the vote.⁸³ Republicans held their two legislative seats secured first in 1944 from Madison and Newton counties and added a third position from Searcy County. A party publication lauded the election of the trio of GOP legislators and predicted further gains for the Republicans would lead to industrial, commercial and cultural advancement in the state.⁸⁴

Nationwide, Republicans swept to control of both the House and Senate in 1946. Senator Fulbright then claimed that President Truman had lost the confidence of the nation and should resign to permit GOP House Speaker Joseph W. Martin of Massachusetts to succeed to the presidency. Fulbright reasoned that the nation had given the GOP a mandate in the mid-term elections and that Truman could best respect such wishes by stepping aside. As there was no vice-president, the speaker would, under legislation

⁸²Letter from Pratt Rommel to Wallace Townsend, January 28, 1946, Townsend Collection, UALR Archives.

⁸³Election Statistics, 1946.

⁸⁴Arkansas State Republican, June 1947.

approved by Congress in 1947, succeed to the presidency. Truman declined Fulbright's advice and thereafter referred to the Arkansan as "Senator Halfbright."⁸⁵

In the late 1940s, Arkansas Republicans tried to expand the party through a variety of means. In 1946, the GOP activated the Young Republicans under Remmel's leadership and formed a women's organization as well. In a letter to GOP leader Dalton Dotson of Huntsville in Madison County, Townsend noted that he had reservations as to whether a women's group was needed but conceded that all states with active Republican parties did indeed have such auxiliary organizations.⁸⁶ In 1948, the party sponsored an essay contest, offering prizes of up to \$1,000 per winner for the best paper reflecting the theme, "Why Arkansas Would Benefit by a Strong Two-Party System." More than fifty persons entered the contest, which focused attention on a longstanding GOP theme.⁸⁷

Throughout the 1940s and early 1950s, Townsend had wanted to see the party nominate Senator Taft for president. Townsend was personally close to the Ohioan, having entertained Taft's son, Horace Taft, in the summer of

⁸⁵William E. Leuchtenburg, A Troubled Feast: American Society Since 1945 (Boston, 1979), 15.

⁸⁶Letter from Wallace Townsend to Dalton Dotson, January 31, 1946, Townsend Collection, UALR Archives.

⁸⁷Essay Contest Entries, March 1, 1948, Republican Party Collection, UALR Archives.

1944, while the young man was stationed at Camp Joseph T. Robinson near Little Rock.⁸⁸ Townsend entered the 1948 Republican Convention in Philadelphia hopeful that Taft would at last be rewarded with the nomination. It did not happen; the GOP was split between the largely Midwestern isolationist wing, epitomized by Taft, and the so-called "eastern establishment," still loyal to New York Governor Dewey. A smaller bloc of delegates supported Stassen of Minnesota. On the first two ballots, the Arkansas delegation, headed by Townsend, split as follows: seven for Taft, four for Stassen and three for Dewey. Dewey received 515 votes to 274 for Taft and 149 for Stassen at that point. On the third ballot, the momentum shifted to Dewey, who garnered the required majority vote. All fourteen Arkansans supported Dewey on the third ballot after Taft's strength dissipated.⁸⁹

Earlier, Truman had commissioned his administrative assistant, Clark M. Clifford, to prepare a confidential memorandum on the political outlook for 1948. In his 43-page report, Clifford emphasized the importance of the black vote to the preservation of Democratic hegemony in the North, noting the apparent popularity of both Dewey

⁸⁸Letter from Wallace Townsend to Robert Taft, May 4, 1944, Townsend Collection, UALR Archives.

⁸⁹Diamond, ed., Congressional Quarterly's Guide to U.S. Elections, 164.

and former Vice-President Henry A. Wallace, who was then contemplating a third-party presidential campaign. Clifford urged Truman to "go as far as possible" in recommending measures to protect minority groups. "As always, the South can be considered safely Democratic, and in formulating national policy, it can be safely ignored," Clifford reported.⁹⁰ Truman was concerned over possible GOP inroads into the black vote, noting Harlem, New York, had supported Dewey in 1944. The Republican platforms of 1944 and 1948 called for civil rights legislation to protect minorities. Franklin Roosevelt had not supported such legislation, deferring instead to southern congressional committee chairmen. World War II though accelerated the civil rights movement in the North.⁹¹

Truman had taken some actions favorable to blacks. He had urged the abolition of the southern poll tax but had refused to support the move to expel Mississippi Senator Theodore Bilbo for racist remarks. He had condemned racial violence after a series of murders occurred in the South in 1946. Truman's civil rights legislative proposals were bottled up in Congress by hostile southerners.

⁹⁰Quoted in Harvard Sitkoff, "Harry Truman and the Election of 1948: The Coming of Age of Civil Rights in American Politics," Journal of Southern History, XXVII (November 1971), 597.

⁹¹Ibid., 598.

By March 1948, Truman's popularity had declined to 35 percent in the South, according to the Gallup Poll. And southerners opposed civil rights legislation by a nine-to-one margin, Gallup reported. Truman, however, was convinced that a strong civil rights plank would be necessary to hold the large northern states for the Democrats. Therefore, civil rights became part of the agenda of modern urban political liberalism. Among those rising to the center stage in support of the Truman civil rights package was the young mayor of Minneapolis, Hubert Horatio Humphrey.⁹²

Dewey expected to win a share of the black vote in the North and East, especially in view of his selection of the liberal California Governor Earl Warren as his running-mate. Dewey had also taken credit for securing the first state fair employment practices act and for establishing a commission to halt discrimination. The governor boasted that he had appointed numerous blacks to high state office.⁹³

Dissident southerners, rejecting Truman, Dewey and Wallace, walked out of the Democratic National Convention in 1948, holding a rival convention in Birmingham, Alabama. These insurgent Democrats, branding themselves as

⁹²Ibid., 599, 601, 602, 615.

⁹³Ibid., 607, 612.

the States' Rights Party, nominated their own presidential and vice-presidential candidates, Governors James Strom Thurmond of South Carolina and Fielding L. Wright of Mississippi, respectively. Thurmond, a staunch conservative and segregationist, predicted that he could win sufficient electoral votes to deadlock the election, forcing Truman and Dewey to deal with the southerners to gain the White House.⁹⁴

In Arkansas, the Democrats split between the Truman regulars and the Thurmond dissidents. While Thurmond was the official state Democratic Party nominee in Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and South Carolina -- the only states he carried in the election -- Arkansas officials remained largely loyal to Truman. The Arkansas States' Righters, popularly termed "Dixiecrats," were led by the Free Enterprise Association, the planter-corporation group based in Marianna in Lee County. The group's executive secretary, John L. Daggett, who had worked diligently for passage of the Arkansas right-to-work law four years earlier, endorsed Thurmond and became a Dixiecratic elector candidate.⁹⁵ Governor Laney

⁹⁴Shreveport, Louisiana, Times, October 28, 1948.

⁹⁵James E. Lester, Jr., A Man for Arkansas: Sid McMath and the Southern Reform Tradition (Little Rock, 1976), 102; Arkansas Gazette, January 17, August 27, September 16, 1948.

at first indicated that he would endorse Thurmond but equivocated, perhaps hoping to preserve his longstanding party ties to prepare for a primary challenge to Fulbright in 1950. Laney finally assumed the honorary chairmanship of the Thurmond campaign in Arkansas but not until October.⁹⁶

Moderate Democrats in Arkansas were led by Congressman Hays and the party's young gubernatorial nominee, Sidney Sanders "Sid" McMath, who held the line for Truman. The Arkansas Gazette also ran numerous editorials supporting Truman.⁹⁷ McMath, who had defeated the more conservative Jack Holt in the primary, ignored his weak Republican opponent, Charles Black, the GOP lieutenant governor nominee in 1944. Instead, McMath concentrated on the national campaign, stumping for Truman in other states, including Oklahoma. Later, reflecting on his upset victory, Truman told Governor-elect McMath:

I want to take this opportunity to tell you of my sincere appreciation of your efforts during the campaign. It was a great victory, and you may be sure that I fully realize the part you played in bringing it about.⁹⁸

⁹⁶Heard, A Two-Party South?, 261; Lester, A Man for Arkansas, 259.

⁹⁷Arkansas Gazette, May 23, September 30, October 1, 1948.

⁹⁸Quoted in Lester, A Man for Arkansas, 107.

At the 1948 Arkansas Democratic Convention, outgoing Governor Laney, who did not seek a third term, used the forum to criticize the Truman administration. Former Third District Congressman Claude Fuller, a Truman loyalist, became so distraught at Laney's remarks, terming them the equivalent of a "Republican speech at a Democratic Convention," that he demanded that "someone be allowed to answer that man."⁹⁹ Rather than spur even further division, the McMath forces entertained a motion to temporarily adjourn the session without permitting Fuller to reply. The conflict between the Truman and Thurmond forces came to a swift halt in the convention when John Daggett announced his group would forego a further fight for the Arkansas Democratic nomination and instead file by petition to appear on the presidential ballot as a third party. Earlier, Thurmond had met with more than one hundred chairmen and secretaries of eleven Democratic county committees at a dinner in Marianna in an attempt to win support. His plea to bolt the national ticket consistently fell short of success in Arkansas.¹⁰⁰

Laney found himself outside the mainstream of the

⁹⁹Arkansas Gazette, September 24, 1948.

¹⁰⁰Ibid., August 26, 1948; Lester, A Man for Arkansas, 104, 107.

Arkansas Democratic Party. In a controversial radio broadcast in Texas, Laney, anticipating Truman's nomination, called for massive southern resistance to the national Democrats:

I am proposing that the South of today, like the stalwart South of yesterday, fight until exhausted, if necessary, to save our nation from the vicious infiltration of tainted, discolored proposals designed to remake the American people and the American way of life. . . . The civil rights program would build discord and strife, turn race against race.¹⁰¹

Later, Laney incurred the wrath of McMath's supporters by terming the governor-elect's leadership as "shady and lousy."¹⁰² In 1950, Laney challenged McMath's bid for a second term but fell far short of victory and subsequently retired from politics. McMath was able in part in 1948 to lessen the impact of the Thurmond revolt by holding out the prospect of "paving some of the rutted roads in the counties," badly-needed public improvements which enticed many party leaders into remaining loyal to the national ticket.¹⁰³

Although their ire was directed against Truman, the Dixiecrats inadvertently fostered the movement toward southern Republicanism. For the first time, many voters

¹⁰¹Arkansas Democrat, June 27, 1948.

¹⁰²Arkansas Gazette, September 24, 1948.

¹⁰³Lester, A Man for Arkansas, 106; Harry S. Ashmore, "McMath Enlarges His Beachhead," Reporter, April 25, 1950, 23.

in the South considered casting a non-Democratic vote in a general election. While the Dixiecrats were not voting for Republicans in 1948, they took the initial plunge which made it psychologically easier to pull a GOP lever at a future date.¹⁰⁴ Thurmond himself endorsed Republican Dwight D. Eisenhower for president in 1952.¹⁰⁵ In 1964, then Senator Thurmond officially joined the Republican Party to support his friend and ideologue, Barry M. Goldwater, in the presidential race against Democrat Lyndon B. Johnson. Thurmond was first elected to the Senate in 1954, as a write-in candidate. He was re-elected as a Democrat in 1960, and he won new terms on the GOP ticket in 1966, 1972 and 1978. Over the years, he has been considered influential among Republican presidents -- Richard M. Nixon, Gerald R. Ford and Ronald W. Reagan. In 1981, Thurmond became chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, as the GOP won control of the upper House of Congress. He also became Senate president pro tempore in that he has the greatest seniority in the majority party.

Truman never lost confidence he could reverse the apparent odds against his election. The Gallup Poll continually underestimated Truman's potential. In

¹⁰⁴ Monroe Lee Billington, The Political South in the Twentieth Century (New York, 1975), 32.

¹⁰⁵ Arkansas Gazette, November 4, 1952.

Arkansas, for instance, the pre-election survey indicated Truman would receive 53 percent; he actually polled 62.2 percent. Nationwide Gallup forecast Dewey would win, 49.6 percent to 44.5 percent.¹⁰⁶ To counter GOP claims that it could better handle domestic policy, Truman called the Republican-dominated Congress into special session to enact measures endorsed in the 1948 party platform. The special session adjourned without accomplishing the tasks requested, and Truman repeatedly reminded voters of this Republican "inaction." The so-called "Turnip Day" session in retrospect proved a brilliant maneuver on the part of Truman.¹⁰⁷

Dewey expected to achieve a breakthrough in the South, perhaps Virginia or Florida, in view of the Thurmond candidacy, which seemed to be dividing Democrats. Senator Taft, Dewey's party rival, made several southern campaign swings for the national ticket. Taft had been among the first national Republican leaders to call for a two-party system in the region. Speaking at Yale University in 1909, Taft, then a student, denounced Radical Republican Reconstruction policies for having mistakenly

¹⁰⁶U.S. News and World Report, XXV (November 12, 1948), 24.

¹⁰⁷Harry S. Truman, Memoirs by Harry S. Truman, Vol. 2 (Garden City, New York, 1956), 198.

turned the region into a nearly unchallenged Democratic bastion. It was the beginning of a 44-year flirtation with southern Republicanism. Ironically, in 1952, when Taft again lost the GOP presidential nomination, his defeat stemmed from a controversial southern delegate seating arrangement.¹⁰⁸

Arkansas Republicans plastered the state with Dewey-Warren billboards and invited Taft to address a party rally. Black waged his gubernatorial race against McMath on the basis that many Arkansans expected Dewey to win the presidency and that the state could thereby benefit from a Republican governor with ties to the White House. The GOP also fielded three U.S. House candidates, with the main effort centered in the Third District, where former Madison County Republican Sheriff Dalton Dotson challenged incumbent James Trimble.¹⁰⁹

To the surprise of nearly everyone except himself, Truman defeated Dewey in a whisker-close race. It now seems likely that Dewey would have won had not Truman polled a higher percent of the black vote than Roosevelt had done in 1944. Truman's plurality came from blacks in such large states as Ohio, Illinois and California.

¹⁰⁸James T. Patterson, Mr. Republican (Boston, 1972), 40.

¹⁰⁹Arkansas Gazette, November 2, 1948.

Truman credited organized labor with the victory. Farmers also proved an invaluable part of the coalition, delivering several western states Dewey had expected to win.¹¹⁰

In Arkansas, Truman polled 149,659 votes, or 62.2 percent, compared to Dewey's 50,959, or 21.2 percent. Thurmond ran a weak third with 40,068 votes, or 16.6 percent. Socialist Norman Thomas outpolled Henry Wallace in Arkansas, 1037 to 751. Dewey carried only Madison (51.4 percent) and Newton (50.5 percent) counties, but he polled at least 40 percent in Benton, Carroll, Searcy and Washington counties. Thurmond carried Crittenden (69.4 percent), Lee (58.2 percent) and Phillips (55.7 percent), all located in the Mississippi delta and subservient to planter interests in an era with few black voters. Thurmond also polled at least 40 percent in Lafayette, Cross and St. Francis counties. Truman carried the other seventy counties. In Pulaski, Truman polled 53.6 percent; in Sebastian County, a future GOP stronghold, Truman won with 57.8 percent.¹¹¹

Further analysis reveals that Thurmond's greatest strength in Arkansas corresponded exactly to the black

¹¹⁰Sitkoff, "Harry Truman and the Election of 1948," 613.

¹¹¹Election Statistics, 1948.

population distribution of 1940. In fifteen counties, Thurmond polled more than 25 percent of the vote, and in each blacks comprised more than one-fourth of the population. In the sixty counties in which Thurmond polled less than 25 percent, forty-five had blacks numbering less than one-fourth of the population. In the three counties the Dixiecrats won, blacks outnumbered whites in population but not voters in 1940. Among forty-one counties with less than 15 percent black population in 1940, Thurmond received under 25 percent of the vote in all and under 15 percent in thirty-eight.¹¹²

From 1944 to 1948, the Republican presidential vote in Arkansas dropped from 29.8 percent to 21 percent, despite the fact the GOP total held firm or increased in other states where the Dixiecrats were on the ballot. This decline in Arkansas is attributed by Alexander Heard to the 16.6 percent polled by Thurmond. The Republicans lost in all of the fifteen counties which cast at least 25 percent for Thurmond. The median decline from 1944 to 1948 in the fourteen counties in which the Republicans polled 40 percent or more of the 1944 vote was 12.2 percent. In terms of total Republican strength, the proportionate loss in these relatively strong GOP areas was much less than in the Dixiecratic strongholds where the

¹¹² Heard, A Two-Party South?, 262.

Republican percentage both years was small. The median GOP vote for the fourteen Republican-leaning counties in 1948 was 33.8 percent, and for the fifteen Dixiecratic-leaning counties, 10.7 percent. In some counties, the 1948 GOP vote was reduced by as much as two-thirds over the 1944 figures. Therefore, Heard concluded that some whites in the "black belt" probably voted for Dewey in 1944, as a protest against President Roosevelt.¹¹³

In the 1948 gubernatorial race, Black proved woefully unable to take any special advantage of Laney's dislike for McMath. The Republican nominee received just 10.9 percent of the vote, compared to McMath's 89.2 percent. In the Third Congressional District, Trimble won his third term, defeating Dotson, 68.6 percent to 31.4 percent. Two other Republican challengers to Congressmen Brooks Hays and Boyd Tackett received less than 14 percent of the vote.¹¹⁴

Arkansas Republican leaders throughout the 1940s were usually wealthy businessmen or attorneys, not competitive politicians desirous of public office, which at the time was unrealistically attainable. In 1947, the Southern

¹¹³Ibid.; Arkansas Gazette, November 5, 1948.

¹¹⁴Diamond, ed., Congressional Quarterly's Guide to U.S. Elections, 399, 811; Election Statistics, 1948.

Republican Conference met at Cobb's Lake Hamilton estate near Hot Springs. Party officials seemed to oppose efforts to open up the political process to those outside the GOP hierarchy. When Harold Stassen asked Arkansas Republicans to hold a presidential preference primary in 1948, the leaders refused, insisting that Stassen and any other candidates post filing fees of \$40,000 each if they wished to run in a primary contest.¹¹⁵

Arkansas Republicans won a non-election victory in 1948. Prior to that time, an ex officio state board of elections, consisting of seven state elective officials, always Democrats, appointed for each county three election commissioners, two Democrats and one Republican. The board sometimes ignored GOP wishes, especially in the Republican-leaning counties of the northwest. In heavily Democratic counties, the board would usually rely on party recommendations. By the initiative process, GOP leaders obtained reform of the method of appointment. Voters in 1948 approved an initiated act to establish a new state election board to consist of the governor, attorney general, secretary of state and the state chairmen of the two political parties. Each county board was

¹¹⁵Arkansas Gazette, March 15, 1947; Key, Southern Politics in State and Nation, 292, 394.

altered to consist of the chairman of each party and a third member designated by the state board. The new arrangement allowed the Democrats to name five officials as precinct judges and clerks, while the Republicans could appoint three such officials. The reform may have eased the way for future Republican gains in the state.¹¹⁶

As Arkansas entered the 1950s, post-World War II changes accelerated. Blacks were voting in somewhat greater numbers, and funding was increased for the support of still segregated education. Teacher pay was equalized between the races in most Arkansas cities.¹¹⁷ Industrialization was continuing, as more Arkansans left the farm in search of economic opportunities in urban areas. Government and business were modernizing and expanding at a rapid pace. New opportunities arose for the still weak Arkansas Republican Party, which in 1951 elected the mayor in Little Rock. Though little encouragement could be obtained from past electoral performances, Republicans looked to the new decade with hopes of becoming a serious force in Arkansas politics.

¹¹⁶Key, Southern Politics in State and Nation, 453.

¹¹⁷Stephen A. Stephan, "Changes in the Status of Negroes in Arkansas, 1948-1950," Arkansas Historical Quarterly, IX (Spring 1950), 43-44.

CHAPTER IV

ARKANSAS REPUBLICANISM, 1950-1954

During the 1930s and 1940s, humorist Bob Burns, the self-styled "sage of the Ozarks," entertained the nation by radio with tales about his relatives and neighbors in the Arkansas hills. Burns' humor was sometimes the only insight Americans had into the nature of the Arkansas character, as the state had become fixed in the national image as a backwoods area plagued by poverty, prejudice and ignorance. This image began to slowly change as a result of vast social, political and economic consequences following the Second World War.¹ The war gradually helped Arkansas to overcome her longstanding inferiority complex, as the state, among other innovations, began to furnish huge supplies of bauxite, or aluminum ore, which were essential to the war effort.²

The 1940 census had listed the number of Arkansans at 1,949,387, but the 1950 figure reflected the loss of 39,876 persons, or 2 percent of the population. The congressional delegation, as a result, was reduced beginning with the 1952 election from seven to six

¹Lawrence Goodwyn, The South Central States (New York, 1967), 120.

²Time, XC (July 27, 1942), 15.

members. Further population declines occurred during the 1950s; the 1960 census listed 1,786,272 Arkansans, reflecting a 6.5 percent loss over the preceding ten-year period. That decline cost the state two more congressional seats, as the number of House districts was reduced from six to four beginning with the 1962 mid-term elections. Large numbers of blacks who had been sharecroppers in the Arkansas delta continued to leave the state. In 1940, Arkansas had been about 24.8 percent black, but the number declined to 22.4 percent in 1950 and 21.8 percent in 1960.³

Politically, Arkansas had changed little in the 1940s but approached the economically-expanding 1950s with the potential for broad changes which would be years in the unfolding. Blacks were voting in larger numbers, but public schools remained segregated until after the 1954 Brown vs. the Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas Supreme Court decision. A few northwestern counties immediately desegregated, but they had few blacks in their public schools. Those areas with large black populations simply ignored the court decision, awaiting specific

³United States Commerce Department, 1960 Census of Population, Vol. 1, Part 5 (Washington, 1961), 5-7; Robert Sherrill, Gothic Politics in the Deep South (New York, 1968), 75.

orders until complying with the new policy. Nevertheless, Arkansas and Little Rock, specifically, were not seen as among those states and cities with defiant tendencies. Little Rock in fact had been a leader in the South in desegregation of municipal buses. The city school board in 1954 prepared a gradual court-approved desegregation plan, one which attracted national attention three years later when its provisions were circumvented by a defiant Governor Orval Eugene Faubus, previously regarded as an emerging southern progressive.⁴

Democrats remained firmly in control in Arkansas despite the formation of factions which appeared after the death of Senator Joseph T. Robinson, who had earlier kept such partisan dissension under control. Led by two governors, Carl E. Bailey (1937-1941) and Homer M. Adkins (1941-1945), the factions quarreled over patronage and personalities, but in their conservative outlooks, they were practically indistinguishable.⁵ The Republicans were unable to capitalize on these disputes.

In 1950, Arkansas Republicans offered as the gubernatorial candidate, Jefferson W. Speck, a 33-year-old

⁴James E. Lester, Jr., A Man for Arkansas: Sid McMath and the Southern Reform Tradition (Little Rock, 1976), 231; Time, LXX (October 17, 1957), 21.

⁵David C. Roller and Robert W. Twyman, The Encyclopedia of Southern History (Baton Rouge, Louisiana, 1979), 72.

planter-businessman from Frenchmans Bayou in Mississippi County. Speck waged what the Arkansas Gazette termed an "extensive and vigorous campaign for a Republican," assailing his opponent, Governor Sid McMath, as an advocate of what Speck termed "Truman's socialism."⁶ Speck repeatedly called for a debate with McMath, but the Democrat ignored the challenge from the nominee of a party historically weak in Arkansas. McMath instead went to Oklahoma City to speak on behalf of the re-election bid of Senator A.S. "Mike" Monroney, who faced tough GOP opposition. In lauding Monroney, McMath blamed the Republican Party for previous isolationist policies such as those which had kept the United States from full membership in the World Court in the 1920s. The governor also hailed the Democrats, who he said represented "liberty and hope for all mankind."⁷

As a minor party candidate, Speck was unable to gain the campaign offensive. A GOP advertisement blamed the state's one-party system for the continuing population losses. "Our state government is loaded with cheap politics -- wanton waste. We have a real mess on our hands that can be cleaned up only by voting for Mr.

⁶Arkansas Gazette, November 2, 1950.

⁷Ibid., November 3, 1950.

Speck," warned the party.⁸ Speck claimed that "every vote my opponent receives is certain to be interpreted as a green light to Truman socialism." McMath, who had defeated former Governor Benjamin T. Laney in the Democratic primary, was never seriously threatened. In fact, voters were more interested in a state constitutional amendment to extend terms of the governor and other state officials from two to four years. Leading the opposition to this Amendment 44 were Laney, who had supported the Dixiecrats in 1948, and Dr. J.M. Robinson, head of the Arkansas Negro Democratic Organization.⁹

McMath polled 266,778 votes, or 84.1 percent, to Speck's 50,303, or 15.9 percent, to win a second term. In spite of the weak showing, Speck's raw vote was the largest polled by an Arkansas Republican gubernatorial candidate in history.¹⁰ The only other statewide Republican candidate in 1950, Mrs. Lillian McGillicuddy of Malvern, a native of Chicago, lost decisively to State Treasurer J. Vance Clayton, who won re-election. The controversial four-year-term amendment was handily

⁸Ibid., November 5, 1950.

⁹Ibid., November 7, 1950.

¹⁰Robert A. Diamond, ed., Congressional Quarterly's Guide to U.S. Elections (Washington, 1975), 399; Election Statistics, 1950 (Little Rock: Secretary of State).

defeated.¹¹ After the election, McMath continued his role as a national Democratic spokesman. In a nationwide radio program, McMath charged that the Republicans had smeared at least two of the Democratic senators who lost re-election bids in 1950, Millard E. Tydings of Maryland and Majority Leader Scott M. Lucas of Illinois. Both Democrats were "victims of McCarthyism," McMath claimed, delivering especially critical remarks about the Republican who unseated Lucas, Everett McKinley Dirksen.¹²

In Little Rock, the Republican Party scored a huge upset in November 1951, when municipal voters elected a 36-year-old insurance executive, Pratt Cates Rempel, as mayor under the mayor-council government. Rempel was the son of the late Republican State Chairman Augustus C. "Gus" Rempel, who had died in 1920, at the age of thirty-eight after a brief bout with malaria. Pratt Rempel's mother, Nell Rempel, had served for years as the Arkansas GOP national committeewoman. Rempel's great-uncle, Harmon L. Rempel, was a legendary figure in the party, having run for both governor and senator and serving as chairman and national committeeman. Pratt Rempel, a 1937 graduate of the University of Virginia at Charlottesville, had been active in Young Republican

¹¹Arkansas Gazette, November 8, 9, 1950.

¹²Ibid., November 13, 1950.

circles for more than ten years. Remmel brought a Republican viewpoint to Little Rock City Hall, which had not anticipated the defeat of the Democratic incumbent, Mayor Sam M. Wassell, who was seeking a rarely-given third term in that particular office.¹³

Like most Arkansas Democrats of his day, Wassell ignored his Republican opponent, viewing Remmel as too weak to warrant the reactivation of his primary precinct organization. Remmel, armed with an active corps of volunteers, hammered away at the incumbent, calling for open audits of municipal funds, a solution to traffic and street maintenance problems and an "active, effective government." Remmel claimed that for

four years, we have been saddled with ineffectual, half-hearted, do-nothing government. To serve Little Rock, we must have a young, energetic, forceful man who can and will fulfill the obligations of the office of mayor.¹⁴

Wassell, who did run newspaper advertisements as the campaign reached the conclusion, termed Remmel's tactics as "propaganda," and listed his own accomplishments, including a newly-constructed \$1 million airport, a city

¹³Bessie Butler Allard, ed., Who is Who in Arkansas, Vol. 1 (Little Rock, 1959), 199-200; Who's Who in the South and Southwest (Chicago, 1952), 603; Arkansas Gazette, December 4, 1920.

¹⁴Arkansas Gazette, November 1, 1951.

budget system, modern garbage disposal, a revised building code and improvements to city-owned properties.¹⁵

To the shock of almost everyone, Rimmel not only won the election, but his margin reached landslide proportions. Rimmel received 7,794 votes, or 68 percent, to Wassell's 3,668, or 32 percent. Rimmel became the first Republican mayor in the capital city since the late Colonel William G. Whipple, who was elected in both 1887 and 1889, but on a nonpartisan basis. Rimmel, who carried twenty-three of the twenty-six precincts, was the first Republican to even seek the position in about twenty-five years. Rimmel said the results "exceeded my fondest expectations," adding he was sorry to see his opponent lose but stressing that "it was just my time." McMath attributed Rimmel's victory to local factors and unhealed wounds from the Democratic primary, when Wassell faced a tough challenge. McMath admitted, however, that Rimmel's election "should encourage the Republicans in the South" ¹⁶

The Arkansas Gazette, in a post-election editorial, termed Rimmel's victory "historic indeed," claiming that the Republican really came to power as a result of a bipartisan civic protest demanding expanded economic opportunities. The Gazette praised Wassell for his work

¹⁵Ibid., November 4, 1951.

¹⁶Ibid., November 7, 1951

in slum clearance, public housing and recreational facilities. According to the paper, Wassell had become "the symbol of -- and in a sense the victim of -- a haphazard, outmoded system of municipal government that failed to meet the demonstrable needs of a growing city." The paper suggested that Rimmel could best serve his party by compiling "an outstanding record in the only major office held by a Republican in Arkansas."¹⁷

Republican Senator Robert A. Taft of Ohio lauded Rimmel's victory, noting that he hoped it was "indicative of a new trend in the South." While speaking in Biloxi, Mississippi, Taft suggested again that the South had more in common philosophically with the GOP than with the national Democrats.¹⁸

Taft, seeking the 1952 presidential nomination, once again clashed with his old rival, Governor Thomas Dewey of New York. No longer a candidate himself, Dewey was supporting a newcomer to GOP circles, Dwight David Eisenhower, the nearly legendary World War II general. After having scored impressive victories in the New Hampshire, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Massachusetts primaries, Eisenhower proved to be a real challenger to Taft. The

¹⁷Ibid., November 8, 1951.

¹⁸Memphis, Tennessee, Press Scimitar, November 8, 1951.

convention almost tied between Taft and Eisenhower, with a dispute over southern delegate credentials holding the outcome. Pro-Taft forces introduced an amendment to seat a Louisiana delegation favorable to the Ohioan, and all eleven Arkansas delegates concurred. The convention, however, rejected the amendment, 658 to 548, and with that crucial vote, the Eisenhower faction moved toward victory. When a pro-Eisenhower report was issued on the disputed Georgia delegate seating question, the Arkansans split three in favor and eight in opposition. On the first ballot, the Arkansans, led by National Committeeman Wallace Townsend, cast six votes for Taft, four for Eisenhower and one abstaining. The convention voted 595-500 for Eisenhower, a total still insufficient for nomination. Before a second ballot could be taken, Harold E. Stassen swung nineteen Minnesota delegates to Eisenhower. After post-ballot switches, the convention endorsed Eisenhower, including all eleven Arkansans.¹⁹ While Townsend and party chairman Osro Cobb stood with Taft, the Arkansans had an active Eisenhower faction, led by the 1950 gubernatorial candidate, Jefferson Speck, and businessman Verne L. Tindall of Stuttgart, who became the state GOP campaign manager in the 1952 campaign.

¹⁹Diamond, ed., Congressional Quarterly's Guide to U.S. Elections, 93, 166; New York Times, June 4, July 11, 12, 1952.

While Townsend was disappointed over Taft's defeat, he accepted the results and worked actively for Eisenhower, just as he had earlier for the moderate party nominees, Wendell Willkie and Thomas Dewey.²⁰

The Republicans in 1952 adopted a weaker civil rights plank than they had endorsed four years earlier. While speaking in the South, Eisenhower said that he was "somewhat opposed" to further fair employment practices legislation, which Dewey had promoted as governor of New York. Three southern Democratic governors, Robert F. Kennon of Louisiana, Allan Shivers of Texas and James F. Byrnes of South Carolina, endorsed Eisenhower.²¹

Eisenhower's running-mate, California Senator Richard Milhous Nixon, spoke in Texarkana, Arkansas, on October 27, 1952. In his speech, Nixon called President Truman, Secretary of State Dean Acheson and Illinois Governor Adlai E. Stevenson, II, the Democratic presidential candidate, as "traitors to the high principles in which many of the nation's Democrats believe."²² Later, Truman claimed that Nixon had called him a "traitor" in the Texarkana speech, but Nixon contended that he never called

²⁰Arkansas Democrat, November 5, 6, 1952; Arkansas Gazette, November 2, 1952.

²¹Roller and Twyman, The Encyclopedia of Southern History, 400; New York Times, September 7, 10, 19, 1952.

²²Texarkana Gazette, October 28, 1952.

Truman a traitor per se. Nixon admitted that his rhetoric was "very rough," adding, "perhaps I was simply carried away by the partisan role."²³

Republican leaders expressed confidence that they could at least duplicate Herbert Hoover's 1928 performance in the South. National Chairman Guy Gabrielson of New Jersey and South Dakota Senator Karl E. Mundt, for instance, suggested an alliance between the Republicans and former supporters of Strom Thurmond, the 1948 Dixiecratic presidential candidate.²⁴ Analysts, however, projected that the Eisenhower-Nixon ticket would not carry a single southern state. U.S. News and World Report claimed that for Eisenhower to succeed in the South "a near political revolution is required. . . . Nothing in economic conditions or in war suggests an overturn."²⁵ A week later, the magazine indicated that perhaps, Texas, Virginia and Florida were no longer solidly for Stevenson but still predicted the Democratic nominee would surpass Truman's

²³Richard M. Nixon, The Memoirs of Richard Nixon (New York, 1978), 112.

²⁴Numan V. Bartley, The Rise of Massive Resistance: Race and Politics in the South During the 1950s (Baton Rouge, Louisiana, 1969), 50; New York Times, January 20, 1951; Alexander Heard, A Two-Party South? (Chapel Hill, North Carolina, 1952), 165.

²⁵U.S. News and World Report, XXXIII (October 24, 1952), 16.

electoral-vote strength in the South in 1948.²⁶

Prior to 1952, an unidentified southern political observer noted that:

to many citizens of the South, a Republican is a curiosity. They may have heard about the Negro undertaker who goes to Republican conventions, or the eccentric railroad official who came from Ohio; but a genuine, breathing Republican is a rarity in most of the counties of the region.²⁷

Native southerners entering the post-war business and professional classes began moving to the GOP at the presidential level in 1952. Social scientist Alexander Heard observed that "when all the obstacles to southern Republican growth are viewed together . . . one wonders how the party can become a serious force in any southern state."²⁸ Heard noted that the prospects for Republican gains depended on overriding national issues, which he said had "engulfed" state policy questions by the 1950s.²⁹

Studies have revealed that many Dixiecrats joined the ranks of the southern GOP as a matter of protest against the Truman-Stevenson Democratic policies, sensing that the Republicans were perhaps more sympathetic to

²⁶ Ibid., October 31, 1952, 15.

²⁷ Quoted in Lee W. Huebner and Thomas E. Petri, The Ripon Papers, 1963-1968 (Washington, 1968), 21.

²⁸ Heard, A Two-Party South?, 133.

²⁹ Ibid., 134.

"states' rights, conservatism and constitutional government."³⁰ Those Democrats who supported Eisenhower had few complaints with the conservatism of their state and local party structures and policies.³¹ Bumper stickers in the South read, "I'm a Democrat, but I like Ike."³²

Arkansas' Democratic hierarchy rallied virtually unanimously behind the Stevenson campaign in 1952. Senator J. William Fulbright, who had been re-elected without Republican opposition in 1950, spoke for Stevenson in West Virginia, Maryland and Delaware, stressing the theme that Eisenhower, while a "great soldier," was in unfamiliar territory in politics. Democratic gubernatorial nominee Francis A. Cherry, the 43-year-old chancery judge from Jonesboro who had halted McMath's third-term bid in the primary, hailed Stevenson as the "ablest and cleanest candidate for whom I have had the privilege to vote in my lifetime."³³ The Arkansas Gazette, in endorsing Stevenson, noted that a national Republican senatorial victory would result in the replacement of John L.

³⁰Avery Leiserson, ed., The American South in the 1960s (New York, 1964), 141.

³¹Ibid., 149.

³²Monroe Lee Billington, The Political South in the Twentieth Century (New York, 1975), 136.

³³Arkansas Gazette, November 1, 1952.

McClellan as chairman of the committee which investigated federal expenditures. The newspaper also warned that a Republican-controlled House would cost the South committee chairmanships which were helpful in obtaining appropriations for flood control, public works and agricultural programs. The Gazette further claimed that Eisenhower was not politically independent but was "irrevocably chained to the Republican Party and to its powerful leaders, most of whom follow the line laid down by Robert A. Taft."³⁴

The Arkansas Democrat, which also endorsed Stevenson, stressed the candidate's governmental experience, adding, "we think Stevenson less impulsive than Ike, has a clearer eye for the difficulties of a problem . . . tackles it with a wider, more realistic view . . ." ³⁵

In a newspaper advertisement funded by the Arkansas Democratic campaign committee, the party quoted Georgia Senator Richard B. Russell in his criticism of Eisenhower:

His evident confusion in efforts to grapple with vital political issues has clearly demonstrated to the American people the grave danger of placing our government in the hands of a military man who is totally unfamiliar with American civilian thinking . . . ³⁶

³⁴Ibid.

³⁵Arkansas Democrat, November 3, 1952.

³⁶Ibid., November 2, 1952.

The advertisement quoted Fulbright as well:

Adlai Stevenson is a reasonable man. In a time when so many zealots have arisen in American politics, he is a refreshing contrast. He is a traditionalist who turns always to the past to find the answers to the future -- and it is only an accident of migration that prevents the South from claiming him as one of our own. . . . There is no reason to bolt the party in 1952.³⁷

Eisenhower won few converts among leading Arkansas Democrats, but Mrs. John Hackett of Little Rock, a member of the Democratic State Central Committee, did endorse him.³⁸ Republicans relied heavily on the "Democrats for Eisenhower" committee in view of the small GOP organization. Chairman Osro Cobb predicted that Eisenhower might come "within a few thousand votes" of winning the state.³⁹ National Committeeman Wallace Townsend predicted that Eisenhower would set a record GOP vote in Arkansas, adding that he had a "faint outside hope" for victory.⁴⁰ A Republican advertisement claimed that an Eisenhower victory would mean an end to the Korean War, restoration of "honesty" in Washington and recovery of "international respect." The advertisement called on Arkansans to "put loyalty to country first and vote

³⁷Ibid.

³⁸Ibid.; Arkansas Gazette, November 2, 1952.

³⁹Arkansas Gazette, November 3, 1952.

⁴⁰Ibid., November 2, 1952.

Republican."⁴¹

Besides the presidential effort, the Arkansas GOP ran two congressional candidates, John H. "Jack" Joyce of Fayetteville in the Third District and Lonzo A. Ross of Conway in the Fifth District. The pair challenged incumbents James Trimble and Brooks Hays, respectively. Each Republican received a \$1,000 contribution from the GOP Congressional Campaign Committee.⁴² Joyce, a young attorney, campaigned on his record as a World War II fighter pilot and criticized the Democrats for the continuing U.S. involvement in the Korean War.⁴³

For the second time, Frenchmans Bayou planter Jefferson Speck carried the GOP banner in the gubernatorial race, this time against Democrat Cherry. Speck's name was omitted in most party literature, which stressed the presidential campaign. He began his campaign in Paragould but made only scattered, unpublicized appearances. After Eisenhower was nominated, Speck was quoted as having said that he would be the "real governor" if Eisenhower were elected because he could then as the titular head of the party make crucial patronage recommendations. Such party stalwarts as Chairman Cobb and Committeeman

⁴¹Arkansas Democrat, November 3, 1952.

⁴²Arkansas Gazette, November 1, 1952.

⁴³Ibid., November 5, 1952.

Townsend criticized Speck for making the statement, reflecting division in the Arkansas GOP between Taft and Eisenhower backers. An original Eisenhower supporter, Speck was nominated by convention in Little Rock when a no more prominent Republican figure wanted the nod. The Arkansas Gazette remarked that the "slam-bang presidential campaign in the state still failed to raise the gubernatorial contest from its usual lethargic tempo in Democratic Arkansas."⁴⁴ Two other Republicans, Lee Reynolds of Conway and George W. Johnson of Greenwood in south Sebastian County, ran for lieutenant governor and attorney general, respectively.

At the national level, 1952 signaled the end of a 20-year dry spell for the Republicans, as Eisenhower swept to victory, 442-89 in the electoral college. Even in the South, Eisenhower carried Virginia, Florida, Texas and, narrowly, Tennessee, while the Carolinas, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana and Arkansas remained Democratic. Republicans also gained a U.S. House majority, though both Democrats Trimble and Hays won new terms in the two contested Arkansas districts. The GOP vice-president was placed in a position as presiding officer of the Senate to break the party deadlock in favor

⁴⁴Ibid.; Arkansas Democrat, November 5, 1952.

of the Republican leadership.⁴⁵

In Arkansas, Eisenhower carried fifteen counties and finished with a then record Republican popular vote in the state of 43.9 percent. Stevenson led with 226,300 votes, or 56.1 percent; Eisenhower received 177,155 ballots. The county breakdown, listed in descending order by percent, follows:

Benton (69)	Polk (56)
Searcy (66.5)	Stone (55)
Carroll (64.8)	Boone (54.7)
Washington (63.7)	Crawford (52.9)
Newton (61)	Arkansas (50.5)
Garland (60.3)	Montgomery (50.3)
Madison (57.6)	Independence (50.2) ⁴⁶
Sebastian (56.5)	

Eisenhower and Nixon fared well in the more traditionally Republican-leaning towns and cities of Arkansas, including Fayetteville, Fort Smith, Mena, Van Buren, Harrison, Huntsville, Mountain View, Siloam Springs, Berryville, Eureka Springs, Rogers and Hot Springs. In the lowland towns and cities of eastern and southern Arkansas, the Democrats were strong, including West Memphis, Blytheville, Jonesboro, Helena, Dumas, Lake Village, Forrest City, Pine Bluff, Wynne, Trumann, Crossett, Monticello, Star City, El Dorado, Magnolia, Texarkana, Newport

⁴⁵Presidential Elections Since 1789 (Washington, 1975), 94.

⁴⁶Election Statistics, 1952.

and Paragould. Among the lowland counties, only Arkansas (Stuttgart) supported Eisenhower. Pulaski, the most populous Arkansas county, cast 48.6 percent for the GOP ticket. Political writers Jack Bass and Walter DeVries contend that Arkansas probably remained Democratic in 1952 due to its rural orientation. Little Rock, a relatively small city, has always been the state's only really major urban area.⁴⁷ The 1952 Arkansas returns bore some similarity to those eight years earlier in the Roosevelt-Dewey race. In both cases, GOP strength was in the hill country, where blacks were few in number and Republican loyalties rested on events which transpired during the Civil War and Reconstruction.⁴⁸

Eisenhower's appeal transcended party lines. Just before the 1960 presidential election, a 60-year-old Little Rock woman was quoted:

I have always been a Democrat. I used to think Republicans made depressions, but Eisenhower didn't make one. But I don't believe he was a real Republican.⁴⁹

By concentrating on Eisenhower's candidacy, the southern

⁴⁷Ibid.; Jack Bass and Walter DeVries, The Transformation of Southern Politics: Social Change and Political Consequences Since 1945 (New York, 1976), 87.

⁴⁸Bartley, The Rise of Massive Resistance, 48.

⁴⁹Quoted in Leiserson, ed., The American South in the 1960s, 82.

GOP virtually ignored state and local candidates. U.S. News and World Report warned that such a strategy was a "real barrier to the development of a Republican Party in the South."⁵⁰ Alexander Heard concluded that:

it is an open secret that certain Republicans have been eminently satisfied with the governmental arrangements of Democratic administrations. In all states of the South, the conservatives, the economic and social groups generally represented by Republicans nationally, have full representation in the Democratic Party.⁵¹

During the 1952 general election campaign, Stevenson's running-mate, Alabama Senator John J. Sparkman, had warned southerners that they could "expect nothing in the future from the Republican Party," claiming that GOP leaders from Dewey to Taft held the region in "contempt and derision." Sparkman claimed the Republicans had "never recognized the South, and they haven't changed a bit this time simply because they have a five-star general fronting for them."⁵² Sparkman's rhetoric was soon echoed by the defeated GOP gubernatorial candidate, Jefferson Speck, who suddenly resigned from the Arkansas Republican State Central Committee after party officials provided him with only \$1,400 in campaign assistance. Speck said

⁵⁰U.S. News and World Report, XXXIII (November 14, 1952), 22.

⁵¹Heard, A Two-Party South?, 99.

⁵²Arkansas Gazette, November 2, 1952.

that Sparkman was correct in his bleak assessment of southern GOP prospects, adding:

I have made two races for governor against overwhelming odds and with practically no support from the leaders of the Republican Party. In my opinion, the Republican Party will never fully develop and take its place in Arkansas politics under its present leadership. . . . The same tired old men -- old in ideas, old in hopes -- will still keep a death grip on southern Republicanism.⁵³

Speck called on Cobb and Townsend to resign their party positions; Cobb attributed the request to "an impulsive move in the aftermath of defeat."⁵⁴ Speck's hopes of becoming the "patronage governor" under Eisenhower never materialized, as Townsend continued to serve as the chief Arkansas patronage advisor to the national administration.⁵⁵ In 1954, Speck, though remaining a nominal Republican, urged the election of Democrat Orval Faubus as governor over the Republican nominee, Little Rock Mayor Rummel.⁵⁶ In the tabulation, Speck received 49,292 votes, or 12.6 percent, compared to Cherry's 342,292, or 87.4 percent. Speck ran more than one thousand popular votes behind his dismal 1950 showing against

⁵³Arkansas Democrat, November 5, 1952.

⁵⁴Ibid.

⁵⁵Ibid., November 6, 1952.

⁵⁶Orval Eugene Faubus, Down from the Hills (Little Rock, 1980), 59.

McMath.⁵⁷

In the Third Congressional District embracing sixteen counties in northwestern Arkansas, Republican Joyce duplicated Eisenhower's statewide performance, polling 38,784 votes, or 44 percent, to Democrat James Trimble's 49,284, or 56 percent. Joyce carried Washington (56.7 percent), Benton (51.6 percent), Newton (51.3 percent) and Madison (51 percent) counties. He also polled 47.5 percent in Searcy and 46.6 percent in Sebastian counties. Joyce polled more popular votes than did the unopposed Second District Democratic Congressman Wilbur D. Mills. In the Fifth District, Brooks Hays swept all six counties, receiving 80.2 percent in his race against Republican Ross.⁵⁸ Although the national party had contributed to both Joyce and Ross, neither seat was among the House posts the GOP had really expected to win.⁵⁹ Two Republicans were elected to the Arkansas House in 1952, but all four state senatorial nominees went down to defeat. The Democrats also won the lieutenant governor and attorney general races.⁶⁰

Townsend hailed the strong vote posted by both

⁵⁷Election Statistics, 1952.

⁵⁸Ibid.

⁵⁹Arkansas Democrat, November 1, 1952.

⁶⁰Arkansas Gazette, November 6, 1952.

Eisenhower and Joyce but lamented that he was "sorry that Arkansas is still wedded to its idol -- the Democratic Party."⁶¹ The Arkansas Gazette, noting the Eisenhower vote cut across party and factional lines, claimed the GOP was premature in its hopes of a two-party system for the state, noting that:

it seems probable that the great majority of those who voted for Eisenhower in Arkansas do not yet consider themselves Republicans. There is evidence of that in the poor race that the regular GOP candidates ran in most counties. But these voters have made the first, hard trip across the ballot now, and it will be easier to make it again in the future if the mood moves them again. . . . The Republicans have a great opportunity to start building the party into an effective political force in Arkansas.⁶²

In 1952, Pratt Remmel announced that he would seek his second two-year term as Little Rock mayor but would not accent the party issue. Remmel claimed that he would run on his record, which he insisted had been "fair to all and partial to none."⁶³ In his second mayoral campaign, Remmel launched a communications innovation by linking the six Little Rock radio stations to carry a simultaneous rally. The party issue, however, was raised by Remmel's Democratic opponent, Aubrey Kerr, who blamed

⁶¹Ibid.

⁶²Ibid.

⁶³Arkansas Democrat, November 1, 1953.

the Republicans for "squeezing Arkansas out of federal aid," a reference to proposed spending reductions in the Eisenhower administration.⁶⁴ The Rempel-Kerr race assumed broader political ramifications in that Rempel was expected to run for the U.S. Senate in 1954, if former Governor McMath should defeat McClellan for renomination in the Democratic primary. Or, Rempel was seen as a possible opponent to Fifth District Congressman Hays.⁶⁵

Rempel swept to an easy victory, carrying twenty of the twenty-five city precincts. The Republican received 9,724 votes, or 59.2 percent, to Kerr's 6,693, or 40.8 percent. Rempel contended that his triumph had partisan implications because Kerr had raised the party issue, but Chairman Cobb said that Rempel's victory demonstrated that Little Rock "places good government ahead of party labels."⁶⁶ Rempel's mother, National Committeewoman Nell Rempel, said the election should encourage southern Republicans but agreed with Cobb that "people will first consider the victory of the man before the victory of the party. Pratt won on his record of a good, clean, fine administration." Kerr's manager, Frank Dodge, said that the GOP victory meant the "two-party system is now

⁶⁴Ibid.

⁶⁵Ibid.

⁶⁶Ibid., November 4, 1953.

at work in Little Rock."⁶⁷

An active Methodist layman, Remmel stressed religious principles in his race. After winning re-election, Remmel said that the objective of his second term would be to "help Little Rock grow more righteous" and added that he would show no favoritism in the enforcement of municipal laws.⁶⁸ A Christian witness, Remmel addressed a high school graduating class at Corning in 1953, urging the members to accept the "fundamental belief in God as the key to success."⁶⁹ Earlier, at a Mena civic club, Mayor Remmel warned that the nation was "moving farther away from the Constitution and are giving up freedoms which were bought by the blood of the founders of our country."⁷⁰ In his second inaugural address, Remmel quoted extensively from Proverbs and noted that "in this era of our world's history, we need to turn to God."⁷¹ A year later, in his gubernatorial campaign against Faubus, Remmel conceded that "some folks have said that

⁶⁷Ibid., November 5, 1953; Arkansas Gazette, November 4, 1953.

⁶⁸Malvern Daily Record, November 20, 1953.

⁶⁹Clay County Courier, May 13, 1953.

⁷⁰Mena Evening Star, March 28, 1953.

⁷¹Pratt Remmel's Second Inaugural Address as Little Rock Mayor, Pratt Remmel Collection, University of Arkansas at Little Rock Archives.

Rommel is too religious, but that's exactly why Rommel has a chance at all."⁷²

In 1954, the McMath faction of the Arkansas Democratic Party offered an intra-party challenger to Governor Cherry, who had soundly whipped McMath in the 1952 primary. McMath, meanwhile, challenged McClellan for re-election; the state's senior senator had endorsed Cherry in the bitter gubernatorial primary two years earlier. Cherry's opponent was Orval Faubus, a 44-year-old Huntsville newspaper publisher and postmaster who had served in several positions in the McMath administration, most notably as state highway commissioner and, later, as director. Faubus' father, John Samuel Faubus, was a mountaineer Socialist who had supported Theodore Roosevelt's Bull Moose presidential bid in 1912, and then voted for Socialist Eugene Debs in 1920 and Progressive Robert M. La Follette, Sr., in 1924. Sam Faubus, who died in 1966, was arrested but released by federal agents during World War I for distributing "seditious literature" and uttering "disloyal remarks."⁷³ Hence, Faubus' family background was anything but conventional.

⁷²Pratt Rommel's speech at West Memphis, October 26, 1954, Pratt Rommel Collection, UALR Archives.

⁷³New York Times Magazine, October 9, 1966; Lester, A Man for Arkansas, 228.

While Cherry had run 45,000 votes ahead of Faubus in the first primary, Faubus ignored the tradition which usually guaranteed a second term to any governor who wanted it.⁷⁴ Faubus appealed to blacks, noting numerous black leader "are members of the Democratic Party, have been voting for a number of years and are entitled to recognition."⁷⁵ After becoming the Democratic gubernatorial nominee, Faubus expanded the party's state central committee to include six blacks.⁷⁶ Black voters at the time numbered between sixty and seventy thousand.⁷⁷

In the runoff, Faubus polled 191,328 votes, or 50.9 percent, to Cherry's 184,509, or 49.1 percent.⁷⁸ After the victory, Faubus drove to Colorado for a family vacation, stopping overnight in El Reno, Oklahoma, Cherry's hometown. In a casual conversation with a motel operator, Faubus claims that he learned that Cherry came from an "old rock-ribbed Republican family." Faubus, in his memoirs, recounted that he had heard previously that

⁷⁴New York Times, August 12, 1954; Time, LXIV (August 23, 1954), 29.

⁷⁵Newsweek, XLIV (October 4, 1954), 29.

⁷⁶Bass and DeVries, The Transformation of Southern Politics, 90.

⁷⁷Numan V. Bartley and Hugh D. Graham, Southern Elections County and Precinct Data, 1950-1972 (Baton Rouge, 1978), 29.

⁷⁸Election Statistics, 1954.

Cherry had once been a Republican but had dismissed such remarks as rumors. The motel operator, not realizing to whom he was speaking, told Faubus that Cherry's brother had run unsuccessfully for the Oklahoma State Senate on the GOP ticket. The motel operator added that Francis Cherry had relocated to Arkansas and won the governor's race "as a Democrat. You can't get anywhere in politics in Arkansas unless you're a Democrat. Some fellow beat him this last time though."⁷⁹

Cherry's supporters subsequently urged the governor to enter the general election as an independent. In the face of the close runoff tally, Rummel scrapped his plans to challenge Congressman Hays and instead accepted the GOP nomination for governor. Rummel, armed with backing from party contributors, campaigned at a frantic pace, eventually visiting all seventy-five counties. Reflecting on Rummel's gubernatorial boom, Faubus later noted that the main beneficiary of the GOP endeavor was Hays:

Instead of a hard race for re-election against the popular mayor of Little Rock, he got by without opposition. However, I received no direct contact from Hays or his close advisors with offers of support. I lost Pulaski County to Rummel . . . the bulk of the voting strength in Hays' congressional district.⁸⁰

⁷⁹Faubus, Down from the Hills, 49.

⁸⁰Ibid., 52.

Numerous Cherry supporters defected to Rummel in the campaign, but the governor himself joined the Democratic hierarchy in formally endorsing Faubus, who expected to continue the Democrats' 82-year-winning streak in the state.⁸¹

In 1954, Arkansas Power and Light Company, acting under an existing law, put into effect a substantial utility rate increase, with the higher bills reaching consumers in the midst of the primary campaign. Cherry received criticism as the "power company's candidate" because not a single AP&L official was apparently supporting Faubus. Rummel was related by marriage to a former AP&L official. In his defense, Rummel stressed that he owned only one share of power company stock, which he sold on October 18, 1954. Rummel's wife owned only non-voting stock in the firm. The utility rate issue led former GOP gubernatorial candidate Jefferson Speck to endorse Faubus.⁸²

In his criticism of Republicans, Faubus was careful to distinguish between party leaders and the rank and file. According to Faubus, GOP leadership in the state had for years come from the "country club set of Little Rock, which had little in common with rank-and-file

⁸¹Ibid., 54, 56.

⁸²Ibid., 56.

party members." Faubus also predicted that as a Madison County native he would win support from hundreds of Republicans in northwestern Arkansas in a race against Remmel.⁸³ In Eureka Springs, Lewis Stafford chaired a "Republicans-for-Faubus" committee which helped the Democrat to carry Carroll County. Other GOP defectors included Lawdon Branscum of Marshall, Elmer Johnson of Springdale, Boone County Judge Aubrey Hickenbottom of Harrison and Curtis Swaim, the former GOP legislator from Madison County and a boyhood friend of Faubus.⁸⁴

One of Faubus' problems in the general election campaign was to convince Democrats that he faced a serious challenge. The Arkansas Gazette urged voters to remain with the Democrats, claiming that Remmel's speeches "liberally sprinkled with quotations from the Bible have been . . . more in the nature of sentimental sermons than serious political discussions."⁸⁵ The Gazette questioned the wisdom of sending a Republican to the statehouse to serve with a legislature whose membership was at least 98 percent Democratic. The paper lavishly praised Faubus, words which during the 1957 desegregation crisis would haunt its editorial board:

⁸³Ibid., 57.

⁸⁴Ibid., 33, 59.

⁸⁵Arkansas Gazette, October 31, 1954.

. . . Moreover, those who have not been blinded by prejudice or diverted by emotional appeals cannot fail to see in Orval Faubus qualities of courage, determination and steadfast purpose which are essential to any chief executive. . . . Arising from a background of rural poverty, he has educated himself against great odds, distinguishing himself in the military service of his country, and won the solid and sustained support of his friends and neighbors throughout his public career. Orval Faubus won the Democratic nomination for governor the hard way . . . while his opponent earned his place on the ballot by receiving the support of a hundred Republican politicians assembled in a hotel ballroom. . . .⁸⁶

Rommel directed most of his oratory against "machine politicians," who he said were behind the Faubus candidacy. The Republican warned that "every tool of the machine politician's trade, including tricks, threats and misrepresentation of fact" had been used against him by the "political bosses."⁸⁷ Rommel questioned why Arkansas remained "near the bottom of the ladder in income and schools and industry when we abound in such wealth." Rommel asked why the state was "content to go on and on, year after year, letting our opportunities pass us by."⁸⁸ Faubus charged that Rommel had a "negative" record as mayor, having done little of a constructive nature regarding the city's traffic problems and

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Ibid., November 1, 1954.

⁸⁸ Ibid., November 2, 1954.

needs for such projects as community centers. Faubus also complained that Rummel had neglected city business in order to campaign for governor. Actually Rummel took a two-month unpaid leave of absence as mayor to conduct his gubernatorial race.⁸⁹

By the weekend prior to the election, Rummel had visited all but two of the state's counties. He staged his Madison County rally on the Saturday night preceding the election in Huntsville. Faubus insists that he took special efforts to make certain that Rummel was well received in Huntsville, long a GOP bastion by Arkansas standards but a town also friendly to native son Faubus. Faubus later reflected that he asked some Madison County supporters:

to see that Rummel had equipment and a place to speak, if arrangements had not otherwise been made. Naturally, this was unnecessary as the Republicans then controlled all county offices except one. I urged my friends to be especially vigilant that no act of discourtesy or rudeness occurred to my opponent while he was there. Everything went well. Pratt told me many times afterward that it was the finest meeting of his campaign.⁹⁰

Rummel claimed that the Arkansas Gazette coverage of the Madison County GOP rally was biased against him. In Rummel's words, some Gazette articles about the campaign

⁸⁹Ibid.

⁹⁰Faubus, Down from the Hills, 60.

did "not always tell the truth."⁹¹

Faubus and Rummel appeared jointly on television on the Sunday prior to the election but seemed to agree on most issues. Their major disagreement erupted over a proposal to exempt seed and feed from the 2 percent state sales tax. Rummel would not state categorically whether he favored such an exemption but indicated he would as governor sign such a bill if it were approved by the legislature. Faubus indicated that he would propose such legislation and would assume responsibility for finding means to replace the revenue lost by the exemptions.⁹²

Rummel concluded his campaign with a speech in Desha County in eastern Arkansas, where he spoke largely in generalities. "I am convinced that the vast majority of the people of Arkansas want, and are entitled to, clean, efficient and honest government."⁹³

Faubus won the election, but the tally accumulated by Rummel was heartening to the Republicans, who had received just 12.6 percent of the gubernatorial vote two years earlier. Faubus received 208,121 votes, or 62.1 percent; Rummel, 127,004 ballots, or 37.9 percent. The turnout was more than forty thousand less than in the

⁹¹Arkansas Gazette, November 1, 1954.

⁹²Ibid.; Faubus, Down from the Hills, 62.

⁹³Pratt Rummel's speech in Desha County, November 2, 1954, Pratt Rummel Collection, UALR Archives.

Democratic runoff. Faubus polled just 16,793 more votes against Remmel than he had in the earlier contest against Cherry. Theoretically, large numbers of Cherry supporters either stayed home in the general election or voted for Remmel. Remmel carried these six counties, listed in descending order by percent:

Arkansas (58.4)	Pulaski (52.9)
Sebastian (55)	Searcy (52.9)
Garland (53.6)	Newton (50.9)

Remmel received at least 40 percent in five other counties, Benton, Independence, Jefferson, Union and Washington.⁹⁴

Recalling his first gubernatorial victory, Faubus remarked that:

Pratt Remmel was a most gracious loser. The day following the election he and his brother, Roland, came . . . to congratulate me on my victory and to wish me well. Their attitude made a strong, favorable impression on me which I never forgot.⁹⁵

Faubus' victory also swept into power the entire Democratic slate in Madison County, where the Republicans had been politically potent for decades. Faubus recalled the disappointment of the defeated Republican candidates in the county on election night:

⁹⁴Election Statistics, 1954.

⁹⁵Faubus, Down from the Hills, 62.

I remember having a tinge of regret that everyone could not be happy. Some of the defeated candidates I had known since the days when I didn't have fifty cents in my pocket . . . N.D. Heathman, the Republican state representative, was one of my strongest boosters. While opposed politically, many of the Republican candidates and I were personal friends. But in the competition of politics there has to be losers as well as winners. There is no other way.⁹⁶

Faubus carried Madison by 3,474 to 1,469, a majority of 2,005, which as of 1982 was an all-time record for a Democrat vs. Republican contest there.⁹⁷

The Arkansas Gazette discussed the election outcome in an editorial, noting that Remmel's problem had been to bolster the "normal Republican vote of 55,000 with support from nominal Democrats who had backed Francis Cherry" in the runoff election. The newspaper said that at least sixty thousand votes received by the GOP candidate were anti-Faubus in nature. The editorial continued by noting Faubus had entered the race against the advice of "any more than a tiny handful of professional politicians," having "singlehandedly created his own bandwagon."⁹⁸ The paper speculated that Faubus would have won had he not even bothered to campaign against

⁹⁶Ibid., 65.

⁹⁷Ibid.; Election Statistics, 1954-1982.

⁹⁸Arkansas Gazette, November 4, 1954.

Rommel. While Faubus' candidacy had the effect of shutting out the Republicans in Madison County, the GOP still won two legislative posts. Republicans also swept all local offices in Newton County except one, and the Newton County GOP candidates ran ahead of Rommel.⁹⁹

Sam G. Harris, a writer for the Arkansas Gazette, noted that Rommel's candidacy had "jarred the Democrats out of their complacency" and demonstrated that a "two-party system is possible in this state." Harris warned that such a system could not be built from the top. "If the GOP leadership is sincere in its desire to become a major factor in Arkansas politics, it will have candidates for county offices, especially the legislature, in 1956," Harris added.¹⁰⁰ Rommel's campaign was listed as the fifth most important story in Arkansas in 1954 by the United Press International poll of newspaper, radio and television editors.¹⁰¹

While supporting Faubus in 1954, former Governor McMath was also seeking to unseat Senator McClellan. McMath had first threatened to challenge the state's senior senator when McClellan supported Cherry in 1952.¹⁰²

⁹⁹Ibid.

¹⁰⁰Ibid., November 7, 1954.

¹⁰¹Faubus, Down from the Hills, 69.

¹⁰²New York Times, August 14, 16, 1952.

McMath, identified with the Truman-Stevenson wing of the Democratic Party, accused McClellan of being sympathetic to Republicanism. McMath, critical of the communist investigation tactics being used at the time by Wisconsin Republican Senator Joseph R. McCarthy, claimed that McClellan was "soft on McCarthy." McMath claimed that as:

long as Joe McCarthy was branding Democrats as spies and traitors, our Johnny McClellan was saying, 'Go to it, Joe, sic 'em.' It was only when McCarthy turned his guns on the Republicans that your senior senator started dragging his feet.¹⁰³

McClellan, a long-time Democratic loyalist himself, noted that Life magazine accompanied McMath during a campaign swing through northern Arkansas to prepare a feature story on the former governor. McClellan attributed Life's interest in McMath to the ex-governor's internationalist philosophy. "I think it's interesting, however, in view of the fact that the publishers of Life are Republican," McClellan added.¹⁰⁴ The Republicans did not field a senatorial candidate in Arkansas in 1954, but McMath sought to link Democrat McClellan with the tenets of Republican philosophy. McClellan defeated McMath by nearly 37,000 votes and won the primary without

¹⁰³Time, LXIV (May 19, 1954), 24.

¹⁰⁴Arkansas Gazette, May 16, 1954.

need for a runoff.¹⁰⁵ McMath never politically recovered from the loss to Cherry in 1952 and the defeat by McClellan in 1954. In his next electoral venture in 1962, McMath lost in a gubernatorial bid to his former ally, Faubus.¹⁰⁶

By the middle 1950s, southern politics was almost wholly dominated by the question of school desegregation. The call for integration stemming from the 1954 Supreme Court decision was initially repudiated by most white southerners, whose opposition was especially accented by the sending of federal troops to Little Rock's Central High School in 1957. The decision to use the federal troops, an action taken by a Republican president, also affected the continuing growth of the GOP in the South and especially in Arkansas.

¹⁰⁵Newsweek, XLIV (August 9, 1954), 20; Election Statistics, 1954.

¹⁰⁶Lester, A Man for Arkansas, 238; Election Statistics, 1962.

CHAPTER V

THE POLITICS OF DESEGREGATION, 1955-1959

By 1955, Little Rock Democrats were determined to defeat Mayor Pratt Rummel, who announced that he would seek a third term in the post even though no one since Ben D. Brickhouse (1919-1925) had served longer than four years. To simplify their task of unseating Republican Rummel, the Pulaski Democratic Executive Committee considered scrapping the traditional primary system for municipal elections. In the end though, the party, acceding to Alderman Franklin E. Loy, agreed that primaries should continue in order to avoid "falling in line with the Republican methods" of selecting candidates by convention. Some Democrats had long contended that Rummel benefited by the Republican convention selection process in that he could devote full energies to the general election, whereas Democrats had to first contend with the primary campaigns. The committee did double the filing fees for office; it cost \$2,000 to file for mayor in 1955 as a Democrat.¹

The Democratic nomination was ultimately won by another insurance executive, Woodrow Wilson Mann, two years younger than the 40-year-old Rummel. Mann, who

¹Arkansas Gazette, April 5, 1955; November 6, 1955.

defeated Alderman Loy in the primary, turned the contest into a partisan question. In a campaign advertisement, Mann asked: "Why give Little Rock a black eye by electing a Republican mayor?" Mann vowed his election could bring "harmony and cooperation with city, county, state and national administrations," reasoning that the Democrats were certain to regain the White House in 1956 anyway.² Mann also accused Rimmel of being a "poor housekeeper" and called for an end to the "deficit operation" of the municipal garbage and sanitation services. Mann further claimed that Rimmel lacked interest in the mayor's job, had refused to permit the city attorney to oppose increases in electric rates and had ignored parks and playground needs.³ Rimmel tried to downplay the third-term issue and reminded voters that they had "a stake in the mayor's race. Will you surrender it to a few politicians?" Rimmel urged his supporters to "reject the bitter politicians."⁴

The headlines read "GOP Outpost in the South Falls," as Mann defeated Rimmel by 1,128 votes, largely a result of the Democrat's skillful wooing of black and labor support. Rimmel polled 8,872 votes, or 47 percent, to

²Ibid., November 1, 1955.

³Ibid., November 6, 8, 1955.

⁴Ibid., November 1, 8, 1955.

Mann's 10,000 exactly, or 53 percent. Mann attributed his triumph to the "fact that the people . . . were tired of disorder between the mayor and the city council. The Democratic Party is united now." On losing, the gracious Rempel rushed to Mann's headquarters, all smiles, and even hugged his foe. Observers at the time said that Rempel appeared to be as excited as the man who had defeated him. Rempel himself said that he had never expected to lose in 1955, in view of his easy victories in 1951 and 1953. The outgoing GOP mayor also indicated that he doubted he would likely again seek public office.⁵ He never did.

Among those supporting Mann was Congressman Brooks Hays, who allegedly feared that a successful Mayor Rempel might challenge him in 1956. Governor Orval E. Faubus, a resident of Huntsville, could not vote in the Little Rock mayor's race. Though he supported Mann as the Democratic nominee, Faubus later blasted Mann as the "opposition's mouthpiece" in the 1957 desegregation crisis.⁶ Faubus himself had defeated Rempel in the 1954 gubernatorial general election.

The Arkansas Gazette, in assessing the 1955 race,

⁵Ibid., November 9, 1955.

⁶Ibid., November 10, 1955; Orval Eugene Faubus, Down from the Hills (Little Rock, 1980), 152.

noted that Remmel in 1951 had campaigned not as a strong Republican but as an individual who happened to be a Republican. Hence, the newspaper concluded that the contest was not really a party victory for the Democrats so much as the result of local factors. Not even Democrats, the Gazette noted, have been able on a regular basis to win third terms in Little Rock mayoral elections.⁷ In 1956, Little Rock voters decided by a two-to-one margin to convert to a city-manager government beginning in January 1958. Faubus attributed that decision to the "unpopularity of Mayor Mann."⁸

Throughout the 1950s, the Republican share of the presidential vote grew steadily in the South, but the party neglected precinct organization. An influx of northerners, many of whom had been Republicans, did not appreciably increase GOP ranks in Arkansas, as many became token Democrats to participate in the pivotal primary elections. These newcomers also tolerated southern racial views perhaps due to their own fears over housing and school desegregation.⁹

⁷Arkansas Gazette, November 10, 1955.

⁸Ibid., November 7, 1956; Faubus, Down from the Hills, 152.

⁹George H. Mayer, The Republican Party, 1854-1966 (New York, 1967), 518, 553; Wall Street Journal, September 12, 1963.

By 1956, the Republicans were attracting numerous southern blacks. The 1954 desegregation decision had been written by Chief Justice Earl Warren, a Republican liberal named to the court by President Dwight Eisenhower. In the black communities such slogans circulated in 1956 as "A Vote for Stevenson is a Vote for Eastland," referring to support for Adlai Stevenson, again the Democratic presidential nominee, by Mississippi segregationist Senator James O. Eastland.¹⁰ Republican advantages in 1956 rested on the apparent conviction that the Republicans were less likely to land the nation into war, factors probably stemming from a Middle Eastern crisis the week before the election. The chief GOP liability was perceived as the recurring notion that Republicans "favor big business and the rich."¹¹

In 1955, Osro Cobb resigned as Republican chairman to accept an Eisenhower appointment as U.S. attorney for the Eastern District of Arkansas. Attorney A.L. Barber of Little Rock defeated Verne L. Tindall of Stuttgart by a one-vote margin, forty-nine to forty-eight, for the right to succeed Cobb. National Committeeman Wallace

¹⁰David C. Roller and Robert W. Twyman, The Encyclopedia of Southern History (Baton Rouge, Louisiana, 1979), 401.

¹¹Charles A. Thomson and Frances M. Shattuck, The 1956 Presidential Campaign (Westport, Connecticut, 1960), 223.

Townsend nominated Barber, and Tindall became vice-chairman.¹²

Arkansas Republicans seeking office in 1956 included William L. Spicer of Fort Smith, the owner of a chain of drive-in theaters, who challenged Third District Congressman James Trimble. Harrison attorney A. Ben Henley opposed Senator J. William Fulbright; Charles F. Cole of Batesville, a perennial GOP candidate for elective office, ran for attorney general against Democratic newcomer Bruce Bennett of El Dorado. Roy Mitchell, a Hot Springs lawyer, challenged Faubus' second-term candidacy.¹³ The state's Republicans united behind Eisenhower in 1956; all sixteen delegates from Arkansas supported the president's unanimous renomination at the national convention.¹⁴ At the state Republican convention in Little Rock in 1956, former Mayor Rempel warned GOP candidates that in order to win they "must be better than their opponents, work harder and out-organize them."¹⁵

The Republicans ran as moderates on the racial issue

¹²Arkansas Gazette, July 17, 1955.

¹³New York Times, October 12, 1956.

¹⁴Robert A. Diamond, ed., Congressional Quarterly's Guide to U.S. Elections, 98, 167.

¹⁵Pratt Rempel's address to Arkansas Republican State Convention at Little Rock, June 12, 1956, Pratt Rempel Collection, University of Arkansas at Little Rock Archives.

in 1956, both nationally and in Arkansas. Vice-President Richard Nixon charged the Democrats had a "split personality" on civil rights in view of the continuing opposition to integration by many southerners.¹⁶ Faubus, for one, never forgot Nixon's railing of southern segregationists in the 1956 campaign. Four years later, Nixon lost much of the South to Democrat John F. Kennedy in the heated presidential race. While Kennedy was as moderate as Nixon on the racial question, the Massachusetts senator had carefully avoided rhetoric which denounced southern Democratic leaders.¹⁷ Republican gubernatorial nominee Mitchell approached the integration issue in a practical, legal vein:

The United States Supreme Court held that segregation is unconstitutional. As this is now the law of the land, there appears no valid alternative than to direct our efforts toward gradual integration.¹⁸

Mitchell opened his campaign in Hot Springs on September 8, spoke before a few small gatherings, conducted a handshaking tour of part of the state and made one television address. Faubus concentrated almost entirely on gubernatorial duties and ignored Mitchell's challenge.

¹⁶Arkansas Gazette, November 1, 1956.

¹⁷Faubus, Down from the Hills, 191, 338.

¹⁸New York Times, October 12, 1956.

It was reported that black leaders in parts of eastern Arkansas campaigned for Mitchell. Henley did not campaign actively in the senatorial race, and Fulbright was out-of-state during most of the fall again working in the Stevenson campaign, which was managed by the Arkansas journalist, Harry S. Ashmore.¹⁹

Though the national spotlight was focused on the Eisenhower-Stevenson rematch, several minor candidates were also listed on some state ballots. In Arkansas, former Internal Revenue Service Commissioner T. Coleman Andrews of Virginia and former California Republican Congressman Thomas Werdel were the Constitution Party presidential and vice-presidential nominees, respectively. Andrews, who served at the IRS under Eisenhower, broke with the GOP, claiming that a "small group of radicals controls both parties now."²⁰

The Arkansas GOP opened state headquarters in Little Rock and branched out into several other major cities, but most of the party drive was conducted by the "Citizens for Eisenhower," a group of nominal Democrats. Spicer stumped the Third District seeking to oust Trimble and hoping to ride any coattails which Eisenhower might

¹⁹Ibid.; Faubus, Down from the Hills, 96, 147.

²⁰Arkansas Gazette, November 2, 1956.

provide.²¹ It happened that Eisenhower's coattails were insufficient to help Republicans in the states that the president carried in 1956 and nonexistent in the pro-Stevenson districts.

Eisenhower duplicated his 1952 victory to win a second term and again carried Texas, Florida, Virginia and Tennessee. He also won Louisiana from Stevenson, but the Democrat prevailed again in the Carolinas, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi and Arkansas.²² In Arkansas, Eisenhower ran 2.7 percent above his 1952 showing and carried eighteen counties, compared to the fifteen four years earlier. The state tally was 213,277, or 53.4 percent of the two-party vote, for Stevenson and 186,287, or 46.6 percent for Eisenhower. Another 7,008 Arkansans supported Andrews and Werdel. Here is the breakdown in descending order by percent of the two-party vote for the Republican ticket:

Searcy (72.9)	Baxter (54.3)
Newton (64)	Crittenden (53.9)
Benton (63.5)	Madison (53.6)
Garland (63.4)	Montgomery (53.3)
Washington (61.3)	Crawford (53.2)
Polk (58.7)	Boone (52.7)
Carroll (58.3)	Pulaski (52.4)
Sebastian (57.7)	Arkansas (50.8)
Scott (56.7)	Independence (50.2)

²¹Ibid., November 7, 1956.

²²Presidential Elections Since 1789 (Washington, 1975), 95.

Fourteen of the fifteen counties which supported Eisenhower in 1952 held firm in 1956, with only Stone switching to the Democrats. Four other counties which backed Stevenson in 1952, Scott, Baxter, Crittenden and Pulaski, supported Eisenhower in 1956.²³

Arkansas black voters, who numbered between sixty and seventy thousand in the 1950s, cast a larger share of their ballots for Eisenhower in 1956 than they did in 1952. This situation is usually attributed to black opposition to the then conservative Democratic state administrations in most of the South.²⁴ Eisenhower also made gains in southern cities in 1956. From 1940 to 1950, urban growth in the South exceeded that in the remainder of the nation. Southerners in urban areas did not begin voting Republican in appreciable numbers but many did support Eisenhower.²⁵ In 1956, Eisenhower received the support of 49 percent of southerners who cast ballots in the general election. In Arkansas, Eisenhower polled 51.1 percent in urban areas and 45.1 percent in rural

²³Election Statistics, 1956 (Little Rock: Secretary of State).

²⁴Numan V. Bartley and Hugh D. Graham, Southern Elections County and Precinct Data, 1950-1972 (Baton Rouge, Louisiana, 1978), 29; Thomson and Shattuck, The 1956 Presidential Campaign, 353.

²⁵Donald S. Strong, Urban Republicanism in the South (Westport, Connecticut, 1960), iii, iv, 1.

sections of the state.²⁶ In 1956, Arkansas had six counties with more than 50 percent black population but none with black voting majorities. Only one of those counties, Crittenden, supported Eisenhower. Eisenhower polled 40.4 percent in the six "black belt" counties of Arkansas. He also carried by at least a plurality vote 53 of the 106 congressional districts in the South. The Republicans, however, fielded House candidates in just forty-two of these districts and won in only seven. The congressional results in the South were hence disappointing to the GOP in view of Eisenhower's strength at the top of the party slate.²⁷

In the gubernatorial race, Faubus swept every county, polling 321,797, or 80.6 percent, to Mitchell's 77,215, or 19.4 percent. In the Senate race, Fulbright defeated Henley by an even larger margin, 331,679, or 83 percent, to 68,016, or 17 percent. In the Third Congressional District, Trimble defeated Spicer, 54,281, or 61.3 percent, to 34,318, or 38.7 percent. Spicer carried Newton (53.8 percent) and Searcy (53.7 percent) counties but lost his native Sebastian, where he polled 46.7 percent. Spicer ran nearly six percentage points behind the 1952 tally received by John "Jack" Joyce in his race

²⁶Ibid., 3, 6.

²⁷Ibid., 32, 38.

against Trimble.²⁸ The Republicans retained their two legislative seats, and Arkansas voters strongly endorsed three anti-integration referenda. One approved resolution called for the state to nullify the Supreme Court desegregation decision and to use its police power if needed in the process.²⁹

In analyzing the returns, the Arkansas Democrat stressed Eisenhower's "sincerity, simplicity and traits of greatness which cannot be pretended and which have an enormous appeal." The newspaper noted an apparent desire by voters for "experienced leadership in world affairs," especially in light of the 1956 Middle East crisis.³⁰ The second Eisenhower victory was also a triumph of the man over the party label. In 1952, the Republican candidate barely managed to pull a party majority with him to victory in the House. By 1956, the Democrats increased their House majority won earlier in the 1954 mid-term elections.

The full impact of the 1954 desegregation ruling reached Arkansas gradually. At the time, Governor Francis Cherry expressed his opposition to integration but emphasized that Arkansas "will observe the law. It

²⁸Election Statistics, 1952 and 1956.

²⁹Arkansas Gazette, November 8, 1956.

³⁰Arkansas Democrat, November 7, 1956.

always has."³¹ The Arkansas Missionary Baptist Association passed a resolution which stated that God was the first segregator and claimed that the Bible authorizes segregation by its account of the curse on Ham, the Tower of Babel and the separation of the continents.³² Several communities, such as Fayetteville and Charleston in Franklin County, immediately desegregated. Those areas with the larger black population continued to practice segregation until a series of court orders were finally implemented to compel desegregation. In late 1955, Faubus released a poll which showed that 85 percent of Arkansans opposed integration.³³

The legislature, under the control of segregationists, embarked on a bold program to thwart the court ruling. It referred the anti-integration resolutions to the voters in 1956. Two years later, it authorized tuition grants to students in private schools, but a federal court in 1959 invalidated the act. The state also established a sovereignty commission designed to find legal ways to prevent "forced integration" and preserve

³¹Arkansas Gazette, May 18, 1954.

³²Francis M. Wilhoit, The Politics of Massive Resistance (New York, 1973), 261.

³³New York Times, January 29, 1956.

"states' rights principles."³⁴ The legislature also approved a law which would have forbade state and local governments from hiring individuals affiliated with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, but the courts struck down the measure in the summer of 1959.³⁵

In 1957, a group of Little Rock segregationists formed the Capitol Citizens' Council to oppose a desegregation plan agreed upon three years earlier by the school board. The group demanded that Faubus intervene to maintain a dual school system.³⁶ Though long identified as a moderate on the racial question, Faubus did post a unit of the Arkansas National Guard at Central High School, ostensibly to "maintain order."³⁷ Meanwhile, the governor conferred with President Eisenhower at Newport, Rhode Island, in a bid to reach a compromise solution to the threatened federal-state clash. The Newport meeting was arranged by Congressman Brooks Hays, soon to establish a reputation for liberalism on the race question.³⁸ On September 20, U.S. District Judge Ronald

³⁴Wilhoit, The Politics of Massive Resistance, 141, 149.

³⁵New York Times, June 9, 1959.

³⁶Ibid., July 21, 1957.

³⁷Ibid., September 3, 1957.

³⁸Ibid., September 13, 15, 1957.

N. Davies, a North Dakota jurist serving on an interim basis at Little Rock, ordered Faubus to remove the Guard and halt delays in the forthcoming desegregation. Faubus removed the Guard, warned of potential violence at the school if the court-approved plan were implemented and departed for the Southern Governors' Conference at Sea Island, Georgia.³⁹ The opening address at the conference was given by an avowed opponent of the resistance movement, Florida Governor LeRoy Collins. In his remarks, Collins predicted that a southerner could be elected president if he dealt with the racial issue in a "calm, lawful and courageous manner." Among those lauding the speech were such figures as Republican Governor Cecil H. Underwood of West Virginia, Democratic Governor Raymond Gary of Oklahoma, Vice-President Nixon and former First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt. Earlier, Faubus had characterized the South as an "unwanted step-child in the family of states."⁴⁰ Faubus also claimed that Collins had "prostituted himself to non-southern interests" in hopes of being the Democratic vice-presidential nominee in 1960, a position subsequently filled

³⁹Ibid., September 21, 22, 1957; Thomas P. Wagy, "Governor LeRoy Collins of Florida and the Little Rock Crisis," Arkansas Historical Quarterly, XXXVIII (Summer 1979), 103; Arkansas Gazette, September 21, 1957.

⁴⁰Wagy, "Governor LeRoy Collins of Florida and the Little Rock Crisis," 104, 108-109.

by Senator Lyndon B. Johnson of Texas.⁴¹

On September 24, a group of about one thousand whites converged on Central High, calling policemen on guard "communists and nigger lovers." Eisenhower, unable to reach a consensus with Faubus, activated a detachment of the 101st Airborne Infantry Division in Little Rock to protect the black students. Within a few days, the one thousand troops restored calm to the school.⁴² Little Rock had hence emerged in the national limelight as a model for later resistance to desegregation.⁴³ Increasingly, it was the Republican-appointed federal judges in the South, such as John Minor Wisdom of Louisiana and Frank M. Johnson of Alabama, who stood against racial discrimination in the period prior to enactment of federal civil rights legislation.⁴⁴

Eisenhower's decision to activate the 101st Airborne drew the praise of moderates and liberals and the wrath of many conservatives. Governor George Bell Timmerman of South Carolina claimed Eisenhower had "set himself up

⁴¹Ibid., 109; Atlanta Constitution, September 24, 1957.

⁴²New York Times, September 25, 26, 1957.

⁴³James E. Lester, Jr., A Man for Arkansas: Sid McMATH and the Southern Reform Tradition (Little Rock, 1976), 232-233.

⁴⁴Pat Watters, The South and the Nation (New York, 1969), 268.

as dictator, and this may be taken as further evidence of an effort to communize America."⁴⁵ Journalist James Jackson "Jack" Kilpatrick, with the Richmond, Virginia, News Leader, saw the issue as one of "who rules," noting, "do we owe allegiance to the fundamental law of this land, as ratified by the states? Or to the lawless usurpation of a few mortal men?" Kilpatrick also urged the South to "defy Warren's false law."⁴⁶

Faubus regarded Eisenhower's actions as a play to power politics. According to the Arkansas governor, Eisenhower hoped to perpetually lock up the northern black vote for the Republicans. Faubus claimed that:

sending federal troops to Little Rock to enforce integration at bayonet point proved futile in capturing the Negro vote for the Republican Party. The Republican elephant now realized he was the victim of the age-old trick -- the snipe hunt -- as he sat in the lonely darkness holding the empty bag.⁴⁷

Eisenhower removed the troops when Faubus agreed that he would no longer obstruct the desegregation process. By May 1970, a federal court struck down the original Little Rock desegregation plan, which Faubus had fought, on the

⁴⁵Quoted in Wagy, "Governor LeRoy Collins of Florida and the Little Rock Crisis," 112; Charleston, South Carolina, News and Courier, September 25, 1957.

⁴⁶Quoted in Nashville, Tennessee, Banner, September 11, 1957.

⁴⁷Faubus, Down from the Hills, 346.

grounds that the neighborhood-school concept had produced insufficient integration.⁴⁸ After a revised plan was put into effect, Central High gradually became a majority black school. In 1982, the black enrollment was 53 percent.⁴⁹

Faubus had his defenders on the desegregation crisis as late as 1970. The Arkansas Democrat claimed that what Faubus had done was "all legal -- and what happened as a consequence was as tame as a Wednesday night prayer meeting compared to the violence, property destruction . . . that has since rocked the nation."⁵⁰

At the time the decision to use the National Guard was made, Faubus was urged by former Governor Sid McMath and businessman Winthrop A. Rockefeller, not to intervene. According to Rockefeller, Faubus replied:

I'm sorry, but I'm already committed. I'm going to run for a third term, and if I don't do this, Jim Johnson and Bruce Bennett will tear me to shreds.⁵¹

⁴⁸Arkansas Gazette, May 14, 1970.

⁴⁹U.S. News and World Report, XCII (September 27, 1982), 39.

⁵⁰Arkansas Democrat, September 25, 1970.

⁵¹Quoted in Neal Peirce, The Deep South States of America (New York, 1974), 132; Robert Sherrill, Gothic Politics in the Deep South (New York, 1968), 95; Jack Bass and Walter DeVries, The Transformation of Southern Politics: Social Change and Political Consequences Since 1945 (New York, 1976), 91; Lester, A Man for Arkansas, 234.

Johnson and Bennett were the leaders of the resistance movement in Arkansas in 1957. Faubus has repeatedly denied ever making this statement though it has been quoted in four books on southern politics.⁵² Faubus did meet with Rockefeller at a Little Rock hotel on September 1, 1957, to discuss the school situation. Faubus indicates that he believes Rockefeller requested the meeting at the urging of the White House. Faubus, in his memoirs, explains:

I reminded him that I was sworn to uphold state law and the state constitution. They were in conflict with the mere order of a federal district judge. Some of these state laws and the state constitution had not yet even been challenged in the courts. . . . While I did not say so to the former New York millionaire who was now Arkansas' wealthiest citizen, I'm sure he sensed that I was in no mood to pull the national administration's chestnuts out of the fire at my own political and physical risk.⁵³

Faubus later noted that Rockefeller had told one of Faubus' associates, who he knew would tell Faubus, "I wish him the very worst," in reference to the 1958 Democratic gubernatorial primary. Faubus questioned why Rockefeller had "continued on the Arkansas Industrial Development Commission payroll for several years thereafter as a part of my administration," referring to

⁵²Sherrill, Gothic Politics in the Deep South, 89.

⁵³Faubus, Down from the Hills, 207.

Rockefeller's chairmanship of the industrial-recruitment agency created by Faubus in 1955.⁵⁴

Faubus elaborated further on his relationship with Rockefeller in the late 1950s:

He was wise and tolerant enough to recognize there were viewpoints other than his own. Although he held to his own opinions and beliefs and never once in my presence hypocritically compromised them in conversation for expediency's sake, he did not fall out with others who did not see things his way. At times, he remained silent on certain issues, which is the prerogative of any public figure. . . . He could disagree openly with another and argue an issue without rancor or impairment of a friendship. At least that was my experience with him.⁵⁵

Faubus' actions at Little Rock have been questioned as to the sincerity of his beliefs. One writer terms Faubus "the first of a new breed of demagogues whose devotion to racism was patently opportunistic."⁵⁶ Sid McMath, who broke with Faubus over the desegregation crisis, later reflected that he had "brought Orval down out of the hills, and every night I ask for forgiveness."⁵⁷ Author Robert Sherrill claims that Faubus did not even enter politics until he was "at the end of his row,"

⁵⁴Ibid.

⁵⁵Ibid.

⁵⁶Watters, The South and the Nation, 132.

⁵⁷Quoted in Sherrill, Gothic Politics in the Deep South, 76.

after having worked as a seasonal migrant, a country school teacher and in the military.⁵⁸

In December 1957, the executive committee of the National Governors Conference met in Hot Springs. Among items on the agenda was a proposal by Illinois Republican Governor William G. Stratton to condemn the president's federalizing of a state National Guard without the consent of the affected governor. Stratton's resolution was prompted by an incident in Illinois but came three months after the Little Rock crisis and generated national attention as a result. Among those attending the conference was former New York Governor Thomas Dewey, whose presence was, in the words of Faubus, "never publicly explained." Faubus said that Dewey had been sent to Hot Springs with the "specific mission of stopping the Stratton resolution." The resolution itself faded into oblivion and was never brought before the committee.⁵⁹

Faubus later recalled a conversation that he had at this conference with Dewey:

Governor Dewey grew loquacious while the rest of us listened. To me, it was meeting and listening to a legend. I had read of Tom Dewey since his name first splashed across the front pages . . . as a gang-busting district attorney in New York. . . . He talked

⁵⁸Ibid.

⁵⁹Faubus, Down from the Hills, 353.

of many things. Of Eisenhower, he said, 'he has his own private pipeline to the American people.' That was the best description I have ever heard of the Eisenhower popularity, and I agreed with Dewey 100 percent. With all his ignorance of civil government and his sometimes neglect of official duties, Eisenhower could always escape the blame for anything that went wrong in national affairs. To the common people, Eisenhower always meant well, and to them any mistakes were the fault of the Palace Guard. . . . We kept filling his glass, and he kept talking, and every minute of his discourse on politics and political figures was filled with interest to his hearers. . . . We parted at four o'clock a.m. I never saw the distinguished New Yorker again.⁶⁰

The Little Rock controversy temporarily increased Faubus' political popularity in both Arkansas and the nation at large. In 1958, Faubus was listed last among the "Ten Men in the World Most Admired by Americans." No other sitting governor had ever made the list, which was headed at the time by President Eisenhower.⁶¹

The impact of the Little Rock crisis had a major influence on the southern GOP. William D. Workman, Jr., a Columbia, South Carolina, journalist who waged a rightist Republican campaign against Senator Olin D. Johnston in 1962, claims that Eisenhower's actions halted the growing movement toward Republicanism in the region. Workman,

⁶⁰Ibid.

⁶¹Arkansas Democrat, December 28, 1958.

who was also the unsuccessful Republican gubernatorial candidate in South Carolina in 1982, claimed that the Civil Rights Act of 1957 hurt the GOP in seeking votes in the South in 1958.⁶² Southern resistance to desegregation culminated in 1956 in the so-called "Southern Manifesto," an idea originated by Democratic Senators Strom Thurmond and Harry F. Byrd, Sr., to employ "every available legal and parliamentary weapon" to prevent school integration. Signers of the manifesto included both Arkansas senators.⁶³ By 1964, the manifesto was a relic of the rage and resentment stemming from the Brown court decision. Senate Majority Leader Lyndon Johnson, who was not asked to sign the manifesto, recognized the potential of the issue driving black voters into the Republican column. Johnson, who was aware that blacks had been reliably voting Democratic only since 1936, feared the minority bloc could return to the party of Lincoln should the Democratically-controlled Senate embrace the Byrd-Thurmond manifesto. Johnson aide Harry McPherson explained that:

⁶² William D. Workman, Jr., The Case for the South (New York, 1960), 265.

⁶³ Monroe Lee Billington, The Political South in the Twentieth Century (New York, 1975), 109.

there was a great deal of pressure for the Republicans to seize that opportunity. At the same time, there was a deep personal and political tie between the conservative Republicans and the southerners. They didn't want to rock the boat.⁶⁴

Republicans were divided nationally over the political strategy to pursue in the wake of the Brown decision. Liberals and moderates, such as Nelson Rockefeller, who defeated New York Governor W. Averill Harriman in 1958, hoped to capture the black vote in the North by promoting desegregation. Others, such as Arizona Senator Barry M. Goldwater, who was re-elected to his second term in 1958, were more cautious, urging the GOP to seek gains among white voters south of the Potomac River, fearing the black vote was forever lost to the GOP. Hence, the court ruling augmented the rift between the moderate and conservative wings of the Republican Party.⁶⁵ A few Republicans openly resigned from the party in the South, including Mississippi National Committeeman W.O. Spencer. Most southern Republicans at the time, however, were activists who swore allegiance to the GOP for reasons unrelated to race.⁶⁶

⁶⁴Quoted in Merle Miller, Lyndon: An Oral Biography (New York, 1980), 187.

⁶⁵Numan V. Bartley, The Rise of Massive Resistance: Race and Politics in the South During the 1950s (Baton Rouge, Louisiana, 1969), 62.

⁶⁶Faubus, Down from the Hills, 307, 309.

Faubus had no difficulty winning his unprecedented third term, a record then unequalled since the late Jefferson Davis (1901-1907).⁶⁷ For the first time in the twentieth century, Arkansas Republicans conducted a gubernatorial primary in 1958, as two candidates sought the nomination. George W. Johnson of Greenwood, the unsuccessful attorney general nominee from 1952, opposed Donald D. Layne, a Little Rock engineer, for the GOP nomination. Johnson defeated Layne, 3,147, or 72.7 percent, to 1,273, or 28.8 percent. Only a few precincts were used for the primary, which attracted minimal interest even among Republicans.⁶⁸

Later, Faubus recalled meeting Johnson during the 1958 primary campaign:

The affable gentleman said, "I'm the man who's going to beat all of you in the general election. I'm George Johnson." We had a good laugh and a nice visit. I liked by soon-to-be opponent. In retrospect, he chose a most inopportune time to bear the GOP banner in Arkansas.⁶⁹

The nomination was hardly worth Johnson's effort. The Republican received 50,288 votes, or 17.5 percent, to

⁶⁷ El Dorado Daily News, August 10, 1958.

⁶⁸ New York Times, August 14, 1958; Diamond, ed., Congressional Quarterly's Guide to U.S. Elections, 898.

⁶⁹ Faubus, Down from the Hills, 409.

Faubus' 236,598, or 82.5 percent.⁷⁰ The Arkansas Democrat claimed that Johnson's candidacy was "a formality to permit the Republicans to retain their standing as the state's minority party." Under Arkansas law, the GOP had to field a gubernatorial candidate to continue in legal existence. The newspaper noted that Republican funds would not "be wasted on such a hopeless cause but probably are being sent to states where they can be more helpful."⁷¹ Faubus also sought support for an increased state sales tax, which voters ratified after the legislature had implemented it the previous year. At the time, Faubus regarded approval of the tax as a personal victory. Faubus received the majority of the black vote in the 1958 general election, but Johnson led in a few Little Rock black precincts.⁷² The Republicans lost their two seats in the Arkansas House in 1958, and no GOP candidates even ran for Congress.⁷³

In the only election upset in 1958 in Arkansas, Little Rock ophthalmologist Dale Aford, an independent Democrat, defeated Second District Congressman Brooks Hays by a 51 percent to 49 percent margin in a write-in

⁷⁰Election Statistics, 1958.

⁷¹Arkansas Democrat, November 2, 1958.

⁷²Ibid., November 5, 1958.

⁷³Election Statistics, 1958.

campaign. Hays blamed his defeat on Faubus, who he claimed had not lived up to an earlier pledge to actively support all Democratic nominees. Hays claimed that Faubus had "attacked the primary system in the state" by allegedly giving encouragement to the Alford forces, who ran almost exclusively on Hays' support for the federal position in the Little Rock desegregation crisis.⁷⁴ Faubus said that even though one of his associates, Claude Carpenter, had managed Alford's campaign, Faubus had taken no part. Faubus was a registered voter in the Third Congressional District. Speaking at a states' rights political rally in Crestview, Florida, Faubus told newsmen that "a man who did more to defeat Brooks Hays than anybody else was Brooks Hays."⁷⁵ Vice-President Nixon called Hays' defeat "tragic," claiming the congressman had lost to "demagoguery and prejudice." Nixon, in a letter to Hays, expressed his own strong views on civil rights and added that the condition of blacks could be improved in the North as well as the South.⁷⁶

Alford effectively ended Hays' political career, although both men unsuccessfully sought the 1966 Democratic

⁷⁴Ibid.; Arkansas Democrat, November 7, 1958.

⁷⁵Arkansas Democrat, November 8, 1958.

⁷⁶New York Times, November 24, 1958.

gubernatorial nomination. Hays relocated to Winston-Salem, North Carolina, in 1968, where he became a part-time consultant to the Wake Forest University Ecumenical Institute. In 1972, Hays received 35.2 percent of the general election vote as a Democratic congressional nominee, running as a staunch opponent of the Richard Nixon presidential administration.⁷⁷ Hays, who died in October 1981, also served earlier as a Tennessee Valley Authority administrator and as assistant secretary of state for President Kennedy. Among those attending his eulogy was the old political rival, Orval Faubus.⁷⁸

Faubus' popularity in Arkansas made the life of white liberals unpleasant in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Harry Ashmore once reflected that:

unless a man goes the whole way with fervid condemnation of the United States Supreme Court and all its works, he is subject to charges of disloyalty and heresy. White southern liberals, if they spoke out, hence undertook the task of opposing school boards, sheriffs, politicians and the White Citizens' Council.⁷⁹

Faubus later soft-pedaled his racial remarks, cloaking them firmly in the mantle of "states' rights and constitutional government." In 1964, though, Faubus was still

⁷⁷Ibid., February 19, 1972; Diamond, ed., Congressional Quarterly's Guide to U.S. Elections, 874.

⁷⁸Arkansas Gazette, October 13, 1981.

⁷⁹Quoted in Morton Sosna, Southern Liberals and the Race Issue: In Search of the Silent South (New York, 1977), 171.

attacking the high court, noting without historical accuracy that:

if the Confederacy had won the battle of Pea Ridge, we would now be living in the Confederate States of America rather than as subjects of the U.S. Supreme Court.⁸⁰

The aftermath of the desegregation crisis appeared to worsen the state's economic climate, as population especially declined from 1958 through 1960.⁸¹ Winthrop Rockefeller insisted that the Little Rock crisis had hampered efforts to recruit industries.⁸² Faubus, however, saw the desegregation issue as unrelated to population losses.⁸³ Rockefeller, soon to become the spokesman for Arkansas Republicanism, further claimed that the states' rights issue was faulty in nature. He charged that southerners were responsible for lower standards in integrated schools because they had never faithfully applied the "separate-but-equal" doctrine.⁸⁴ It was in this onetime New Yorker to whom Arkansas Republicans looked for leadership in the emerging 1960s.

⁸⁰Quoted in Sherrill, Gothic Politics in the Deep South, 74.

⁸¹Ibid., 75.

⁸²Washington Post, October 6, 1957; New York Times, October 26, 1958.

⁸³New York Times, October 5, 6, 1957.

⁸⁴Ibid., September 12, 1958.

CHAPTER VI

WINTHROP ROCKEFELLER REVITALIZES THE ARKANSAS GOP

The first contact between the legendary Rockefeller family and the state of Arkansas occurred in 1911, when the Rockefeller Sanitary Commission appropriated funds to eradicate the hookworm from a group of southern states long plagued by infestation of the dreaded pest.¹ Then, on May 1, 1912, a child who was destined to alter the political landscape of Arkansas was born in New York. Winthrop A. Rockefeller, son of John D. Rockefeller, Jr., and grandson of John D. Rockefeller, Sr., and Rhode Island Senator Nelson W. Aldrich, had a challenging life to fulfill. He and his brothers, Nelson, David, Laurence and John D., III, were reared in a strict manner by their parents. The boys were required to work, open a savings account and contribute to charity. As youngsters, Winthrop was usually closer to brother David, who eventually became president of the New York Chase Manhattan Bank. With the exception of Nelson, who served as New York governor from 1959-1973, and vice-president from 1974-1977,

¹David C. Roller and Robert W. Twyman, The Encyclopedia of Southern History (Baton Rouge, Louisiana, 1979), 71.

the Rockefeller boys were considered "shy, withdrawn and reticent people."² The Rockefeller home, devoutly Baptist, emphasized thrift, the rewards of work, the rights of others, civic responsibility and stewardship of the vast wealth accumulated in the petroleum business. Winthrop was educated at the Lincoln High School of Columbia University Teachers' College. Having entered Yale University in 1931, Rockefeller lost interest in his studies and left Yale in 1934, without graduating, to become a trainee for Humble Oil and Refining Company in the Texas oil fields. He was the only Rockefeller brother ever employed at manual labor, a factor he later found useful to stress while on the campaign trail.³

Rockefeller was unable to effectively compete with his brothers in New York. For a time after working in the oil fields, he studied finance at the Chase Manhattan. From 1937-1938, he was an industrial relations consultant at Rockefeller Center, Inc. In 1940, he became a director of the National Urban League, which subsequently promoted civil rights activities in the South.⁴

²Frank Henry Gervasi, The Real Rockefeller (New York, 1964), 26, 49-52.

³Charles Moritz, ed., Current Biography Yearbook, 1959 (New York, 1960), 392.

⁴Ibid., 392-393.

Rockefeller enlisted as a private in the U.S. Army during World War II, rising to the rank of lieutenant colonel after serving with the 77th Division in the invasions of Guam, Leyte and Okinawa. At one time, he was the senior officer left alive after a Japanese suicide plane attacked the troop ship, U.S.S. Henrico. Though himself injured, Rockefeller took command of the troops until he was relieved the next day. He was confined to a hospital for six weeks and returned to active duty only to be stricken with infectious hepatitis. Rockefeller earned a Bronze Star and Purple Heart and is listed in the Infantry Officer Hall of Fame at Fort Benning, Georgia.⁵

On February 14, 1948, Rockefeller married the divorced daughter of a West Virginia coal miner, an actress-model named Barbara Paul Sears but known as "Bobo." She bore him a son, Winthrop Paul Rockefeller, the next year. The couple quickly separated and was divorced in 1954. In the largest divorce settlement until that time, Mrs. Rockefeller received \$6,393,000. Rockefeller was married for a second time on June 11, 1956, to Jeannette Edris, the divorced mother of both a son and a daughter.⁶ That marriage too ended in divorce prior to Rockefeller's death

⁵Ibid., 393; John L. Ward, The Arkansas Rockefeller, (Baton Rouge, Louisiana, 1978), 1.

⁶New York Times, March 22, 1958; Moritz, ed., Current Biography Yearbook, 1959, 394.

in 1973.

In 1953, Rockefeller, branded as a reckless playboy, left New York to move to Arkansas at the suggestion of an Army friend, Frank Newell. Rockefeller initially purchased nine hundred acres on Petit Jean Mountain in Conway County about sixty-five miles northwest of Little Rock. He acquired pure-bred Santa Gertrudis cattle from the King Ranch in Texas to begin his celebrated WinRock Farms, ultimately a 3,500-acre cattle farm valued at \$10 million. The complex is run today by Rockefeller's son, Winthrop Paul Rockefeller.⁷

Rockefeller took an active interest in his community and state. He donated \$2.5 million to the Morrilton public schools with the stipulation that the facilities be integrated. His stepchildren attended the integrated Morrilton schools. In 1955, Governor Orval E. Faubus, a man mystified by the Rockefellers, named the state's famous newcomer as chairman of the Arkansas Industrial Development Commission, the agency created by Faubus to foster the relocation of northern industries. Rockefeller in 1956 wrote a series of articles for the Christian Science Monitor to promote Arkansas' industrial prospects. He

⁷Moritz, ed., Current Biography Yearbook, 1959, 393-394; Jack Bass and Walter DeVries, The Transformation of Southern Politics: Social Change and Political Consequences Since 1945 (New York, 1976), 105; Arkansas Gazette, November 24, 1982.

became a director of both the Union National Bank in Little Rock and the Pulaski County American Red Cross. Earlier, Rockefeller was named chairman of the board of Colonial Williamsburg, Inc., a Rockefeller-family enterprise which restored the Virginia town to its early eighteenth century image. As a director of the restoration project, Rockefeller was instrumental in the desegregation of restaurants and inns in Williamsburg. In 1954, President Dwight D. Eisenhower appointed Rockefeller a member of the Jamestown-Williamsburg-Yorktown Celebration Commission, a group formed to arrange ceremonies for the 350th anniversary in 1957 of the founding of the Jamestown colony.⁸

In 1957, former Governor Francis A. Cherry paid tribute to the adopted Arkansan:

The people of Arkansas wish Winthrop Rockefeller had been born quintuplets. We haven't many rich people in this state, but we have plenty rich enough to do the things Winthrop has done. The difference is that he does them.⁹

David Rockefeller contends that "Win found himself in Arkansas. It was just what he wanted and needed."¹⁰ As

⁸Bass and DeVries, The Transformation of Southern Politics, 89; Christian Science Monitor, December 20-22, 1956; Moritz, ed., Current Biography Yearbook, 1959, 393-394.

⁹Washington Post, October 4, 1957.

¹⁰"Arkansas: Opportunity Regained," Time, LXXXVIII (December 2, 1966), 24.

the "nonconformist" of the Rockefeller family, Winthrop was, according to David, "rebellious against the stereotype of what we are."¹¹ His mother, Abby Aldrich Rockefeller, once admonished his brothers to stop their cruelty toward Winthrop, noting that the "only way to help him is by being kind to him."¹² A New York friend, Pelle Aavatsmark, recalling Rockefeller's pre-war days, remarked, "Win was a ladies' man, you know. I don't know a person who didn't like him."¹³

Rockefeller thrust himself into the tasks of the industrial development program, aiding in the relocation of 523 industries during his nine years on the commission. The industries produced 70,684 new jobs, which swelled Arkansas payrolls and the state treasury as well. After years at the bottom level, per capita income in Arkansas in 1963 was among the fastest growing in the nation. On coming to Arkansas, Rockefeller concluded that the state suffered from an "inferiority complex," and he vowed to devote his energies and wealth to the state's economic and cultural life.¹⁴ For three years, he underwrote the costs of a medical clinic in neighboring Perry County and

¹¹Ibid., 25.

¹²Ibid.

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Bass and DeVries, The Transformation of Southern Politics, 89.

made annual gifts to state colleges and universities. He provided scholarships to deserving high school students under his Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation, an agency still active after his death. He also helped raise \$1,000,000 for an arts center in Little Rock.¹⁵

In 1956, the Arkansas legislature appropriated \$127,500 to initially fund the industrial development commission, and Rockefeller enlisted a statewide committee to raise another \$200,000. As the legislature authorized an \$8,000 annual salary for the individual chosen to run the commission staff, Rockefeller hired a two-man team and used donated funds to pay one \$20,000 and the other, \$12,000. Manufacturers subsequently admitted that the Rockefeller name did cause them to take second looks at Arkansas industrial requests. For at least twenty years, Arkansas had been losing population, as the mechanization of cotton farms had thrown many out of work. Moreover, college graduates could not find suitable positions in the state, and the existing industries offered low-paying jobs in lumber, apparel, furniture or leather. World War II started a transformation in Arkansas, and industrial expansion became the top priority of the Faubus administration during his initial term. By 1956, the Census Bureau confirmed that Arkansas had halted the population

¹⁵Ward, The Arkansas Rockefeller, 2; "Arkansas: The Squire of Petit Jean," Time, LXXXI (March 8, 1963), 27.

drain, but the state again lost population between 1958 and 1960, a situation Rockefeller attributed to the unfavorable publicity stemming from the Little Rock desegregation crisis of 1957.¹⁶ Rockefeller's performance at the commission seemed to "symbolize the yearnings" of those Arkansans tired of being constantly ranked at the bottom among states in per capita income and educational achievement.¹⁷

The Arkansas Industrial Development Commission became the focal point of controversy as Rockefeller's GOP political activities accelerated in the early 1960s. In 1962, the crafty Faubus, who had publicly praised Rockefeller's efforts at the commission, appeared to engineer a partisan coup to remove Rockefeller from the chairmanship.¹⁸ Democratic State Representative Walter Day of Blytheville in Mississippi County proposed that the commission appropriation be withheld until Rockefeller resigned. In Day's words, "we just can't see a Republican Party leader as chairman . . . We think the commission should be dominated by Democrats."¹⁹ Another Democrat

¹⁶"Arkansas: State Perked Up by Rockefeller," Business Week, December 22, 1956, 74-75; Washington Post, October 6, 1957.

¹⁷Lawrence Goodwyn, The South Central States (New York, 1967), 121.

¹⁸Time, March 8, 1963, 27.

¹⁹Conway Log Cabin Democrat, February 20, 1963.

introduced a bill which would have prohibited any party official -- obviously Rockefeller -- from sitting on the industrial commission. Angry telegrams and telephone calls flooded the governor's office from across the state. At the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville, Faubus was even hanged in effigy. Rockefeller's defenders included former Governor Sid McMath, who had unsuccessfully challenged Faubus in the 1962 Democratic gubernatorial primary, and the American Association of University Women.²⁰ Caught in an uproar, Faubus himself defended Rockefeller and defused efforts to remove the Republican as chairman. Rockefeller, unconvinced of Faubus' sincerity, told the Young Republican Club of Jonesboro that the state was:

entitled to better government . . . I am working for that which I think is right for Arkansas so that we will take our position with the ranks of states with dignity, not buffoonery. . . . I have a sneaking suspicion that the governor's bipartisan policy is coming to an end.²¹

The Arkansas Gazette urged that Faubus retain Rockefeller in the industrial commission post despite the Republican's role in the 1962 campaign against Democratic Senator J. William Fulbright. The paper noted that the:

²⁰ Arkansas Democrat, February 26, 1963; Ward, The Arkansas Rockefeller, 8.

²¹ Time, March 8, 1963, 27.

job of the Arkansas Industrial Development Commission, essentially, is to talk outside industrialists into making investments in Arkansas, and the fact remains that when Winthrop Rockefeller speaks, the prospective investor is likely to listen. The issue is that simple, and it shouldn't matter whether Rockefeller is a Democrat, a Republican or a Whig.²²

Rockefeller resigned the chairmanship on March 28, 1964, to carry the GOP banner in the gubernatorial election against the man who had named him to the post, Orval Faubus.²³

With the exception of the Dwight Eisenhower candidacy, the Republican Party did not fare too well during the 1950s. The New Deal continued to define American politics throughout the decade, and the Republicans remained in a minority position in many areas of the country despite the president's personal appeal. That situation was accentuated in the 1958 mid-term congressional elections, which produced convincing Democratic majorities from coast-to-coast. Many northern Republicans began to imitate liberal Democrats in competing for support. Most southern Republicans, however, remained extremely conservative. The national GOP became as divided as had the Democrats through their earlier sectional rivalries between North and South. Arkansas Republicans

²²Arkansas Gazette, November 12, 1962.

²³Ibid., March 29, 1964.

followed this conservative stance in the early 1960s, but as Winthrop Rockefeller became more actively involved in party affairs, the trend toward moderation gained acceptance.²⁴

Some political observers did not expect Faubus to seek a fourth term in 1960. If Faubus did run though, many thought that Rockefeller would challenge him at the time. Faubus, however, was generally perceived as preparing to challenge either of the state's two Democratic senators in 1960 or 1962. Faubus declined to ever seek the senatorial position; in his memoirs Faubus explained that he never opposed Senator John L. McClellan because during his:

tenure as governor, I never knew of Senator McClellan doing anything detrimental to my interests. In our official capacities, we worked together many times on many projects for the state. Politically, he assisted me when, as the Democratic nominee, I had strong Republican opposition in 1954 and 1964. . . . I have never yet shown the cold hand of ingratitude when gratitude was due.²⁵

Author Louis Lomax reported in March 1960 that he was convinced that Rockefeller's potential candidacy had Faubus "running scared."²⁶ Lomax incorrectly predicted that

²⁴Ripon Society and Clifford W. Brown, Jr., Jaws of Victory (Boston, 1974), 288.

²⁵Orval Eugene Faubus, Down from the Hills (Little Rock, 1980), 31.

²⁶Louis E. Lomax, "Two Millionaires, Two Senators and a Faubus," Harper's Magazine, CCXX (March 1960), 74.

Faubus would shun another gubernatorial bid and instead accept a temporary position as an executive with the Stephens Union Life Insurance Company and wait until 1962 to challenge Fulbright. Union Life at the time, owned by Faubus' financial booster, W.R. "Witt" Stephens," president of Arkansas Louisiana Gas Company, sold mainly to poor whites in Arkansas, Mississippi and Georgia. Lomax also predicted that if Rockefeller ran for governor in 1960, he would choose the independent label, as the GOP banner was seen as too great of a liability to overcome.²⁷

Later in 1960, the Republican National Convention met in Chicago to select a presidential nominee to contest the general election. Eisenhower was ineligible to succeed himself, and the only candidate in the running was Vice-President Richard M. Nixon. Nixon dominated the convention, winning support from all but 10 of the 1,331 delegates. Those dissenters, all Louisianians, backed an unannounced contender, Arizona Senator Barry M. Goldwater. Winthrop's brother, Nelson Rockefeller, had considered a challenge to Nixon but backed down due to lack of support and assurances that Nixon would seek a strong civil rights plank in the platform.²⁸ The convention

²⁷Ibid., 84.

²⁸Robert A. Diamond, ed., Congressional Quarterly's Guide to U.S. Elections (Washington, 1975), 168.

attracted considerable attention in Little Rock when a housewife, Mrs. Bryant B. Pake, complained to the Federal Communications Commission when local television stations failed to cover a portion of the GOP proceedings. All three Little Rock stations on the night of July 24 carried campaign speeches by state and district Democratic candidates, shunning the Republican convention. The stations then revised their schedules to carry the keynote address on the following night, thus pacifying Mrs. Pake, a member of the Pulaski County Republican Committee.²⁹

Winthrop Rockefeller took an active political role in 1960, supporting GOP gubernatorial candidate Henry Middleton Britt, a Hot Springs lawyer who challenged Faubus' fourth-term bid. Britt, an Illinois native born in 1919, was an active member of the Republican State Central Committee and the Garland County party organization.³⁰ Britt, who ultimately won election as Garland County judge (a position he lost in the 1982 elections), was perceived as a token GOP opponent for Faubus, who scored a landslide in the 1960 Democratic primary. Faubus' primary victory was seen as having weakened the cause of those southerners who advocated compliance with

²⁹New York Times, August 7, 1960; Arkansas Gazette, July 25, 1960.

³⁰Bessie Butler Newsom Allard, ed., Who is Who in Arkansas, Vol. 2 (Little Rock, 1968), 41.

federal court rulings on racial matters.³¹ Rockefeller assisted Britt financially and sponsored the "Party for Two Parties" at WinRock Farms to launch the GOP campaign in Arkansas. Rockefeller brought entertainers Tex Ritter (later to unsuccessfully seek the Republican senatorial nomination in Tennessee in 1970, losing to William E. Brock, III) and Edgar Bergen to entertain the 850 guests who paid \$50 each. The money collected went to the GOP campaign and a "bipartisan political education" fund.³² Rockefeller endorsed the concept of the two-party system in a Little Rock television address on October 10, claiming that a viable Republican Party would mean greater opportunity for Arkansans.³³

Britt and Rockefeller devoted much of their time toward promoting the Nixon candidacy in Arkansas. While speaking in Memphis, Tennessee, on September 27, Nixon crossed the Mississippi River as a gesture to the Arkansans in West Memphis and was warmly greeted by party leaders. Rockefeller, when asked if Nixon could carry Arkansas, merely replied, "I'm a fighter."³⁴ Britt

³¹New York Times, July 28, 1960; Arkansas Gazette, November 3, 1982.

³²New York Times, October 19, 1960.

³³Ibid., October 16, 1960.

³⁴Arkansas Democrat, September 28, 1960.

warned those contemplating support for the National States' Rights Party that they could indirectly contribute to the election of Democratic nominee John F. Kennedy, a Massachusetts senator, by dividing the anti-Kennedy vote. In Arkansas, Governor Faubus was the official nominee of the States' Rights Party, but he disavowed the militant organization and issued instead a "lukewarm" endorsement of Kennedy. Faubus also dispatched one of his aides, Dan Stephens of Clinton, to manage the Kennedy effort in Arkansas. Britt criticized the Faubus administration and claimed that the two-party system was needed to "check unreasonable public expenditures."³⁵

Arkansas Democratic leaders rallied behind the campaign of Kennedy and his Texan running-mate, Senator Lyndon B. Johnson. Both Little Rock newspapers editorially endorsed the Democratic slate. The Arkansas Democrat admitted that it was not fully impressed with either Nixon or Kennedy but felt compelled to remain with the Democrats. "We're Democrats of the Cleveland-Wilson type," the paper said in urging Arkansans to work actively to reclaim the Democratic Party for conservatism.³⁶ Among officials urging support for Kennedy and Johnson was Senator McClellan, who ran in 1960 without GOP opposition.

³⁵Ibid., November 1, 2, 1960.

³⁶Ibid., November 4, 1960.

McClellan gave what the Arkansas Democrat described as a "forty-minute table-thumping, two-arm speech" on behalf of the national ticket.³⁷ Kennedy suggested that he might appoint Fulbright as secretary of state, and the Democratic nominee received a television endorsement from all leading Arkansas Democrats on the Saturday night before the election.³⁸

Still, potentially fatal opposition developed to Kennedy and Johnson in Arkansas. State newspapers were saturated with letters criticizing Kennedy's liberalism and Catholicism. State Supreme Court Justice James D. "Jim" Johnson of Conway, Faubus' 1956 Democratic party rival, attacked the Kennedy platform but stopped short of endorsing the moderate Nixon.³⁹ A former Democratic national committeeman, Dr. R.B. Robbins of Camden, endorsed Nixon, claiming that Kennedy and Johnson were "not the same kind of Democrats that your father and grandfather and my father and grandfather were." Of Johnson, Robbins termed the Senate majority leader a "Judas goat -- betrayer of the South."⁴⁰

A 1960 survey found that 60 percent of southern

³⁷Ibid., November 5, 1960.

³⁸Jim Ranchino, Faubus to Bumpers: Arkansas Votes, 1960-1970 (Arkadelphia, Arkansas, 1972), 29.

³⁹Ibid.

⁴⁰Arkansas Democrat, November 7, 1960.

whites considered themselves Democrats, while just 14 percent chose the Republican label. The remaining 26 percent identified themselves as independents or "no party."⁴¹

The Republican Party was perceived among blacks in 1960 as the party of depression, favoritism of corporations and mistreatment or unconcern for workers. Only 10 percent of voting-age blacks called themselves Republicans. The survey also found that those who had supported Democrat Adlai E. Stevenson in 1956 and who planned to vote for Kennedy in 1960 had the most favorable image of the Democratic Party. On the other hand, those who had voted for Eisenhower in 1956 and who planned to support Nixon in 1960 had a "slightly more favorable image of the Republican Party" than the Democratic Party to which they pledged nominal allegiance. Those voters who supported Eisenhower in 1956 but planned to back Kennedy in 1960 had equally favorable opinions of both parties.⁴²

About three weeks prior to the 1960 general election, a private unpublished poll in Arkansas gave Kennedy and Nixon each 40 percent with the crucial 20 percent undecided. A key pro-Kennedy Democrat offered this comment: "If I had to bet one way or the other, I'd say 'Kennedy,'"

⁴¹Avery Leiserson, ed., The American South in the 1960s (New York, 1964), 84.

⁴²Ibid., 97, 107-108.

but I wouldn't put a nickel on it."⁴³ The Fort Smith Southwest American noted in an editorial that "there's a feeling Kennedy is ahead," but it claimed that the "religious issue remains an important intangible."⁴⁴

Among the more controversial incidents in the campaign was the sympathetic telephone call made by Kennedy to Mrs. Martin Luther King, Jr., while King was jailed after leading a civil rights march in Atlanta, Georgia. The call is believed to have aided Kennedy in carrying several states by encouraging blacks to vote. Analysis of the returns indicates that blacks provided Kennedy's margin in such states as Texas, Michigan, the Carolinas and Arkansas. Nixon later admitted that he lost the race because of opposition from blacks. Southern voters, both black and white, were essential to Kennedy's victory.⁴⁵

Nationwide, Kennedy prevailed with 49.72 percent of the popular vote to Nixon's 49.55 percent. In the electoral college, the Democrats received 303 to 219 for Nixon and 15 for Virginia Senator Harry F. Byrd, Sr., all derived from Mississippi, Alabama and one stray GOP elector

⁴³U.S. News and World Report, XLIX (October 17, 1960), 56.

⁴⁴Fort Smith Southwest American, November 1, 1960.

⁴⁵Monroe Lee Billington, The Political South in the Twentieth Century (New York, 1975), 142, 144.

in Oklahoma.⁴⁶ Nixon carried Florida, Virginia and Tennessee, and he ran better in some rural areas of the South than had Eisenhower four years earlier despite the presence of Johnson on the Kennedy ticket. Apparently, numerous Protestants did support Nixon out of fear that Kennedy might be too closely tied to the Vatican. Nixon received 46 percent in the eleven former Confederate states and ran well in urban and suburban areas, such as Dallas, Houston, Birmingham, Charlotte and Shreveport.⁴⁷

In Arkansas, Nixon received 185,489 votes, or 46.1 percent of the two-party share; Kennedy led with 216,529, or 53.9 percent. When the 29,057 National States' Rights Party votes are considered, the Nixon percent decreases to 43, while the Kennedy share drops to 50.2 percent. The Arkansas returns in 1960 paralleled those from four years earlier. Whereas Stevenson polled 213,277, Kennedy received 216,529. While Eisenhower in 1956 drew 186,287, Nixon nearly matched that showing with his 185,489 ballots in Arkansas.⁴⁸ Turnout in Arkansas in 1960 was only 41.2 percent of eligible voters. Nixon received

⁴⁶Presidential Elections Since 1789 (Washington, 1975), 96.

⁴⁷Billington, The Political South in the Twentieth Century, 144; Roller and Twyman, Encyclopedia of Southern History, 401.

⁴⁸Election Statistics, 1956 and 1960 (Little Rock: Secretary of State).

pluralities in twenty-three counties, listed in descending order by percent of the two-party vote:

Searcy (69.2)	Polk (53.5)
Benton (68.4)	Garland (53.2)
Newton (68.2)	Sharp (53)
Carroll (66.8)	Craighead (51.8)
Washington (65.2)	Stone (51.7)
Fulton (61.6)	Independence (51.5)
Madison (59)	Montgomery (51.5)
Crawford (58.1)	Marion (51.2)
Sebastian (57.4)	Randolph (51)
Clay (57.1)	Scott (50.5)
Baxter (55.4)	Pike (50.4) ⁴⁹
Boone (55)	

Further analysis reveals that Nixon ran best in northwestern Arkansas, where the more traditional national Republican vote was evident, and in certain counties with relatively few blacks. He fared weakest in the southwest and eastern sections. Nixon ran better among wealthier voters, and Kennedy did well in low-income areas, defeating Nixon there, 51.1 percent to 43.7 percent. Kennedy ran well in Little Rock and Pine Bluff but amassed less convincing showings in most other urban areas. The Democratic success in heavily-black counties reflected in part a return of some blacks who had crossed party lines to support Eisenhower in 1956.⁵⁰

In the gubernatorial race, Faubus received 292,064,

⁴⁹Election Statistics, 1960.

⁵⁰Ranchino, Faubus to Bumpers, 30-31.

or 69.2 percent, compared to Britt's 129,921, or 30.8 percent. Faubus carried every county but fell below 70 percent for the first time since his general election victory over Pratt C. Rempel in 1954.⁵¹ The only Arkansas Republican to seek a congressional seat in 1960, L.J. Churchill of Dover in Pope County, ran as a write-in candidate, as his filing papers were received too late to qualify for a regular ballot position. Churchill was handily defeated by incumbent Fifth District Representative Dale Alford of Little Rock, who received 82.7 percent.⁵² Republicans won a single seat in the Arkansas House in the 1960 elections.⁵³

Reflecting years later on the 1960 campaign, Mrs. Jeannette Rockefeller remarked that:

at that point, the Republican Party was truthfully about five old men who sat on a porch until there was a Republican president and then held out their hands for some patronage. Win wanted to work within the system and change things, activate the Republican Party, which he did at untold personal hurts.⁵⁴

In 1961, Republican National Committeeman Wallace Townsend retired after thirty-three years of service in

⁵¹Election Statistics, 1954, 1956, 1958 and 1960.

⁵²Election Statistics, 1960; Arkansas Democrat,
November 9, 1960.

⁵³Ibid.

⁵⁴Quoted in Ward, The Arkansas Rockefeller, 16.

the key party position. Townsend was succeeded at his own request by Winthrop Rockefeller. Mrs. Nell Gates Rimmel of Little Rock also retired as national committee-woman in 1961, and she was succeeded by Mrs. W.L. Jameson, Jr., of Magnolia, who held the position for one year. Mrs. Jameson in turn was succeeded by Mrs. Lillian McGillicuddy of Malvern, who held the post until she resigned due to ill health in 1973.⁵⁵ From the national committee-man slot, Rockefeller accelerated his party-building activities.

Arkansas Republicans in 1962 offered their strongest challenge yet to Senator Fulbright. Dr. Kenneth G. Jones, a 43-year-old orthopedic surgeon from Little Rock, claimed that Fulbright was a "liberal" even though most Arkansans at the time regarded him as a "conservative." Jones, the son of Democratic Circuit Judge Gus Jones of El Dorado, repudiated Fulbright's foreign policy positions in light of the American quarantine of Cuba during the 1962 missile crisis.⁵⁶ Jones claimed that Fulbright's policy was one of "fear, accommodation and appeasement" when the senator claimed that Cuba was not a threat to the United

⁵⁵Arkansas Gazette, January 8, 1979; Arkansas Outlook, November 1973.

⁵⁶New York Times, September 16, 1962.

States because only defensive weapons had been installed there by the Soviet Union.⁵⁷ Among those speaking on Jones' behalf were two of Fulbright's senatorial colleagues, John G. Tower of Texas and Barry Goldwater of Arizona. In a Republican rally at the Little Rock Coliseum, Goldwater termed Cuba the only issue in the Arkansas race. While Goldwater insisted that he was not questioning Fulbright's patriotism, he called for "those decent but timid men to be left at home."⁵⁸ About 1,500 attended the rally and cheered loudly as Winthrop Rockefeller introduced Goldwater.

Goldwater urged support for a two-party system in the South, noting that Arizona had once been a Democratic bastion. Goldwater emphasized that his uncle had helped to found the Arizona Democratic Party, but he claimed that the GOP "represented the true Jeffersonian principles." Goldwater also praised Fulbright's Arkansas colleague, John McClellan, as "one of the finest men I've ever known" and admitted that he would not be campaigning in Little Rock if McClellan were the senator facing opposition. At that point, Dr. Jones interjected to stress that he would not be the GOP nominee if McClellan were the candidate in

⁵⁷Ibid., November 3, 1962.

⁵⁸Arkansas Gazette, November 1, 1962.

1962.⁵⁹

The Arkansas Gazette, which endorsed Fulbright, accused Jones and the Republicans of attempting to exploit the Cuban crisis for partisan advantage. When the Republicans claimed that Fulbright had been instrumental in "calling off air support for the Bay of Pigs invasion of April 1961," the Gazette reminded readers that the Arkansas senator had in reality played no role in the attempted invasion. Fulbright accused the GOP of "McCarthyism," referring to alleged unfair tactics being used against him in the senatorial race.⁶⁰ At one point, Jones charged that not since Neville Chamberlain "has one public employee seen his policies proven to be so completely wrong."⁶¹

The 1962 Senate race united Arkansas Democrats, who were unaccustomed to such a spirited challenge of one of their own. The Democratic Party drew up a platform in Little Rock on September 15. The Democrats vowed to "pulverize" the Republicans.⁶² To counter the Tower and Goldwater appearances, Fulbright asked his Oklahoma colleague, Robert S. Kerr, to campaign for the Democratic

⁵⁹Ibid.

⁶⁰Ibid., November 2, 1962.

⁶¹Ibid., November 1, 1962.

⁶²New York Times, September 16, 1962.

ticket.⁶³ Moreover, Faubus, seeking his fifth term as governor, permitted his political organization to be used on Fulbright's behalf even though Faubus had not been particularly friendly toward the senator in the past. Faubus undoubtedly feared a strong GOP showing against Fulbright could bolster the Republican gubernatorial candidate, 37-year-old Fayetteville pharmacist, Willis "Bubs" Ricketts.⁶⁴ Nearly three thousand cheered at a Democratic rally in Little Rock as Senator Kerr lauded Fulbright. Kerr noted that Arkansas Democrats at the time had more seniority in Congress than the five most populous states. Kerr credited Fulbright in obtaining funds for the Arkansas River navigation project, crucial to the economies of both Oklahoma and Arkansas, and he ridiculed the Tower-Goldwater combination that had urged Fulbright's defeat.⁶⁵

Jones received the support of numerous right-wing political organizations, such as the Americans for Constitutional Action and some members of the John Birch Society. The Republican Senatorial Campaign Committee donated \$5,025 to Jones, and Rockefeller gave another contribution of \$1,000.⁶⁶ For Rockefeller, the Jones

⁶³Arkansas Gazette, November 2, 1962.

⁶⁴New York Times, November 3, 1962.

⁶⁵Arkansas Gazette, November 3, 1962.

⁶⁶Ibid., November 1, 4, 1962.

candidacy proved potentially politically embarrassing. The GOP rallies drew crowds over the state, and Rockefeller joined the anti-Fulbright rhetoric even though his own views were known to be somewhat more moderate than those of Dr. Jones. The Pine Bluff Commercial at one point quoted Rockefeller as having implied that Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev "wanted Fulbright re-elected." The paper retorted that "in spreading such hogwash, Mr. Rockefeller is seeking to cast doubt upon the loyalty . . . of one of America's most dedicated public servants."⁶⁷

The Fulbright-Jones contest even affected "Lum and Abner," two former Arkansas radio personalities. Chester Lauck of Houston, Texas, who portrayed "Lum," made a television appearance on Fulbright's behalf, giving the impression that both "Lum" and "Abner" favored the senator. Norris Goff of Palm Desert, California, who portrayed "Abner," retaliated with a statement clarifying his position. Goff, who had been a fraternity brother of Fulbright's at the University of Arkansas years earlier, lambasted the senator's foreign policy views and said he would vote for Dr. Jones if he were an Arkansas resident. Both Lauck and Goff said that their dispute

⁶⁷Quoted in Arkansas Gazette, November 4, 1962, from Pine Bluff Commercial.

over Fulbright did not affect their "warm and close friendship," noting, "this is the true meaning of democracy."⁶⁸

Most attention in the 1962 general election was centered on the senatorial race, but Ricketts made a modest effort to unseat Faubus. The Arkansas Gazette noted that the Republicans had "set a blaze under the Democrats . . . but may not set the woods on fire." The renewed party fervor was attributed largely to Rockefeller, who encouraged twenty-two Republicans to seek state legislative positions.⁶⁹ Ricketts campaigned as a "reformer" regarding election machinery, state government, tax policies and the judicial system. He chastized Faubus for having written a letter to welfare recipients prior to his July primary race against former Governor McMath requesting their assistance in the campaign. The letter listed Faubus' self-stated accomplishments for the poor, but Ricketts termed the gesture a form of "intimidation." Republican State Chairman William Spicer, meanwhile, called for Federal Bureau of Investigation agents to determine the honesty of the state election. Spicer accused some Democratic leaders of prematurely examining absentee

⁶⁸Arkansas Gazette, November 3, 6, 1962.

⁶⁹Ibid., November 4, 5, 1962.

ballots to detect the election trend.⁷⁰

Two other Republicans offered challenges to Congressmen James Trimble of the Third District and Oren Harris of the Fourth District. Cy Carney, Jr., a 39-year-old Fayetteville businessman, opposed Trimble, assailing the incumbent as an "Americans for Democratic Action liberal" and a "yes-man and rubber stamp for Jack Kennedy." Carney claimed that Trimble had voted 96 percent of the time with the national administration, a contention Trimble denied.⁷¹ Opposing Harris was 40-year-old Pine Bluff jewelry salesman Warren Lieblong, who charged that the incumbent represented "big oil, big airline and American Telephone and Telegraph, but not the people of the Fourth District."⁷²

Despite the Republicans' high hopes in the senatorial contest, Fulbright won handily, 214,867, or 68.7 percent, to Jones' 98,013, or 31.3 percent. Jones carried no counties but polled at least 45 percent in Benton and Columbia.⁷³ When asked why he fared so poorly, Jones blamed the "Democratic tradition with seniority and patronage" and "the unavoidable inadequacy of the Republican

⁷⁰Ibid., November 6, 1962.

⁷¹Ibid., November 4, 1962.

⁷²Ibid.

⁷³Election Statistics, 1962.

organization." Jones also indicated that he could not counter the "predominantly liberal press" and "the welfare-state philosophy and money."⁷⁴ The Arkansas Gazette hailed the Fulbright victory as proof that the senator's touch "is very close and sure indeed to Arkansas voters." The newspaper claimed that the "real winners are the people . . . who now have the extraordinary talents" of Fulbright for another six years.⁷⁵

In the gubernatorial race, Ricketts fared even worse than had GOP candidate Henry Britt two years earlier. He polled 82,349 votes, or 26.7 percent, to Faubus' 225,743, or 73.3 percent. Faubus carried all seventy-five counties in the state, while Ricketts' best showing was a weak 42 percent performance in Baxter County.⁷⁶ Faubus interpreted the returns as a "slap in the face to Winthrop Rockefeller." The governor charged that Rockefeller's leadership of the GOP was "not in tune with the people."⁷⁷ Despite the poor showings by both Jones and Ricketts, Rockefeller said that he was satisfied. "I think we've run a good race and made a lot of friends who want to join forces with the Republican Party to create a true

⁷⁴U.S. News and World Report, LIII (November 19, 1962), 64.

⁷⁵Arkansas Gazette, November 8, 1962.

⁷⁶Election Statistics, 1962.

⁷⁷Arkansas Gazette, November 8, 1962.

two-party system," Rockefeller said. He added that he was "not discouraged" and predicted that the GOP would "consolidate our gains."⁷⁸

Republicans ran no better in the congressional elections against entrenched incumbents Trimble and Harris. Trimble defeated Carney, 69.3 percent to 30.7 percent; Harris whipped Lieblong, 77.5 percent to 22.5 percent. Neither Carney nor Lieblong carried a single county in their races.⁷⁹ The Republicans retained their single seat in the Arkansas House but failed to make gains despite the record field of GOP legislative candidates in 1962.⁸⁰ Rockefeller's role in financing some of the legislative candidates angered many Democratic leaders. Faubus' chief legislative booster, Paul Van Dalsem of Perry County, complained that Rockefeller had:

put money in the counties and gave twenty-two of you boys opposition. . . . Just who in hell does Mr. Rockefeller think he is that he can play both sides?⁸¹

Rockefeller's increasing management of Arkansas Republican activities did not come without dissent from the so-called "Old Guard" or "Stalwart" wing of the

⁷⁸Ibid.

⁷⁹Election Statistics, 1962.

⁸⁰Time, March 8, 1963, 27; Arkansas Gazette, November 8, 1962.

⁸¹Arkansas Gazette, February 29, 1963.

party, led by such figures as Chairman Spicer and former Chairman Osro Cobb, a Little Rock attorney. Rockefeller supporters claimed that Spicer neglected efforts to expand the Arkansas GOP. Marion Butler, who served for a time at Rockefeller's request as Spicer's executive assistant, claimed that the chairman was content to see the party remain a closed entity. In 1963, Spicer wrote Republican National Committeeman George Hinman of New York, a friend of Nelson and Winthrop Rockefeller, to discuss the rift between the "Old Guard" and Rockefeller wings of the Arkansas party, noting that he found it interesting to observe:

the activities of some of the boys operating in Arkansas. I have never seen so many moves being made by the wrong people, in the wrong manner, at the wrong time.⁸²

Spicer subsequently wrote Ab Herman, director of political organization for the national party, complaining that he was being circumvented by the Republican National Committee in favor of Rockefeller. Spicer said that it was "most unfortunate to experience this disunity and turmoil in the Republican Party in Arkansas. Every effort has been

⁸²Quoted in Ward, The Arkansas Rockefeller, 11. Ward bases this information on a letter from William Spicer to George Hinman. The letter, written October 15, 1963, is located in the Winthrop Rockefeller Collection of the University of Arkansas at Little Rock Archives. A portion of the collection is tentatively scheduled to become available to the public in July 1983; another section will become open in 1993.

made to work as a team."⁸³

On January 13, 1964, Spicer wrote two Republican leaders, John Paul Hammerschmidt of Harrison and Eugene "Gene" Holman of DeQueen, explaining that he knew efforts were underway to remove him from the chairmanship. Ironically, it was Hammerschmidt, a lumber dealer, who succeeded Spicer later in the year, when the embattled chairman resigned, vowing to "wash my hands of the whole thing."⁸⁴ Spicer accused Rockefeller of dividing the state GOP by politicking behind the scenes for his brother Nelson, who was a candidate for the 1964 Republican presidential nomination. Although Spicer personally preferred the nomination of Goldwater, he insisted that Arkansas send uncommitted delegates to the national convention in San Francisco. "It's inappropriate for the national committeeman or the state chairman to be campaigning for any candidate," Spicer explained.⁸⁵ Spicer admitted that Rockefeller "sees the policies of the Republican Party in one direction, and I see them 180 degrees in the other direction."⁸⁶

⁸³Quoted in Ibid.

⁸⁴Quoted in Ibid., 12-13.

⁸⁵Wall Street Journal, March 31, 1964.

⁸⁶Ibid.

In 1963, at Spicer's request, the Republican executive committee criticized Rockefeller's retaining of his own staff men to conduct a political drive. In March 1964, however, the same committee went against Spicer and approved Rockefeller's hiring of four men at his own expense to enlist party members and build a stronger GOP organization. A Little Rock businessman explained that the state GOP had been "sort of a small, closely held corporation here, and the members of the clan didn't want it to get too big."⁸⁷ Spicer supporters claimed that the Rockefeller associates, including Burton and Everett A. Ham, Jr., of North Little Rock, had "kicked the old Republicans out" and taken over the party. One GOP leader explained the situation by asking if one could:

imagine the reaction of a 50- or 60-year-old Republican who's been spending his own time and money working at this to have some two-bit employee come in and tell him what to do to win an election?⁸⁸

The "two-bit employee" was a reference to Burton and Ham.

Rockefeller said that he had letters from numerous Republicans in Arkansas who had moved from other states and who had insisted that the Spicer forces had made

⁸⁷Ibid.

⁸⁸Ibid.

them "feel not welcome" in the party.⁸⁹ G. Thomas Eisele, a veteran Rockefeller advisor and currently a U.S. district judge in Little Rock, credited Ham with the removal of the party machinery from the "Old Guard" forces. Eisele admitted that Ham employed "ruthless tactics" to take control of the party from the Spicer partisans, who he also contended had "no interest in building a two-party system."⁹⁰ Rockefeller of course made the two-party pitch the centerpiece of his whole political philosophy:

Even though I had become Republican national committeeman and had campaigned for Bubs Ricketts and some of the others, my major thrust in the political field was toward selling the two-party system.⁹¹

To promote the two-party concept, Rockefeller hired a professional staff at state headquarters and established a United Republican Fund which was raising about \$8,000 monthly by 1966, for the various GOP candidates. He also helped to establish a permanent Republican committee in each county.⁹²

In 1972, Rockefeller reflected on the dispute with the Spicer forces, noting that the:

⁸⁹Ibid.

⁹⁰Quoted in Ward, The Arkansas Rockefeller, 20.

⁹¹Quoted in Ibid.

⁹²Time, December 2, 1966, 27.

basic problem was political philosophy coupled with enormous ego. His following was politically antagonistic to my basic philosophy. They were the right-wingers up to and including sometimes Birchers, and they were power-crazy.⁹³

On March 12, 1962, prior to the Baker v. Carr U.S. Supreme Court ruling, the Arkansas Supreme Court overruled the state legislative apportionment board and directly reapportioned the Arkansas House of Representatives. No action was taken against the state senate, whose districts were then frozen by the Arkansas constitution and weighted in favor of rural areas.⁹⁴ In 1963, Arkansas state senate districts varied from a maximum of 80,993 voters to a minimum of 35,983. House districts ranged from 31,686 to 4,927.⁹⁵ As a result of the Tennessee case, Baker v. Carr, the Supreme Court ordered the states to draw districts in the lower houses of their legislatures so as to result in equal representation by numbers.⁹⁶ This principle was subsequently extended in a 1964 case, Reynolds v. Sims, to include the upper

⁹³Quoted in Ward, The Arkansas Rockefeller, 14.

⁹⁴Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, March 22, 1963), 425.

⁹⁵Ibid., December 27, 1963, 2264.

⁹⁶Baker v. Carr, United States Reports, CCCLXVII (October Term 1961) (Washington, 1962), 236-237.

houses of state legislatures.⁹⁷ Arkansas Republicans fielded several dozen legislative candidates in both 1962 and 1964, hoping to take advantage of the redistricting process, but in the end, only the one Republican was elected each year.⁹⁸

Rockefeller had asked several other Republicans to run for governor in 1964, but they declined and insisted that he make the challenge. On deciding to make the race, Rockefeller was quoted by his biographer, John L. Ward, as having said, "of course, we'll have to do it twice because we're not going to win the first time."⁹⁹ On May 1, 1964, Rockefeller announced that he would indeed carry the GOP banner in the gubernatorial race.¹⁰⁰ Earlier, Harry S. Ashmore, editor of the Arkansas Gazette and later president of the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions at Santa Barbara, California, had urged Rockefeller to run as a Democrat to reduce the odds against his victory. When Rockefeller suggested that he might run as an independent, Ashmore warned that such a course made little political sense, noting that if:

⁹⁷Reynolds v. Sims, United States Reports, CCCLXXVII (October Term 1963) (Washington, 1964), 586-587.

⁹⁸Bass and DeVries, The Transformation of Southern Politics, 35.

⁹⁹Quoted in Ward, The Arkansas Rockefeller, 21.

¹⁰⁰Arkansas Gazette, May 2, 1964.

he was bound to invest his time, energy and money outside the one-party system, I urged that he use it to try to build a continuing formal partisan opposition to the old Democratic statehouse machine, now nominally steered by Faubus but largely harnessed to the services of Witt Stephens and his cohorts. . . . I told Winthrop that I doubted he could be elected as a Republican, but that if he took over the moribund party apparatus and headed a state ticket that attracted able young men to stand for the legislature and local office, he might start a process that would ultimately give state and local governments the shaking up they badly needed.¹⁰¹

Rockefeller said that many had told him that he would be "crazy to run as a Republican," but he decided to seek the governorship on the GOP ticket because "fundamentally I believe in the two-party system, and I am a Republican."¹⁰²

In announcing for his sixth term, Faubus sounded what would be the essential theme of the 1964 campaign. It will be "interesting to see if a poor boy can still beat a millionaire," Faubus exclaimed, stressing his rural background. Faubus pointed with pride that he was born in Greasy Creek in the backwoods near Huntsville, but actually the governor was born in nearby Combs. He always, however, preferred to call himself the "po' boy

¹⁰¹Quoted in Ward, The Arkansas Rockefeller, 17-18.

¹⁰²"Showdown in Arkansas: Win Rockefeller vs. Orval Faubus," Saturday Evening Post, CCXXXVII (September 19, 1964), 76.

from Greasy Creek."¹⁰³ Faubus, who personally admired and liked Rockefeller, usually directed his campaign rhetoric at his two favorite Rockefeller targets, New York Governor Nelson Rockefeller and the family patriarch, the late John D. Rockefeller, Sr. According to Faubus, the senior Rockefeller had stolen from the poor by charging an unfair high price for kerosene during the early 1900s, a product then controlled by the Rockefeller oil monopoly. Hence, Faubus concluded that Winthrop Rockefeller was taking the "poor people's money" to run for governor in 1964.¹⁰⁴ Faubus seemed to never tire of his story attacking the elder Rockefeller:

I remember how hard it was when I was a boy, and old man John D. Rockefeller raised the price of coal oil a penny. It was my job to stick a sweet potato on the spout of the jug to keep it from spilling out, because at the prices the Rockefellers charged, we couldn't afford to spill a drop.¹⁰⁵

Faubus was always quick to remind audiences of the incidents of divorce in the Rockefeller family, a claim which would haunt Faubus' own ill-fated 1970 comeback attempt after Faubus was himself divorced. Faubus repeated the following theme: Winthrop Rockefeller's

¹⁰³ Neal Peirce, The Deep South States of America (New York, 1974), 130; Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, May 1, 1964, 804.

¹⁰⁴ Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, October 9, 1964, 2350.

¹⁰⁵ Quoted in Ward, The Arkansas Rockefeller, 39.

second wife was a divorcee, and Nelson Rockefeller had divorced his wife to marry another divorcee.¹⁰⁶ Nelson Rockefeller's divorce was widely believed to have jeopardized his 1964 GOP presidential aspirations.¹⁰⁷

Faubus conceded from the start that Rockefeller represented the "best opportunity" the GOP had to win the governorship since Reconstruction. However, Faubus predicted that he would receive substantial GOP backing in the general election.¹⁰⁸ Former Republican State Chairman Osro Cobb publicly endorsed Faubus, claiming that Rockefeller was "not ready" for the governorship and had converted the state party into a "one-man political machine." Cobb was the U.S. attorney who brought the court injunction against Faubus in 1957, ordering the governor not to interfere with the federal desegregation orders at Little Rock. When Rockefeller learned of Cobb's defection, Rockefeller claimed that the former chairman held him responsible for Cobb's not receiving appointment as a federal judge in the Eisenhower administration. Rockefeller said that Cobb did not get the desired appointment because the American Bar Association

¹⁰⁶Saturday Evening Post, September 19, 1964, 75.

¹⁰⁷Gervasi, The Real Rockefeller, 243-244, 251.

¹⁰⁸Saturday Evening Post, September 19, 1964, 75.

failed to endorse him for selection. Rockefeller also noted that Cobb's sister-in-law, Mrs. Jack Carnes of Camden, was the Arkansas Democratic national committee-woman and that Faubus had named Cobb as a temporary special judge of the Arkansas Supreme Court. Moreover, Rockefeller said that Cobb resented the changing character of the party, which had broadened its scope since Cobb was the gubernatorial nominee twenty-eight years earlier. Cobb did announce that he would support Goldwater in the presidential race against Democrat Lyndon B. Johnson.¹⁰⁹

To prepare for the rigors of the campaign, Rockefeller lost 40 pounds, dropping to 205 pounds. The 6-foot, 3-inch Rockefeller wore western boots and a cowman's hat. Aides suggested a unique vote-getting technique: they would snap Polaroid pictures of Rockefeller with the crowds and then give the photographs as keepsakes. Rockefeller faulted Faubus for the "deplorable condition" of Arkansas roads and the state's low teacher salaries. Rockefeller labeled the highway system "Faubus Freeways," a term which Faubus himself found particularly amusing. Rockefeller criticized Faubus' ties to the

¹⁰⁹Arkansas Democrat, November 2, 1964.

Democratic courthouse politicians, noting that:

my opponent is visiting all the counties, but he heads for the courthouse to a secret meeting where he oils the machine. If you want a man with a plan instead of a man with a machine, vote for me.¹¹⁰

Faubus delighted audiences in attacking Rockefeller as a "carpetbagger" who flew by private jet to New York for haircuts.¹¹¹ In one civic meeting, the two agreed in advance to refrain from politicking. When Faubus proceeded to list a string of accomplishments of his administration, Rockefeller rose to remark, "Orval, if you hadn't just given your word as a gentleman that there would be no politics, I would have sworn that was a political speech." To that comment, Faubus beamed his familiar grin.¹¹² Faubus stumped in 1964 with a near evangelical zeal. For the first time in several years, he even revived his segregationist rhetoric, charging that, "they tell me 'Win' mean 'Wants Integration Now.'"¹¹³ Faubus also questioned Rockefeller's presumed sympathies with radical youth of the 1960s, claiming that:

¹¹⁰"Arkansas: Can Win Win?" Time, LXXXIV (October 16, 1964), 38.

¹¹¹Ibid.

¹¹²Saturday Evening Post, September 19, 1964, 77.

¹¹³Newsweek, LXIV (November 2, 1964), 36.

so long as I am governor, the executive mansion will not become the scene of drinking parties, and the guest house will not become the headquarters of beatniks from other states.¹¹⁴

Faubus also assailed civil rights demonstrators, insisting that the first time a demonstrator should lie down "to block the traffic of a legitimate business operation, they're going to get run over." Faubus added that if "no one else would do it, I'll get in a truck and do it myself."¹¹⁵ This statement was later modified and used by a Faubus friend, Alabama's George Corley Wallace, in the 1968 presidential campaign.¹¹⁶ Faubus later explained that he was referring to "hoodlums and demonstrators, whatever their race," but the mild-mannered Rockefeller called the statement "one of the boldest" and "immoral . . . I have ever heard."¹¹⁷

Rockefeller announced his opposition to racial discrimination, adding, "there isn't room in this country for first- and second-class citizenship."¹¹⁸ Both candidates, however, opposed the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

¹¹⁴Arkansas Democrat, July 21, 1964.

¹¹⁵Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, October 9, 1964, 2350.

¹¹⁶William E. Leuchtenburg, A Troubled Feast: American Society Since 1945 (Boston, 1979), 211.

¹¹⁷Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, October 9, 1964, 2350.

¹¹⁸Saturday Evening Post, September 19, 1964, 77.

Rockefeller said that he abhorred the apparent need for legislation in racial questions, noting his opposition to the act referred to methods, not intent.¹¹⁹ Faubus claimed that Rockefeller was actually an ardent civil rights advocate and criticized Nelson Rockefeller's handling of rioting in black sections of New York City in 1964.¹²⁰ For a time, Faubus hinted that he might vote for Goldwater, but in the end he endorsed President Johnson, sensing a Democratic year at the national level. Faubus' support of Johnson angered many of his more militant segregationist backers.¹²¹ Rockefeller, when asked where he stood in the pre-convention struggle between Goldwater and his brother Nelson, replied, "that's just what I do. I stand between Nelson and Goldwater."¹²² In both his 1964 and 1966 gubernatorial campaigns, Rockefeller sought to disassociate himself from his brother Nelson, adding, "there are obvious differences between my brother and me on race relations. You've got to be

¹¹⁹Ibid.

¹²⁰Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, October 9, 1964, 2350.

¹²¹Ibid.; Saturday Evening Post, September 19, 1964, 77.

¹²²Saturday Evening Post, September 19, 1964, 76.

realistic about these things."¹²³

The Republican National Convention nominated Goldwater for president on the first ballot in 1964. The Arkansas delegation split, nine for Goldwater, two for Pennsylvania Governor William Warren Scranton and one, Winthrop Rockefeller himself, for Nelson Rockefeller. After Goldwater surpassed the needed majority vote on the initial ballot, all twelve Arkansans supported the Arizonan's nomination. Goldwater received 883 delegates to 328 for Scranton and Rockefeller combined.¹²⁴ Rockefeller's staff divided over how to handle the gubernatorial campaign in light of Goldwater's nomination. Eisele urged Rockefeller to shun Goldwater and build a moderate coalition which would include supporters of President Johnson. Ham, however, urged that the Republicans warmly embrace Goldwater, who had strength of undetermined proportions among Arkansas conservatives of both parties. Eisele countered that numerous Goldwater activists did not really believe that Rockefeller could defeat Faubus and would therefore drag their heels in

¹²³Time, December 2, 1966, 28.

¹²⁴Diamond, ed., Congressional Quarterly's Guide to U.S. Elections, 169; Arkansas Gazette, July 16, 1964.

seeking votes in the gubernatorial race. Former Governor McMath, a staunch Lyndon Johnson backer, recalled Rockefeller's nonpartisan appeal in 1964, noting that:

he had people in every community willing to go out and work for him. They were Rockefeller people, personally loyal. These people didn't care too much about party labels. They thought he was best for Arkansas.¹²⁵

Some Goldwater supporters in Arkansas questioned Rockefeller's allegiance to Republicanism. Others could never forgive him for being Nelson's brother.¹²⁶

On May 3, 1964, Rockefeller appeared on the National Broadcasting Company's "Meet the Press" interview, but his supporters were disappointed with his performance. When asked about the possibility of legalizing casino gambling in Hot Springs, Rockefeller did not state his opposition to such a proposal as he had done in the past. Instead he called for a public referendum on the question, thereby alienating those voters who objected to gambling in the Arkansas resort city.¹²⁷ Later in the campaign, Rockefeller criticized Faubus' supposed tolerance of illegal gambling at Oaklawn Racetrack in Hot Springs, noting that Faubus had in 1954:

¹²⁵Quoted in Ward, The Arkansas Rockefeller, 22.

¹²⁶Ibid., 34.

¹²⁷Ibid., 35.

said he would enforce the gambling laws of this state. Nine years and four months later, it took a resolution of the state legislature to make him recognize illegal gambling at Hot Springs. He didn't do it right then. He had it closed the next Sunday, after the racing season closed. Now he tells you that if Winthrop Rockefeller wanted the gambling shut down, why didn't he hire a lawyer and get an injunction? . . . Do we have to get an injunction to get the laws of this state enforced?¹²⁸

In 1963, Faubus opposed an anti-gambling bill in the legislature. Yet, Faubus halted illegal gambling in Hot Springs in March 1964, ostensibly to remove the matter as a potential political issue in the upcoming governor's race. When the inconsistency was pointed out to him, Faubus laughed and remarked, "it's a different time of year," referring to the expected challenge from Rockefeller.¹²⁹ Gambling had periodically emerged as an issue in Arkansas politics since 1927, when the Democratic mayor of Hot Springs, Leo P. McLaughlin, literally threw open his city to casino gambling and accompanying vices. Except for occasional "reform cleanups," the casino gambling continued until the 1960s, when pressure was applied by the U.S. Justice Department to halt it. The

¹²⁸ Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, October 9, 1964, 2349.

¹²⁹ Saturday Evening Post, September 19, 1964, 78.

legislature had legalized pari-mutuel betting at Oaklawn in 1935, but never casino gambling.¹³⁰

Though Rockefeller wore a big straw hat, rolled up his sleeves and hired hillbilly bands on the campaign trail, many voters still perceived him as the "jet-set cowboy" who owned at least a dozen pair of boots.¹³¹ He remained the Ivy League millionaire and Arkansas was a "die-hard Dixie state . . . naturally suspicious of Republicans . . . and squarely in the Bible belt."¹³² A novice at campaigning, Rockefeller was at first shy and awkward on the stump. Rockefeller activist Margaret Kolb recalls him as an extremely timid man, noting that such shyness:

endeared him to a lot of people. They had been used to the polished, oratorical southern Democrat type of politician. And it was very refreshing to have a wealthy man, big in stature and yet not a good speaker, getting up in front of a crowd. This psychologically appealed, especially to women. They all wanted to mother him.¹³³

Opinion polls lent Rockefeller no particular encouragement. In February 1961, for instance, pollster Joe Belden of Dallas, Texas, found that Arkansas voters

¹³⁰Roller and Twyman, The Encyclopedia of Southern History, 72.

¹³¹Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, October 9, 1964, 2349.

¹³²Saturday Evening Post, September 19, 1964, 75.

¹³³Quoted in Ward, The Arkansas Rockefeller, 37.

were aware of Rockefeller, and goodwill toward him was especially favorable among Republicans, blacks, pro-business groups and anti-Faubus Democrats. Those voters allied with Faubus and with organized labor, however, were decidedly anti-Rockefeller. In a 1960 poll, only 12 percent of Arkansans called themselves Republicans, compared to 66 percent Democrats and 20 percent independents. From 1961 to 1964, the poll showed that the percent of Democrats had declined to 48, while the Republicans had climbed to just 13 percent. The striking change occurred in the number of independents, up from 20 to 35 percent. For the first time hence in the twentieth century, hard-core Democratic allegiance in Arkansas had fallen below the 50 percent mark, Belden reported.¹³⁴

The 1964 campaign was ripe with rhetoric involving foreclosures and cemeteries. Gene Wirges, the Republican publisher of Rockefeller's hometown Morrilton Democrat, was threatened with foreclosure after he had editorialized extensively against Faubus backer Sheriff Marlin Hawkins. To keep Wirges in business, Rockefeller even bought the paper for a time. Wirges' problems were accentuated by the fact that a rival paper, the Petit Jean Country Headlight, was editorially aligned with the

¹³⁴Ibid., 27-28. This information is taken from a group of polls conducted by the Joe Belden firm; the polls are in the Winthrop Rockefeller Collection of the UALR Archives.

Hawkins faction and received most of the local advertising. Wirges, who sold the paper in 1979, was sentenced to three years at hard labor in the state penitentiary by a Conway County jury on a charge of perjury. Though he ultimately won his appeal, Wirges' house was stoned, he was beaten by a 220-pound county assessor and his wife died. For years, Arkansas Republicans referred to the Wirges case as sufficient reason to bring the two-party system to the state.¹³⁵ Before the election, Faubus accused Rockefeller of ordering the razing of a cemetery on WinRock Farms property. Actually, a dozer did raze a cemetery which had been overgrown by years of neglect.¹³⁶ In 1971, Faubus admitted the charge was only a partial truth, adding that he believed Rockefeller personally knew nothing about the dozer.¹³⁷

Rockefeller's campaign made mistakes in the first gubernatorial race. Eisele, for instance, went to the office so rarely that he was not even recognized by the secretaries. Once, Everett Ham called the headquarters and asked to speak with Eisele. The switchboard operator

¹³⁵Arkansas Outlook, March 1966; Arkansas Gazette, March 8, 1982.

¹³⁶Fayetteville Northwest Arkansas Times, October 23, 1964.

¹³⁷Ward, The Arkansas Rockefeller, 46.

replied that she had never heard of Eisele, the Rockefeller campaign manager!¹³⁸

In a pre-election issue, Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report foresaw a Faubus victory, noting that:

no matter how 'attractive' Rockefeller's candidacy may be, Faubus must be rated a favorite because of the acquired political power, reaching into every county, which he has solidified through his ten years as governor.¹³⁹

Faubus had amassed vast powers, having appointed every member of every state board. Banks were not inclined to alienate the governor, who deposited state funds in accounts which drew no interest. Many businessmen sided with Faubus due to his influence over state business regulation.¹⁴⁰ Faubus also appeared to hold the allegiance of twenty thousand state employees and their families as well as the hundreds of appointees he had given positions over the years.¹⁴¹

Faubus knew that the Rockefeller threat was a serious one for the Democrats, noting that he had:

¹³⁸ Ibid., 46.

¹³⁹ Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, October 9, 1964, 2349.

¹⁴⁰ Saturday Evening Post, September 19, 1964, 77.

¹⁴¹ Newsweek, November 2, 1964, 36.

always thought I was a fairly good political analyst. At the time Rockefeller ran against me, I viewed him as the most serious threat I had faced. The difficulty was convincing my friends that he was a serious threat.¹⁴²

At one point, Faubus noted that his private polls showed the two locked at 46 percent, with 8 percent undecided. Then, Faubus indicates that he increased the pace of his campaigning and turned the corner.¹⁴³ Rockefeller actually received majorities in nine of ten mock elections held on various Arkansas campuses. Rockefeller charged that Faubus became frantic in the closing days of the campaign because some polls began to reflect growing sentiment for the GOP candidate.¹⁴⁴ When Faubus had to halt campaigning due to illness, he accused Rockefeller of circulating rumors that Faubus had an "incurable malady" and would not be able to serve his sixth term, if elected.¹⁴⁵ Faubus accused both Little Rock newspapers of printing news from a pro-Rockefeller viewpoint.¹⁴⁶ A Little Rock politician observed the perils of the 1964 Arkansas campaign by noting that when:

¹⁴²Quoted in Ward, The Arkansas Rockefeller, 49.

¹⁴³Ibid.

¹⁴⁴Arkansas Democrat, November 1, 1964.

¹⁴⁵Ibid., October 19, 1964.

¹⁴⁶Ibid., November 4, 1964.

Faubus says he might vote for the Republican candidate for president, and a guy named Rockefeller runs as the underdog, how the hell can anyone tell how this crazy election will come out?¹⁴⁷

While Rockefeller shifted the Arkansas GOP from its hard-core conservatism, Goldwater appeared to write off the industrial East, sought the traditional Republican states of the Midwest and West and aimed to steal the "Solid South" from the Democrats. In some ways, the Goldwater nomination seemed to be a "vindication for the futility" of the former Robert Taft wing of the GOP, which had lost at conventions since 1940.¹⁴⁸ Goldwater sought to exploit southern white backlash against civil rights legislation and the added pressures of school desegregation.¹⁴⁹ The Ripon Society, a liberal-based GOP group, saw the Goldwater strategy as a:

deliberate attempt to trade away Republican strength among the rapidly growing Negro and moderate white electorates in the South in return for the support of dissatisfied segregationist Democrats.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁷ Saturday Evening Post, September 19, 1964, 77.

¹⁴⁸ Robert D. Novak, The Agony of the GOP, 1964 (New York, 1965), 2, 5.

¹⁴⁹ Roller and Twyman, The Encyclopedia of Southern History, 401.

¹⁵⁰ Lee W. Huebner and Thomas E. Petri, The Ripon Papers, 1963-1968 (Washington, 1968), 19.

Goldwater's strategy hence conflicted with Rockefeller's efforts to recruit blacks and moderate Democrats to the Arkansas GOP. The Ripon Society urged Republicans to pattern themselves "with the forces of change working to build a New South."¹⁵¹

In addition to his own race, Rockefeller succeeded in attracting 172 Republican candidates for state and local offices in Arkansas in 1964. The Republicans challenged veteran Lieutenant Governor Nathan Gordon, running a 39-year-old Rockefeller supporter, Travis N. Beeson of Camden. While campaigning in 1964, Rockefeller noted that he would also be a candidate for governor in 1966, regardless of the outcome of the fight with Faubus. Faubus warned that Democrats should repudiate Rockefeller, or "we would have Republicans running for office all over the state in 1966."¹⁵² This appeal to partisan pride surely helped Faubus and President Johnson in an overwhelmingly Democratic year. A Forrest City businessman was quoted as to why he expected Johnson to carry Arkansas: "A lot of people here will vote Democratic no matter what. If they'd put Lassie on the ticket, they'd vote for her."¹⁵³

¹⁵¹Ibid., 20.

¹⁵²Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, October 9, 1964, 2350; Time, October 16, 1964, 38.

¹⁵³U.S. News and World Report, LVII (August 24, 1964), 62.

Another Forrest City resident, a lumber dealer, conceded that Goldwater might come closer to winning in Arkansas than any of his GOP predecessors. Early in the campaign, Johnson was thought to have slipped somewhat due to his characterization of himself as a "Westerner," not a Southerner. Goldwater, however, lost votes in Arkansas due to his opposition to federal farm subsidies, which are especially popular in eastern sections of the state.¹⁵⁴ In endorsing President Johnson, the Arkansas Democrat praised the administration's foreign policy as "firm, yet cautious . . . energetic, yet forceful and persuasive."¹⁵⁵

Besides the Rockefeller-Beeson ticket, the Republicans offered potentially strong opposition to veteran Congressman James Trimble, who had survived periodic GOP efforts to topple him since his initial election twenty years earlier. Trimble was perceived as slightly vulnerable due to resentment over the closure of the Fort Chaffee army base outside Fort Smith.¹⁵⁶ Trimble's opponent was J.E. "Jerry" Hinshaw, who expected support from poultry interests in the Third Congressional

¹⁵⁴Ibid.

¹⁵⁵Arkansas Democrat, October 31, 1964.

¹⁵⁶Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, May 1, 1964, 804.

District, which ranked second in the nation at the time in annual poultry sales. Hinshaw ran a well-financed campaign, replete with billboards and radio and television advertisements. Goldwater, however, was seen as a liability to Hinshaw, as northwestern Arkansas, though often Republican at the presidential level, was not as conservative in political orientation as the Arizona senator. Much of the district then favored the federally-funded development of the Arkansas River, a project dear to the heart of Congressman Trimble. Hinshaw was critical of "excessive federal spending," but he did not include the river navigation project as among wasteful items.¹⁵⁷ Trimble defeated Hinshaw, 71,228, or 54.7 percent, to 58,884, or 45.3 percent. Republicans contested no other congressional seats from Arkansas in 1964. Dale Alford's Fifth District seat had been dropped in 1962 due to population losses and consolidated with the Second District of Wilbur Daigh Mills of Kensett in White County.¹⁵⁸

While they ran separate campaigns and appealed to separate voters, Goldwater and Rockefeller each polled 43 percent of the Arkansas vote, and, incredibly, each

¹⁵⁷Ibid., October 9, 1964, 2350.

¹⁵⁸Election Statistics, 1964; Diamond, ed., Congressional Quarterly's Guide to U.S. Elections, 851.

carried ten counties. Goldwater received 243,264 votes, or 43.6 percent, compared to Johnson's 314,197, or 56.4 percent. Another 2,965 votes were cast for the National States' Rights Party electors in Arkansas, but these are not included in the percent breakdowns. Rockefeller received 254,561 votes, or 43 percent, compared to Faubus' 337,489, or 57 percent. Turnout in the gubernatorial race exceeded that in the presidential election for the first time -- by 31,624 votes. Four counties, Benton, Carroll, Searcy and Sebastian, supported Goldwater and Rockefeller. Here is the county-by-county table for Goldwater:

Ashley (56.3)	Columbia (53.5)
Sebastian (56)	Searcy (52.2)
Howard (55.5)	Drew (51.6)
Union (54.9)	Benton (51.4)
Arkansas (54.1)	Carroll (51.2)

Goldwater ran weaker in traditionally Republican counties of northwestern Arkansas than had Nixon in 1960, or Eisenhower in 1956. However, he won several counties, Ashley, Drew, Union and Columbia, which had never before supported a GOP presidential nominee.¹⁵⁹

Rockefeller's county breakdown followed a different pattern:

¹⁵⁹Election Statistics, 1964.

Searcy (60.9)	Pulaski (53)
Baxter (56.4)	Jefferson (52.4)
Washington (55.7)	Sebastian (52)
Benton (55.2)	Marion (51)
Boone (53.3)	Carroll (50.2)

While also carrying Pulaski and Jefferson, Rockefeller fared best in the more traditionally Republican counties. His performances in Little Rock and Pine Bluff reflected an appeal to moderate Democrats, who also supported Johnson. Rockefeller polled at least 40 percent in twenty-five other counties, and he nearly won in Craighead (Jonesboro) and Newton, where he received 49.3 percent and 48 percent, respectively. Goldwater received at least 40 percent in thirty-three other counties and lost Lafayette, Newton, Crittenden and Pulaski by small margins.¹⁶⁰ In the previous GOP strongholds of northwestern Arkansas, such as Washington and Boone counties, Goldwater received no better than his 43 percent statewide total. Hence, Lyndon Johnson apparently received the support of numerous Republican voters in northwestern Arkansas.

Further analysis reveals that Goldwater ran better than previous national Republicans in the Arkansas "black belt," but in predominantly black precincts in such counties, Johnson received nearly all of the ballots cast.

¹⁶⁰Ibid.

Goldwater ran better among higher-income voters in Arkansas but still trailed Johnson among that group by nearly five percentage points. The late pollster and political scientist Jim Ranchino of Arkadelphia, Arkansas, contended that Goldwater might have carried the state had not Johnson been considered a regional figure. Rockefeller, who was aided by such groups as "Independents for Rockefeller," ran best among Democratic moderates. Yet, Rockefeller was exceptionally weak among those voters earning less than \$2,000 per capita. Ranchino determined that the typical Rockefeller voter in 1964 was an urban, affluent, white moderate who probably supported President Johnson unless he lived in the northwestern part of the state, in which case he was slightly more likely to have voted for Goldwater. Rockefeller received only 14 percent of the black vote in 1964.¹⁶¹

On learning that he had repelled the Rockefeller threat, Faubus proclaimed, "I received the Negro vote; the office of governor is not just one to be passed around."¹⁶² Faubus won his home county of Madison but lost neighboring Carroll County, the home of his friend,

¹⁶¹Ranchino, Faubus to Bumpers, 35-38.

¹⁶²Newsweek, LXIV (November 9, 1964), 40.

Congressman Trimble. Rockefeller never ran well in Madison County, which had cast majorities for such previous Republican standard-bearers as Thomas Dewey, Eisenhower and Nixon. Faubus scored his best showings in eastern Arkansas, winning eight of the ten counties which then contained 60 percent of the state's black population but losing Pulaski and Jefferson. Ranchino claimed that Faubus' endorsement of Lyndon Johnson helped Faubus with those blacks opposed to Goldwater. Faubus' organization controlled much of the black vote in the last year prior to abolition of the poll tax.¹⁶³ In November 1956, Arkansans defeated a proposed constitutional amendment to repeal the poll tax. The tax was dropped, however, as a result of the Twenty-fourth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which applied to federal elections. The amendment was subsequently held to apply in state and local elections as well by virtue of the interpretation of the Fourteenth Amendment.¹⁶⁴ Ranchino claimed that the moderate white vote, which had begun to coalesce behind McMath's 1962 primary challenge to Faubus, slowly built strength through a "negative response to the state

¹⁶³Ranchino, Faubus to Bumpers, 39.

¹⁶⁴James E. Lester, Jr., A Man for Arkansas: Sid McMath and the Southern Reform Tradition (Little Rock, 1976), 292.

Democratic organization."¹⁶⁵

In the other statewide races, Lieutenant Governor Gordon and Secretary of State Kelly Bryant easily defeated their Republican opponents. Gordon defeated Travis Beeson, 363,763, or 65.5 percent, to 175,130, or 32.5 percent. Bryant turned aside Charles R. Watson of Arkadelphia, receiving 389,295, or 73.1 percent, to 143,263, or 26.9 percent, for Watson. Of the seventy-five counties, only Searcy supported the GOP candidates for president, governor, lieutenant governor, secretary of state and Congress.¹⁶⁶

At the national level, Johnson overwhelmingly defeated Goldwater, who received just 38.5 percent of the popular vote and 52 of the 538 electoral votes cast. Goldwater carried five Deep South states, four of which had never before supported a Republican presidential nominee, as well as his native Arizona. To a certain extent, the Goldwater vote of 1964 patterned that established sixteen years earlier by States' Rights Democrat Strom Thurmond. Goldwater ran stronger in the "black belt" where the racial issue was decisive. However, his vote was below Nixon's 1960 performance in areas of mountain

¹⁶⁵Ranchino, Faubus to Bumpers, 40.

¹⁶⁶Election Statistics, 1964.

Republicanism as well as in Texas and Florida. Nevertheless, the elections of both 1960 and 1964 left the old "Solid South" in shambles.¹⁶⁷

In Arkansas, there was no apparent relationship between the 1960 and 1964 tabulations. In 1964, the mountainous northwestern counties gave Goldwater less support than they had delivered for Eisenhower and Nixon. Yet, the party polled about 43 percent in both 1960 and 1964. The Arkansas "black belt," which was smaller than in the states carried by Goldwater, replaced the diminished contribution of the regular Republican tally customary from the northwest.¹⁶⁸ Overall, Goldwater's southern vote was smaller than Nixon's in 1960, a result of the increased black vote in the latter election. Still, the full impact of black voting strength in the region would not become apparent until 1966, 1968 and 1970.¹⁶⁹

Lyndon Johnson, reflecting on the 1964 campaign, said that Goldwater made "rash statements" that isolated

¹⁶⁷Novak, The Agony of the GOP, 1964, 5-6; Presidential Elections Since 1789, 97; Roller and Twyman, The Encyclopedia of Southern History, 401.

¹⁶⁸Louis M. Seagull, Southern Republicanism (New York, 1975), 67.

¹⁶⁹Charles P. Roland, The Improbable Era: The South Since World War II (Lexington, Kentucky, 1975), 78.

him from the majority of voters, including many Republicans. Johnson said that Goldwater attempted to leave the "middle ground" to find a "hidden majority" of frustrated conservative Americans" who had for decades supposedly failed to vote in protest against the moderate-liberal nominees of the two parties. This "hidden majority" never materialized for Goldwater.¹⁷⁰

Senator Strom Thurmond, who joined the GOP during the Goldwater campaign, blamed the Republican loss on:

the extreme, radical, left-wing element that controls the networks, big newspapers and magazines, and they are determined to take this country to socialism. . . . They slanted, falsified and misquoted Goldwater's position.¹⁷¹

Thurmond vowed to "fight the radical leftists every step of the way" in preserving the Republican Party as a bastion of conservatism in spite of Nelson "Rockefeller and his stripe."¹⁷²

Though Rockefeller, Goldwater and the other major Republican candidates were defeated in Arkansas, the party held three local positions. State Representative Orville D. Pendergrass of Mountain Home in Baxter County

¹⁷⁰ Lyndon Baines Johnson, The Vantage Point: Perspectives of the Presidency, 1963-1969 (New York, 1971), 102.

¹⁷¹ Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, November 13, 1964, 2673.

¹⁷² Ibid.

won re-election, and Eulan Moore was retained as the Boone County treasurer. Jake Williams of Scotland was elected Van Buren County sheriff. No Republicans were elected again in Madison County, which consistently supported a local Democratic slate so long as Faubus was governor.¹⁷³

On November 21, 1964, the Republican State Central Committee agreed to implement Rockefeller's proposed United Republican Fund to raise money to organize the party in each county. The party named Truman Altenbaumer of Jacksonville as executive director, designated the newly-established Arkansas Outlook as its official publication and directed National Committeeman Rockefeller and National Committeewoman Mrs. Lillian McGillicuddy to take "whatever actions they deem appropriate" at the forthcoming Republican National Committee meeting in Washington. At that session in January 1965, the party appointed the "nuts-and-bolts" operative, Ray C. Bliss of Ohio, as national chairman, succeeding the Goldwater activist, Dean Burch of Arizona.¹⁷⁴

Republican State Chairman John Paul Hammerschmidt, in the Arkansas Outlook, cautioned the GOP that it could

¹⁷³Arkansas Outlook, December 1964; October 1965.

¹⁷⁴Ibid., December 1964.

"expect even more abuse from a Democrat machine than is becoming more and more concerned about the very real threat our party offers to its 100-year reign." Hammer-schmidt also claimed that the Republicans had "compiled a remarkable record of maturity," noting the Rockefeller candidacy as a major impetus toward growth.¹⁷⁵ Thomas Eisele, Rockefeller's campaign manager, blamed the defeat on the failure to establish valid party organizations in thirty counties. To prepare for 1966, Eisele suggested a "doubling of efforts in rural communities." Eisele also contended that the state GOP was "not a party of special interests . . . or any particular segment of the economic or social community" but a broadly-based grass-roots organization for reform. Eisele also emphasized that in two "machine" counties, Perry and Conway, Faubus won pluralities due to absentee ballots. In Conway County, Faubus received 51 percent of the vote as a result of sweeping the absentee boxes, 364-78. Eisele said that "machine" counties historically have cast a larger percent of their vote in absentee boxes in comparison to "non-machine" counties.¹⁷⁶

Rockefeller never stopped running after his loss to

175 Ibid.

176 Ibid.

Faubus. As he conceded defeat in 1964, Rockefeller wore a "Win with Win '66" button, and the Democrats clearly knew that they had not heard the last of the Arkansas "gentleman farmer" who had practically single-handedly revitalized the state GOP into a force of sufficient strength to potentially bring the period of one-party politics to a close. Moreover, the Republicans also took aim at Democratic legislators who they claimed had "helped to perpetuate" the Faubus administration "machine that has impeded Arkansas progress in so many ways." Rockefeller Republicans vowed to unseat legislators "who put personal consideration ahead of the public interest." Democrats hence were served notice that they could no longer expect the customary "free ride" through Arkansas general elections.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁷Ibid.; January 1965.

CHAPTER VII

THE ROCKEFELLER TRIUMPH

The Arkansas Republican Party assumed an active opposition role throughout Democratic Governor Orval E. Faubus' last term in office. Led by National Committeeman Winthrop Rockefeller and State Chairman John Paul Hammerschmidt, the GOP questioned Faubus' actions involving many political and governmental issues. In early 1965, Rockefeller and Hammerschmidt criticized Faubus for appointing a non-engineer, Mack Sturgis, as director of the Arkansas Highway Commission. Sturgis was the first director who lacked engineering credentials since Faubus himself held the position fifteen years earlier in the Sid McMath administration. Rockefeller claimed that Sturgis' chief qualification appeared to have been his experience in a Works Progress Administration road project in 1937, and later as head of the highway right-of-way section in 1962.¹ Faubus sustained a political setback in February 1965, when Arkansas voters by a two-to-one margin rejected his proposed \$150 million highway bond proposal. Republicans charged that the bond package was developed by "special interests," referring to highway

¹Arkansas Outlook, February 1965.

contractors and bond dealers. Rockefeller called for a more comprehensive bond proposal to be determined by a nonpartisan citizens' advisory panel. The Republicans insisted that the Faubus plan did not reveal sufficient details as to what roads should and would be paved under the program.² Faubus' problems with the highway department surfaced again in 1966, when it was revealed that \$3 million worth of secret pay raises for upper-echelon officials had been authorized by Director Sturgis. The raises were arranged by Sturgis, as he resigned the post after suffering a heart attack to take the less-demanding job of state purchasing agent. Sturgis said that the raises, which averaged \$300 per month, were essential to meet competition from private industry for the services of the highway executives. Faubus, who said that he had misunderstood the magnitude of the raises involved, ordered the recipients to return the money after the controller declared the raises illegal.³

Republicans also pressed for an investigation into the casting of absentee ballots from the 1964 general election in Faubus' home county, Madison. On November 16,

²Ibid., April 1965; New York Times, February 19, 1965; Arkansas Gazette, February 28, 1965.

³New York Times, April 10, 1966.

1964, Madison County Republican Chairman Dotson Collins asked the county clerk for permission to copy absentee voter lists from the election but was rebuffed in his attempt. The Republicans filed suit in state court to obtain the records, but the judge ruled that the GOP had failed to prove that the clerk had denied the party access to the records sought.⁴ In September 1965, the Arkansas Supreme Court, ruling on a Republican appeal, decreed that citizens do have the right to copy voting records. Collins, noting that Madison County had not elected a single Republican to local office throughout the Faubus gubernatorial tenure, termed the ruling a victory for the movement toward a two-party system.⁵ Prior to Faubus' 1954 general election triumph over Republican Pratt C. Remmel, Republicans had been highly competitive in Madison County local elections. Faubus had himself once been defeated for local office in the county by a Republican candidate.⁶ After Faubus left office, the GOP began electing Republicans to certain local positions in Madison County

⁴Arkansas Outlook, February 1965.

⁵Ibid., October 1965; Arkansas Gazette, September 21, 1965.

⁶Orval Eugene Faubus, Down from the Hills (Little Rock, 1980), 57, 65.

The Republicans also criticized the allegedly partisan actions of Democratic Attorney General Bruce Bennett and Treasurer Nancy J. Hall. Bennett was accused by the party publication Arkansas Outlook of "trying to figure out ways to punish the Republican Party for existing," ignoring in the process illegal gambling at Hot Springs.⁷ Pulaski County GOP Chairman Dr. Wayne H. Babbitt, a North Little Rock veterinarian, asked Mrs. Hall to show him exactly where state funds were on deposit. Instead, she asked Bennett for a legal opinion, which in turn led to a refusal of Babbitt's request.⁸

In 1965, Rockefeller arranged for a meeting between GOP leaders and Arkansas AFL-CIO President J. Bill Becker. Afterwards, Becker endorsed the concept of a two-party system, adding that he was pleased to see the GOP "establishing muscle in the state. The people always come out on top when there is competition between the parties."⁹ In 1967, however, organized labor criticized Governor Winthrop Rockefeller's appointment of Dotson Collins, the Madison County Republican chairman, as Arkansas labor commissioner. Though a member of the Teamsters Union, Collins was listed by labor as "unacceptable" for selection

⁷Arkansas Outlook, April 1965.

⁸Ibid.

⁹Ibid., October 1965.

to the position. Instead the AFL-CIO submitted a list of prospective appointees, all Democrats, claiming that Rockefeller had pledged to follow labor's wishes regarding such appointments.¹⁰ Becker later conceded that Rockefeller owed no political debt to labor, but he said the AFL-CIO had assumed through previous conversations with the governor that he would adhere to their wishes in naming the labor commissioner.¹¹

To raise funds for the 1966 election drive, Arkansas Republicans invited former Vice-President Richard M. Nixon to address a dinner on May 1, 1965. Little Rock attorney Wallace Townsend, whom Rockefeller had succeeded as national committeeman in 1961, served as the honorary chairman for the event. Also assisting in the dinner were ex-Democratic State Representative James M. Coates, Jr., and Dr. William Martin Eisele, both of Little Rock. Townsend described Nixon as:

a man of firm judgment with a quick and questioning mind and a warm sense of humor, whose career has been marked by a tremendous capacity for work, great personal courage and devotion to the principles on which this nation was founded.¹²

¹⁰Arkansas Gazette, October 28, 1967.

¹¹Ibid., October 29, 1967.

¹²Arkansas Outlook, April 1965.

Nixon, subsequently paying tribute to the senior Arkansas GOP official, said that Townsend knew "the loneliness of controversial politics, as do many of us who have picked withered grapes in the dry and parched Republican vineyards of Arkansas."¹³ Nixon told the gathering that Arkansas Republicans could achieve victory in 1966 through intense work at the precinct level.¹⁴

In 1965, political observers were convinced that Faubus would seek an unprecedented seventh two-year term. Faubus warned the Democrats that they must nominate a "middle-of-the-road candidate" in 1966, or face certain defeat at the hands of Rockefeller, who had never stopped running after his 1964 loss. Faubus branded two potential candidates, former Governor Sid McMath and former Congressman Dale Alford as "sure losers" in a showdown with the Republican Rockefeller.¹⁵ After Faubus declined to seek re-election in 1966, he was expected to either challenge Senator J. William Fulbright in 1968, or to seek the Third District House seat of Representative James Trimble, who planned to retire at the end of his twelfth term in 1969. In the meantime, Faubus was expected to write books about

¹³Ibid., June 1965.

¹⁴Arkansas Gazette, May 2, 1965.

¹⁵Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, August 20, 1965, 1659.

his years as governor and his beloved Ozark Mountain people and move into his new home outside Huntsville.¹⁶ In 1980, Faubus produced his memoirs under the title Down from the Hills.

During his gubernatorial tenure, Faubus had been politically allied with Wilton Robert "Witt" Stephens of Little Rock, an eighth-grade dropout who had amassed vast power and wealth as president and chairman of the board of Arkansas Louisiana Gas Company. In the 1950s, the Arkansas Public Service Commission approved three annual rate hikes averaging \$3.2 million for the firm. Many of the company officers served on boards of the state's largest banks, which during the Faubus era held millions in public funds that drew no interest.¹⁷ In 1965, the Arkansas legislature approved a bill requiring banks to pay interest on such public accounts, and Faubus signed the measure into law.¹⁸ Stephens recalled that Faubus got his financial "support from people like me . . . who would chip in and pay the expense."¹⁹ A number of state legislators

¹⁶New York Times Magazine, October 9, 1966, 45.

¹⁷Jack Bass and Walter DeVries, The Transformation of Southern Politics: Social Change and Political Consequences Since 1945 (New York, 1976), 93.

¹⁸Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, October 7, 1966, 2352.

¹⁹Quoted in Neal Peirce, The Deep South States of America (New York, 1974), 131.

worked for Arkansas Louisiana Gas as public relations consultants, attorneys or through other arrangements. In 1965, Stephens retired, turning over company management to then 31-year-old Sheffield Nelson.²⁰

Though uncomfortable with the election of Winthrop Rockefeller, Stephens later praised the Republican for turning the state around on the racial issue, and he shared Rockefeller's opposition to capital punishment.²¹ Rockefeller viewed Stephens as a "charming, skilled, amoral businessman-politician," who it was later revealed had harbored gubernatorial ambitions. Neal Peirce, a writer on southern politics, viewed the cigar-chomping Stephens as a "wealthy, behind-the-scenes manipulator found in politics throughout the South."²²

The Arkansas legislature, which in 1965 contained only one Republican member, again redistricted the state congressional delegation, a procedure which had last been completed in 1961. Redistricting was required again under court order to bring the four congressional districts to approximately equal size. The state had forfeited two House seats after the 1960 census, due to a decline in

²⁰Bass and DeVries, The Transformation of Southern Politics, 93.

²¹Ibid.

²²Peirce, The Deep South States of America, 131.

Arkansas population. Legislators, who were alarmed at Republican inroads made against Third District Congressman Trimble in 1964, hoped to strengthen the Democratic complexion of the district. Several normally Democratic counties, including Hempstead, Sevier, Little River, Perry and Garland, were taken from the Second and Fourth districts of Representatives Wilbur Mills and Oren Harris, respectively, and moved into Trimble's terrain to assist the congressman in his 1966 race.²³ Ironically, Garland County and Hot Springs will contribute to Trimble's defeat in 1966. Observers had expected Trimble to run a stronger race in 1966 than he had two years earlier.²⁴

During 1965, Rockefeller carefully analyzed his 1964 performance and proposed strategy and issues for the upcoming 1966 campaign. Rockefeller personally expected and hoped to face Faubus, who in November 1965 held a 71 percent favorable job rating among likely voters, according to a Joe Belden Associates poll commissioned by Rockefeller. Faubus was seen as the strongest possible Democratic gubernatorial candidate for 1966, followed closely by Senator John McClellan, whose term expired in 1967. The Arkansas Republican Party was not growing in voter

²³Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, June 25, 1965, 1255.

²⁴Ibid., April 15, 1966, 815.

allegiance despite Rockefeller's efforts to broaden its base, the poll found. Voters surveyed listed education, highways and the need for industrial jobs as the main public issues. The Belden survey found a striking dichotomy in the results: despite his favorable job rating, the majority said that Faubus should not seek a seventh term due to his longevity in the office.²⁵

Once again, Faubus proved to be the master of surprises. When most expected him to retire in 1960, he declined. When many thought that he would run once more in 1966, he decided to retire. Faubus' announcement led to a scramble among Democrats hoping to carry the party banner against Rockefeller. Rockefeller told a GOP fund-raising dinner in Huntsville that it made him no difference whom the Democrats ran "because we are not running against an individual and never have. We are running against a machine."²⁶

Rockefeller was opposed at the last minute in the GOP primary by the unconventional Gus A. McMillan, a 64-year-old Sheridan contractor who had run unsuccessfully for governor in the 1954 Democratic primary against Faubus and the late Francis A. Cherry. McMillan, subsequently

²⁵John L. Ward, The Arkansas Rockefeller (Baton Rouge, Louisiana, 1978), 51-52.

²⁶Quoted in Ibid., 53.

a Faubus ally, denied that he had entered the Republican primary merely to force the party to bear the expense of an election, an accusation raised by GOP leaders. McMillan claimed to be a "country boy without a telephone" who could be contacted through the Grant County Sheriff's Department. He admitted that he knew no Arkansas Republicans who supported his candidacy, noting that he had changed parties strictly to make the gubernatorial race.²⁷ McMillan labeled Rockefeller as "Mr. Moneybags" and said that the nation was "in a time of turmoil because we are guilty of shooting at God's planets," an apparent reference to the space program.²⁸ Meanwhile, McMillan told Truman Altenbaumer, the pro-Rockefeller executive director of the Arkansas GOP, that he would abandon his primary candidacy for \$82,000 and in turn endorse Rockefeller. Altenbaumer, in anticipation of an offer from McMillan, had hidden a recorder in his office. Once the bribery attempt was made public by party officials, McMillan polled only 310 of the 19,956 votes cast in the 1966 GOP gubernatorial primary.²⁹

In 1964, 165 Arkansas Republicans had sought state or

²⁷Ibid., 55; New York Times, April 28, 1966.

²⁸Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, July 22, 1966, 1491.

²⁹Arkansas Outlook, July 1966; Election Statistics, 1966 (Little Rock: Secretary of State).

local office, but Rockefeller's 1966 campaign attracted more than 500 such candidates. Several Democrats joined former State Representative James Coates in defecting to the GOP, including State Senator James W. "Jim" Raney of Warren. Little Rock businessman Maurice L. "Footsie" Britt, a former University of Arkansas football star and decorated World War II hero, switched his affiliation to Republican to run for lieutenant governor. Britt ran a separate endeavor from Rockefeller, appointing Glen Jermstad of North Little Rock as his campaign manager.³⁰ Jerry Thomasson, a Democratic state legislator from Clark County, switched to the GOP to oppose incumbent Bruce Bennett in the attorney general's race, but Bennett in turn was defeated in the Democratic runoff by Benton lawyer Joe Purcell.³¹ A number of Republican legislative candidates in 1966 later appeared in positions of party leadership, including James L. "Jim" Sheets of Benton County, George I. Nowotny, Jr., of Fort Smith, Marion Burton of Little Rock and Harlan "Bo" Holleman of Wynne. Others assumed positions in the party hierarchy, including the Rogers businessman Cass S. Hough, president of the Daisy Manufacturing Company, Charles T. Bernard of Earle, chairman of the Crittenden County GOP, and Neal Sox Johnson of

³⁰Arkansas Outlook, May 1966.

³¹Ibid., August 1966; Election Statistics, 1966.

Nashville, a construction contractor who headed the Howard County party apparatus.³² The party was roundly cheered as more than 2,500 persons attended a fund-raising dinner on April 30, 1966, in Little Rock. The featured speaker was Senate Minority Leader Everett M. Dirksen of Illinois.³³

Most attention in the summer of 1966 was not focused on the Republicans but instead on the seven-candidate Democratic gubernatorial field. The leading hopefuls included former Congressmen Dale Alford and Brooks Hays, the two old rivals from the 1958 Fifth District House race, and an admitted "dark horse," 34-year-old prosecuting attorney Sam Boyce of Newport, who claimed that only he could unite the party in the contest against the GOP. Two Arkansas Supreme Court justices, James Douglas "Jim" Johnson of Conway and Frank Holt of Little Rock, resigned from the court to run for governor. Johnson and Holt became the Democratic frontrunners, pushing Alford, Hays, Boyce and two lesser-known rivals into the background.³⁴

The most unusual of the 1966 Democratic candidates was clearly the eventual nominee, Jim Johnson, whom Time

³²Arkansas Outlook, May 1966; July 1966.

³³Ibid., May 1966; Arkansas Gazette, May 1, 1966.

³⁴Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, July 22, 1966, 1491.

magazine referred to as "A Different Kind of Johnson." After losing in races for attorney general in 1954 and governor in 1956, Johnson was elected on a fiery segregationist platform to the Supreme Court in 1958. In 1966, he stepped down from the court, which paid \$20,000 annually, to offer himself at half the salary to serve as governor. Most observers doubted that Johnson could muster sufficient support to win the nomination. His rhetoric was aimed primarily at President Lyndon B. Johnson, whose election Justice Johnson had bitterly opposed in 1964.³⁵ Johnson lambasted the president in harsh rhetoric, noting that when he looked:

on the national scene, and I see drunk men at the head of the government, and I see high-placed preachers on the president's staff dancing vulgar dances until 3 o'clock in the morning when our boys are fighting and dying in the jungles of Vietnam, I cringe, I tell you. If that's Lyndon Johnson's Great Society, Jim Johnson wants no part of it.³⁶

Johnson told Arkansas Democrats that his primary victory would be interpreted as a rejection of a "no-win war, federal controls, desegregation guidelines, foreign aid and protection of civil rights demonstrators."³⁷ Holt, who

³⁵"Arkansas: A Different Kind of Johnson," Time, LXXXVIII (August 19, 1966), 22.

³⁶New York Times, August 11, 1966.

³⁷Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, August 12, 1966, 1763.

won the backing of most of the defeated party candidates in the runoff campaign against Johnson, claimed that such attacks on President Johnson could jeopardize federal projects in Arkansas. Jim Johnson claimed that many of the programs which Holt was defending were "immoral," and Holt in turn termed Johnson a "purveyor of prejudice" and a "hypocrite." Holt's bland style, however, was no match for Johnson's fiery oratory.³⁸ Johnson claimed that Holt, Alford and Hays were all "running out of the same stable," a reference to the trio's relationship with the Faubus organization. Yet, at various times Holt, Alford and Hays had all broken with Faubus on key issues.³⁹

In 1955, Johnson had helped to organize the segregationist White Citizens Councils of Arkansas, and he termed integration "one little checkerboard square in the Russian scheme to make us a satellite."⁴⁰ After his primary victory, however, Johnson pledged to enforce civil rights laws as governor whether he agreed with them or not. He also claimed that as a Supreme Court justice he had been sensitive to black interests, once voiding the convictions of some black demonstrators. As a justice,

³⁸New York Times, August 7, 1966.

³⁹Ibid., May 1, 1966; Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, August 12, 1966, 1763.

⁴⁰Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, October 7, 1966, 2352.

Johnson had often spoken out in support of right-wing positions and causes, even touring parts of the South in backing Goldwater.⁴¹ Rockefeller, like Johnson, had opposed passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and the Republican candidate criticized Health, Education and Welfare desegregation guidelines issued by President Johnson's administration. Rockefeller also claimed that federal authorities were using long distance telephone calls to "verbally intimidate our school administrators," and he urged changes and challenges to the guidelines through the courts. Rockefeller lamented that every time his brother, New York Governor Nelson A. Rockefeller (who was seeking his third term in 1966), "says something nice about Martin Luther King, it costs me ten thousand votes down along the Mississippi."⁴² Rockefeller nevertheless expected full black support in the general election, and the black vote that year consisted of about 125,000 of the state's 800,000 registered voters.⁴³

In the general election campaign, Jim Johnson continued his attacks on President Johnson and Winthrop Rockefeller. In many ways, Johnson's rhetoric was more suited

⁴¹Ibid., October 7, 1966, 2352; New York Times, August 11, 1966.

⁴²Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, October 7, 1966, 2352.

⁴³Ibid.; Election Statistics, 1966.

for a congressional than a gubernatorial campaign. He criticized the administration's "foreign aid giveaway to every Hottentot country in the world," and he once proclaimed that the greatest service that:

Lyndon Johnson is performing for the people of this country is the fact that his sitting in the president's chair keeps Hubert Humphrey out of it.⁴⁴

Although Johnson had supported Goldwater in 1964, he countered Rockefeller's call for a two-party system by claiming that the GOP gubernatorial candidate was primarily interested in "one-man rule," not a two-party system.⁴⁵ Johnson's uneasy relationship with state Democratic regulars who resented his opposition to John F. Kennedy in 1960 and Lyndon Johnson in 1964 clearly hurt him in the 1966 election.

In 1981, eight years after Rockefeller's death, Jim Johnson tangled with the Arkansas Democratic establishment. Backed by Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Strom Thurmond of South Carolina, Johnson actively sought the appointment from President Ronald W. Reagan to the United States Parole Commission. The commission, headquartered in Chevy Chase, Maryland, consists of nine members paid

⁴⁴Time, LCCCVIII (August 19, 1966), 22.

⁴⁵Conway Log Cabin Democrat, September 16, 1966.

\$50,000 annually, who possess the sole authority to grant, modify or revoke paroles of eligible U.S. prisoners serving sentences of more than one year.⁴⁶ Johnson reasoned that his judicial experience in Arkansas qualified him for the appointment. The Arkansas Gazette reported that Thurmond wrote a six-line letter to Reagan, asking that Johnson, still a nominal Democrat, be considered for the vacancy. Thurmond's office, however, declined to comment on the matter.⁴⁷ On hearing of Johnson's desire for the position, Arkansas Democratic Senator David H. Pryor vowed to filibuster against the nomination if it ever reached the Senate floor.⁴⁸ According to Pryor, the selection of a man "as inflammatory as Jim Johnson to represent the state of Arkansas is in itself an insult to our decency and intelligence."⁴⁹ Pryor expressed anger that he had not been consulted by Thurmond about the matter and labeled Johnson "not a judicious man."⁵⁰ Pryor's opposition meant that the proposed appointment was "effectively

⁴⁶United States Government Manual, 1982/83 (Washington, 1982), 344-345.

⁴⁷Arkansas Gazette, October 16, 1981.

⁴⁸Ibid., October 10, 1981.

⁴⁹Ibid., October 12, 1981.

⁵⁰Ibid., October 11, 1981.

dead," in that Reagan would not risk a Senate defeat over a relatively minor appointment. Arkansas GOP Chairman Harlan Holleman declined to take a position on the proposed nomination.⁵¹ The Arkansas Gazette derided the Republicans for ever considering the Johnson appointment, claiming that the former Democratic gubernatorial nominee had been:

supporting Republicans for about the same period and with about the same intensity, as, say, Governor Frank White and Orval E. Faubus -- that is, for about one year. . . . Apparently, the state's Republican congressmen have been reluctant to sponsor him; so, sadly, he has to depend on poor old Strom Thurmond of South Carolina who has written to the White House in his behalf. . . .⁵²

Pryor's opposition to Jim Johnson did not surface in 1966, however. At that time, the young Democratic congressional nominee, soon to be elected to succeed the retiring Fourth District Representative Oren Harris, appealed for party unity at the state Democratic convention. Pryor warned that the Democrats should make sure that the Republicans did not establish a viable base in the state. Joining Pryor at the convention was Congressman Mills, who tried to moderate Johnson's image as a hot-headed radical by stressing the gubernatorial

⁵¹Ibid.

⁵²Ibid., October 12, 1981.

nominee's long-time Democratic roots.⁵³ Faubus and Johnson did not appear together at the convention. For weeks, Johnson claimed that he would not need Faubus' active support; he changed his mind prior to the general election, but it was too late to reverse the Rockefeller tide. Rockefeller's advertisements, stressing the belated Faubus-Johnson connection, read: "Last Minute Program Change: Jimmy Johnson and Orval Faubus, Originally Scheduled to Appear in 'Duel Under the Oaks,' Now Will Be Seen in 'The Honeymooners.'"⁵⁴ Johnson, seen by most Democratic regulars as a "maverick with almost no institutional ties," actually approved a liberal reform platform at the state Democratic convention and asked liberals and blacks for assistances in the waning days of the campaign.⁵⁵ Faubus, in his election-eve pitch, urged all Democrats to unite, or in his words, "come up to the lick log, now!"⁵⁶

In campaign speeches, Rockefeller pointed to his long tenure as chairman of the Arkansas Industrial Development Commission and repeatedly stressed the two-party angle. However, Johnson charged that Rockefeller had improperly

⁵³New York Times, September 20, 1966.

⁵⁴Ward, The Arkansas Rockefeller, 63-64.

⁵⁵New York Times, October 26, 1966.

⁵⁶"Squealing at the Lick Log," Time, LXXXVIII (November 4, 1966), 34.

used his position at the commission in order to purchase land at cheap prices, knowing in advance where industrial development was imminent.⁵⁷ Rockefeller cited Republican efforts to establish permanent voter registration, to secure voting machines and to obtain passage of a bill to collect interest on public funds idle in Arkansas banks, thus sapping the Faubus organization of its past strength in the banking community.⁵⁸ A Eugene Newsom voter survey conducted for Rockefeller noted that the Republican trailed all the prospective Democratic candidates prior to the primary. When Newsom asked voters what they most disliked about Rockefeller, a third replied, "he is a Republican." Thereafter, the Republicans decided to downplay Rockefeller as the "Mr. Republican" of Arkansas, in hopes of appealing to disaffected Democrats.⁵⁹

After Johnson won the runoff over Holt, some loyalist Democrats charged that Republicans had indeed voted in that election in sufficient numbers to enable Johnson to win.⁶⁰ The theory advanced was that Republicans regarded

⁵⁷New York Times, September 20, 1966.

⁵⁸Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, October 7, 1966, 2352.

⁵⁹Ward, The Arkansas Rockefeller, 54.

⁶⁰New York Times, August 11, 1966.

Johnson as a weaker candidate than Holt and therefore contributed to his primary victory by participating in the Democratic runoff. A similar argument was offered in Georgia, where a virtual carbon-copy of Johnson, Lester Garfield Maddox, won the gubernatorial nomination in 1966, with apparent covert GOP backing. John L. Ward, Rockefeller's 1966 campaign manager and the editor of the Conway Log Cabin Democrat, however, argues that the Rockefeller organization was not nearly strong enough in 1966 to undertake a sabotage effort against Holt.⁶¹

In August 1966, the Newsom survey showed Johnson with 45 percent to Rockefeller's 42 percent, with 13 percent undecided. The interviews were conducted after the runoff, allowing maximum strength for the Democrat in his post-victory momentum. Newsom also found that Rockefeller had greater strength among those who did not vote in the runoff but who planned to take part in the general election. A plurality of those surveyed also claimed that Rockefeller would be better able as governor to handle racial problems than would Jim Johnson. The poll showed that 77 percent of black voters favored Rockefeller, the apparent reverse of the 1964 election results.

⁶¹Ward, The Arkansas Rockefeller, 55.

Newsom urged Rockefeller to "continue taking a moderate, even-tempered positive approach," thereby increasing his backing among the more educated voters.⁶²

The campaign was noted for Johnson's use of the invective in his political rhetoric. While Johnson emphasized that he attended church and prayed regularly, the Democrat reminded audiences that Rockefeller, though reared a Baptist, was a member of no church in Arkansas. Johnson even invoked the name of the Apostle Paul in his campaign, vowing that he would fight "a good fight, finish the course and keep the faith."⁶³ Johnson mentioned Rockefeller's divorce, but that question had less effect in 1966, than it had in 1964, when Faubus raised the point. Newsom reported that 74 percent of the voters did not think the divorce was relevant to the campaign.⁶⁴ Johnson used several characterizations of Rockefeller, which turned off moderates and liberals in mass: "a prissy sissy," "the clever manipulator," and "the Santa Gertrudis steer."⁶⁵ Ward said that those remarks deeply hurt and embarrassed Rockefeller, noting that:

⁶²Ibid., 56-57.

⁶³New York Times, August 11, 1966.

⁶⁴Ward, The Arkansas Rockefeller, 58-59.

⁶⁵Conway Log Cabin Democrat, September 19, 1966; Fayetteville Northwest Arkansas Times, November 2, 1966; New York Times, September 20, 1966.

to him, politics was not a game. . . .
 Each double cross, each stinging charge
 went right to his insides and stayed
 there. . . .⁶⁶

Johnson also criticized Rockefeller's drinking habits. Ward and Harry S. Ashmore, former editor of the Arkansas Gazette, however, claimed that most "Arkansas politicians drink like fish but never admit it publicly."⁶⁷ Rockefeller though never denied his fondness for liquor. As Johnson's slurs continued, the mild-mannered Rockefeller finally lost his own temper. At a news conference, Rockefeller referred to Johnson as a "conceited ass," when the Democrat claimed personal credit for defeat of an open housing law in Congress in 1966.⁶⁸

In the campaign, Rockefeller's personal tax records were taken from a file in the Little Rock office of Peat, Marwick, Mitchell and Company. Information from the files was used in several Johnson advertisements. A former employee of the firm was suspected of stealing the records, but no one was ever arrested. Rockefeller was furious at the incident and blamed the accounting firm for presumed

⁶⁶Ward, The Arkansas Rockefeller, xi, xii.

⁶⁷Quoted in both John L. Ward, Readings in Arkansas Government (Little Rock, 1973), 164; and Harry S. Ashmore, Arkansas: A Bicentennial History (New York, 1978), 159.

⁶⁸Conway Log Cabin Democrat, November 2, 1966.

lax security measures.⁶⁹

Terming himself a "realistic conservative," Rockefeller avoided the pitfalls of his 1964 campaign. He began to appear more "down-to-earth" to voters. When his campaign bus broke down, he flagged down a pickup, climbed into the cab and rode with a farmer to Texarkana. The public relations staff was thrilled that the candidate had learned to establish rapport with the common man.⁷⁰ Rockefeller was rarely on time for an appointment, but Ward notes that he could show concern for the rights of others. Though a connoisseur of fine foods, Rockefeller could make a meal of peanut butter and crackers.⁷¹

Rockefeller rejected ties to the so-called radical right, which largely united behind the Johnson candidacy. In the past, right-wing influence in Arkansas had tended to occur in Democratic primaries, not in the Republican camp which remained moderate to conservative. Among the well-known right-wing figures in the state were George S. Benson, president of the Church of Christ fundamentalist Harding College in Searcy, and the Reverend Gerald L.K.

⁶⁹Fayetteville Northwest Arkansas Times, November 5, 1966.

⁷⁰"Arkansas: Opportunity Regained," Time, LXXXVIII (December 2, 1966), 24; Ward, The Arkansas Rockefeller, 66.

⁷¹Ward, The Arkansas Rockefeller, xii.

Smith, a Louisianian who became a follower of the late Huey Pierce Long. Smith retired to Eureka Springs, Arkansas, to establish a popular passion play and to build his mammoth "Christ of the Ozarks" statue.⁷² In elective politics, the radical right in Arkansas coalesced around Jim Johnson, Dale Alford (especially in 1958) and to some extent Faubus (in 1957 and 1964 in particular). At times, these men were endorsed by the Johnson-inspired White Citizens' Council. The council in 1958 launched a boycott of the Arkansas Gazette as a result of the newspaper's leadership in calling for compliance with the Little Rock school desegregation plan. The circulation dropped by 18 percent as a result, and the owners lost an estimated \$1 million in net income. This boycott reduced the morning paper's long lead over the Arkansas Democrat, the more conservative publication which although it too supported the desegregation plan expressed sympathy for Faubus' activities.⁷³

Johnson, like Faubus in 1964, attempted to use the Rockefeller wealth as a campaign issue. According to Johnson, Rockefeller was "literally born to the Purple.

⁷²Peirce, The Deep South States of America, 154.

⁷³Ashmore, Arkansas: A Bicentennial History, 152.

He seeks to destroy the American dream that every child in this state has the right to aspire to the office of governor."⁷⁴ In reply, Rockefeller stressed that only eight of the thirty-six governors through 1966 had been natives of Arkansas.

Johnson, belatedly appealing for black support, indicated that he would not engage in any "schoolhouse-door stands" and noted he could not win without some black support.⁷⁵ In an election-eve telecast, however, Johnson refused to apologize for his segregationist past. In the primary race, Johnson had even refused to shake hands with some blacks.⁷⁶ He criticized federal open housing legislation pending in 1966 as "dastardly." He also accused Rockefeller of financing "such radical agitators as Martin Luther King and Stokely Carmichael." Still, Johnson insisted that as a former state senator and Supreme Court justice he had "always treated our colored citizens with fairness and impartiality."⁷⁷

In his final television appearance, Rockefeller

⁷⁴Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, October 7, 1966, 2352.

⁷⁵Arkansas Gazette, October 28, 1966; Earl Black, Southern Governors and Civil Rights (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1976), 270.

⁷⁶"Arkansas: Within Reach," Time, LXXXVIII (August 5, 1966), 23.

⁷⁷Quoted in Black, Southern Governors and Civil Rights, 270.

reiterated his support for educational reform and economic development, claiming that only he could provide "responsible leadership." He urged voters to reject the "smears and vilification of a badly beaten man," his reference to Johnson. Rockefeller pledged a "wholesome change" and accused Johnson of being "unstable, a divisive influence and a radical."⁷⁸

Republican John Paul Hammerschmidt, challenging Congressman James Trimble, ignored the redistricting advantage established earlier by the Arkansas General Assembly on behalf of the Third District incumbent. In his advertisements, Hammerschmidt attempted to tie Trimble to the Lyndon Johnson administration, asking, "why is the cost of living still going up? Why is money so hard to borrow and interest rates so high?" Hammerschmidt accused Trimble of supporting unrestrained foreign aid, poverty programs and federal rent subsidies.⁷⁹ In the attorney general race, Republican Thomasson sought to tie Democrat Purcell to the Democratic "Old Guard," which had united in the primary behind incumbent Bruce Bennett. "Purcell is controlled by this same old crowd," exclaimed Thomasson in his advertisements. Purcell ignored the

⁷⁸Arkansas Gazette, November 5, 1966.

⁷⁹Fayetteville Northwest Arkansas Times, November 4, 1966.

Republican challenge after having defeated Bennett in a hard-fought runoff election. Thomasson became so irritated that Purcell did not actively campaign for the general election that he accused the Democrat of "taking the voters for granted."⁸⁰

As the campaign closed, Faubus attempted to shore up public employee support for Democrat Johnson. Though he publicly urged party unity, Faubus reportedly told certain state employees on election morning that he fully expected Rockefeller to win. Johnson later claimed that Faubus' pessimistic assessment of the outcome cost the Democrat victory.⁸¹

The 1966 returns were a striking victory for Rockefeller, probably greater than the most optimistic Republican had anticipated. Newsweek and U.S. News and World Report forecast victory for Johnson, but Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report earlier in the year had insisted that Republican Rockefeller was a slight favorite to defeat any Democrat.⁸² Richard Nixon, who made

⁸⁰Ibid., November 7, 1966.

⁸¹Ward, The Arkansas Rockefeller, 65.

⁸²Newsweek, LXVIII (November 7, 1966), 33; U.S. News and World Report, LXI (October 31, 1966), 63; Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, July 22, 1966, 1491.

a cross-country tour in 1966 on behalf of GOP candidates, listed Arkansas as a prime opportunity for Republicans in the gubernatorial contest. Nixon had "specifically predicted" that both Rockefeller and another then GOP "moderate" running for governor of Maryland, Spiro T. Agnew, would win in 1966. In his memoirs, Nixon termed the Agnew and Rockefeller triumphs "personally satisfying to me."⁸³ Nixon and House Republican Leader Gerald R. Ford of Michigan each appeared on behalf of Rockefeller and Third District House candidate Hammerschmidt. While Ford spoke in Huntsville on October 27, Nixon addressed a general GOP rally in Fort Smith the next day.⁸⁴

Voting machines were used for the first time throughout Arkansas in 1966, allowing for a relatively quick tabulation. Rockefeller gained the initial lead based on his support in Little Rock. When two national networks forecast a Rockefeller victory, the Johnson headquarters was publicly unmoved, expecting their man to move into the lead once votes from rural counties were counted.⁸⁵

Rockefeller polled 306,324 votes, or 54.4 percent,

⁸³Richard M. Nixon, The Memoirs of Richard Nixon (New York, 1978), 277.

⁸⁴Arkansas Outlook, October 1966; Arkansas Gazette, October 28, 1966.

⁸⁵Arkansas Gazette, November 9, 1966.

to Johnson's 257,203, or 45.6 percent. The Republican carried these thirty-five counties, listed in descending order by percent:

Washington (72.8)	Lee (54.8)
Benton (69.2)	Marion (54.7)
Baxter (67.5)	Desha (54.5)
Garland (65.9)	Pope (54.3)
Searcy (65.5)	Clay (53.9)
Pulaski (64.9)	Polk (53.8)
Sebastian (62.5)	Union (53.8)
Carroll (62.1)	Clark (53.2)
Chicot (61.2)	Montgomery (52.6)
Phillips (59.8)	Hempstead (51.8)
Jefferson (58.9)	Independence (51.7)
Mississippi (58.4)	Logan (51.3)
Craighead (57.2)	Sevier (51.2)
Ouachita (56.7)	St. Francis (51)
Boone (56.3)	Newton (50.8)
Columbia (56.1)	Randolph (50.5)
Miller (56)	Greene (50.4)
Little River (55.1)	

Johnson received majorities in the other forty counties, including his home base, Faulkner, which encompasses the city of Conway, and Rockefeller's home county, Conway, which includes Morrilton. Every major population center supported Rockefeller. Madison County, Faubus' home, cast 52.3 percent for Johnson. Johnson's strength was clearly based in rural counties of the south, central and eastern sections of the state. Rockefeller ran well in counties with large numbers of black voters, including Mississippi, Lee, Phillips, Chicot, St. Francis, Greene and Desha.⁸⁶

Political columnist Kevin P. Phillips, an ex-aide

⁸⁶Election Statistics, 1966.

to former Attorney General John Newton Mitchell, contends that Arkansas' "black belt" surely provided Rockefeller with his victory margin in 1966, whereas most other Republicans that year ran poorly in the South among black voters.⁸⁷ Based on a review of selected black precincts in Pulaski County, Rockefeller received at least 81 percent of the estimated statewide black vote.⁸⁸ Over the years, the Arkansas black vote grew to sufficient strength to determine the outcome in closely-divided elections. Black registration remained constant in the 1950s, between 60,000 and 70,000, reaching an estimated 72,600 by 1960, a figure representing about 38 percent of adults at least twenty-one years of age. These figures are considered rather large for a period five years prior to passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965.⁸⁹ Black support for Rockefeller in 1966 did not drive away significant numbers of whites, a situation attesting to the state's overall moderate racial climate, despite the interval of the Little Rock crisis of 1957.⁹⁰ Rockefeller retained

⁸⁷Kevin P. Phillips, The Emerging Republican Majority (New Rochelle, New York, 1969), 269.

⁸⁸Numan V. Bartley and Hugh D. Graham, Southern Elections County and Precinct Data, 1950-1972 (Baton Rouge, Louisiana, 1978), 353.

⁸⁹Ibid., 29.

⁹⁰Lawrence Goodwyn, The South Central States (New York, 1967), 122.

the support of those counties which had previously backed GOP presidential nominees, with the exception of Madison, which, following Faubus' lead, supported Johnson.⁹¹ The Fayetteville Northwest Arkansas Times said that Rockefeller won in part because he had been campaigning for almost two straight years. In addition, the newspaper noted that Johnson had failed to unite moderate and liberal Democrats behind his candidacy.⁹²

Rockefeller's election shattered the national stereotype of the "typical Arkansas voter." Not only had a Republican defeated a Democrat, but the state turned to a divorced man who had once been married to an actress-model, had inherited a couple of hundred million dollars and who hailed from New York City. Until the Rockefeller era, most Arkansans had been viewed as:

two million or so inhabitants who attended pine-shack churches where the Gospel was interpreted with fundamentalistic fervor and who, rather less frequently, sent their children to one-room schools in the hills where they could learn their politics according to the scriptures of the Democratic Party's southern wing.⁹³

⁹¹Election Statistics, 1916-1966.

⁹²Fayetteville Northwest Arkansas Times, November 10, 1966.

⁹³Goodwyn, The South Central States, 120.

In a 1972 interview, Rockefeller reflected on his 1966 triumph, noting that:

the people were not necessarily voting for me. Certainly, they weren't voting for a Republican. They were voting against a system they wearied of. They knew I was not in politics for personal gain, and they were fully aware of what had transpired under my leadership in industrial development.⁹⁴

Besides the Rockefeller victory, the Republican candidate for lieutenant governor, Maurice Britt, narrowly defeated Democrat James Pilkinton of Hope, who had won the party nomination in a primary to succeed the retiring Nathan Gordon of Morrilton. Britt embraced the Rockefeller platform and benefited from those who cast straight Republican tickets in 1966. He received 275,151 votes, or 50.3 percent, to Pilkinton's 271,455, or 49.7 percent. Britt polled majorities in only twenty-three counties, but his strength was sufficient in the larger population centers to overcome Pilkinton's edge in rural areas. In seven counties, Britt received more than 62 percent of the vote, including Searcy, Washington, Benton, Baxter, Carroll, Sebastian and Garland. In six northwestern counties which often support Republicans, Britt actually ran ahead of Rockefeller. Britt also carried Crawford County, which supported Jim Johnson.⁹⁵

⁹⁴Quoted in Ward, The Arkansas Rockefeller, 65.

⁹⁵Election Statistics, 1966.

In the attorney general race, Democrat Purcell prevailed over Republican Thomasson, 287,983, or 53.9 percent, to 246,133, or 46.1 percent. Thomasson carried twelve counties, receiving more than 60 percent in Searcy, Baxter, Sebastian, Benton and Washington. As in the lieutenant governor race, Crawford County was unique in that it supported the GOP attorney general candidate while also backing Jim Johnson.⁹⁶

Arkansas Republicans achieved their first congressional breakthrough in 1966, as Hammerschmidt, a 44-year-old lumber company president from Harrison and the state party chairman, upset Congressman Trimble in the Third District. Hammerschmidt polled 83,938 votes, or 53.1 percent, and Trimble received 74,009, or 46.9 percent, almost the reverse of the 1964 contest when Trimble had defeated Republican J.E. Hinshaw. Hammerschmidt carried eleven of the twenty-five counties, but his margin was sufficient in heavily-populated areas, Garland, Washington and Sebastian, to overcome Trimble's edge in the smaller counties. Hammerschmidt carried these counties:

Sebastian (61.1)	Washington (56.7)
Benton (60.8)	Polk (52.8)
Garland (59.9)	Scott (52.6)
Boone (59.2)	Carroll (52.5)
Searcy (58.4)	Crawford (50.4)
Marion (58)	

⁹⁶Ibid.

Trimble lost his home county, Carroll, but carried often-Republican-leaning Newton County. Hammerschmidt generally trailed Rockefeller's showing in the Third District, but he ran more than three percentage points above the Rockefeller vote in Marion County. Hammerschmidt also carried Scott and Crawford counties, both of which had backed Jim Johnson.⁹⁷

Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report contended that Hammerschmidt owed his election to Rockefeller's "coat-tails."⁹⁸ Hammerschmidt had campaigned in part against President Johnson's "no-win" policies in Vietnam but also claimed that voters were leary of escalation of the conflict.⁹⁹ By 1971, after his fourth year in the House, Representative Hammerschmidt joined seven other conservative Republicans in sending a letter to then President Nixon asking him to speed troop withdrawals, set a deadline beyond which no draftees would be sent to Southeast Asia and to "consider" setting a troop-withdrawal deadline.¹⁰⁰

In the other contested House race in Arkansas in

⁹⁷Ibid.

⁹⁸Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, November 11, 1966, 2777.

⁹⁹Ibid., December 2, 1966, 2937.

¹⁰⁰Rowland Evans, Jr., and Robert D. Novak, Nixon in the White House (New York, 1971), 391.

1966, Democrat David Pryor, a state legislator from the labor-oriented city of Camden, defeated Republican Lynn Lowe, a Texarkana engineer and farmer, for the right to succeed Fourth District Congressman Harris, who had resigned the seat in February 1966 to accept appointment from President Johnson as U.S. district judge for the Western District of Arkansas. A special election in which Pryor and Lowe were the party candidates was held simultaneously with the regular general election to fill out the remainder of Harris' term. The seat was vacant through most of 1966 due to a series of legal and political disputes.¹⁰¹ In the regular general election, Pryor carried all twenty counties in the district, which embraces southwestern and south central sections of Arkansas. Even Lowe's native Miller County, which supported Rockefeller, gave Pryor 53.2 percent, his weakest showing. Pryor received 86,887 votes, or 65 percent, to Lowe's 46,804, or 35 percent.¹⁰² Lowe ran as a conservative and declined to confirm or deny whether he had formerly belonged to the John Birch Society. Instead, Lowe, like Hammerschmidt, predicted that his election would mean an expression of opposition to President

¹⁰¹Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, July 22, 1966, 1492.

¹⁰²Election Statistics, 1966.

Johnson. Lowe urged "local determination of local problems," while Pryor stressed his record as one of the reform-minded "Young Turks" of the Arkansas House.¹⁰³

Republicans did not field opponents to Democratic Senator McClellan and Congressmen Mills and Ezekiel C. "Took" Gathings of the First District. Of the 520 local GOP candidates, 163 were elected in 1966, or 31 percent of the party slate. Three Republicans won seats in the Arkansas House, including James Sheets of Benton County, George Nowotny of Fort Smith and Danny L. Patrick of Washington County. Incumbent GOP Representative Orville D. Pendergrass of Mountain Home was defeated for re-election despite Rockefeller's strong showing in Baxter County.¹⁰⁴

With the election of Rockefeller, the GOP became the official "majority party" in Arkansas under state law. Numerous Democrats were furious at the Rockefeller victory. Democratic lieutenant governor candidate James Pilkinton criticized the state's vote-tabulation system, claiming that Rockefeller had influenced the reporting of returns. However, Pilkinton seemed to ignore the fact that the 1966 returns were basically handled by judges

¹⁰³Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, October 7, 1966, 2353.

¹⁰⁴Time, December 2, 1966, 24; Arkansas Outlook, November-December 1966.

and clerks of Democratic persuasion.¹⁰⁵ As Rockefeller took the oath of office on January 23, 1967, a Newsom survey gave the new governor an 80 percent favorable rating.¹⁰⁶

From the start of his administration, Rockefeller seemed to irritate the Democratic legislature. He insisted on delivering his inaugural address in Robinson Auditorium, where about three thousand could be seated, rather than giving the speech as tradition dictated in the smaller legislative chamber.¹⁰⁷ Campaign manager John L. Ward said that Rockefeller would recoil at "personal ridicule and derision," which frequently greeted him among legislators. Rockefeller was bewildered by the partisanship of legislators in contrast to his "own fair-minded and genteel upbringing."¹⁰⁸ When legislators threatened his reform program, Rockefeller addressed the two houses as follows:

A few men have attempted to choke off the development of better government in Arkansas. . . . to embarrass the new state government in every way possible. . . . They have attempted to show, at any cost, that a Republican governor cannot possibly accomplish anything with a legislature made up almost entirely of Democrats. . . . I

¹⁰⁵Arkansas Outlook, November-December 1966.

¹⁰⁶Ward, The Arkansas Rockefeller, 68.

¹⁰⁷Ibid., 69.

¹⁰⁸Quoted in Ashmore, Arkansas: A Bicentennial History, 159.

must tell you now -- in the most emphatic terms -- that I will not sit quietly in the governor's office while a few legislators do their best to dismantle the executive branch of government.¹⁰⁹

Rockefeller angered some stalwart Republicans by retaining several Democratic appointees, including Education Commissioner Arch W. Ford and Welfare Commissioner A.J. "Red" Moss, who was said to have a superior knowledge of state and federal welfare regulations. Reflecting later on the patronage question, Rockefeller said that he was:

aware of the fact that for re-election, I was still going to be dependent on the independents and Democratic vote. So with those people who had worked for me as independents or 'Citizens for Rockefeller' that were known as Democrats, I made appointments from those ranks . . . to maintain the kind of relationship that I needed with the Democratic majority.¹¹⁰

Some Rockefeller aides urged that patronage bear a clearly-defined GOP flair, suggesting that the governor fire state employees in mass. At the time, Arkansas had no civil service protection for public employees. Rockefeller firmly declined to initiate such wholesale firings.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁹Quoted in Ibid.

¹¹⁰Quoted in Ward, The Arkansas Rockefeller, 71.

¹¹¹Ibid.

Rockefeller did name numerous Republicans to state office. Marion Burton, an unsuccessful legislative candidate in 1966, became the governor's top aide. Three young men served as assistant aides, including Marshall Martin, Ray G. Cooper and Robert "Bob" Scott. Later in 1967, Cooper ran for the chairmanship of the National Young Republicans, losing to a more conservative contender from Kansas.¹¹² Other appointees included Dr. Wayne Babbitt as executive director of the Livestock and Poultry Commission; Glen Jermstad, the campaign manager for Lieutenant Governor Britt, as state director of the Office of Economic Opportunity; and Jerry Thomasson, the defeated attorney general candidate, as director of the assessment coordination division of the Public Service Commission.¹¹³ Thomasson was later named to head the Arkansas Employment Security Division after a vacancy occurred due to the death of another Rockefeller appointee, Colonel Fred D. McKinney of Little Rock.¹¹⁴ Rockefeller appointed Howard County GOP leader Neal Sox Johnson to the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission, and Madison County Republican chairman Dotson Collins served as director of

¹¹²Arkansas Outlook, January 1967; April 1967.

¹¹³Ibid., February 1967; June 1967.

¹¹⁴Ibid., January 1968.

the state welfare department surplus commodities division until his appointment as labor commissioner.¹¹⁵

Rockefeller never mastered the art of working with the partisan legislature. When he delayed moving into the governor's mansion until October 1967, some lawmakers accused him of feeling that he was "too good" for the Arkansas gubernatorial residence. Actually, he was awaiting renovation to the building. Rockefeller was apparently never the stuffed-shirt millionaire his opponents made him out to be. Often, he personally answered his telephone at WinRock Farms, to the astonishment of many callers.¹¹⁶ Years later, Rockefeller's estranged wife Jeannette recalled that:

there is so much underneath in term of what Win is and how he thinks that never comes to the surface that people think of him as being one kind of a person or another kind, when in reality, he's many people.¹¹⁷

The Rockefeller associate Thomas Eisele remarked in 1971 that for:

a Rockefeller to come to the South and to make it down here, I don't think it gave him that sense of achievement, but it was a fantastic success story. Still, he wanted to be accepted by the family . . . ¹¹⁸

¹¹⁵Ibid., March 1967; November-December 1967.

¹¹⁶Ward, The Arkansas Rockefeller, 74-75.

¹¹⁷Quoted in Ibid., 77.

¹¹⁸Quoted in Ibid., 82.

In the summer of 1967, Governor Rockefeller conducted fourteen so-called "nonpolitical" regional tours of Arkansas to gain citizen input into governmental planning. A state tax collector in Pocahontas, a sleepy town in Randolph County in northeastern Arkansas, said that the governor's visit was the "first time that anybody, even a tax commissioner" had stopped by in years. While in Huntsville, Rockefeller paid a courtesy call on his old rival, Faubus, asking for two past issues of Faubus' popular Madison County Record newspaper.¹¹⁹

Before Rockefeller took office, the legislature approved ninety-three of Faubus' lame-duck appointments and then stubbornly attempted to block certain Rockefeller nominations.¹²⁰ Rockefeller even had to go to court to secure an important appointment to the utility-regulating Public Service Commission. The Democratic legislators also rejected one Rockefeller proposal after the other, including a proposed highway department audit, the reform of jury-selection procedures, a \$1-per-hour state minimum wage law and the strict regulation of Arkansas employee political activities. At one point, Rockefeller

¹¹⁹Time, XC (July 21, 1967), 25.

¹²⁰New York Times, January 10, 1967.

became so miffed with the Democratic legislators that he remarked that he wished "the bastards would go home."¹²¹ That incident drew the protest of legislative partisans and contributed to a further deterioration in his relations with lawmakers. When Rockefeller took steps to make certain that illegal gambling was halted at Hot Springs, the legislature approved a bill to legalize limited casino operations. Rockefeller vetoed the measure and succeeded in sustaining the veto.¹²² Rockefeller also created a department of administration to modernize operations of the then existing 187 state agencies and established a commission to study constitutional revision in a preliminary move to replace the Constitution of 1874.¹²³

Rockefeller tried in vain in 1967 to obtain the confirmation of Lynn Davis as state police director. Davis was declared ineligible for the position by the Arkansas Supreme Court because he had not lived in the state for a preceding ten-year period. Lawmakers refused to change the residency requirement as if they were deliberately

¹²¹Time, July 21, 1967, 25.

¹²²New York Times, March 8, 1967; April 8, 1967; December 17, 1967.

¹²³Time, July 21, 1967, 25.

defying the governor.¹²⁴ Davis ran in 1968 as the Republican nominee against Democratic Secretary of State Kelly Bryant but was defeated. The constant wrangling with the legislature apparently aided Rockefeller somewhat politically in the long run. The Arkansas Gazette, which broke its Democratic tradition to back Rockefeller in 1966, said the lawmakers' behavior "strengthens the argument for a two-party system in the legislature as well as in gubernatorial politics."¹²⁵

Among problems inherited by Rockefeller was the admittedly deplorable state of Arkansas prisons. To resolve the situation, Rockefeller named 39-year-old criminologist Thomas E. Murton to manage Tucker Intermediate Reformatory. Murton thereafter uncovered bones buried in the prison grounds and claimed that they were those of former prisoners -- an apparent ploy at national media attention.¹²⁶ Later, evidence revealed that the bones were skeletons buried about forty years earlier when the land was a paupers' cemetery. Rockefeller voiced impatience with Murton, who seemed to disregard the channel of authority by not informing the governor about the

¹²⁴New York Times, December 19, 1967.

¹²⁵Quoted in Time, July 21, 1967, 25, from Arkansas Gazette.

¹²⁶New York Times, January 9, 28, 1968; Ward, The Arkansas Rockefeller, 104-105.

diggings. As problems resurfaced with Murton, Rockefeller asked the corrections board to fire the superintendent after only a few weeks on the job.¹²⁷ Rockefeller objected to the "bad publicity" about the prison system, adding, "I would rather be reading about Arkansas getting a new industry."¹²⁸ Murton took credit for improving Arkansas prison conditions in a speech in Berkeley, California, where the superintendent attended a meeting without consulting Rockefeller.¹²⁹ After his dismissal from the position, Murton in 1969 told the U.S. Senate Juvenile Delinquency Subcommittee, headed by Thomas J. Dodd of Connecticut, that Arkansas had failed to back him up when he tried to "overhaul the degenerate system at its very roots." Murton's testimony included horror stories of brutality that he claimed had occurred in the prison system. Murton also contended that he had been fired by Rockefeller in a "whitewash."¹³⁰

Rockefeller nevertheless instituted a series of reforms in the prisons, including the outlawing of the strap in discipline, requiring a balanced diet for inmates to include daily milk and meat, disinfecting of the

¹²⁷New York Times, March 8, 1968.

¹²⁸"Prisons and Politics," New Republic, CLVIII (April 6, 1968), 7.

¹²⁹Arkansas Gazette, February 28, 1968.

¹³⁰New York Times, March 5, 1969.

kitchen and cells, a pest control program, requiring clean beddings and linens, improving agricultural programs and instituting academic classes at Tucker and the expansion of vocational training at the adult facility, Cummins Prison. Rockefeller ordered the desegregation of the prisons and reduced the inmate-guard ratio from fifty-eight to one to eight to one.¹³¹

After his election, Rockefeller announced that he would donate his first \$10,000 annual salary toward the construction of a chapel at a state hospital. He also supplemented from his personal funds the salaries of a dozen state officials to attract the personnel he desired.¹³² Attorney General Purcell, however, declared the practice of supplementing state salaries from private sources to be illegal.¹³³ In 1968, Rockefeller sought to raise teacher pay and welfare grants, but the cash reserve in the treasury was only about \$7 million. Therefore, Rockefeller offered a series of tax proposals, including sales taxes, personal and corporate income taxes and cigarette, tobacco and alcoholic beverage

¹³¹Ward, The Arkansas Rockefeller, 113-114.

¹³²"Arkansas: Win's Way," Time, LXXXIX (May 12, 1967), 22.

¹³³New York Times, May 9, 1967.

taxes. The proposals were made in an election year, and legislators refused to act. In plugging for his program, designed to raise about \$10 million annually, Rockefeller told lawmakers that the package was:

not a Republican program; it is not a Rockefeller program. It's a program for the people of Arkansas. It proposes that we meet our promised salary increases to our teachers and that we provide money to colleges and universities and . . . to allow modest welfare increases. . . . Our problems won't go away just because some legislators are unwilling to face them. These problems will be here whether I'm governor or not and regardless of who is in the legislature.¹³⁴

In early 1969, after his second election, Rockefeller invited several legislators to an overnight stay at WinRock Farms; he hoped to persuade them to support his controversial tax package and to mend the divisions of the past. While there, the lawmakers stole about \$3,000 worth of "souvenirs," such as bath cloths, perfumes, ash trays, trinkets and the like.¹³⁵ Rockefeller never seemed to be able to communicate with the legislators. One state senator was once heard to remark that Rockefeller was "like the measles. We might as well have it and get it over with."¹³⁶

¹³⁴Pine Bluff Commercial, May 26, 1968.

¹³⁵Ward, The Arkansas Rockefeller, 136.

¹³⁶Quoted in Ibid., xiv.

Throughout his career, Rockefeller tended to rely heavily on his professional staff for advice and consultation. Occasionally, he would criticize the staff for failure to keep him fully informed on policy issues so that he could make public statements. Publisher Perrin Jones of the anti-Rockefeller Searcy Daily Citizen said that Rockefeller had a good public relations staff and "his ability to stay in office was due to its polished handling of a most inept administration."¹³⁷

Meanwhile, 1968 promised to be a competitive election year in Arkansas. Senator Fulbright was awaiting the "serious prospect" that former Governor Faubus was ready to challenge him; rumors to that effect had been circulating for at least eight years. Faubus was seen as a likely candidate in 1968 because of Fulbright's opposition to the Johnson Vietnam policies, a position which appeared to trouble certain moderate and conservative voters in the state. Republicans talked about the prospects of freshman Congressman Hammerschmidt as a senatorial candidate. Hammerschmidt would not, however, relinquish his House seat for the uncertainties of a

¹³⁷Searcy Daily Citizen, July 13, 1970.

Senate race.¹³⁸

Fulbright became chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in 1959; in that role, he had espoused the view that in dealing with the communist world, the real choice was not victory or defeat but mutual accommodation. Such thinking by 1968 seemed incompatible with a large segment of Arkansas voters, who might have more nearly agreed with the view of Republican Senator Goldwater. Goldwater instead called for total victory in dealing with communists, claiming that the:

failure to declare total victory as our fundamental purpose is a measure of an official timidity that refuses to recognize the all-embracing determination of communism to capture the world and destroy the United States.¹³⁹

Fulbright had made defense of the containment and "peaceful coexistence" philosophy the centerpiece of his foreign policy views and won a smashing re-election in 1962, over the Goldwater-endorsed Republican senatorial candidate, Dr. Kenneth Jones of Little Rock. In dealing with the Vietnam War, Fulbright had broken with his own party

¹³⁸Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, March 3, 1967, 310.

¹³⁹Congressional Record, 87th Congress, 1st Session, July 14, 1961, CVII, Part 9, 12584; Lloyd E. Ambrosius, "The Goldwater-Fulbright Controversy," Arkansas Historical Quarterly, XXIX (Autumn 1970), 252-253.

leadership, urging an immediate cessation of U.S. activities in the conflict.¹⁴⁰ At the time of the 1968 campaign, a plurality of Arkansas voters appeared to support the war effort. Fulbright hence had alienated both the moderate pro-Lyndon Johnson Democrats and the Republicans.

Besides the senatorial race, Rockefeller would be seeking re-election in 1968, and all members of the House delegation faced the voters except for Congressman Gathings, who decided to retire from his First District seat after thirty years of service. President Johnson withdrew from a possible re-election bid, and the nominations of both major parties were up for grabs. In addition, Alabama's George C. Wallace, who carried the blessing of Orval Faubus, mounted a third-party presidential bid. In Arkansas, the Republican State Central Committee instructed delegates to the national convention in Miami Beach, Florida, to support Governor Rockefeller as the "favorite-son" presidential candidate on the first convention ballot.¹⁴¹ The GOP then envisioned a divisive party struggle between Richard Nixon and Michigan Governor George W. Romney. Nixon and Romney had been active in

¹⁴⁰New York Times, February 6, 1968; May 15, 1968; June 25, 1968.

¹⁴¹Arkansas Outlook, January 1968.

fund-raising for the Arkansas GOP.¹⁴² The state GOP prepared for the 1968 campaign on May 4, when Tennessee Senator Howard H. Baker, Jr., addressed the "Salute to Winthrop Rockefeller" dinner in Little Rock.¹⁴³ Clearly, 1968 would pose difficulties and challenges for the struggling Arkansas Republican Party. How would the party handle the Wallace threat? Should Rockefeller work actively for the Republican senatorial nominee or avoid offending Fulbright? Should the GOP make a major push to capture the First District House seat being vacated by Congressman Gathings in an overwhelmingly Democratic area of the state? Should the Republicans field another strong slate of statewide candidate or simply concentrate on the re-election of the governor? Should the party emphasize or overlook the difficult state legislative races?

¹⁴²Ibid., June 1965; March 1967.

¹⁴³Ibid., March 1968; Arkansas Gazette, May 5, 1968.

THE REPUBLICAN PARTY IN ARKANSAS, 1920-1982

Volume II

A Dissertation

by

BILLY BURTON HATHORN

Submitted to the Graduate College of
Texas A&M University
in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

May 1983

Major Subject: American History

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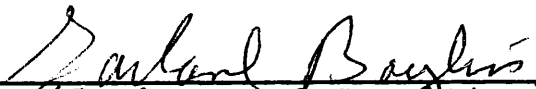
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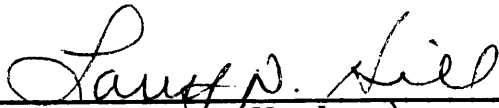
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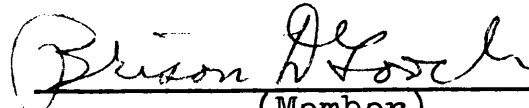
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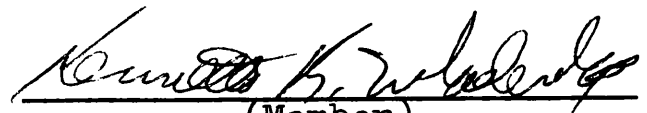
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CHAPTER VIII

THE CAMPAIGNS OF 1968 AND 1970

Winthrop Rockefeller faced a host of challengers in 1968 -- candidates certain that the Republican incumbent who had achieved mixed results working with the Democratic legislature could be toppled in the general election. Rockefeller even drew a primary opponent, Sidney C. Roberts, an unemployed heating equipment salesman from Little Rock. Roberts claimed that he had been fired from his job as a result of indirect pressure brought against the employer by the governor.¹ Roberts polled 1,195 votes, or 4.3 percent of the statewide Republican primary total, as Rockefeller won with 26,541 ballots, or 95.7 percent. The 1968 GOP primary drew about eight thousand more participants than had the 1966 party contest.²

Among the Democratic gubernatorial hopefuls was former Attorney General Bruce Bennett, who had lost the primary against Orval E. Faubus eight years earlier on a strong segregationist platform. In 1968, Bennett ran on the theme that Rockefeller had become "an expensive luxury which the state of Arkansas can no longer afford,"

¹Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, July 19, 1968, 1826.

²Ibid., August 2, 1968, 2073; New York Times, July 31, 1968.

a reference to growing state financial problems.³ Another Democratic candidate, Virginia Johnson of Conway, vowed to "set a high moral tone in my personal behavior in and out of office" as an example to youth. Mrs. Johnson, the wife of Rockefeller's 1966 general election opponent, James D. "Jim" Johnson, further accused the Republican governor of "eighteen months of fumbling," noting the continuation of disputes with the Democratic legislature. Mrs. Johnson in 1968 was following a pattern established in Alabama in 1966, when Lurleen Burns Wallace became a candidate to succeed her husband, Governor George C. Wallace. Wallace, at the time, could not succeed himself by law, and Mrs. Wallace won the position. Jim Johnson, on the other hand, had never been elected governor, and Mrs. Johnson failed to survive the Arkansas gubernatorial runoff.⁴ Marion H. Crank, a representative from Sevier and Little River counties with ties to the Faubus organization, accused Rockefeller of being irresponsible with state finances, noting the addition of 1,700 individuals to the payroll since early 1967. The Democratic "dark horse" in 1968 was Ted Boswell, a Bryant

³Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, July 19, 1968, 1826.

⁴Ibid.; New York Times, November 9, 1966.

attorney backed by the Arkansas AFL-CIO. Boswell, like Sam Boyce in 1966, claimed that only he among Democratic hopefuls could unseat Rockefeller.⁵

While Mrs. Johnson sought the governorship, her husband failed in a primary challenge to Senator J. William Fulbright. Faubus, who had been expected to challenge Fulbright, again surprised observers by sitting out the 1968 election. Instead, the former governor worked on behalf of American Independent Party presidential nominee George Wallace, who had won ballot positions in all fifty states. In the gubernatorial runoff election, Crank defeated Mrs. Johnson and appeared for a time to pose a serious threat to Rockefeller as well. In September 1968, a state poll showed Crank leading Rockefeller three-to-two. Morale in the Rockefeller camp declined as a splinter group of disgruntled conservative Republicans formed a "Republicans-for-Crank" organization in an effort to embarrass the governor. According to Rockefeller's biographer, John L. Ward, the group was in the employ of Crank. Among those contacted by the "Republicans-for-Crank" was Garland County Circuit Judge Henry M. Britt of Hot Springs, the 1960 Republican gubernatorial nominee.

⁵Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, July 19, 1968, 1826; July 22, 1966, 1491.

Britt offered to "expose" the group's tactics but was encouraged by Rockefeller not to do so to avoid giving the dissidents publicity. Ward does not identify the leaders of the splinter group.⁶

Arkansas Republicans returned from the 1968 party nominating convention in Miami Beach, Florida, with mixed emotions. The state had passed on the first ballot out of deference to Governor Winthrop Rockefeller, who was supporting his brother, New York Governor Nelson Rockefeller, for the presidential nomination. Earlier, in 1967, the Rockefeller brothers agreed at the National Governors' Conference in White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia, not to pledge themselves to any presidential candidate until Michigan Governor George Romney could explore his own possibilities. Romney withdrew from the race prior to the New Hampshire primary balloting.⁷ Nelson Rockefeller subsequently declined to enter the race but later reversed himself and attempted to take the nomination from the admitted frontrunner, former Vice-President Richard Nixon. After passing on the initial roll call, the Arkansas delegation cast all of its eighteen votes for Nixon, who was

⁶John L. Ward, The Arkansas Rockefeller (Baton Rouge, Louisiana, 1978), 117, 122.

⁷Theodore H. White, The Making of the President, 1968 (New York, 1969), 44.

nominated on the first ballot, 692 to 277 for Nelson Rockefeller and 182 for California Governor Ronald W. Reagan, who became a declared candidate after reaching the convention. After first-ballot switches, Nixon's total swelled to 1,238 to 93 for Rockefeller and 2 for Reagan. After his nomination, Nixon selected as his vice-presidential choice, Spiro T. Agnew, who had been elected governor of Maryland the same day that Winthrop Rockefeller first won in Arkansas.⁸ While Arkansas GOP officials were optimistic about the national prospects of the Nixon-Agnew ticket, they were discouraged at GOP presidential chances in the state in light of the Wallace candidacy, which had the potential to deny the Republicans thousands of protest votes against the national Democratic administration, represented in the election by Vice-President Hubert H. Humphrey. Moreover, the Republicans knew that they would be hard-pressed to re-elect Governor Rockefeller.⁹

Arkansas Republicans in 1966 had fielded large numbers of legislative candidates and fallen far short of their targeted goal. Hence, the party decided in 1968 to

⁸Robert A. Diamond, ed., Congressional Quarterly's Guide to U.S. Elections (Washington, 1975), 171.

⁹Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, October 11, 1968, 2393.

seek only four state senate and twenty-three state representative positions. GOP leaders felt that a smaller number of legislative candidates might reduce resentment against Republicans among traditional Democrats. The Republicans, however, offered a full statewide slate. Lieutenant Governor Maurice Britt sought a second term, and Jerry Thomasson, the former representative from Arkadelphia, again challenged Attorney General Joe Purcell. Other candidates were Lynn A. Davis of Little Rock, opposing Secretary of State Kelly Bryant; Leona Troxell of Rose Bud in White County, opposing Treasurer Nancy J. Hall; G.W. "Whitey" Tyler of North Little Rock, challenging Auditor Jimmie "Red" Jones; and Ed Allison of Blytheville, seeking to oust Land Commissioner Sam Jones. Allison, for instance, suggested abolition of the land commissioner post, calling it an "antiquated constitutional office" and insisting that other existing agencies could more effectively handle its duties.¹⁰

The gubernatorial campaign appeared to be closely tied to the U.S. Senate race. While Fulbright had handily defeated Jim Johnson with an urban-black coalition, he still faced Republican Charles Taylor Bernard of Earle in Crittenden County. Bernard, a farmer and drycleaning

¹⁰Arkansas Outlook, October 1968; "Arkansas: Opportunity Regained," Time, LXXXVIII (December 2, 1966), 24.

chain operator, had long supported Rockefeller but insisted that he was not "Win Rockefeller's candidate."¹¹ Rockefeller aides feared that the Fulbright-Bernard race had "within it the force to beat Rockefeller," in that moderate voters inclined to support Fulbright might decide to cast straight Democratic ballots. Opinion surveys repeatedly claimed that Bernard could not win but might deny Rockefeller crucial moderate Democratic backing. After the campaign, Bernard told two Rockefeller advisors, John Ward and Robert "Bob" Faulkner, that the Republican leadership had "cut his throat" in the Arkansas Senate race in a flagrant bid to pacify the Fulbright supporters. Bernard was miffed that the "Democrats-for-Rockefeller" organization headed by Margaret Kolb was also backing Fulbright.¹² The "gentleman's agreement" between Fulbright and Rockefeller applied only to the 1968 election. In 1970, Fulbright endorsed the Democratic gubernatorial nominee, attorney Dale Leon Bumpers of Charleston in Franklin County. Bumpers handily defeated Rockefeller's third-term bid. In 1974, Bumpers opposed Fulbright's own primary renomination and defeated the

¹¹New York Times, July 31, 1968; Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, October 11, 1968, 2694.

¹²Ward, The Arkansas Rockefeller, 115-116.

senator by a margin slightly larger than he had toppled Governor Rockefeller.¹³

Bernard, like Rockefeller, sought black support, but he ran essentially a mainstream conservative Republican campaign. He received assistance from direct-mail fundraiser Richard A. Viguerie of Falls Church, Virginia, a conservative activist who was also supporting George C. Wallace. The Viguerie organization sent a letter signed by Arkansas GOP leader Robert Webb criticizing Fulbright's foreign policy views as alien to the American system. Similar letters were sent on behalf of GOP senatorial candidates Max Rafferty in California, who lost to Democrat Alan Cranston, and Representative Edward J. Gurney of Florida, who defeated former Democratic Governor LeRoy Collins, the man who had criticized Faubus' performance in the Little Rock desegregation crisis at the 1957 Southern Governors' Conference.¹⁴ The letter specifically charged that Fulbright had "done more to divide America on the issue of communism than any other man in the country," and it proclaimed that his defeat would "strike a resounding chord for freedom-loving people throughout

¹³Election Statistics, 1970 and 1974 (Little Rock: Secretary of State).

¹⁴St. Louis Post Dispatch, September 25, 1968; Thomas P. Wagy, "Governor LeRoy Collins of Florida and the Little Rock Crisis," Arkansas Historical Quarterly, XXXVIII (Summer 1979), 99; Congressional Quarterly

the world." About 300,000 potential contributors across the nation received such letters.¹⁵

Bernard claimed that the summer invasion of Czechoslovakia by Soviet troops confirmed that Fulbright was "mistaken" about changes in communist attitudes. Bernard hence directed his appeal to conservatives angered over Fulbright's foreign policy stands and to moderates opposed to the senator's longstanding coolness toward federal civil rights legislation. Fulbright in turn claimed that the Vietnam War had led to neglect of domestic social programs which he had generally supported. Emphasizing the rural nature of Arkansas, Fulbright further claimed that he was ideally suited to protect the state's farming interests.¹⁶

Bernard's only elective experience had been a six-month unexpired term on the Earle Town Council. As the underdog, Bernard pledged an extensive newspaper and television advertising campaign. He urged a reduction in federal spending and a crackdown on crime. Speaking before the Arkansas Press Association, Bernard said that the nation:

Weekly Report, October 11, 1968, 2694.

¹⁵Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, October 11, 1968, 2695.

¹⁶Ibid., 2694.

must develop just and effective means of dealing with crime and the deviate, but we must be no less energetic in dealing with the causes. To eliminate the gun, firebomb or fist is simply to deal with the expression of the problem.¹⁷

Bernard said that he would have supported the Voting Rights Act of 1965, which Fulbright initially opposed. He also charged that Fulbright's chairmanship of the Foreign Relations Committee had affirmed "a devotion to international aspects of government, but on things affecting the people -- everyday problems -- I feel he has lost touch."¹⁸ Arkansas political scientist Jim Ranchino maintained that Bernard's two-edge attack on Fulbright "probably confused voters." While Bernard sought black backing, Fulbright employed a prominent black minister, Ben Grinage, to represent him among minority voters in the southern and eastern sections of the state. Ranchino felt that Fulbright might have lost the 1968 general election without his firm black support.¹⁹

The Rockefeller and Bernard campaigns, which were separate entities, were not adequately coordinated. Rockefeller's literature frequently omitted Bernard's name

¹⁷Ibid., 2716.

¹⁸Ibid., July 26, 1968, 1863.

¹⁹Jim Ranchino, Faubus to Bumpers: Arkansas Votes, 1960-1970 (Arkadelphia, Arkansas, 1972), 53.

from the list of favored candidates circulated in black neighborhoods. Yet, Bernard drew about 30 percent of the black vote, a good showing for most Republican candidates in the South in the late 1960s.²⁰ Fulbright benefited from unofficial alliances with Wallace presidential supporters in eastern Arkansas, Bernard's home territory, as well as with Democratic liberals supporting Hubert Humphrey and Winthrop Rockefeller. Democratic loyalists supported Fulbright despite misgivings over his foreign policy views.²¹ Fulbright reaffirmed his "dovish" position on the Vietnam War, first predicting a negotiated settlement of the conflict and later applauding President Lyndon Johnson's decision to halt the air bombardment of North Vietnam in an effort to convince the communists to negotiate.²² Time magazine claimed that Bernard had "lots of Winthrop Rockefeller's money behind him but little else."²³ Both Bernard and John Ward, however, insisted that Rockefeller did not actively support the GOP Senate nominee. In Ward's words, "the decision was made: be

²⁰Ibid., 54.

²¹Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, October 11, 1968, 2694.

²²New York Times, October 20, 1968; November 1, 1968.

²³Time, LXXXVIII (August 9, 1968), 21.

nice to Bernard, but don't give him much help. That was all explained to Bernard. He accepted the decision, but went on and filed for the Senate seat anyway."²⁴

Fulbright and Bernard clashed over the need for a two-party system in Arkansas. In a Texarkana speech, Fulbright called the two-party format "a burden on the candidates and their constituents. It involves too much politicking over too long a period of time."²⁵ Bernard, noting that the one-party system is "the rule in Russia," claimed that the senator opposed two viable parties because he had "machine support" from Democratic regulars and resented the need to campaign for a general election after having won the primary against Jim Johnson.²⁶ While Bernard claimed that Fulbright had "lost touch with the people," the incumbent claimed that Bernard had "distorted" his statements, some of which dated to 1945. "He has taken my comments out of context and found new meanings for them," Fulbright charged.²⁷ Bernard hammered away at Fulbright's Vietnam stands, urging "prayers for peace" and claiming that "if we learn a lesson . . . it is that

²⁴Ward, The Arkansas Rockefeller, 116.

²⁵Texarkana Gazette, November 1, 1968.

²⁶Ibid., November 2, 1968.

²⁷Ibid., November 1, 1968.

we must never let our military strength be dissipated by costly blunder and computer errors."²⁸

Third District Representative John Paul Hammerschmidt was given a virtual free ride for re-election by the Democrats, who nominated former State Representative Hardy Croxton of Rogers, once a leader of insurgent legislators at odds with then Governor Faubus. Hammerschmidt was even lauded in dedication ceremonies at a Mountain Home motel by his senior Democratic colleague from Arkansas, Wilbur Mills, who said that Hammerschmidt had "already begun to make his mark in the Congress in helping his district and the people of Arkansas." Mills predicted "greater things to come in the future in the way of service to the people of his state."²⁹ Croxton was opposed by some traditional Democrats in the Third District as a result of his long anti-Faubus record. Years later, it appeared that Hammerschmidt in 1968 had probably gained the covert backing of Faubus. It was Hammerschmidt in 1981 who convinced then Republican Governor Frank D. White to name the then 71-year-old Faubus to a \$31,587-per-year post as Arkansas veterans affairs director. Hammerschmidt's recommendation was considered crucial in the selection in

²⁸Ibid., November 2, 1968.

²⁹Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, October 11, 1968, 2695.

that the Republican congressman had become an authority on veterans programs during his long tenure in the House. In his recommendation, Hammerschmidt said that Faubus "needs something to do" and further claimed that the former Democratic governor "has good judgment and certainly has great experience and a great understanding of people."³⁰ Ironically, Faubus had once considered seeking the congressional position won by Hammerschmidt.

Besides the Hammerschmidt campaign, Arkansas Republicans fielded a candidate to contest the First District seat being vacated by the retiring Ezekiel C. "Took" Gathings of West Memphis. Guy Newcomb, an Osceola farmer and businessman, could not, however, overcome the disadvantage of running as a Republican in the heavily Democratic district, which encompasses the flat fertile plains west of the Mississippi River. The Democrats nominated Osceola attorney William Vollie "Bill" Alexander, Jr., to succeed Gathings. In 1970, the First District was 26 percent black and 74 percent blue-collar in composition. Newcomb, perceived as the "chamber-of-commerce" candidate, attracted little support in the district's working-class neighborhoods, which leaned traditionally Democratic. Newcomb had served four years earlier as Senator Barry

³⁰Arkansas Gazette, August 5, 1981.

Goldwater's Arkansas state coordinator, and in 1966, he had been a district finance chairman for Rockefeller.³¹ Newcomb and Alexander favored the regional economic development of the district, which had been hard-hit by the steady decline in cotton production. Newcomb suggested that mothers on the Aid to Families with Dependent Children program be allowed to work as domestics without losing benefits but still vowed to insist on "fiscal responsibility" at all times. Though Newcomb appeared to be making some headway, Alexander was never seriously threatened.³² A Jonesboro television station offered time to both candidates for debate, but only Newcomb would agree to the proposed format. Newcomb charged that Alexander was the "machine candidate" and afraid to face the voters in a public forum.³³

The state and congressional races were overshadowed by the 1968 presidential campaigns waged by Nixon, Humphrey and Wallace. Wallace, according to Ranchino, appealed to the "fears and loyalties of all southerners, some of which had been buried years ago, but were brought

³¹Michael Barone, Grant Ujifusa and Douglas Matthews, The Almanac of American Politics, 1972 (New York, 1972), 34.

³²Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, October 11, 1968, 2695.

³³Jonesboro Sun, November 6, 1968.

again to the surface by the long hot summers of demonstrations and chaos of 1967-1968."³⁴ Wallace, supported by Faubus and Jim Johnson, warned the South against the Republicans, noting, "it was the Eisenhower administration that put the bayonets in the backs of the people of Arkansas," referring to the 1957 Little Rock crisis.³⁵

Wallace's rhetoric appealed to many conservative southerners, especially his attacks on "pointy-headed, bearded intellectual morons who don't know how to park a bicycle straight." If elected, Wallace vowed to "throw all these phonies and their briefcases into the Potomac." He also claimed that if "any demonstrator ever lies down in front of my car, it'll be the last car he'll ever lie down in front of."³⁶ That quotation was borrowed from Faubus in his 1964 campaign against Rockefeller.³⁷ Fueled by his rhetoric, Wallace's popularity soared in opinion polls from 9 percent in the spring to 21 percent by mid-September. For a time, Wallace appeared on the verge of beating

³⁴Ranchino, Faubus to Bumpers, 56.

³⁵Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, October 11, 1968, 2693.

³⁶Quoted in William E. Leuchtenburg, A Troubled Feast: American Society Since 1945 (Boston, 1979), 211.

³⁷Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, October 9, 1964, 2350.

Humphrey in the trial heats.³⁸

Rockefeller, faced with possible defeat at the hands of Marion Crank, conducted a whistle-stop tour across the state beginning in the town of Winthrop in Crank's native Little River County in southwestern Arkansas. This "WR Campaign Special" was designed to supplement the massive media advertising being financed by the governor in an effort to obtain maximum public exposure.³⁹ The train crossed the state diagonally, as entertainment was provided by country singer Johnny Cash, a native Arkansan. Spectators along the path consumed six thousand pounds of beef, a truckload of watermelons and twenty thousand soft drinks. The tour was restricted to the Rockefeller reelection effort. Ed Allison, the GOP candidate for land commissioner, was angered and embarrassed when he attempted to board the train but was informed that it was strictly a Rockefeller endeavor.⁴⁰ In his speech at Winthrop, Rockefeller forcefully stressed his accomplishments as governor, noting that:

³⁸Leuchtenburg, A Troubled Feast, 213.

³⁹Arkansas Outlook, August 1968.

⁴⁰Ward, The Arkansas Rockefeller, 119.

I told you two years ago I would erase corruption and scandal in the prison system, and I did. I told you I would run out of the state the gamblers and racketeers, and I did. I told you I would run out insurance companies which were bilking thousands of our citizens out of their savings, and I did.⁴¹

The Arkansas Democrat observed that Rockefeller emerged as a "tough, hard-hitting candidate for re-election who will give no quarter to his Democratic opponent."⁴²

Rockefeller insisted that he needed the second term to solidify his accomplishments, which he listed as the crackdown on illegal gambling, appointment of the first blacks to Arkansas draft boards, prison reforms, establishment of a department of administration to replace loosely-run and overlapping agencies and the continuing industrial development program.⁴³

Regarding the insurance scandals, Rockefeller criticized the Democrats for their alleged connections with the bankrupt Arkansas Loan and Thrift Corporation of Van Buren, a firm declared insolvent by a federal court in September 1968, after an audit revealed a \$3.1 million deficit. Among those instrumental in the formation of

⁴¹Arkansas Gazette, August 25, 1968.

⁴²Arkansas Democrat, August 25, 1968.

⁴³Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, October 11, 1968, 2693.

the company were former Attorney General Bennett, one of the 1968 Democratic gubernatorial contenders, and several legislators. The firm, established in 1964, had more than two thousand depositors.⁴⁴ When the assets failed to show up in the audit, Attorney General Purcell filed suit. In 1969, Bennett was indicted on twenty-seven counts of wrongdoing in the case, but the charges were never pursued by authorities. The full indictment in fact was dropped in 1977 due to Bennett's ill health.⁴⁵

Strident Republican loyalists resented the role of the "Democrats-for-Rockefeller" organization, feeling these persons were using Rockefeller mainly to protest the nomination of Marion Crank. In some respects, the GOP loyalists were probably correct. In 1970, many Democrats who supported Rockefeller in 1966 and 1968 "returned home" to vote for gubernatorial nominee Dale Bumpers. The single issue which most helped Rockefeller in 1968 was provided to the Republicans by supporters of Ted Boswell, who had been eliminated in the Democratic gubernatorial primary. Boswell aide Warren Bass produced documentation that most of Crank's family, including an eight-year-old daughter, had been on the state's payroll while Crank was

⁴⁴Ibid., 2693-2694.

⁴⁵Ward, The Arkansas Rockefeller, 145; Conway Log Cabin Democrat, May 21, 1977.

in the legislature. In 1963, Crank and his family received \$6,838 from the state in addition to his regular salary of \$1,200. Included on the payroll were two daughters, ages eight and fourteen, and Crank's eighteen-year-old son, a University of Arkansas at Fayetteville student who was listed as the legislative sergeant-at-arms. The eight-year-old, Elizabeth, had worked as a House messenger.⁴⁶ Crank quickly admitted that his family had been on the payroll, noting in a television address that he needed the money in contrast to the wealth of Rockefeller. "Neither could I afford to send my children to an expensive private school in Switzerland, as Mr. Rockefeller did with his son," Crank added in reference to Winthrop Paul Rockefeller.⁴⁷ Crank criticized Rockefeller for having hired Thomas Murton as Arkansas prison superintendent, noting that Murton in his brief tenure in the post had appointed relatives to the department. In addition, Crank emphasized that Republican State Representative George Nowotny, Jr., of Fort Smith had his personal secretary on the House payroll. Moreover, the brother of Lieutenant Governor Britt worked in the state

⁴⁶Ward, The Arkansas Rockefeller, 126-127; Arkansas Gazette, October 8, 1968.

⁴⁷Arkansas Gazette, October 16, 1968.

revenue department. Crank stressed that the wife of Republican attorney general nominee Jerry Thomasson had been on the legislative payroll as well while Thomasson served as a Democratic member of the state House.⁴⁸

Prior to a joint television appearance between Rockefeller and Crank, two Rockefeller aides, John Ward and Charles Allbright, prepared without Rockefeller's knowledge a blistering attack on Crank. The two then secretly presented the material to a Crank supporter, allegedly as the text of Rockefeller's planned opening remarks. Crank was irate on learning of the alleged opening statement and entered the debate angry and with a sour face and disposition. Actually, Rockefeller never knew of the proposed speech and was said by observers to have emerged the "winner" of the debate in part because of his easy-going manner in comparison to the combative Crank.⁴⁹

Early in the campaign, Rockefeller appeared to have erred when he criticized Wallace as "a demagogue." Rockefeller appeared to be forming a coalition between supporters of Humphrey and Nixon, feeling that he could not attract sufficient numbers of Wallace backers to form an

⁴⁸Ward, The Arkansas Rockefeller, 128.

⁴⁹Ibid., 130.

integral part of his base. Crank, however, worked frantically to bridge the division at the gubernatorial level between the Humphrey and Wallace camps.⁵⁰ One leading Wallace supporter, Virginia Johnson, refused to endorse Crank, her former primary rival, unless Crank would also formally support Wallace. Crank declined to follow Mrs. Johnson's advice and forfeited her support. Mrs. Johnson did not support Rockefeller either.⁵¹

Rockefeller continued his campaign to hold the black vote in 1968, vowing to attract "intelligent young blacks back to Arkansas," noting many had relocated in search of economic opportunities to neighboring states.⁵² Rockefeller sang "We Shall Overcome" with a group of blacks assembled on the Arkansas capitol steps after the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr., on April 4, 1968, in Memphis, Tennessee. When U.S. News and World Report claimed that serious racial disturbances occurred in Arkansas after the assassination, Rockefeller pointed out that only one incident had been reported to him. Rockefeller also said that he was the "only governor of the fifty states who held a memorial service for Martin

⁵⁰Ibid., 121-122.

⁵¹Texarkana Gazette, November 3, 1968.

⁵²Ward, The Arkansas Rockefeller, 163.

Luther King on the capitol steps."⁵³ Rockefeller subsequently told black leaders not to forget that "we are all creatures of God. Black, white, it makes no difference. Therefore, we must work in unity."⁵⁴

Besides his appeal to blacks, Rockefeller addressed himself to younger voters. On September 25, he endorsed full adult rights for eighteen-year-olds, including the right to purchase beer. Crank seized upon this remark and appealed for clergymen and educators to "rise up in protest."⁵⁵ Yet, the question of youth rights did not figure prominently in the 1968 campaign.

Despite his struggles with the partisan legislature, most Arkansans in 1968 felt that Rockefeller had given the state a more favorable national image, according to opinion surveys. Rockefeller continued to warn of financial problems and hinted he might again seek new taxes, a course rare for an incumbent seeking re-election.⁵⁶ The unfavorable publicity from the Murton prison escapade did not harm Rockefeller. New Republic commented that "luckily for him, the Democrats are in such disarray

⁵³Quoted in Ibid., 166.

⁵⁴Arkansas Gazette, April 8, 1968.

⁵⁵Ibid., September 26, 1968; Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, October 11, 1968, 2694.

⁵⁶Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, July 26, 1968, 1863.

that even this blunder does not measurably help their chances of recapturing the governorship this fall."⁵⁷

It appears that Crank made some headway among moderate white voters who supported Rockefeller in 1966 until the disclosure of the Crank youngsters on the state payroll. Ranchino contended that Crank's momentum halted with the payroll disclosure incident, and subsequent efforts to regain the offensive failed.⁵⁸ Crank accused Rockefeller of wasting \$24 million in the state surplus and not holding down expenditures in various governmental agencies. Crank also claimed that only he, not Rockefeller, represented the real reform movement.⁵⁹

The 1968 elections resulted in a peculiar string of winners in Arkansas: Wallace, Rockefeller, Fulbright, Hammerschmidt and Alexander. The victories by Wallace, Rockefeller and Fulbright confounded national observers who questioned voter consistency. The situation resulted from the large number of coalitions formed by virtue of the Wallace factor. Ranchino contended that Arkansas voters were at "their best in 1968. They were discerning

⁵⁷New Republic, CLVIII (April 6, 1968), 7.

⁵⁸Ranchino, Faubus to Bumpers, 50.

⁵⁹Texarkana Gazette, November 4, 1968.

and well aware of the choices available. They voted their independence and their individualism."⁶⁰ To some, support for Rockefeller meant "gigging" the old-style Democrats," while Fulbright was sometimes secretly and openly admired for his attacks on Lyndon Johnson's unpopular war policies. Wallace, who had threatened "every bureaucrat's briefcase with a dunking in the Potomac," was seen as the instrument of national protest.⁶¹

In the presidential returns, Nixon won nationally with just 43.4 percent of the popular vote, compared to Humphrey's 42.7 percent. Wallace trailed with 13.5 percent. Nixon also carried the electoral college, 301 to 191 for Humphrey and 46 for Wallace, who won in Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana and Arkansas. In the South, Nixon led in Virginia, both Carolinas, Florida and Tennessee. Texas remained with the national Democrats.⁶²

Wallace carried Arkansas with 235,627 votes, or 38.7 percent, compared to Nixon's 189,062, or 31 percent, and Humphrey's 184,901, or 30.3 percent. Wallace received

⁶⁰Ranchino, Faubus to Bumpers, 65.

⁶¹Ibid., 63.

⁶²Presidential Elections Since 1789 (Washington, 1975), 98.

pluralities in forty-nine counties; Nixon, in nineteen counties, and Humphrey in seven counties. Nixon led in the following counties, listed in descending order by percent:

Searcy (56.6)	Clay (42.1)
Carroll (51.3)	Polk (39.6)
Newton (50.8)	Pope (38.3)
Baxter (49.5)	Garland (37.8)
Madison (49.1)	Fulton (36.8)
Benton (48.9)	Stone (36.1)
Washington (48.7)	Logan (36)
Boone (45.1)	Van Buren (35.8)
Sebastian (44.4)	Independence (35.5)
Marion (42.3)	

Wallace carried Crawford County by a 194-vote margin, and Nixon received 38 percent there, with Humphrey a weak third. In sixteen other counties, Nixon received at least 30 percent but failed to draw a plurality. Cleveland and Lincoln counties in southern Arkansas tied for the worst GOP vote in the state. Nixon polled 12.6 percent in Cleveland and 12.9 percent in Lincoln.⁶³

Ranchino found that income made little difference in presidential voting patterns in Arkansas in 1968. He found that the Wallace phenomenon was "for the most part non-ideological," noting it "revolved around a personality, an attitude and a specific point of time in Arkansas political history."⁶⁴ Ranchino said that the Wallace

⁶³Election Statistics, 1968.

⁶⁴Ranchino, Faubus to Bumpers, 56.

vote in Arkansas was not restricted to hard-core segregationists but contained southern Democrats who feared an expanded federal role in society and growing crime rates and who admired "Wallace's spunk." Some of the Wallace vote may even have come from disaffected supporters of then Minnesota Senator Eugene Joseph McCarthy, who had unsuccessfully challenged Humphrey for the Democratic presidential nomination.⁶⁵

The Arkansas Democrat, which endorsed Nixon, Rockefeller and Fulbright, claimed that Humphrey and the national Democrats had "no new ideas -- the Democratic argument is worn out and simply does not work any more." The Democrat instead contended that Nixon "wants to run this country in a different, more moderate way. We think the people . . . will let him try it."⁶⁶

The gubernatorial results confirmed a second Rockefeller victory, as the governor polled 322,782 votes, or 52.4 percent, to Crank's 292,813, or 47.6 percent. The higher turnout meant that Rockefeller in 1968 polled sixteen thousand more votes than he had in 1966, but he amassed a smaller winning margin. Crank carried

⁶⁵Ibid., 59.

⁶⁶Arkansas Democrat, November 3, 1968.

forty-eight counties, many in southern, eastern and southwestern parts of the state, while Rockefeller received majorities in twenty-seven counties, eight fewer than he carried in 1966.⁶⁷

Here is the county breakdown for Rockefeller:

Washington (71.4)	Craighead (54.2)
Baxter (67.4)	Crittenden (53.4)
Benton (67.2)	Mississippi (53.4)
Pulaski (63.6)	Columbia (53.2)
Carroll (61.3)	Polk (53.1)
Sebastian (61.1)	St. Francis (52.9)
Boone (61)	Pope (52.7)
Marion (58.6)	Newton (52.6)
Searcy (57.1)	Lee (52.5)
Jefferson (56)	Miller (52)
Chicot (55.8)	Clay (51.1)
Union (55.6)	Greene (50.7)
Ouachita (55.5)	Howard (50.2)
Phillips (55.5)	

Ten counties, Garland, Little River, Desha, Clark, Montgomery, Hempstead, Independence, Logan, Sevier and Randolph, which backed Rockefeller in 1966, switched to Crank in 1968. Two other counties, Crittenden and Howard, which supported Jim Johnson in 1966, gave majorities to Rockefeller in 1968.⁶⁸ Rockefeller's base of affluent and progressive whites and blacks survived. He received comparable margins in Benton, Sebastian, Washington and Pulaski counties in 1968, as he had in 1966,

⁶⁷Ranchino, Faubus to Bumpers, 50, 52; Election Statistics, 1968.

⁶⁸Election Statistics, 1966 and 1968.

and it was these four counties which made possible his victories each time. Pulaski alone gave Rockefeller nearly all of his 29,000-statewide margin in 1968.⁶⁹

In the senatorial contest, Fulbright polled 349,965 votes, or 59.1 percent, to Bernard's 241,731, or 40.9 percent. Bernard carried these eight counties:

Searcy (62)	Sebastian (54.6)
Crawford (57.1)	Carroll (52.9)
Newton (57.1)	Polk (51.4)
Benton (56)	Madison (50.2)

There was no trend between the Rockefeller and Bernard vote, a situation which stemmed from the multiple choices available at the presidential level. Undoubtedly, Rockefeller may have had "coat-tails" in Benton, Sebastian, Carroll and Polk counties, as the Bernard margins in each were below those polled by the governor. Yet, Bernard ran ahead of Rockefeller in traditionally Republican Newton and Searcy counties, and he carried two counties which supported Crank, Crawford and Madison. In twenty-seven other counties, Bernard polled at least 40 percent. In his home county of Crittenden, which Rockefeller carried, Bernard received 46 percent. Rockefeller also lost his home county of Conway, where he garnered 44 percent. It was a personal affront to Rockefeller that he never won

⁶⁹Ibid.

his home county in any of his gubernatorial bids.⁷⁰ While Bernard drew about 30 percent of the black vote, Rockefeller amassed 91 percent. Nationally, Nixon received about 12 percent of the black vote in 1968; in Arkansas, blacks voted an estimated 97 percent for Humphrey.⁷¹

In the Arkansas lieutenant governor's race, Republican Britt narrowly won his second term, almost duplicating his 1966 performance. Britt received 299,700 votes, or 50.3 percent, to 296,518, or 49.7 percent, for Democrat Bill G. Wells, a state representative from Hermitage in Bradley County, who won his nomination in the primary. Britt carried only sixteen counties to win a second term, amassing at least 59 percent in Washington, Benton, Baxter, Pulaski, Carroll, Sebastian, Boone and Searcy. He trailed Rockefeller's showings in Washington, Baxter, Boone, Marion, Polk, Jefferson, Pope, Craighead and Union counties, matched Rockefeller in Newton and ran ahead of the governor in Benton, Pulaski, Carroll, Sebastian and Searcy. Crawford County was unique in that it supported Wallace and Crank and the Republicans Bernard and Britt.

⁷⁰Ibid.

⁷¹Ranchino, *Faubus to Bumpers*, 50; Leuchtenburg, *A Troubled Feast*, 215.

Britt polled at least 40 percent in thirty-eight other counties. He did not run as well among blacks as did Rockefeller. In counties with large blocs of blacks, such as Chicot, Phillips, Crittenden and Mississippi, Britt lost while Rockefeller won.⁷²

Initially, Britt appeared to have been defeated by Wells. Only when the final tabulation was submitted did the incumbent emerge victorious. Rockefeller speculated that Britt ran behind the gubernatorial showing in part because some voters who cast ballots for Rockefeller mistakenly thought they were also automatically voting for Britt. Rockefeller said that the confusion stemmed from the fact that ballots cast in the presidential race also covered the vice-presidential contest.⁷³

Other statewide Republican candidates were defeated in 1968. Lynn Davis polled 265,510, or 45.3 percent, and carried thirteen counties, but he lost to Secretary of State Bryant, who received 320,203, or 54.7 percent. Nevertheless, Davis' total was the best of any Republican who ever sought to topple the popular Bryant.⁷⁴ In the treasurer's race, Republican Troxell polled 218,804, or

⁷²Election Statistics, 1968.

⁷³Texarkana Gazette, November 8, 1968.

⁷⁴Election Statistics, 1964, 1968, 1970 and 1972.

37.4 percent, to Democrat Hall's 365,540, or 62.6 percent. Mrs. Troxell carried five counties, Searcy, Baxter, Benton, Carroll and Washington. In the attorney general contest, Republican Thomasson received 240,725 votes, or 41.4 percent, compared to Democrat Purcell's 341,233, or 58.6 percent. Thomasson, who carried nine counties, hence ran worse in 1968 than he had two years earlier in his first match against Purcell. Democrats handily retained the land commissioner and auditor positions.

In legislative races, Republicans increased their representation from three to five, as Preston Bynum of Siloam Springs and Marshall Chrisman of Ozark were elected to join incumbents George Nowotny of Fort Smith and Danny Patrick of Huntsville. Bynum succeeded Republican Representative James Sheets, who did not seek reelection. In 1981, Bynum, after twelve years in the House, became assistant to GOP Governor White. Chrisman opposed White for the Republican gubernatorial nominations in 1980 and 1982.⁷⁵ The Arkansas GOP also elected its first state senator of the twentieth century in 1968, when a Church of Christ minister from Rogers, James "Jim"

⁷⁵Election Statistics, 1968; Arkansas Outlook, February 1970; Arkansas Gazette, March 4, 1982.

Caldwell, won the seat embracing Benton and Carroll counties in northwestern Arkansas. Caldwell, known as an after-dinner speaker throughout the state, served as the GOP state chairman from 1973-1974.⁷⁶

In the Third District, Representative Hammerschmidt defeated Croxton, 121,771, or 67.1 percent, to 59,638, or 32.9 percent, carrying all twenty-five counties except Franklin and Little River. In the First District, Democrat Alexander defeated Republican Newcomb, 80,293, or 68.9 percent, to 36,284, or 31.3 percent. Newcomb lost all fifteen counties, faring no better than 39.4 percent in St. Francis County, which backed Rockefeller.⁷⁷

Ranchino analyzed the presidential, gubernatorial and senatorial elections and made these findings:

Rockefeller voters supported Nixon 64 percent of the time; Humphrey, 30 percent, and Wallace, 6 percent.

Crank voters supported Wallace 62 percent of the time; Humphrey, 20 percent, and Nixon, 18 percent.

Fulbright voters supported Humphrey 35 percent of the time; Wallace, 34 percent, and Nixon, 31 percent.

Bernard voters supported Nixon 43 percent of the time; Wallace, 34 percent, and Humphrey, 21 percent.⁷⁸

⁷⁶Arkansas Outlook, November-December 1968; Springdale News, July 1, 1973; Election Statistics, 1968.

⁷⁷Election Statistics, 1968.

⁷⁸Ranchino, Faubus to Bumpers, 59-60.

After his re-election, Rockefeller made a televised appeal for a series of tax proposals designed to raise \$65 million in new revenues.⁷⁹ Moreover, in an apparent ploy to gain legislative support for his tax package, Rockefeller announced that he would not seek a third term in 1970. Actually, the no-third-term pledge had been included in his 1966 platform. Months later, Rockefeller reversed himself by announcing that he would indeed run again if lawmakers continued to reject the tax proposals. Lawmakers continued to balk, and Rockefeller on June 9, 1970, confirmed he would run once more. "To quit now, I know in my heart, would impose on me a feeling of guilt for the rest of my days," the governor said.⁸⁰ Rockefeller's delay in clarifying his position for a third term was criticized by such Republicans as defeated senatorial candidate Charles Bernard and State Representative George Nowotny, who himself wanted to run for governor in 1970. On several occasions, Nowotny explained that he would seek the governorship if Rockefeller would confirm that he was not interested in a third term.⁸¹

⁷⁹Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, August 22, 1969, 1573.

⁸⁰Ward, The Arkansas Rockefeller, 142; New York Times, June 10, 1970.

⁸¹Arkansas Democrat, May 28, 1970.

In 1969, Rockefeller faced the threat of racial strife in Forrest City, seat of government for St. Francis County in east-central Arkansas. A dispute erupted between a black faction led by the Reverends Cato Brooks and J.F. Cooley and a group of whites under the leadership of a surgeon, Dr. Norman Saliba, a school board member and spokesman for the rightist John Birch Society.⁸² Saliba charged that Cooley, a social studies teacher at all-black Lincoln High School, was using his classroom to encourage civil rights activities. Saliba asked the board to fire Cooley, and black protests broke out after Cooley was indeed dismissed.⁸³ Some property was destroyed, and the situation was tense for several days in August 1969. Rockefeller placed the Arkansas National Guard and state police on alert, and the threat of renewed violence hence eased.⁸⁴ Blacks though began boycotting numerous business establishments owned by Forrest City whites and announced plans to conduct a "walk against fear" from Forrest City to Little Rock, a 140-mile distance. At first, Rockefeller denounced the proposed march as "cheap and dangerous

⁸²Arkansas Gazette, April 20, 1969.

⁸³Ward, The Arkansas Rockefeller, 169-170

⁸⁴Arkansas Gazette, September 14, 1969.

theatrics," but he withdrew the statement after meeting with the dissident blacks, adding that Brooks had convinced him that there would be a "constructive spirit" behind any march.⁸⁵ Brooks and Cooley cancelled their march and accepted Rockefeller's pledge to check into their grievances. However, another black leader from Memphis, Tennessee, Lance "Sweet Willie" Watson, led a small group of blacks in a march from Forrest City to Little Rock between August 20 and 24. Cooley did not regain his job.⁸⁶ Rockefeller apparently succeeded in persuading the blacks involved that he had been sympathetic to their interests. He reminded the group that he had named the first blacks to Arkansas draft boards and to other positions in state government. Later, he asked President Nixon not to delay massive school desegregation scheduled for August 1970 in much of the Deep South for fear of breaking faith with the black community and its desire for integration.⁸⁷ After Rockefeller left office, a group of black youngsters presented him with a silver plaque, engraved as follows:

⁸⁵New York Times, August 17, 1969.

⁸⁶Ibid., August 25, 1969; Arkansas Gazette, August 25, 1969.

⁸⁷Ward, The Arkansas Rockefeller, 175-176.

Governor Winthrop Rockefeller, an inspiration to the young, a symbol of security for the old, full of love, warmth and compassion; a champion of human rights, brotherhood and dignity, who brought the Rockefeller family tradition to Arkansas and sacrificed time, resources, energy and public office for the causes of unity, justice and equality. . . . 88

While Rockefeller had a reputation for supporting black interests, he was less liberal in regard to campus militants. The governor kept his own "list" of alleged campus militants, which he presented to law enforcement officials plagued by university unrest.⁸⁹ The list was prepared by Kenneth McKee, a security investigator for Rockefeller. Whereas Rockefeller insisted that the list was used only for "preventative" purposes, Arkansas liberals denounced the prospect of a possible "blacklist."⁹⁰ Hayes McClerkin of Texarkana, a Democratic candidate for governor in 1970, charged that the list could be used to discredit persons "who may be guilty of no more than a disagreement with the governor."⁹¹ The Arkansas Conference of the American Association of University Professors also condemned the

⁸⁸Quoted in Ibid., 177-178.

⁸⁹Arkansas Gazette, December 27, 1969.

⁹⁰Ward, The Arkansas Rockefeller, 167-168.

⁹¹Arkansas Democrat, January 3, 1970.

list, and Rockefeller soon lamented that he had ever revealed its existence.⁹² The incident drew praise from conservative elements who agreed with the idea of keeping lists of troublemakers and traveling campus militants.⁹³

In seeking a third term, Rockefeller longed to face Faubus, hoping to even up the score from 1964, when the Democrat had defeated him. Faubus once offered this requirement for a public official, a stipulation the divorced Rockefeller, an imbiber, could never fulfill:

"A public official should fulfill some requirements -- at least as many as a Baptist deacon -- and that is you have only one wife and that you do not love whisky."⁹⁴

The "po' boy from Greasy Creek," however, had himself run upon personal indiscretions. In 1969, Faubus divorced his wife of thirty-seven years, Alta Haskins Faubus. Three weeks later, he married a 31-year-old divorcee, Mrs. Elizabeth Westmoreland. The change in partners was anything but peaceful; the first Mrs. Faubus threatened to run for governor in 1970 if Faubus entered the contest.⁹⁵ Since leaving the governorship in 1967,

⁹²Ibid., January 8, 1970.

⁹³Ward, The Arkansas Rockefeller, 168, 175.

⁹⁴Quoted in Reg Murphy and Hal Gulliver, The Southern Strategy (New York, 1971), 238.

⁹⁵Ibid., 241; New York Times, May 10, 1970.

Faubus had operated the Dogpatch, U.S.A. amusement park near Harrison. Yet, the longing to return to state government remained. In announcing his candidacy, Faubus proceeded to attack the "moneyed political machine" of Rockefeller.⁹⁶ While Rockefeller had run against the Faubus "machine" in 1964, Faubus proceeded in 1970 to tackle a Rockefeller "machine." Unlike Faubus in 1964, Rockefeller did not seek to take advantage of Faubus' divorce and remarriage. Indeed, Rockefeller refused to use biting personal attacks in his campaigns, a point probably not lost on many voters.

Faubus in 1970 was perceived as the "New Faubus," who like the "New Nixon" nationally, was destined to rescue the people from the excesses of liberal administrations. The "New Faubus" was a racial moderate who objected not to school integration but to busing as a means to achieve racial balance. Faubus also voiced support for private schools as a means of improving the quality of education. The "New Faubus" criticized Rockefeller for absenteeism from the state house (actually the governor preferred to work at WinRock Farms) and called for increased teacher salaries, pollution control and improved

⁹⁶Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, July 24, 1970, 1843.

prison facilities.⁹⁷

Faubus never tired of attacking Rockefeller's drinking habits, claiming that the "big boy from New York cannot resist liquor." Faubus chided that, "now you know where the governor stands -- no, he lies stretched out on the hill because he can't stand too steady."⁹⁸ Some Democrats turned their fire on Faubus; Hayes McClerkin, the speaker of the Arkansas House, termed the ex-governor a "reversible turncoat" for having supported Wallace for president in 1968 and then running on the Democratic label for governor.⁹⁹ Most of the attention seemed to be focused on Faubus and Rockefeller; no one seemed to consider the possibility that the 1970 election could mean victory for neither man.

Once Rockefeller settled on a third-term bid, no Republican was expected to challenge him. Earlier, reports circulated that Jim Johnson, the 1966 Democratic gubernatorial nominee, was on the verge of switching parties to challenge Rockefeller for renomination.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁷Ibid.; Murphy and Gulliver, Southern Strategy, 239.

⁹⁸Quoted in Murphy and Gulliver, Southern Strategy, 241.

⁹⁹Ibid., 242.

¹⁰⁰Arkansas Outlook, October 1969.

Three minor candidates opposed Rockefeller's nomination, including the Reverend R. Jeffrey Hampton, former president of the black Shorter College in North Little Rock. Hampton claimed that he sought the governorship because Rockefeller had "disappointed black hopes," but did not elaborate.¹⁰¹ Other challengers were James M. "Uncle Mac" MacKrell and Lester Gibbs, also from North Little Rock. The New York Times reported that Hampton entered the primary at Faubus' request as a means to embarrass Rockefeller.¹⁰² The primary results were a smashing victory for Rockefeller, who received 50,726 votes, or 96.3 percent. Hampton, MacKrell and Gibbs split the remaining 3.7 percent.¹⁰³ The primary returns of course had no bearing on the crucial general election to come.

Faubus pitched his campaign largely to blue-collar voters and expected to win the primary with relative ease. Besides Faubus, other Democratic candidates were Hayes McClerkin and Attorney General Purcell, who reminded the voters of his role in uncovering the Arkansas Loan and Thrift fraud case. Four weeks before the August 25 primary, the New York Times offered an article on the race,

¹⁰¹New York Times, June 17, 1970.

¹⁰²Ibid., June 21, 1970.

¹⁰³Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, August 28, 1970, 2149.

focusing on Rockefeller, Faubus, McClerkin and Purcell. The newspaper did not mention another primary candidate, the virtually unknown attorney from Charleston, Dale Bumpers, a man destined to revolutionize the Arkansas political landscape in the 1970s.¹⁰⁴ Opinion polls in the spring of 1970 showed that only one percent of voters recognized Bumpers.¹⁰⁵

While Faubus led in the primary balloting, he was forced into a runoff with Bumpers, who narrowly edged out Purcell for the second position. The 45-year-old Bumpers sold his herd of Angus cattle for \$95,000 to finance his 1970 primary campaigns, using the money for television advertisements featuring his good looks and genial low-key style. Bumpers stressed personal appeal, not specific stands on issues, and his opponents accused him of avoiding controversial subjects. Simultaneously, Bumpers claimed to be both pro-business and pro-consumer, for lowered taxes and reduced government spending but in support of programs to "improve the quality of life in Arkansas." Critics charged that he was all-personality and lacking in substance.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁴New York Times, July 28, 1970

¹⁰⁵Murphy and Gulliver, Southern Strategy, 243.

¹⁰⁶Charles Moritz, ed., Current Biography Yearbook, 1979 (New York, 1980), 56.

In the runoff campaign, Faubus chided Bumpers for being "strangely quiet on the issue of school busing," and the ex-governor frequently referred to "disorder in the schools" and vowed to take corrective action but did not offer specific measures. Faubus attacked Bumpers as "a flaming liberal," a characterization which seemed extreme in 1970 but gained more credibility in later years after Bumpers was elected to the U.S. Senate.¹⁰⁷ In 1979, the Americans for Democratic Action, a liberal interest group allied with the leftist faction of the Democratic Party, scored Senator Bumpers higher marks than any other sitting southern senator.¹⁰⁸ In the fall of 1982, Bumpers emerged as a critic of the Reagan administration. While debating a proposal to ban most abortions nationwide, Bumpers launched into a personal attack on Republican Senator Jesse Helms of North Carolina, much to the delight of liberals throughout the country. Bumpers referred to Helms as the "senator from South Carolina," and he then added, "I apologize to the other state."¹⁰⁹

Faubus soon found himself fighting an uphill battle,

¹⁰⁷ New York Times, September 6, 1970.

¹⁰⁸ Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, October 11, 1980, 2990.

¹⁰⁹ Arkansas Gazette, September 26, 1982.

running against the prevailing mood of Arkansas. About 72 percent of Arkansas blacks were registered in 1970, in part a result of Rockefeller's earlier voter recruitment drives.¹¹⁰ Ranchino said that Faubus' appeal to the "white backlash" was misplaced in that the:

statewide candidate who builds his campaign with racial overtones is now appealing to a distinct minority. Arkansas simply will not give a majority to an extremist on the issues of race.¹¹¹

Yet, Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report forecast a Faubus runoff victory, claiming that Bumpers did "not have the reputation or the money of the former governor."¹¹²

Faubus attempted to project a more youthful, polished image in the runoff campaign but could not resist attacking Rockefeller in the primary race. Faubus' defeat, however, spared or deprived, depending on one's viewpoint, Arkansas voters of a second Faubus-Rockefeller race. In late September 1970, a former chief executive with Arkansas Loan and Thrift alleged that Rockefeller and Glen Jermstad, who had been Lieutenant Governor Britt's 1966 campaign manager, had offered to pay for a book which would incriminate Faubus in the finance company

¹¹⁰Earl Black, Southern Governors and Civil Rights (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1976), 105.

¹¹¹Ranchino, Faubus to Bumpers, 13.

¹¹²Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, August 28, 1970, 2149.

scandal. The executive, Ernest A. Bartlett, Jr., said that Rockefeller and Jermstad had made a verbal contract with him but broke the agreement after Bumpers won the runoff. Rockefeller denied the allegations levied against him, and although Bartlett threatened to sue the governor, a lawsuit was never filed.¹¹³

The runoff results were devastating to Faubus, who received just 41.3 percent, compared to Bumpers' 58.7 percent. Faubus blamed his defeat on the AFL-CIO and Senator Fulbright, both of whom worked for the Democratic newcomer. Faubus even alleged that Bumpers had the "active help of thousands of Rockefeller workers," an accusation of doubtful validity. In November 1969, Rockefeller had appointed Bumpers as a special justice of the Arkansas Supreme Court but had never met Bumpers personally. The appointment had been routinely made by Rockefeller on the basis of judicial recommendations.¹¹⁴ Rockefeller also must have been aware that Faubus would have been an easier general election foe in that the "dark horse" Bumpers had the potential to steal away Rockefeller's moderate-liberal base from the 1966 and 1968 campaigns.

¹¹³Arkansas Gazette, September 27, 1970.

¹¹⁴Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, August 28, 1970, 2149; September 11, 1970, 2230-2231.

Like Faubus, Rockefeller also did not know how to react to the Bumpers candidacy. Bumpers' triumph had clearly united the state Democratic Party, which had pro-Rockefeller factions from the two earlier campaigns. Observers projected that Bumpers, whose mannerisms were said to resemble those of the late John F. Kennedy, could win, but most said the outcome would be close. Rockefeller accused Bumpers of avoiding issues and emphasized that he, as governor, had rescued the state from serious financial problems even though the need for more revenues remained. Policy differences between the two were minimal. Both endorsed a proposed new state constitution designed to streamline government, and each indicated that a tax increase would be required within two years. Bumpers also proposed tax incentives for industries that purchased antipollution devices.¹¹⁵

Rockefeller claimed that his re-election was needed to maintain the two-party system, which had yet to filter effectively down to the legislative and local levels. The governor claimed that Democrats had a "stranglehold" on more than 175 state regulatory commissions and boards, and he insisted that more Republican members were needed on such panels. Rockefeller was damaged by adverse news

¹¹⁵Ibid., October 23, 1970, 2589.

stories regarding his campaign expenditures. Estimates were that Rockefeller pumped \$4 million into his 1970 race, only to lose decisively. Rockefeller would not discuss campaign spending, and state laws at the time did not require disclosure. When asked by a university student as to the amount he would spend, the crusty Rockefeller replied, "none of your damn business."¹¹⁶

A widely-quoted remark by U.S. Attorney General John Mitchell indicated that Rockefeller could "buy this election if he wants to." Mitchell, however, denied making the statement.¹¹⁷ Specifically, Women's Wear Daily quoted Mitchell as having said that Rockefeller could "buy enough votes from the far left or the hard right or the black vote" to defeat Bumpers.¹¹⁸ Rockefeller was embarrassed further when it was disclosed that checks had been written from the campaign organization to a black group in Faulkner County as part of a carpool effort scheduled for election day.¹¹⁹

Despite the Mitchell incident, which Rockefeller

¹¹⁶Ibid.; Time, XCII (November 16, 1970), 24, 27.

¹¹⁷Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, October 23, 1970, 2589.

¹¹⁸Arkansas Gazette, September 19, 1970.

¹¹⁹Ward, The Arkansas Rockefeller, 188-189.

repudiated, the governor invited Vice-President Agnew to campaign on his behalf. The invitation to Agnew reflected Rockefeller's growing apprehension over Bumpers. In 1968, Rockefeller had shunned involvement in the presidential campaign, and he had even informed GOP staffers that visits by such "surrogates" as Agnew or South Carolina Senator Strom Thurmond could be counterproductive to his own re-election. Rockefeller in 1968 feared that an Agnew appearance or an active effort for Nixon could either jeopardize his own black support or spur an overt alliance between the Wallace and Crank camps.¹²⁰ Two years later though, Agnew had become a favorite of many southern Republicans. Thurmond at one point even referred to the vice-president as the greatest figure to hold the office since South Carolina's John C. Calhoun (1825-1832).¹²¹ While speaking in Arkansas, Agnew seemed to ignore the Rockefeller-Bumpers campaign. Instead, he initiated a biting attack on Senator Fulbright, who was not a candidate in 1970. Agnew called the Senate Foreign Relations Committee chairman a "radic-lib," drawing the heavy applause of partisan Republicans.¹²² Agnew also

¹²⁰Ripon Society, The Lessons of Victory (New York, 1969), 252.

¹²¹Arkansas Gazette, October 9, 1970.

¹²²New York Times, October 9, 1970.

pointed to earlier criticism of Fulbright by "a very attractive little lady," a reference to Martha Mitchell, outspoken wife of the attorney general and herself a Pine Bluff native. Mrs. Mitchell had been critical of Fulbright for his opposition to the appointment of Judge G. Harrold Carswell of Florida to the Supreme Court. Fulbright had been instrumental in blocking Carswell's confirmation on grounds that the judge lacked proper qualifications for the post.¹²³ Later, Rockefeller said that the invitation to Agnew was a gross mistake in campaign strategy.¹²⁴ The observation was made prior to Agnew's resignation as vice-president in October 1973. Rockefeller died eight months before Agnew resigned.

The Arkansas Gazette, which had broken its partisan tradition to endorse Rockefeller in 1966 and 1968, urged support for Bumpers in 1970. The Arkansas Democrat, however, urged a third term for Rockefeller. Despite Bumpers' appeal, Rockefeller was seen as a potential winner once more because of the "sense of respect and vitality he had brought to state government." Bumpers at first seemed to be making little headway among blacks. An unknown factor in the campaign was the third candidate,

¹²³Ibid., April 10, 1970.

¹²⁴Ward, The Arkansas Rockefeller, 189.

Walter L. Carruth of Lexa in Phillips County, nominee of the Wallace-inspired American Independent Party.¹²⁵ Carruth had the support of Wallace, who in 1970 was himself coasting to victory as governor of Alabama after a one-term hiatus from the position -- but on the Democratic ticket. Numerous former Faubus supporters were sympathetic to Carruth, but the ex-governor reluctantly endorsed Bumpers. Meanwhile, the Arkansas Supreme Court was considering the constitutionality of a new law which would require a runoff contest if a general election candidate did not receive a majority vote. Obviously, the law could prevent Rockefeller from winning the position by plurality should Carruth poll a significant vote.¹²⁶ After GOP leaders challenged the law, the Supreme Court declared the measure unconstitutional.¹²⁷

Despite the court victory, Rockefeller continued to err in his 1970 campaign. His use of a helicopter for campaign purposes angered residents about the governor's mansion who dislike the noise. Many whites who had backed

¹²⁵Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, October 23, 1970, 2589.

¹²⁶Ibid., 2590; Murphy and Gulliver, Southern Strategy, 245.

¹²⁷Arkansas Gazette, October 27, 1970; New York Times, October 27, 1970.

him earlier as a reformer began to feel that he had become too closely identified with black interest groups and deserted him in droves, especially in the predominantly Republican areas of northwestern Arkansas.¹²⁸

Rockefeller could not campaign effectively against a "New Politics" figure. His contention that Bumpers was trying to "take over the governor's office with a smile, a shoeshine and one speech," while it may have been accurate, was emphatically rejected by voters. Later, he offered this analysis for Bumpers' appeal, noting that the Democratic nominee was:

new, he was new, he had no record. There was nothing to attack, and don't forget that Arkansas is still predominantly Democratic in direction, and there were a good many Democrats who wanted back into the fold. Dale Bumpers¹²⁹ represented that which they were looking for.

At the time, Rockefeller regarded Bumpers as a "fine, clean and honest young man."¹³⁰

After Bumpers won the runoff, one poll projected that he could unseat Rockefeller, 70 to 20 percent, with 10 percent either undecided or favoring Carruth. Subsequent

¹²⁸Ward, The Arkansas Rockefeller, 192-193.

¹²⁹Quoted in Murphy and Gulliver, Southern Strategy, 244.

¹³⁰Ibid.

polls predicted a Bumpers win, but a fluke survey on October 31 showed Rockefeller with an outside chance of victory though he still trailed, 51 to 45 percent.¹³¹ Bumpers drew unified Democratic support, receiving the backing of 101 Arkansas mayors. On election-eve, Congressman Wilbur Mills hailed the Democratic ticket in a telecast. The Arkansas Democrat described Mills' appearance by noting that the veteran representative was:

extremely partisan and anything but flat. Seated, he crossed his arms, narrowed his eyes and almost growled into the microphone his criticisms of the present administration in Washington. . . . His speech was the most exciting -- and perhaps the only genuine -- thing that has happened in this year's general election.¹³²

The AFL-CIO reiterated its support for Bumpers, although president J. Bill Becker emphasized that Rockefeller had attempted to win labor's endorsement.¹³³

Besides the editorial endorsement of the Arkansas Democrat, Rockefeller was supported by the Benton Courier and the Pine Bluff Commercial.¹³⁴ The Fayetteville

¹³¹Ward, The Arkansas Rockefeller, 183-185.

¹³²Arkansas Democrat, November 3, 1970.

¹³³Ibid., November 2, 1970.

¹³⁴Arkansas Gazette, November 1, 1970.

Northwest Arkansas Times endorsed neither candidate but questioned Rockefeller's campaign expenditures, noting that the governor had "literally saturated every advertising medium through the sponsorship of his own personal fortune."¹³⁵ Rockefeller drew the support of former Democratic State Senator James P. "Doc" Baker, Jr., of West Helena. Baker, who had little name recognition statewide, lauded Rockefeller for economic gains, noting the accumulation of \$4 million in interest per year as a result of the investment of state funds. Only \$30,000 had been obtained in such interest prior to the inauguration of Rockefeller, Baker said.¹³⁶

The Arkansas Outlook, the GOP newspaper, attempted to portray Bumpers as a captive of the Democratic "Old Guard" and often ran photographs of the candidate meeting with former Perry County Representative Paul Van Dalsem and State Senator Guy "Mutt" Jones of Conway, two anti-Rockefeller politicians. The party newspaper claimed that Bumpers was "at a loss for words due to the widely divergent support from the two factions," referring to the Faubus and anti-Faubus elements of the Democratic Party. The publication added that it did not know how much

¹³⁵Fayetteville Northwest Arkansas Times, November 2, 1970.

¹³⁶Arkansas Democrat, November 1, 1970.

instruction Bumpers had received in college government courses but insisted that "taxpayers should not have to bear the brunt of a post-graduate course at the state capitol for him."¹³⁷

Arkansas Republicans in 1970 endorsed a platform supporting the proposed new state constitution as well as such general reforms as educational improvements, open meetings of all public agencies, governmental reorganization, "human rights" and an expanded welfare program to assist the elderly and disadvantaged. The party also embraced tax reform, the involvement of youth in political affairs and the removal of "political influence" from operations of the Arkansas Children's Colony in Conway. Moreover, the party called for consumer protection, environmental quality, industrial expansion, promotion of recreation and tourism, improved farm-to-market roads and a bond issue to finance new highway construction.¹³⁸

In 1970, Lieutenant Governor Britt declined to seek re-election and instead directed the Rockefeller campaign effort. The GOP nominated the former Democratic majority leader and speaker of the Arkansas House, Sterling R. Cockrill, Jr., of Little Rock to run for lieutenant

¹³⁷Arkansas Outlook, October 1970.

¹³⁸Ibid.

governor. In February 1968, Democrat Cockrill had criticized Rockefeller's proposed "Era of Excellence" as having never materialized.¹³⁹ Yet, in 1970, Cockrill endorsed Rockefeller for a third term and himself sought to succeed Britt. Cockrill explained his party bolt in a GOP campaign pamphlet entitled "The Conscience of an Arkansan." Cockrill claimed that the Democrats believed that they should "do anything, say anything, tell anything, create anything in order to win." Cockrill said that he opposed politicians who practice such a philosophy and decided his beliefs were more nearly served by the Republican Party.¹⁴⁰

To become the GOP lieutenant governor nominee, Cockrill won a primary, defeating Gerald Williams of North Little Rock, 49,869, or 88.3 percent, to 6,598, or 11.7 percent.¹⁴¹ The Democrats nominated Robert "Bob" Riley, a political science professor at Ouachita Baptist University in Arkadelphia, to oppose Cockrill. Riley charged that Cockrill's party switch was motivated by politics, not conviction. In bolting the Democrats, Cockrill had criticized the requirement that all nominees sign loyalty

¹³⁹Arkansas Democrat, November 3, 1970.

¹⁴⁰"The Conscience of an Arkansan," Pamphlet from the 1970 Campaign of Sterling R. Cockrill, Jr., for Lieutenant Governor.

¹⁴¹Election Statistics, 1970.

oaths, claiming such actions violated an individual's rights of free expression. Riley retorted that the Republicans, while they had no formal loyalty oath, also expected their party members to vote a straight ticket.¹⁴²

Years later, Cockrill attributed his party bolt to a desire to protest the "cronyism" of the Faubus administration, which he claimed had "misruled" the state from 1955-1967. Cockrill said that his party bolt, which came three years after Faubus left office, did not end his political career per se. Instead the defeat for lieutenant governor convinced him to remain outside the realm of elective politics, Cockrill explained.¹⁴³

In another statewide race, the GOP nominated former State Representative James Sheets of Benton County to challenge Democratic Secretary of State Bryant. Sheets defeated John Thompson of Morrilton, 35,954, or 68 percent, to 16,881, or 32 percent, to win the party nod. Congressman Hammerschmidt ran for his third term against a moderate-liberal Democrat, Donald Poe, a former legislator from Waldron in Scott County.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴²Arkansas Democrat, November 1, 1970.

¹⁴³Interview with Sterling Cockrill, November 30, 1982.

¹⁴⁴Election Statistics, 1970.

The 1970 results were a stinging disappointment to Rockefeller, and he took the returns with humiliation and personal sorrow. Not only did Bumpers win, but Rockefeller polled just 32.4 percent. Rockefeller did not garner a majority in a single county, although he led by plurality in heavily black Phillips and Lee counties, where he drew 47 percent. He also polled 47.8 percent in Chicot County, but Bumpers led there with 48.2 percent. Bumpers received 375,648, or 61.7 percent, to Rockefeller's 197,418, and Carruth's 36,142, or 5.9 percent. In nine other counties Rockefeller polled at least 40 percent.¹⁴⁵

Rockefeller was embarrassed by the fact that his running-mates for lieutenant governor and secretary of state outpolled him. Cockrill was defeated by Riley, but the Republican convert received 232,429, or 39.3 percent, or 35,000 more votes than Rockefeller. Cockrill later said that he could offer no explanation for the discrepancy other than the fact that some of his long-time backers were also supporting Bumpers. Riley won with 334,379, or 56.5 percent, and the American Independent candidate, Hubert Blanton of Hughes in St. Francis County, received 25,042, or 4.2 percent. Cockrill obtained majorities in Searcy and Washington counties and won pluralities in

¹⁴⁵Ibid.; Arkansas Democrat, November 6, 1970.

seven other counties as well.¹⁴⁶ Cockrill later accepted from President Nixon an appointment as Arkansas director of the Department of Housing and Urban Development. In 1979, he became executive director of Little Rock Unlimited Progress, a private civic-betterment group.¹⁴⁷

In the secretary of state's race, Bryant polled 360,209 votes, or 62.3 percent, to Republican Sheets' 217,752, or 37.7 percent. Sheets carried Searcy and Benton counties, where he received 55 percent each. He lost Washington County by a single vote, 10,345 to Bryant's 10,346. In the attorney general contest to succeed Joe Purcell, who lost the Democratic gubernatorial race, voters chose Democrat Ray Thornton of Sheridan, who defeated American Independent nominee John Norman Warnock of Camden, 87.3 to 12.7 percent. Republicans did not contest the position in 1970.¹⁴⁸

Democrats prevailed again at the legislative level, as two GOP House members, Danny Patrick and Marshall Chrisman, were defeated. Republican incumbents Preston Bynum and George Nowotny won new terms. State Senator

¹⁴⁶Election Statistics, 1970; Interview with Sterling Cockrill, November 30, 1982.

¹⁴⁷Arkansas Gazette, December 2, 1981.

¹⁴⁸Election Statistics, 1970.

Jim Caldwell did not face voters in 1970. In Benton County, carried by Bumpers and Cockrill, Republicans triumphed at the local level. Sheriff Ralph Bolain of Pea Ridge was elected county judge, and Bolain's deputy, Jack Saxon, won the sheriff's post. Republicans Emil M. Larson and Oliver L. Adams were elected assessor and prosecuting attorney, respectively. A large number of Republicans won justice-of-the-peace positions in Benton County as well.¹⁴⁹

Congressman Hammerschmidt defeated Democrat Poe, 115,532, or 66.7 percent, to 57,679, or 33.3 percent.¹⁵⁰ Poe had criticized Hammerschmidt for supporting what he termed "inflationary measures," and the Democrat advocated faster withdrawal of American forces from South Vietnam. Poe also criticized the rhetoric of Vice-President Agnew, whom Hammerschmidt said that he admired.¹⁵¹

The Arkansas Democrat attributed Bumpers' victory to his party label and "marvelous impression on television," noting that the Democrat dealt in "generalities and avoided making enemies." The paper termed Bumpers "big-league material" in that he had come from obscurity

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.; Arkansas Outlook, November 1970.

¹⁵⁰ Election Statistics, 1970.

¹⁵¹ Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, July 24, 1970, 1843; Arkansas Democrat, November 4, 1970.

and defeated both Faubus and Rockefeller. The Democrat attempted to console the shaken Rockefeller, noting that the defeat should not be interpreted as:

ingratitude on the part of the people of Arkansas. People are pretty cold-blooded about politics, and it's easy to put away any sentimentality in the privacy of the voting booth. It ought to be that way of course. Public office ought not to be a reward. . . . Rockefeller is a liberal, and most Arkansans are not. Thirty years ago, parents in Arkansas scared their kids by telling them if they didn't behave, a Republican would come and get them. Really, the wonder of it is that we ever elected him the first time. . . . The voters know what Rockefeller has given the state -- money, buildings, industry, arts, prestige, reform, laws, open government, etc. Most of all, he has given us more self-respect by driving the special interests out of the state capitol.¹⁵²

Winthrop Rockefeller was visibly shaken as he lost his re-election bid so decisively while his brother, Nelson Rockefeller, won handily in New York over Democrat Arthur J. Goldberg. Nelson had contributed about \$274,000 to his brother's Arkansas campaigns. Winthrop in turn had given \$100,000 to Nelson's 1966 campaign, but the money did not arrive until 1967.¹⁵³ Over the years that he ran for office, Nelson Rockefeller received \$260,500 from Winthrop. While Winthrop budgeted \$1.3

¹⁵²Arkansas Democrat, November 6, 1970.

¹⁵³Michael S. Kramer and Sam Roberts, I Never Wanted to Be Vice-President of Anything (New York, 1976), 185, 187.

million for his 1970 campaign, Nelson spent \$7.2 million to win his third term.¹⁵⁴ Time magazine had "estimated" that Rockefeller's expenditures for the Arkansas race at \$4 million, a figure disputed by Nelson Rockefeller's biographers, Michael S. Kramer and Sam Roberts.¹⁵⁵ While watching the returns, Winthrop received a condolence call from Democratic Governor Robert Docking of Kansas, who himself won a third term in 1970. Rockefeller told Docking that he was then "looking at thirty of the finest staff that any man was ever privileged to work with."¹⁵⁶

In the lieutenant governor race, Riley attributed his victory over Cockrill to a "team effort," and he then accused his Republican opponent of conducting a campaign of "mudslinging, character assassination and hate emotions." Riley claimed that Cockrill backers circulated "vicious statements about me" in black neighborhoods. Riley said that he still regarded Cockrill as a "friend," hoping that the tactics he had criticized had been those of GOP activists acting without the candidate's knowledge.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁴Ibid., 187, 340.

¹⁵⁵Ibid., 340; Time, November 16, 1970, 24.

¹⁵⁶Quoted in Ward, The Arkansas Rockefeller, 190.

¹⁵⁷Arkansas Gazette, November 5, 1970.

The Arkansas results were not the only defeat for southern Republicans in 1970. GOP efforts in the region had hinged on Agnew's claim that the South had for "too long been the punching bag for those who characterize themselves as liberal intellectuals."¹⁵⁸ The Republicans did not profit significantly from Agnew's rhetoric, as the party lost the governorship of Florida and fell short in other gubernatorial contests in Texas, Georgia and South Carolina. The bright spot for the southern wing of the party in 1970 was in Tennessee, where the Republicans won both the governorship and a second U.S. Senate seat. In 1969, the GOP had also elected its first governor of the twentieth century in Virginia, the moderate A. Linwood Holton.¹⁵⁹

In the midst of the 1970 campaign, a fight erupted over the Arkansas Republican state chairman's post between the conservative Charles Bernard, Fulbright's 1968 opponent, and the moderate William T. "Bill" Kelly, Sr., of Little Rock. Bernard and Kelly were the leading candidates to succeed the retiring Odell Pollard of Searcy. Rockefeller supported Kelly. To avoid a split in party

¹⁵⁸Quoted in Ripon Society and Clifford W. Brown, Jr., Jaws of Victory (Boston, 1974), 36.

¹⁵⁹Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, November 13, 1970, 2806; Arkansas Gazette, November 4, 1970.

ranks, businessman Cass S. Hough of Rogers urged Rockefeller to accept the chairmanship. Bernard urged Rockefeller not to step down to the level of party politics after having served four years as governor. When the party vote was taken on November 21, Bernard won overwhelmingly, 137 to 28 for Kelly and 27 for Everett Ham, the former Rockefeller aide who later joined the race. Rockefeller hence found himself on the losing side in the struggle for party leadership, much as he had stood alone in the Arkansas GOP delegations on behalf of his brother Nelson in earlier campaigns.¹⁶⁰ After his election as chairman, Bernard went to the rostrum and called Rockefeller the "Mr. Republican" of Arkansas, adding, "Governor Rockefeller, I say to you we do love you."¹⁶¹ In his farewell address to the GOP State Central Committee, Rockefeller said that he had experienced "an emotionally rough time of it since November 3. . . . but I have never been accused of being a quitter, and I can assure you that I am not one now."¹⁶²

After the defeat, John Ward urged Rockefeller not to

¹⁶⁰Arkansas Gazette, November 22, 1970; Arkansas Outlook, November 1970.

¹⁶¹Quoted in Ward, The Arkansas Rockefeller, 187.

¹⁶²Arkansas Gazette, November 22, 1970.

"participate financially" in the Republican Party to the extent that he had earlier. Ward told Rockefeller that the Arkansas party needed to "revert to whatever it will be without your help. It needs to fall back to a new beginning . . ." ¹⁶³

Ranchino analyzed the 1970 results from the GOP perspective and found that Rockefeller still received about 88 percent of the black vote. Bumpers outpolled Rockefeller by as much as nine-to-one in some areas of traditionally Republican northwestern Arkansas, as many GOP voters deserted the standard-bearer. This return of moderate voters to the Democrats far outweighed Rockefeller's advantage among blacks. ¹⁶⁴ The 88 percent figure, however, is not fully accepted. Numan Bartley and Hugh Graham, in analyzing selected black precincts in Pulaski County, found that Rockefeller received just 46 percent, compared to 86 percent at the same boxes two years earlier. ¹⁶⁵ Ranchino concluded that the Arkansas middle class had moved away "from a rather conservative, intolerant posture in 1960 toward a greater degree of

¹⁶³Ward, The Arkansas Rockefeller, 187.

¹⁶⁴Ranchino, Faubus to Bumpers, 71.

¹⁶⁵Numan V. Bartley and Hugh D. Graham, Southern Elections County and Precinct Data, 1950-1972 (Baton Rouge, Louisiana, 1978), 353.

tolerance and moderation in 1970."¹⁶⁶

Ranchino also found that the GOP was handicapped by problems of party organization, noting that the:

Republicans have never had a party in Arkansas in the strictest sense. They have not offered consistent opposition to the Democrats at all levels of government and have frequently opted out for individual efforts and campaigns at the expense of the broad party-oriented effort.¹⁶⁷

In 1970, Ranchino estimated that Arkansas voters included about 150,000 liberals, 150,000 conservatives and 300,000 moderates. He explained that:

whichever way the moderate vote leans in any specific election does make the essential difference between victory or defeat for the candidates. . . . There is no 'emerging Republican majority' in Arkansas built on a conservative coalition of blue-collar, middle-class Democrats and upper-class traditional Republicans. The success that Republicans have had in Arkansas has come from a moderately liberal coalition based on blacks and progressive Democrats. That combination was shattered in 1970.¹⁶⁸

After the election, Rockefeller angered conservative elements by commuting to life imprisonment the death sentences of the fifteen prisoners then on death row at Tucker Prison Farm. In his statement, Rockefeller noted that he had long been "unalterably opposed" to capital

¹⁶⁶Ranchino, Faubus to Bumpers, 71.

¹⁶⁷Ibid., 91.

¹⁶⁸Ibid., 92.

punishment and would remain so for as long as he lived.

Rockefeller asked:

what earthly mortal has the omnipotence to say who among us shall live and who shall die? I do not. Moreover, in that the law grants me the authority to set aside the death penalty, I cannot and will not turn my back on lifelong Christian teachings and beliefs, merely to let history run its course on a fallible and failing theory of punitive justice.¹⁶⁹

Rockefeller said that he hoped other governors would follow his example to "hasten the elimination of barbarism as a tool of American justice."¹⁷⁰

Before leaving office, Rockefeller delivered a farewell to state legislators. The key excerpts follow:

It has been said by some that I asked for too much. Perhaps so. You tell me -- what quality of leadership would ask too little? What sort of leadership would be content merely to maintain a standard of living that for so long has been so meager for so many? The shame upon me and my administration would have been in not struggling for something better. Today, I am not ashamed. . . . The most meaningful measurement of progress is that certain things are no longer acceptable to us as a people.¹⁷¹

As a private citizen, Rockefeller went into seclusion by 1971, and his drinking reached the critical

¹⁶⁹Quoted in Ward, The Arkansas Rockefeller, 198.

¹⁷⁰Ibid.

¹⁷¹Arkansas Outlook, January 1971.

stage. He divorced Jeannette.¹⁷² His political activities came to a virtual halt, but he did attend the 1972 Republican National Convention in Miami Beach, where he joined the state's delegation in affirming the renominations of Nixon and Agnew to terms neither man would complete.¹⁷³ Rockefeller later voted in the 1972 election and expressed elation that Nixon finally carried Arkansas but lamented the fact that the GOP otherwise made no strong showing in the state.¹⁷⁴

In the summer of 1972, Rockefeller had an apparently routine marble-sized knot removed from his right shoulder. It was malignant, and his physicians could prescribe nothing but chemotherapy, as the cancer had spread to the liver and pancreas. The former governor, a man beaten at the polls and in weak spirits, grew a long white beard and lost weight as the chemotherapy took its toll on his frame. He spent his last days in the warmth of Palm Springs, California, to avoid the winter at Morrilton.¹⁷⁵

Rockefeller died on February 22, 1973, and his

¹⁷²Ward, The Arkansas Rockefeller, 180.

¹⁷³Diamond, ed., Congressional Quarterly's Guide to U.S. Elections, 174.

¹⁷⁴Arkansas Gazette, November 8, 1972.

¹⁷⁵Ward, The Arkansas Rockefeller, 200-203.

remains were cremated at his request. The ashes are interred in a sanctuary near WinRock Farms. A memorial service was held at the Rockefeller Museum of Automobiles in Morrilton on March 4. Nelson Rockefeller spoke, but the audience seemed to respond more warmly to a brief eulogy delivered by William "Sonny" Walker, who had been appointed by Rockefeller as state director of the Office of Economic Opportunity. Walker, the first black to head an Arkansas state agency, praised Rockefeller for his role in the struggle for racial justice. "God be with you, Guv, until we meet again," he said.¹⁷⁶

Rockefeller left most of his estate to a charitable trust, which in turn was directed to support the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation. At the time of his death, the estate was appraised at \$60 million. The foundation was established in December 1974, and it became involved in funding health, education, economic development and human service programs in Arkansas.¹⁷⁷

On Rockefeller's death, speculation persisted that his young son, Winthrop Paul, might take up the Republican mantle. But Winthrop Paul, known as "Win Paul,"

¹⁷⁶Quoted in Ibid., 205; Arkansas Gazette, March 5, 1973.

¹⁷⁷Arkansas Gazette, December 13, 1981.

told associates that he wanted to establish his own record in animal husbandry before becoming politically active.¹⁷⁸ Though Winthrop Rockefeller was gone, his influence in Arkansas remains through his philanthropic foundation. With his death, the state Republican Party entered into a lengthy period of one political defeat after another. For the GOP there seemed no light at the end of the tunnel throughout the 1970s.

¹⁷⁸ Jack Bass and Walter DeVries, The Transformation of Southern Politics: Social Change and Political Consequences Since 1945 (New York, 1976), 105.

CHAPTER IX

THE POST-ROCKEFELLER ERA

Arkansas underwent broad political, social and economic changes during the 1960s and 1970s. Cotton declined from first to fourth place as the state's most valuable crop, and soybeans rose from second to first position as the leading farm commodity. The rice industry became the second most valuable agricultural enterprise. More strikingly, by 1972 the value added by manufacturing was more than twice the agricultural cash receipts. In 1962, the state was forty-ninth in per capita income, but the ranking had improved to forty-sixth by 1974.¹

Politically, Arkansas is governed by the Constitution of 1874, which reflects a largely negative philosophy of government that prevailed when the document was drafted. A new constitution was rejected in 1918 and, again, in 1970, when the question was overshadowed by the Dale Bumpers-Winthrop Rockefeller gubernatorial contest. The state legislature in 1968 authorized the calling of a constitutional convention to prepare a new charter. The convention, which met during 1969 and 1970, approved a largely

¹David C. Roller and Robert W. Twyman, The Encyclopedia of Southern History (Baton Rouge, Louisiana, 1979), 74.

progressive document that would have provided for annual, rather than biannual, legislative sessions. The new constitution would also have removed the \$1,200 legislative salary limit, authorized open committee meetings and recorded votes and permitted more taxing and debt-incurring powers to local governments. Much of the convention success rested on the prestige of the respected Dr. Robert A. Leflar, then dean emeritus of the University of Arkansas Law School.² Opposition to the proposed constitution was organized by a small, well-financed group which feared that the reforms would make it too easy for the General Assembly to raise taxes. They also argued that the 1874 document, which contained fifty-two amendments at the time, had met the state's changing needs.³ While both Bumpers and Rockefeller endorsed the new constitution, the measure failed, 301,195 against, or 57.4 percent, to 223,334, or 42.6 percent. The proposed constitution still ran about 10 percent ahead of Rockefeller's weak showing in the statewide tabulation.⁴

Rockefeller revolutionized Arkansas politics from the

²Ibid.; New York Times, June 1, 1969.

³Atlantic Monthly, CCXVII (February 1971), 20; Roller and Twyman, The Encyclopedia of Southern History, 74.

⁴Election Statistics, 1970 (Little Rock: Secretary of State).

standpoint of campaign spending. After Rockefeller's election, W.R. "Witt" Stephens of Arkansas Louisiana Gas Company remarked that the:

governor's office pays \$10,000; so what happens when a man without a quarter comes in? It must have cost Winthrop Rockefeller a quarter to a half million a year to be governor. How in hell can one of our Democratic boys be governor when it costs that much?⁵

Democrat Bumpers, like Republican Rockefeller, had called for an end to the "Old Politics," an apparent reference to the Orval Faubus-Witt Stephens combination which for years had determined state policies. By 1974, both Stephens and another "Old Politics" figure, Conway County Sheriff Marlin Hawkins of Morrilton, refused to support Faubus' comeback attempt in the Democratic gubernatorial primary, against David Pryor. Faubus, who sought the support of Stephens and Hawkins, later criticized Pryor for accepting backing from the pair. Later, Pryor was quoted as having said that Stephens and Hawkins knew Faubus' "day was over, and they know themselves that their day is about over."⁶

John L. Ward, Rockefeller's biographer, contends that

⁵Quoted in Neal Peirce, The Deep South States of America (New York, 1974), 131.

⁶Quoted in Jack Bass and Walter DeVries, The Transformation of Southern Politics: Social Change and Political Consequences Since 1945 (New York, 1976), 99.

Governor Bumpers implemented many of the reforms that Rockefeller had long advocated, noting that it:

is ironic that the very reforms, Rockefeller forced on the Democratic Party served to defeat him, and doubly ironic that the reforms he instituted would be carried on in large measure by the man who defeated him.⁷

Bumpers, who had lost his sole previous campaign for state office, a legislative contest, confounded most political observers. He did not fit the press image of a "small town country lawyer." Bumpers attended Northwestern Law School in Evanston, Illinois, where he had studied under the late Adlai E. Stevenson, II.⁸ As governor, Bumpers proceeded to modernize state government through administrative and tax reforms and expansion of social services. In 1971, he secured adoption of a governmental reorganization plan, a feat Rockefeller never accomplished with the Democratic legislature. Bumpers consolidated about sixty executive agencies into thirteen super departments, saving an estimated \$235 million outright. He also achieved passage of a \$30 million tax increase, a measure legislators had rejected under Rockefeller. By December 1972, Arkansas had a surplus of \$135 million. In 1973, Bumpers proposed spending much of the surplus

⁷John W. Ward, The Arkansas Rockefeller (Baton Rouge, Louisiana, 1978), 193.

⁸U.S. News and World Report, LXIX (November 16, 1970), 46; Atlantic Monthly, February 1971, 14.

for a vast array of programs, especially in the field of education. The legislature hence approved Bumpers' call for statewide kindergartens, free high-school textbooks, teacher salary increases and increased state aid to Arkansas school districts.⁹

Bumpers also implemented many Rockefeller proposals regarding environmental quality. In 1968, Arkansas had become one of the first states to adopt a plan for quality criteria under the Federal Water Pollution Control Act. Rockefeller had initiated a program for solid waste disposal in 1967, and the Arkansas Pollution Control Commission completed an extensive survey on the subject in 1969. Bumpers continued these policies and also supported tax incentives for industries which purchased anti-pollution devices.¹⁰

Through the twentieth century until 1972, Arkansas voters refused to support any Republican presidential nominee. When Richard Nixon succeeded in carrying Arkansas, along with forty-eight other states in 1972, the GOP victory stemmed from overriding national factors, not the effectiveness of the state Republican organization. At

⁹Charles Moritz, ed., Current Biography Yearbook, 1979 (New York, 1980), 56.

¹⁰Atlantic Monthly, February 1971, 20; U.S. News and World Report, November 16, 1970, 46.

the time, Nixon was considered to have adopted a "Southern Strategy," but the president rejected the concept in an Atlanta, Georgia, speech, noting that:

it has been suggested that by campaigning in the South in 1960, and then again in 1968, and now again in 1972 means that we have, I have, a so-called Southern Strategy. It is not a Southern Strategy. It is an American Strategy.¹¹

In 1971, Nixon discussed the future of the Republican Party in an interview with journalist Howard K. Smith, then with the American Broadcasting Company. Nixon remarked that many:

southern Democrats, and I can say this looking back at our policies in the field of foreign . . . and defense policy, . . . are our best supporters -- best supporters of this president, not because he is a Republican, but because they think it's in the best interests of the country.¹²

Nixon predicted that during the 1970s and 1980s both parties would be evenly divided and that each would compete for key independent voter support. He expressed doubts that either party could build a national majority status as had occurred after the Civil War for the Republicans and after 1932 for the Democrats.¹³ Nixon cautiously encouraged the development of a Republican Party in the

¹¹Atlanta Constitution, October 13, 1972.

¹²Interview with President Nixon by Howard K. Smith, March 29, 1971, American Broadcasting Company.

¹³Franklin Burdette, The Republican Party: A Short History (New York, 1972), 200.

South but declined to alienate the southern Democratic committee chairmen in Congress. Such hesitation caused Nixon to practically abandon Republican senatorial nominees Winton Blount, Gil Carmichael and Dr. Wayne H. Babbitt in Alabama, Mississippi and Arkansas, respectively. In the process, the Democrats gained two Senate seats in 1972, even though Nixon swept 60.7 percent of the national popular vote and won all except 17 of the 535 electoral votes.¹⁴

Nixon's majority stemmed in part from the perceived ineptness of his Democratic opponent, South Dakota liberal Senator George Stanley McGovern. McGovern raised questions about his logic when he proposed to give from the federal treasury \$1,000 to every person "from the poorest migrant to the Rockefellers." The senator suggested taxing back the \$1,000 from the wealthy and redistributing it to the needy. Even his Democratic nomination opponent, Senator Hubert Humphrey, who agreed with McGovern on many issues, termed the plan unworkable.¹⁵

In 1972, for the first time in Arkansas history, the number of qualified voters exceeded one million. The

¹⁴William E. Leuchtenburg, A Troubled Feast: American Society Since 1945 (Boston, 1979), 263; Presidential Elections Since 1789 (Washington, 1975), 99.

¹⁵Leuchtenburg, A Troubled Feast, 259.

additional voters was attributed to the Twenty-sixth Constitutional Amendment, which lowered the voting age to eighteen, and to a U.S. Supreme Court ruling which reduced the period a person must reside in a state from one year to thirty days in order to become eligible to vote. Democrats expected to capture the bulk of the new youth vote in Arkansas. Ted Boswell, a former gubernatorial candidate, became the McGovern campaign coordinator in Arkansas.¹⁶ McGovern secured the support of more Democratic candidates and officeholders in Arkansas than in other southern states, but projections indicated that Nixon could win by as much as 55 percent in the state.¹⁷ In a ploy to persuade conservative Democrats to support the national ticket, McGovern announced that he would, if elected, name Arkansas Congressman Wilbur Mills as secretary of treasury.¹⁸ Mills, who had briefly challenged McGovern for the presidential nomination, emerged as a leading Democratic spokesman, deriding the Nixon campaign as the "dirtiest" he had witnessed in thirty-four years of politics. Mills joined Senator J. William Fulbright in a Little Rock appearance pledging unwavering support

¹⁶Arkansas Gazette, November 1, 1972.

¹⁷U.S. News and World Report, LXXIII (October 16, 1972), 24.

¹⁸Leuchtenburg, A Troubled Feast, 259.

for McGovern.¹⁹ Fulbright, who predicted that McGovern would carry Arkansas, claimed that no single individual had done "more to undermine the free enterprise system" than Richard Nixon. Fulbright cited the devaluation of the dollar in 1971, the recurring national deficit and an unfavorable balance of payments. He also accused Nixon of seeking to "destroy the Democratic Party" to provide for the succession of Vice-President Spiro Agnew in the 1976 election.²⁰ Fulbright, who was not up for re-election in 1972, lauded the McGovern-Hatfield Amendment as a serious proposal to end the Vietnam War from the perspective of American participation. Proposed in 1970 by Senators McGovern and Mark O. Hatfield, an Oregon Republican, the amendment would have set December 31, 1971, as the deadline for full American withdrawal from Vietnam. The amendment never passed the Senate, however, due to administration opposition.²¹ Nearly overlooked in the 1972 campaign in Arkansas was a prediction offered by the McGovern co-chairman, State Representative Thomas E. Sparks of Fordyce. Sparks suggested that investigations into the break-in of June 1972 at the Watergate complex

¹⁹Arkansas Gazette, November 2, 1972.

²⁰Ibid., November 7, 1972.

²¹Ibid., November 5, 1972; New York Times, August 19, 1970.

in Washington could lead to "impeachment proceedings" against Nixon.²²

The Arkansas Gazette, which supported every Democratic presidential ticket of the twentieth century, continued its tradition in a warm endorsement of McGovern. The paper claimed that in:

Little Rock and in Arkansas, there is a great body of loyal national Democrats . . . and Democrats and independents who admire George McGovern as a great man who has fought the courageous fight for peace and for basic reform in American society.²³

Arkansas Republicans made a determined effort to hold the state for Nixon. State Representative George Nowotny declined to seek re-election or higher office in order to manage the Nixon campaign. Nowotny claimed that McGovern's welfare proposals would place 61 percent of Arkansans on relief rolls and delighted in painting the Democrats as "pious hypocrites."²⁴ State Chairman Charles Bernard, elected in late 1970 after the defeat of Rockefeller, leveled his fire at his old nemesis, Fulbright, and Congressman Mills. When Fulbright criticized Nixon for accountability in the handling of the My Lai massacre of 1968 (not revealed until 1969), Bernard charged that

²²Arkansas Gazette, November 2, 1972.

²³Ibid., November 3, 1972.

²⁴Ibid., November 4, 1972.

"the Republican Party is a party of peace . . . the Democrats have put us in four wars."²⁵ Later, Bernard claimed that state employees had been pushed to purchase tickets for a Mills appreciation rally, which the GOP chairman charged was a prelude to the congressman's ill-fated 1972 presidential bid. In a telegram to the three Little Rock television stations, Bernard said that the "stunt of having state employees buy tickets to a Democrat rally destroys the merit system and professionalism we all desire in government."²⁶ Bernard had long been criticized by the Arkansas Gazette, which once dubbed him as "a born loser" after his election as chairman. The Gazette had charged that the selection of Bernard was proof that the GOP was "flirting with old suicidal instincts" in naming defeated candidates to key leadership positions.²⁷

Republicans had difficulty locating candidates in 1972 to challenge Governor Bumpers or Senator John L. McClellan. Unlike Bumpers, who faced only token opposition in the primary, McClellan was seriously pressed by Congressman David Pryor. Regardless of the outcome of the senatorial primary, however, Republican prospects of capturing the seat were considered bleak. Once Nowotny

²⁵Arkansas Outlook, May 1971.

²⁶Ibid., September 1971.

²⁷Arkansas Gazette, February 11, 1971.

agreed to run the Arkansas Committee for the Re-Election of the President, the GOP hoped to recruit either former State Representative Sterling Cockrill or former Chairman Odell Pollard as gubernatorial or senatorial candidates. Both declined to seek elective office. Hence, the party offered Len E. Blaylock of Perryville in Perry County, Rockefeller's welfare commissioner, as the gubernatorial standard-bearer. Wayne Babbitt, a North Little Rock veterinarian who had resigned as area director for the U.S. Housing and Urban Development office in Little Rock, was unopposed for the GOP senatorial nomination.²⁸

Despite his reputation as an "exceptionally competent administrator," Blaylock was plagued as a "poor campaigner."²⁹ Political scientist Jim Ranchino branded Blaylock early in the race as "not a legitimate candidate" in view of Bumpers' name recognition and general popularity.³⁰ Blaylock tried to paint Bumpers as lacking consistency on issues, charging that the incumbent espoused "widely varying philosophies, depending on the audience or the occasion."³¹ Blaylock imported a firm

²⁸Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, October 7, 1972, 2488.

²⁹Ibid.

³⁰Camden News, September 2, 1972.

³¹Ibid., September 8, 1972.

from California to handle his campaign techniques but was mismatched against Bumpers who was considered "naturally talented on the campaign trail." Arkansas tradition, moreover, dictated a second term for the governor.³²

The Arkansas Outlook criticized Bumpers' administration as a return to the "good ole days" of the one-party system. The GOP publication objected when Bumpers had removed Blaylock as welfare commissioner and Ralph Scott as director of the Arkansas State Police. The pair actually resigned due to harassment and interference from Bumpers, the Republicans charged.³³ Later, the publication termed Bumpers as "the biggest spender" in state history, noting that his administrative expenses in 1971 were more than twice those of Rockefeller in 1970.³⁴ The GOP viewed Blaylock as a type of Horatio Alger success story in Arkansas, a man who had dropped out of high school three times before graduating in order to support his family. Afterwards, Blaylock enlisted in the Army, made the military a career and began dabbling in Republican politics with an unsuccessful legislative race in 1964 against

³²Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, October 7, 1972, 2488.

³³Arkansas Outlook, May 1971.

³⁴Ibid., October 1971.

Democratic Representative Paul Van Dalsem, a longtime Faubus ally.³⁵ Blaylock criticized Bumpers as "indecisive," claiming that the incumbent had mishandled the 1971 reorganization scheme.³⁶ He further claimed that the state surplus of 1972 was proof that the 1971 tax increase had been premature.³⁷ Even Blaylock's admirers conceded that his personality was unsuited for a statewide race. According to an unidentified rural legislator, "Len's problem is that he looks and talks like I do."³⁸ While Bumpers generally ignored Blaylock, at one point the governor claimed that he would have to campaign strenuously for the general election and thus would be unable to work actively for the McGovern ticket. Observers said that statement was mainly a reflection of McGovern's unfavorable position in Arkansas.³⁹

After leading in the first Democratic primary, Senator McClellan won the party runoff with a 52 percent margin over Congressman Pryor, who had solid labor support

³⁵Ibid., March 1972.

³⁶Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, October 7, 1972, 2488.

³⁷Arkansas Gazette, November 5, 1972.

³⁸Ibid., November 8, 1972.

³⁹New York Times, August 13, 1972.

and backing from the moderate-liberal wing of the party. Republican Babbitt then attempted to attract Pryor's supporters, including blacks and moderate whites, the core of the former Rockefeller coalition. Babbitt, a Nebraska native, was limited in attracting black support because of his Republican affiliation. A good campaigner, Babbitt augmented his personal efforts with full-page "open letters" to McClellan in several newspapers. In the advertisements, Babbitt questioned why McClellan wished to serve another term in view of his advancing age, seventy-six. Babbitt had little success in ultimately attracting former Pryor supporters, who as lifelong Democrats felt more comfortable with the familiar McClellan than they did with an imported Republican.⁴⁰ Babbitt, the only Republican to ever challenge McClellan, noted that the incumbent had voted on less than half of major Senate issues in 1972 alone and did not actually cast a ballot on Fulbright's popular proposal to bring Amtrak to Arkansas. "Maybe at seventy-six years of age, you have grown tired of putting your votes on the record," said Babbitt in one of the letters.⁴¹ Later, Babbitt declared that McClellan was a nineteenth-century leader working through

⁴⁰Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, October 7, 1972, 2488.

⁴¹Arkansas Democrat, October 3, 1972.

an antiquated seniority system. McClellan, who became chairman of the Appropriations Committee on the death of Louisiana's Allen J. Ellender, appeared to resent the need to campaign against a Republican in view of his victory over Pryor. Babbitt tried to link McClellan with the McGovern campaign but in doing so appeared to alienate the Pryor supporters he was seeking to recruit. Babbitt often dwelled on minor incidents. At one point, he even held a press conference with two Little Rock housewives to accuse McClellan of failure to alleviate drainage problems from Rock Creek in the southwestern part of the capital city.⁴²

Other Republican candidates in 1972 included Kenneth L. Coon, a 37-year-old biology instructor at Westark Community College in Fort Smith, who was challenging Lieutenant Governor Robert Riley of Arkadelphia; Ed Bethune, a 36-year-old Searcy attorney and former FBI agent, who was opposing the Democratic attorney general nominee, James Guy Tucker, Jr., the Pulaski County prosecutor from Little Rock; and Jerome Climer of Little Rock, who had been appointed Pulaski County clerk in late 1970 by outgoing Governor Rockefeller, challenging veteran Secretary of State Kelly Bryant of Hope. Bethune and Tucker were competing to succeed Attorney General Ray Thornton, who

⁴²Ibid., October 11, 1972; Arkansas Gazette, November 2, 1972.

was stepping aside after a single two-year term to run for the Fourth District House seat vacated by Representative Pryor.⁴³

Coon, who had the unofficial backing of numerous Arkansas Jaycee chapters by virtue of his active role in the civic organization, claimed from the start that Riley had a "credibility problem." While Riley had promised to serve full-time as lieutenant governor, Coon noted that the incumbent had instead retained his teaching post at Ouachita Baptist University. When Riley urged Arkansans to cast a straight Democratic ballot, Coon brought up the question of McGovern. "Arkansans just don't believe that being a Democrat is reason enough to vote for McGovern, as my opponent suggests," said Coon.⁴⁴ Riley was seen as a staunch Democrat who preached party loyalty and lectured at length on the mechanics of government. Because he had lost an eye in World War II, Riley wears an eyepatch, which became his trademark in Arkansas politics.⁴⁵ Coon claimed that Riley's embracing of the party issue was really a subterfuge to ignore the voters. Coon was especially miffed when Riley claimed on several

⁴³Arkansas Outlook, January 1971; September 1972.

⁴⁴Arkansas Gazette, November 1, 1972.

⁴⁵Ibid., November 5, 1972.

occasions that he did not even know his GOP opponent.⁴⁶

Bethune attempted to depict Tucker as "weak" on the issue of crime in contrast to his own tough record as an FBI agent. "Tucker doesn't believe that stiff punishment can deter the drug traffic," said Bethune, who insisted that Tucker, as the Pulaski prosecutor, had failed to properly push drug cases.⁴⁷ Bethune also claimed that Tucker, a then 29-year-old lawyer, was too "liberal" for Arkansas in view of his role in the American Civil Liberties Union. Bethune termed the ACLU "an ultraliberal organization that is soft on criminals, drugs and sex offenders."⁴⁸ To manage his campaign, Bethune selected a 24-year-old Clinton attorney, James Burnett, who in 1982 became director of the National Transportation Safety Board on appointment Safety Board on appointment from President Reagan.⁴⁹

Climmer charged that Bryant's office was "full of political hacks," thereby causing most of the employees to be "overworked."⁵⁰ He accused Bryant of showing special

⁴⁶Pine Bluff Commercial, November 4, 1972.

⁴⁷Arkansas Gazette, November 2, 1972.

⁴⁸Ibid., November 5, 1972.

⁴⁹Arkansas Outlook, September 1972; Arkansas Gazette, May 9, 1982.

⁵⁰Arkansas Gazette, November 1, 1972.

consideration for certain printing firms in the awarding of state contracts, with failure to preserve vital state records and mishandling petitions filed with the office. Climer also questioned the hiring of Mrs. Bryant as an \$11,500-per-year employee in the office.⁵¹ Climer was seen in some circles as among the more promising GOP candidates; he even won the support of the Pine Bluff Commercial, which also backed Nixon but refused to take a position in the gubernatorial campaign.⁵² Throughout the campaign, Bryant ignored Climer, whose political experience included a stint as an assistant to Congressman John Paul Hammerschmidt. He subsequently served as an assistant to Congressman Ed Bethune.⁵³

Meanwhile, Arkansas had completed congressional redistricting in 1971, according to latest census figures. About 37,000 more persons were living in Little Rock and surrounding portions of Pulaski County in 1970, compared to ten years earlier. Losses occurred along the Mississippi delta in such counties as Mississippi, Phillips and Lee. A redistricting bill approved by the legislature

⁵¹Ibid., November 5, 1972.

⁵²Pine Bluff Commercial, November 4, 6, 1972.

⁵³Arkansas Gazette, November 5, 1972.

made no changes in partisan alignments and offered a population variance among the four districts of .26 percent.⁵⁴ The original redistricting proposal offered a 3.1 percent variance between the First and Second Districts, but the adjustments were made after the Arkansas GOP threatened a suit to test the constitutionality of the plan. Legislators then agreed to the .26 percent variance, which required the shifting of Van Buren County from the Third to First District and Perry County from the Second to Third District.⁵⁵ The plan with the 3.1 percent variance had been submitted by First District Congressman Bill Alexander.⁵⁶

In 1972, Arkansas Republicans contested only the Third District House seat, as Hammerschmidt sought his fourth term. In the Democratic primary, Guy Hatfield, a 65-year-old retired comedian from Rogers who claimed the backing of his friend Groucho Marx, defeated a 28-year-old admirer of Faubus, Howard G. Cain of Huntsville. Hammerschmidt's popularity had increased to the point that Democrats seemed unable to find top-name candidates to oppose him. Hatfield was educated as an architect

⁵⁴Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, March 26, 1971, 649.

⁵⁵Ibid., April 23, 1971, 948.

⁵⁶Arkansas Outlook, March 1971.

and civil engineer before switching to acting. He had never before sought public office.⁵⁷ Hatfield claimed that Hammerschmidt had "personal interests" that prevented the incumbent from "campaigning and functioning as a congressman." In reply, Hammerschmidt emphasized his constituent service which most observers rated as the best in Arkansas by the early 1970s. When Senator Fulbright interjected himself into the race on Hatfield's behalf, Hammerschmidt said, "I've always made it a policy not to cast dispersive remarks on my colleagues."⁵⁸ Fulbright had himself held the House seat for a single term from 1943-1945. When asked if the Republicans considered the seat as "safe," Hammerschmidt said that no Republican running in a district estimated at 85 percent Democratic in nominal allegiance could ever take election for granted.⁵⁹ After his defeat, Hatfield accused Arkansas Democratic leaders of failure to unite against Hammerschmidt. Hatfield said that Democratic state chairman Bradley D. Jesson of Fort Smith and other party officials had "no compassion for their fellow man. They're just out to take care of themselves. . . . I'm my own man and

⁵⁷Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, October 7, 1972, 2488.

⁵⁸Arkansas Gazette, November 5, 1972.

⁵⁹Ibid.

wouldn't obligate myself to anyone."⁶⁰ Hatfield also indicated that if he ever again sought office he likely would not run as a Democrat.⁶¹

With the exceptions of the Nixon and Hammerschmidt victories, 1972 was a disappointment for Arkansas Republicans. The presidential ticket easily prevailed, 445,751, or 69.1 percent, to 198,899, or 30.9 percent. Another 3,016 votes were cast for American Party nominee, Congressman John G. Schmitz of California, a member of the John Birch Society. Nixon swept all seventy-five counties, the first time that all Arkansas counties supported the same presidential candidate since Franklin D. Roosevelt's 1932 triumph. The twenty counties giving Nixon his highest percent showing, listed in descending order by percent (not including the votes for Schmitz), follow:

Crawford (82.1)	Cross (75.4)
Sebastian (81.4)	Garland (75)
Searcy (78.8)	Boone (74.7)
Poinsett (78.6)	Franklin (74.6)
Benton (78.2)	Miller (74.5)
Union (77.2)	Pike (74.4)
Ashley (76.6)	Drew (74.1)
Polk (76.3)	Arkansas (73.9)
Scott (75.9)	Greene (73)
Mississippi (75.5)	Columbia (72.6)

⁶⁰Ibid., November 10, 1972.

⁶¹Ibid.

Nixon's weakest showing was 58.2 percent in largely Democratic Conway County, the home of Rockefeller. A glance at the leading Nixon counties reveals that the president ran as strongly in southern and eastern Arkansas as he did in the traditionally Republican northwestern corner. Newton, Carroll and Baxter counties, which usually vote for GOP presidential candidates, did not even make the list of the first twenty Nixon counties. It is sufficient to note that Nixon carried every section of the state, winning the support of thousands of traditional Democrats.⁶²

In the gubernatorial contest, Bumpers carried every county, defeating Blaylock, 488,892, or 75.4 percent, to 159,177, or 24.6 percent. Blaylock did no better than a 42.5-percent showing in predominantly black Lee County, an area that had remained loyal to his former boss, Rockefeller. Even in Republican Searcy County, Blaylock received only 40.9 percent.⁶³ In 1975, Blaylock was named by President Gerald R. Ford as U.S. marshal for the Eastern District of Arkansas but was replaced in 1978 by Democratic President Jimmy Carter. In 1981, Blaylock became

⁶²Election Statistics, 1972.

⁶³Ibid.

appointments secretary to Republican Governor Frank D. White.⁶⁴

In the lieutenant governor's race, Coon carried three counties, his home of Sebastian as well as Pope and Searcy. Riley easily prevailed, 392,869, or 62.8 percent, to 233,090, or 37.2 percent. Coon also received 49.6 percent in Crawford County.⁶⁵ In January 1973, Coon became the Arkansas GOP executive director, a paid position, succeeding Neal Sox Johnson of Nashville. Johnson, who became executive director in January 1970, accepted a position with the Farmers Home Administration in Washington.⁶⁶

For attorney general, Tucker handily defeated Bethune, 370,647, or 60 percent, to 247,404, or 40 percent. Bethune carried three counties, his home of White with 57.9 percent, Searcy with 51.5 percent and Pulaski with 54 percent. Bethune also polled more than 48 percent but no majority in Garland County and received at least 40 percent in fourteen other counties.⁶⁷ It was Bethune's

⁶⁴Arkansas Gazette, October 23, 1981.

⁶⁵Election Statistics, 1972.

⁶⁶Arkansas Outlook, February 1973.

⁶⁷Election Statistics, 1972.

victory in Pulaski County, also the home of Tucker, which convinced GOP leaders to invest in Bethune as the Republican congressional nominee in an open-seat election in 1978. Ironically, the man vacating the House seat was Tucker.⁶⁸

In the secretary of state race, Bryant defeated Climer, 366,079, or 59.4 percent, to 250,532, or 40.6 percent. Climer, who led in Pulaski with 62.4 percent, carried Searcy County as well with 53.2 percent. He also received more than 48 percent in Washington County. Overall, Climer fared better than Bryant's 1970 GOP opponent, Jim Sheets, but he failed to match the level obtained in 1968 by Republican Lynn Davis in his race against Bryant.⁶⁹

Senatorial returns were also discouraging to the GOP, as McClellan defeated Babbitt, 386,398, or 60.9 percent, to 248,238, or 39.1 percent. Babbitt carried two counties, Searcy with 58.3 percent and Garland with 52.8 percent. In twenty-six other counties, Babbitt polled at least 40 percent. Pulaski, home of both candidates, cast 43.9 percent for McClellan. In the Third District, Hammerschmidt defeated Hatfield, 144,571, or 77.3 percent,

⁶⁸Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, February 25, 1978, 424.

⁶⁹Election Statistics, 1968, 1970, 1972.

to 42,481, or 22.7 percent. Hatfield lost Newton County by thirty-one votes, his best showing throughout the district. Sebastian cast 85 percent for Hammerschmidt, even exceeding the vote given there to Nixon.⁷⁰

At the legislative level, only two Arkansas Republicans won in 1972. State Senator Jim Caldwell of Rogers won his second term with 57.4 percent in a district encompassing parts of Benton, Carroll and Washington counties, and State Representative Preston Bynum, the automobile dealer from Siloam Springs, won his third term.⁷¹ The GOP won a few minor offices throughout the state. In heavily Democratic Poinsett County, which voted overwhelmingly for Nixon, a 42-year-old Harrisburg feed store owner, Gerald Crawford, became the first Republican to hold the sheriff's position there. Crawford defeated a Democrat who had upset the incumbent sheriff in the primary. The GOP also elected the county judge and sheriff in Benton County and the treasurer and assessor in Searcy County.⁷²

Most of the post-election attention was fixed on Nixon's victory in Arkansas. Among the GOP electors was the 89-year-old retired Republican national committeeman

⁷⁰Election Statistics, 1972.

⁷¹Ibid.

⁷²Arkansas Gazette, November 9, 1972.

Wallace Townsend, still promoting the party he had led in the 1916 and 1920 gubernatorial campaigns.⁷³ Hammer-schmidt attributed the Nixon victory to the independent political thinking inspired by Rockefeller, or as he phrased it, "Win's pioneering effort for a two-party system." Sheriff Marlin Hawkins of Conway County attributed McGovern's defeat to his political philosophy. "When your party standard-bearer takes a position opposite to that of the people, then no party loyalty can prevail," said the old-line Democrat who had reluctantly worked on McGovern's behalf.⁷⁴ Democratic Chairman Jesson said that Nixon carried the state due to widespread "fear" of McGovern's positions. The McGovern leader Brownie Ledbetter of Little Rock claimed that her candidate suffered from a "lot of misunderstanding." Jesson also noted that the GOP was "not on a strong foundation" due to the weak showings at the lower level of the ticket. Republican Chairman Bernard admitted that it remained a political liability to be affiliated with the Arkansas GOP. "It's going to take time in a state that has been so deeply Democratic for years to make the transition at the state and local level," Bernard said.⁷⁵ After attending the

⁷³Arkansas Outlook, February 1973.

⁷⁴Arkansas Gazette, November 9, 1972.

⁷⁵Ibid.

election night reception at GOP headquarters in Little Rock, Bernard narrowly escaped injury when his light plane crashed while returning home to Earle.⁷⁶

The Arkansas Gazette noted editorially that Nixon's coattails did not "reach to any of the four statewide races for constitutional office" and suggested that the GOP "may have come out of the election weaker than before at the grassroots level."⁷⁷ Arkansas held the record in 1972 for a high-low Republican split between the presidential and gubernatorial candidates, as Blaylock ran 44.5 percentage points behind Nixon in Arkansas.⁷⁸ Nixon received 72.5 percent in the Deep South, comparable to his Arkansas showing.⁷⁹

In March 1973, a month after Rockefeller's death, the GOP State Central Committee elected Senator Jim Caldwell as chairman to succeed the retiring Bernard. Caldwell defeated two other candidates, former Rockefeller staff member Everett Ham of North Little Rock and Thomas "Tom" Francis of Arkadelphia. At the time, Caldwell indicated

⁷⁶Pine Bluff Commercial, November 9, 1972.

⁷⁷Arkansas Gazette, November 10, 1972.

⁷⁸Ripon Society and Clifford W. Brown, Jr., Jaws of Victory (Boston, 1974), 36.

⁷⁹Roller and Twyman, The Encyclopedia of Southern History, 402.

his opposition to the fielding of "sacrificial lambs" on the Republican ticket, adding that he doubted the GOP could regain the governorship for at least six years. As it turned out, Caldwell's prediction was one year too soon.⁸⁰ Caldwell, who grew up as a Democrat in Yell County, joined the GOP in 1968, when he was first elected to the state senate. While caught in the position of defending President Nixon in the Watergate scandal, Caldwell contended that he hoped the party could expand to recruit more blacks and independents.⁸¹ Later, Caldwell predicted that the Watergate disclosures would not particularly damage the Arkansas GOP any further but could have adverse effects at the national level for Republican candidates in 1974.⁸²

The resignations of Vice-President Agnew in 1973 and President Nixon in 1974 damaged prospects for Arkansas Republicans to regain the initiative. The Arkansas Outlook, for example, reflected Republican dismay at Agnew's troubles when it practically ignored his resignation. The publication ran only an eight-line article in which National Committeewoman Leona Troxell praised Nixon's

⁸⁰Arkansas Outlook, May 1973.

⁸¹Springdale News, July 1, 1973.

⁸²Arkansas Gazette, July 27, 1973.

selection of Gerald Ford as Agnew's successor.⁸³ Mrs. Troxell earlier in the year succeeded the ailing Mrs. Lillian McGillicuddy in the national committeewoman position.⁸⁴ On December 1, 1973, Agriculture Secretary Earl L. Butz addressed a GOP fund-raising dinner in Little Rock, where he defended Nixon from attacks by liberals and rapped what he termed the Watergate "slide show."⁸⁵

Some southern Republicans were hopeful that Ford's accession to the White House on the resignation of Nixon might strengthen the party in the region. As the GOP leader in the House from 1965 to 1973, Ford had de-emphasized the northern Republican-southern Democratic coalition embraced by his predecessor, Congressman Charles W. Halleck of Indiana. Ford hoped to force southern Democrats to ally themselves with President Lyndon Johnson's policies, and, therefore, lose support in their individual districts. Ford reasoned that the GOP could eventually forge a congressional majority by winning many formerly Democratic seats in the South. Such a strategy seemed especially promising when long-time Democratic

⁸³Arkansas Outlook, November 1973.

⁸⁴Ibid.; August 1974.

⁸⁵Ibid., December 1973.

incumbents retired.⁸⁶ As president, however, Ford found that he had little time to accent Republicanism in the South. With vastly reduced Republican House ranks by 1975, Ford was forced to rely on support from key southern Democrats.

In 1974, Arkansas politics revolved around the aspirations of one man: Dale Bumpers, who in one survey held an astonishing 91 percent approval rating as governor. Bumpers was expected to either seek a third term or to set his sights on Washington, specifically the Senate seat held since 1945 by Fulbright. When Bumpers decided to run for the Senate, the Fulbright loyalists felt betrayed in view of the assistance that Fulbright had given to Bumpers in the 1970 campaigns against both Faubus and Rockefeller. Opinion polls forecast an easy Bumpers victory from the start despite Fulbright's support from many state legislators and county officials. When the primary votes were tabulated, Bumpers won with 65 percent.⁸⁷ With Bumpers seeking the Senate seat, former Congressman Pryor entered the gubernatorial primary against two potentially tough opponents, Lieutenant

⁸⁶M. Stanton Evans, The Future of Conservatism: From Taft to Reagan and Beyond (New York, 1968), 156-157.

⁸⁷Bass and DeVries, The Transformation of Southern Politics, 95.

Governor Robert Riley and former Governor Faubus. Pryor edged past the 50 percent mark in the first primary to win the Democratic nomination without the need for a run-off with the second-place finisher, Faubus.⁸⁸

In early 1974, Joseph H. Weston of Cave City in Sharp County, editor of the Sharp Citizen, announced that he would run for governor but did not designate a party selection.⁸⁹ Weston later stipulated that he would seek the GOP nomination, but party leaders told him that he could not qualify as a Republican because he was not a registered member of the party. The warning was patently false, as there is no party registration per se in Arkansas, and Weston could not legally be denied a ballot position.⁹⁰ The GOP leadership claimed that a provision of the election code requires that officials of the party must register their affiliation and automatically become members of the Republican executive committee. Hence, Weston was not technically a registered Republican, the officials insisted.⁹¹ Weston, who said that he had voted

⁸⁸Election Statistics, 1974.

⁸⁹Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, January 19, 1974, 94.

⁹⁰Ibid., April 6, 1974, 882.

⁹¹Arkansas Outlook, April 1974.

for Nixon in 1972 but regretted doing so, claimed that the provision in question could not possibly apply to him because he was not a party official but was merely becoming a primary candidate for governor. The courts compelled the GOP to accept Weston's filing papers. A black, Andrew Bearden, became Weston's running-mate for lieutenant governor.⁹² The Republicans objected to Weston because of his personal criticism of many elected officials, accusing most of "moral rot" and demanding mass resignations. Weston explained that he was seeking the GOP nomination because "we need someone to heal the wounds of the party instead of just wounding the heels."⁹³

To challenge Weston and Bearden, the GOP organization offered Ken Coon, the party executive director who had been the lieutenant governor nominee two years earlier, and National Committeewoman Troxell, respectively. Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report termed the Coon-Weston campaign as "comical and nearly irrelevant in an overwhelmingly Democratic state."⁹⁴ Coon easily prevailed, 3,698, or 81.9 percent, to Weston's 815, or 18.1 percent. Mrs. Troxell won the lieutenant governor nod

⁹²Ibid., May 1974.

⁹³Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, May 18, 1974, 1294.

⁹⁴Ibid.

by a comparable margin over Bearden. The turnout, 4,513 voters, was barely above the 1958 GOP gubernatorial primary, the first one held in Arkansas history.⁹⁵ The fact that a token candidate such as Weston could cause such anguish for Arkansas Republicans was in itself a testimony to the weakened condition of the GOP during the early 1970s.

After Rockefeller's death, Chairman Caldwell remarked that many Arkansas Republicans did not "think in practical terms. We're busy debating issues that don't elect anybody." Caldwell added that the party was in a "serious adjustment period over Rockefeller's not being involved any more."⁹⁶ By 1974, there were GOP organizations in just seventeen of the seventy-five counties. The party contested fourteen legislative positions and held serious hopes in only seven.⁹⁷ The bright spot for the party in 1974 was the failure of the Democrats to find an opponent for Garland County Circuit Judge Henry Britt of Hot Springs, the 1960 GOP gubernatorial nominee.⁹⁸

⁹⁵Election Statistics, 1974.

⁹⁶Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, October 26, 1974, 2960.

⁹⁷Ibid.

⁹⁸Arkansas Outlook, June 1974.

The dismal GOP prospects at the state level in 1974 stemmed largely from the popularity of Bumpers, whose moderately liberal administration had kept progressive Democrats within party ranks. The GOP was surprisingly hard-pressed to re-elect Congressman Hammerschmidt to a fifth term in view of the adverse Republican picture nationally. The Democratic primary winner was a 27-year-old law professor at the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville who had worked for McGovern in Texas in 1972, William "Bill" Clinton. Running as a "New Politics" figure, Clinton might have won in 1974 had he been a candidate in another district. The Third District at the time was only 5 percent black; it was 67 percent blue collar and 33 percent white collar. The district contains most of the state's reliably Republican territory, the mountain counties supportive of numerous GOP counties since the Civil War. Yet, the district also stretches into Democratic areas north of Texarkana.⁹⁹

Clinton was labeled as a "charismatic" candidate in part due to his good looks and outstanding speaking ability. Clinton was educated at Yale, Oxford and Georgetown universities, having been a Rhodes scholar. Despite his personal qualities, Clinton could not match

⁹⁹Michael Barone, Grant Ujifusa and Douglas Matthews, The Almanac of American Politics, 1972 (New York, 1972), 37.

Hammerschmidt's growing reputation for constituent services and casework. Having received little national publicity, Hammerschmidt was viewed as a "conservative, colorless representative who is more interested in answering constituents' letters than in making angry speeches."¹⁰⁰ Hammerschmidt forced Clinton to downplay his past connections with McGovern, who had lost Arkansas by a decisive margin, but Clinton sought to turn the tables by linking Hammerschmidt with his 1972 candidate, the disgraced Nixon.¹⁰¹ Clinton became dismayed at press accounts of Hammerschmidt's friendly, down-home style. "I get sick and tired of hearing how nice Hammerschmidt is!" Clinton told one audience.¹⁰² Political observers claimed that Clinton gained on Hammerschmidt with the Nixon resignation, lost ground after Ford became president and then gained again slightly after Ford pardoned Nixon of wrongdoing that might have occurred in the Watergate scandal. Hammerschmidt was able to defuse the challenge due to his personal popularity and reputation for working well with his Democratic colleagues.¹⁰³

¹⁰⁰ New York Times, September 5, 1974.

¹⁰¹ Bass and DeVries, The Transformation of Southern Politics, 104.

¹⁰² Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, October 12, 1974, 2720.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

Clinton accented what he termed "teriffic economic burdens," claiming that the Nixon-Ford-Hammerschmidt policies had allowed the nation to fall under the domination of big banks, oil companies and other corporate interests. Clinton attributed mounting inflation in 1974 to the abuses of corporate power.¹⁰⁴ The Democrat accused Hammerschmidt of voting many times "for self-interest and against the interests of the people" and questioned why Hammerschmidt had not spoken publicly on the Nixon pardon.¹⁰⁵ The Arkansas Gazette insisted that the Republican administration in Washington "must take its punishment" in the 1974 congressional elections." The newspaper urged the defeat of Hammerschmidt as a "Republican among Republicans" and a "die-hard Nixon supporter." At the same time, the Gazette hailed Clinton as a "gifted young lawyer. . . personable and articulate."¹⁰⁶

In 1974, Judy C. Petty, a 31-year-old divorcee, became the first Republican to challenge Congressman Wilbur Mills in his thirty-six years in the House. She criticized Mills' integrity, focusing on contributions that he received in his brief run for the 1972 Democratic

¹⁰⁴New York Times, September 5, 1974.

¹⁰⁵Arkansas Gazette, November 3, 1974.

¹⁰⁶Ibid.

presidential nomination. Mills subsequently claimed that his presidential bid had been undertaken to block the nomination of McGovern and had not been a serious venture.¹⁰⁷ David L. Parr, a former special counsel with Associated Milk Producers, Inc., pleaded guilty to making an illegal \$75,000 contribution to Mills' presidential campaign. Mills said that the gift was accepted by aides without his permission.¹⁰⁸ A similar donation was made by Gulf Oil Corporation in the amount of \$15,000.¹⁰⁹ Mrs. Petty, who once worked for Winthrop Rockefeller as a \$300-per-month secretary, claimed that the disputed contributions showed negligence, adding, "Mills is standing with his feet planted in sour milk."¹¹⁰ Though associated with the National Women's Political Caucus and a supporter of the Equal Rights Amendment, Mrs. Petty took a main-line Republican stand on defense and federal spending. She scolded Mills for supporting "cronyism, pork barrelism and boondoggery." The national outcry at the time over

¹⁰⁷New York Times, July 31, 1974.

¹⁰⁸Ibid., September 8, 1974.

¹⁰⁹Ibid.

¹¹⁰Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, October 12, 1974, 2720.

campaign spending violations was expected to assure her a sizeable protest vote in the general election against Mills. By most accounts, however, Mrs. Petty faced formidable odds due to the respect and affection Second District voters held for Mills.¹¹¹

In 1972, Mills joined Massachusetts Senator Edward M. Kennedy in proposing a national health insurance plan. Mills, chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, said his proposed plan would prevent health care from becoming "mired down in federal bureaucracy" but at the same time protecting citizens at lowest possible costs.¹¹² By October 1974, however, Mills said that he and Kennedy would not introduce their proposed legislation due to a lack of congressional support. Mrs. Petty, meanwhile, accused Mills of "talking out of both sides of his mouth" about how such a federal insurance plan could be administered through either government or private enterprise.¹¹³

In the course of the campaign, Saline County observed a "Wilbur Mills Day," an action prompting Benton Mayor Noel Butler, Jr., to declare a "Judy Petty Day" in his town. Under pressure from Democratic leaders, however,

¹¹¹Ibid.

¹¹²Face the Nation, 1972, XV (June 4, 1972), 184.

¹¹³Arkansas Gazette, November 1, 1974.

Butler backed out of his decision. Republicans charged discrimination, but the Democrats retorted that they had merely honored Mills because he was then a public official, not just a candidate for election. Meanwhile, Democratic State Senator Guy H. "Mutt" Jones of Conway refused to allow Mrs. Petty to ride in the Faulkner County fair parade.¹¹⁴

After the 1970 census report, the Second District was 15 percent black, 62 percent blue collar and 38 percent white collar. It seemed tailor-made for Mills, extending from the Ozark hill country near Little Rock eastward to the Mississippi River.¹¹⁵ Mills' advantage was threatened after a series of escapades in the fall of 1974, which he later attributed to a drinking problem.

As chairman of the Ways and Means Committee since 1959, Mills presided over tax legislation, Social Security, tariffs, foreign trade, medicare, interest rates and the federal budget. He had become a "Washington legend of ponderous circumspection." Most Arkansans thought that the congressman spent his evenings reading the tax codes. Mills himself once remarked that his "only real amusement is work . . . My father always impressed on me

¹¹⁴Ibid.

¹¹⁵Barone, Ujifusa and Matthews, The Almanac of American Politics, 1972, 35.

that you couldn't do a day's work and stay out all night at parties."¹¹⁶ Little did Mills know that those words would come to haunt him. In October 1974, Mills, who had been drinking heavily, ran his car into the Washington Tidal Basin. He was accompanied at the time, not by his wife, but by Anna Battistella, an exotic dancer who used the alias, "Fanne Foxe," and was known as the "Argentine Firecracker." One of Mills' colleagues, on reading of the sensational incident, quipped that the woman was "only a stripper from the Silver Slipper, but she had her ways and means," a reference to Mills' committee chairmanship.¹¹⁷ Mills apologized for the incident but stressed that the stripper was merely a family friend. The voters bought his explanation and re-elected him with 58.9 percent of the general election ballots.¹¹⁸

After the election, Mills further enraged some Arkansans when he appeared on stage at a Boston burlesque house holding hands with Fanne Foxe. The Harvard Law School graduate again apologized for his behavior and admitted that he was suffering from alcoholism, which caused temporary "blackouts" and loss of memory and

¹¹⁶Quoted in Marshall Frady, Southerners (New York, 1980), 116.

¹¹⁷Quoted in Ibid., 128.

¹¹⁸Ibid.; Election Statistics, 1974.

contact with reality. Mills announced his retirement from the House in 1976, declining to seek another term and vowing to conquer the disease through "total abstinence."¹¹⁹

President Ford posed for pictures with Mrs. Petty but declined to actively campaign for the Republican lest he anger his old House colleague, Mills. Ronald Reagan came to Little Rock in October to speak on behalf of Mrs. Petty. Though often linked to the moderate Republicans, Mrs. Petty was actually more in tune with the Reagan ideology. She termed the Nixon pardon premature, opposed Ford's proposed 5 percent tax surcharge and called for the elimination of "deficit spending."¹²⁰ Mrs. Petty hammered away at what she perceived as Mills' arrogance. "The most beautiful words in the Constitution are not 'he's the chairman' or 'he's the powerful,' it's 'we the people,'" Mrs. Petty said.¹²¹ Mills termed 1974 as the worst "peacetime inflation in our history" and vowed to seek about \$2 billion in tax relief for lower and moderate-income workers.¹²²

Overlooked by most voters and the press in the 1974

¹¹⁹Bass and DeVries, The Transformation of Southern Politics, 99.

¹²⁰Arkansas Gazette, November 3, 1974.

¹²¹New York Times, September 8, 1974.

¹²²Arkansas Gazette, November 2, 1974.

congressional races was the challenge waged against Representative Bill Alexander in the First District by James L. Dauer, a 52-year-old retired civil service employee from Imboden in Lawrence County. Dauer, who termed himself a "George Wallace Republican," was ignored by the state party organization. He was listed in the party newspaper, the Arkansas Outlook, as "John Dauer." A former member of the American Party in Arkansas, Dauer received no Republican campaign funds, although he did get the ritualistic invitation to come to Washington to have his picture taken with President Ford. He never did so though.¹²³

The GOP made its strongest effort on behalf of Hamerschmidt, Mrs. Petty and gubernatorial candidate Coon. Former GOP Chairman Odell Pollard served as Coon's campaign strategist. Pollard urged nursing home owners to support the Republicans, claiming that Pryor's previous actions to more closely regulate nursing facilities had "demeaned the nursing homes just so he could get national publicity." Pollard, who became national committeeman on the death of Rockefeller, solicited campaign contributions from business groups, including the nursing home operators.¹²⁴ Coon played down his party label

¹²³Ibid., November 3, 6, 1974.

¹²⁴Ibid., November 1, 1974.

and stressed his personal honesty. "I'm so honest that I've been accused of being naive," Coon told one audience. In a bid for Faubus supporters, Coon claimed that Pryor was "closer" to Arkansas business and labor leaders than Faubus had ever been. Pryor did not wage an active general election campaign, instead devoting the time to preparation for his administration.¹²⁵

Before the election, Coon filed a complaint with the Fair Campaign Practices Committee in Washington, charging Pryor with "smear" tactics. Pryor had earlier indicated that he was considering filing charges against Coon for the Republican's allegations that Pryor had received funds from Associated Milk Producers, Inc., which made the illegal donation to Mills.¹²⁶ Pryor repeatedly refused Coon's call for a series of public debates. On state issues, Coon suggested a one-year moratorium on construction of the proposed state office complex at the capitol grounds in order to reconsider the project and evaluate its spiraling costs.¹²⁷

Bumpers, after defeating Fulbright in the primary,

¹²⁵Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, October 12, 1974, 2719.

¹²⁶Arkansas Gazette, November 3, 1974.

¹²⁷Ibid., November 2, 1974.

then faced the token Republican candidate, Pine Bluff banker John Harris Jones, who had run unsuccessfully as a Democrat for the House in 1956, 1961 and 1966. Jones accused Bumpers of spending excessively as governor, referring to the \$186 million state office complex, but Bumpers ignored the challenger.¹²⁸ Instead, Bumpers appeared at rallies for Bill Clinton in his challenge to Hammerschmidt. Jones charged that Bumpers was a "spend-thrift" and a McGovern "liberal" but to no avail.¹²⁹

In the race to succeed Lieutenant Governor Riley, Republican Troxell faced Democrat Joe Purcell of Benton, attorney general from 1967-1971. Mrs. Troxell, who was popular among feminists and who served for a time as Rockefeller's Employment Security Division director, promised if elected to "bring decorum" to the state senate, over which the lieutenant governor presides.¹³⁰ She was also among the first to call for the ouster of State Senator Guy Jones after Jones' conviction for income tax evasion and filing false returns.¹³¹ Jones was finally

¹²⁸Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, October 12, 1974, 2719.

¹²⁹Arkansas Gazette, November 3, 1974.

¹³⁰Ibid.

¹³¹Arkansas Outlook, May 1974.

expelled from the senate in late 1974.¹³²

When the ballots were tabulated, Coon had failed to even meet the 40 percent showing his supports had hoped. Pryor won with 358,018, or 65.6 percent, to Coon's 187,872, or 34.4 percent. Coon carried only Sebastian and Searcy counties, with 56.2 and 51.3 percent, respectively. He drew at least 40 percent in twelve other counties. Weston drew a scattered eighty-four votes as a write-in candidate.¹³³ After losing the GOP primary to Coon, Weston joined the American Party and then returned to the Republicans to run again for governor in 1976.¹³⁴ As weak as Coon's showing was, it was no worse than Rockefeller's defeat in 1970.

In the lieutenant governor's race, Purcell defeated Mrs. Troxell, 406,040, or 77 percent, to 121,303, or 23 percent. Mrs. Troxell, who had been the GOP candidate for treasurer six years earlier, carried no counties.¹³⁵ The GOP gained two legislative seats in 1974, with the election of Carolyn Pollan of Fort Smith and James "Jim" Smithson of Marshall to the Arkansas House. Representative Preston Bynum of Siloam Springs was unopposed,

¹³² Ibid., December 1974.

¹³³ Election Statistics, 1974.

¹³⁴ Arkansas Gazette, November 6, 1974; May 26, 1976.

¹³⁵ Election Statistics, 1974.

and the Jim Caldwell state senate seat did not expire in 1974. A few Republicans won selected local offices, including Jim Burnett, elected as Clinton municipal judge, and Buster Tritt, re-elected judge in Logan County.¹³⁶

Bumpers overwhelmed Jones, 461,056, or 84.9 percent, to 82,026, or 15.1 percent. Jones' tabulation was the worst Republican senatorial performance in Arkansas since Fulbright defeated Victor M. Wade in 1944.¹³⁷ Time magazine reacted to Bumpers' triumph by noting that the governor's "charisma" had proved overwhelming. The publication said that many "to their sorrow have had trouble taking him seriously," noting that Bumpers was often referred to as "Dandy Dale, the man with one speech, a shoeshine and a smile."¹³⁸ Time claimed that Bumpers had decided to run for the Senate, rather than the governorship for a third time, due to financial considerations. At the time, Bumpers had a daughter with a serious spinal condition that required expensive medical care. As a senator, Bumpers earned \$42,500 annually in 1975, far

¹³⁶Arkansas Outlook, November 1974; Arkansas Gazette, November 7, 1974.

¹³⁷Election Statistics, 1974; Diamond, ed., Congressional Quarterly's Guide to U.S. Elections, 486.

¹³⁸"Bumpers: Watch That Killer Smile," Time, CIV (November 18, 1974), 10.

more than his \$10,000 gubernatorial salary.¹³⁹ U.S. News and World Report termed Bumpers a "giant killer" in Arkansas politics, noting that he had defeated Faubus, Rockefeller and Fulbright and was perceived as a "new breed" of moderate southern politicians.¹⁴⁰

In the Third District House race, Hammerschmidt narrowly defeated Clinton, 89,324, or 51.8 percent, to 83,030, or 48.2 percent. Clinton carried thirteen counties to only eight for the Republican incumbent. Hammerschmidt won these counties, listed in descending order by percent:

Sebastian (64.3)	Franklin (52.3)
Benton (58.9)	Garland (51.2)
Crawford (56.3)	Washington (51.1)
Boone (53)	Logan (50.4)

Hammerschmidt lost numerous counties that he had previously carried with ease, including Polk (49.2 percent), Pope (48.4 percent), Baxter (47.7 percent) and Marion (45.7 percent). He also lost Carroll, Johnson, Madison, Montgomery, Newton, Perry, Scott, Searcy and Yell counties. Searcy which voted for Coon for governor, cast just 40.6 percent for the Republican congressman.¹⁴¹

Hammerschmidt trailed in the rural counties during

¹³⁹Ibid., 11.

¹⁴⁰U.S. News and World Report, LXXVII (November 18, 1974), 30.

¹⁴¹Election Statistics, 1974.

election night but moved into the lead once Fort Smith returns were tabulated. By Arkansas standards, Fort Smith is a citadel of conservatism; the city rejected urban renewal on four occasions. Fort Smith and Sebastian County has a large fundamentalist religious community that tends to be politically conservative.¹⁴² The 1980 census revealed that Sebastian was 5.2 percent black; the county hence lacks a part of the normal Democratic base, the black vote. Per capita income in 1979 dollars was 6,834, the second highest in the state, rivaled only by Pulaski. The county poverty level was among the numerically lowest in Arkansas but still 13.3 percent. From 1960 to 1980, the Sebastian population increased from 66,685 to 95,172. The population is largely employed in manufacturing, managerial positions and professions.¹⁴³

In the Second District, Mills polled 80,296 votes, carrying all nine counties, while Mrs. Petty trailed with 56,038, or 41.1 percent. The Republican's best tallies were in Saline and Pulaski, where she drew about 46 percent. In the First District, Alexander polled 90.6 percent in his race against Dauer. Republicans did not

¹⁴²Arkansas Gazette, November 7, 1974.

¹⁴³United States Commerce Department, 1980 Census of Population, Arkansas: Summary Characteristics for Governmental Units and Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas (Washington, 1982), 5-1, 5-15, 5-22, 5-29.

challenge Fourth District Representative Ray Thornton, a member of the House Judiciary Committee during the Nixon impeachment hearings.¹⁴⁴

After the 1974 elections, authors Jack Bass and Walter DeVries referred to the Arkansas GOP as a:

faction-ridden organization that still maintained a large state headquarters . . . published a monthly party newspaper, supported a paid staff and could claim one congressman and a quartet of state legislators as major officeholders.¹⁴⁵

The party supported its staff by fund-raising activities, which netted about \$143,000 in 1973 alone. Yet, the GOP seemed to have lost its best issue with the decline of the Arkansas Democratic "Old Guard."¹⁴⁶ Chairman Caldwell said that the party had made it "possible for the right candidate to win under the right circumstances," but when such a breakthrough might occur was uncertain.¹⁴⁷

Caldwell stepped down as chairman in December 1974, and he was succeeded by Lynn Lowe of Texarkana, who had challenged Pryor for Congress in 1966. Lowe defeated three candidates, Dr. Robert Luther of Arkadelphia, later

¹⁴⁴Election Statistics, 1974.

¹⁴⁵Bass and DeVries, The Transformation of Southern Politics, 104.

¹⁴⁶Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, October 26, 1974, 2960.

¹⁴⁷Ibid.

the Republican executive director; Marshall Martin of Benton, the Saline County chairman and former aide to Rockefeller; and Bob Scott of Little Rock, a moderate and former Rockefeller associate.¹⁴⁸ Though regarded as a conservative, Lowe was friendly with Vice-President Nelson Rockefeller, who had been nominated to fill the second slot in the administration by President Ford in the aftermath of the Nixon resignation. Lowe said that Nelson Rockefeller was popular among many Arkansas Republicans because of the "feelings for his brother," the late Winthrop Rockefeller. Yet, the Arkansas chairman said that a more conservative running-mate might be needed for Ford in 1976.¹⁴⁹

In February 1975, President Ford replaced Lynn Davis as the Republican U.S. marshal for the Eastern District of Arkansas, apparently as a gesture to please Senator McClellan, who regarded Davis as too partisan for the position. Instead, Ford nominated, and the Senate confirmed, Len Blaylock, the defeated 1972 gubernatorial candidate, as the marshal. Davis technically resigned after McClellan announced that he would not support the

¹⁴⁸ Arkansas Outlook, December 1974; Arkansas Gazette, December 8, 1974.

¹⁴⁹ Arkansas Outlook, October 1975.

Republican's renomination.¹⁵⁰ By the fall of 1975, Coon resigned as GOP executive director to begin work on his doctorate in educational counseling at the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville.¹⁵¹ Having completed his program in 1978, Coon subsequently reappeared as Governor Frank White's appointee to head the Employment Security Division.¹⁵² Judy Petty vowed in May 1975 to again seek the U.S. House seat in 1976, but she abandoned those plans to head the presidential drive for Ronald Reagan, who had campaigned on her behalf in the hard-fought race against Mills.¹⁵³ Heading the campaign for President Ford in Arkansas were Dorothy Webb of Little Rock and Guy Newcomb of Osceola, the 1968 Republican challenger to Congressman Alexander and an early supporter of Barry Goldwater in the 1964 presidential race.¹⁵⁴

Under Arkansas law, both parties were required to conduct presidential primaries, the results of which bound

¹⁵⁰Ibid., February 1975; March 1975.

¹⁵¹Ibid., October 1975.

¹⁵²Arkansas Gazette, October 24, 1981.

¹⁵³Arkansas Outlook, May 1975; April 1976.

¹⁵⁴Ibid., April 1976.

delegates for one ballot at the nominating conventions. Attention on the Ford-Reagan contest blossomed in Arkansas after Reagan scored a shutout of the president in the May 1 Texas primary. Ford supporters still believed that their man could win in Arkansas due to the absence of a large Democratic crossover vote. As there were contests for state and local offices in the May 25 Democratic primaries, most conservative Democrats were expected to avoid the GOP contest. In Texas, on the other hand, thousands of Democrats had crossed party lines to vote for Reagan. In addition to the absence of a large crossover, staunch Rockefeller loyalists were solidly for Ford.¹⁵⁵ These individuals had stood behind Winthrop Rockefeller in his four gubernatorial races. Many also admired Nelson Rockefeller, who on November 3 took himself out of contention as the 1976 vice-presidential candidate with Ford.¹⁵⁶

The Republican primary vote was concentrated in the Ozark Mountains of the northwest and metropolitan Little Rock. Ford managers in those areas worked closely with Mrs. Webb, a board member of the National Federation of

¹⁵⁵Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, May 8, 1976, 1086.

¹⁵⁶Michael S. Kramer and Sam Roberts, I Never Wanted to Be Vice-President of Anything (New York, 1976), 376.

Republican Women. One party source remarked that the "Ford people here are vociferous now. They got the hell beat out of them in Texas."¹⁵⁷ About half of those Republicans seeking positions as Ford delegates had some official party connection. The Reagan support was expected to come from the most conservative Republican ranks and numerous disaffected Democrats in southern and eastern Arkansas, some of whom had once supported George C. Wallace until his withdrawal from the 1976 contest after the Democratic lead shifted firmly to former Georgia Governor Jimmy Carter. While the Ford supporters wanted to resurrect the old Rockefeller coalition in Arkansas, Mrs. Petty spoke of the need to rebuild the bipartisan conservative base that contributed to Nixon's 1972 victory in the state. Mrs. Petty insisted that the Rockefeller coalition could not be revived because Carter had a lock on moderate and liberal Democrats.¹⁵⁸

While 32,541 Arkansans cast ballots in the 1976 GOP presidential primary, the Democratic contest drew more than 500,000 participants. Carter led with 62.8 percent, trailed by Wallace's 16.3 percent, tallied after the

¹⁵⁷Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, May 8, 1976, 1086.

¹⁵⁸Ibid.

Alabamian had withdrawn from the race.¹⁵⁹ In the GOP contest, Reagan led with 20,628, or 63.4 percent, to Ford's 11,430, or 35.1 percent. Another 483 cast ballots for uncommitted delegates, representing the remaining 1.5 percent. Reagan carried sixty-nine counties, while Ford led in three. Two counties, Fulton and Sevier, cast equal numbers of votes for both candidates. Woodruff County cast no Republican primary ballots. In only six counties were more than one thousand votes cast in the party contest. These are listed in descending order of popular votes cast, with the Reagan percent in parentheses:

Sebastian, 6,451 (67.8)	Benton, 2,832 (56)
Pulaski, 5,646 (62)	Garland, 2,395 (58.7)
Washington, 3,677 (61.6)	Baxter, 1,678 (56.4)

Ford carried Madison County, 120-119, and he led in Newton with 60.3 percent and Monroe with 52.5 percent, although the turnout in Monroe was only 61 votes. Reagan received 100 percent in Chicot County, where only four cast ballots in the GOP primary. Reagan polled more than 80 percent in Calhoun, Columbia, Crawford, Howard, Little River, Lincoln, Miller, Pike and Polk counties, but in some of those, only a handful participated.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁹Ibid., May 29, 1976, 1330.

¹⁶⁰Election Statistics, 1976.

Governor David Pryor was so strong in his 1976 re-election drive that the Republicans could find no serious challenger. The party hoped to recruit Jim Lindsey, a 31-year-old Fayetteville insurance broker and former University of Arkansas and Minnesota Vikings football player who had returned home to enter business, to oppose Pryor. Lindsey, however, filed as a Democratic opponent to the governor. Running on a conservative platform, Lindsey attacked Pryor on the crime issue, noting a 20 percent increase in Arkansas during 1975. After Lindsey refused the GOP invitation, the party permitted Leon Griffith, a 40-year-old plumber from Pine Bluff, to stand alone as the primary challenger to the cantankerous Joseph Weston, the Cave City editor again making mischief for the weak GOP organization.¹⁶¹ Pryor had firmly united the Democrats by sticking to his pledge to avoid further tax increases and with the selection of reform Democrats to state positions. He appointed the first woman to fill a vacancy on the Arkansas Supreme Court. Pryor also took issue with organized labor, which had long backed him, in a Pine Bluff firefighters strike. The governor even called out the Arkansas National Guard when the strikers

¹⁶¹Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, May 15, 1976, 1220.

refused to end their walkout. Pryor, however, was troubled by the breakup of his marriage and the emotional illness of his wife. It was not clear whether the publicity about his marital problems caused him political damage or generated sympathy.¹⁶²

In the summer of 1976, the liberal Republican Ripon Society claimed that Arkansas party officials had approached Orval Faubus about his running for governor on the GOP ticket. The group termed the suggestion "an ignominious end to the reform heritage" of the Rockefeller era. Faubus and party leaders, however, denied that such talk ever occurred.¹⁶³

Griffith won the primary, defeating Weston, 15,500, or 59.5 percent, to 10,540, or 40.5 percent. The acid-tongued editor again embarrassed the GOP with his peculiar antics when he told a group of farmers that World War III had begun and that they should lay up provisions.¹⁶⁴ The larger GOP gubernatorial primary turnout in 1976 was clearly attributed to the Ford-Reagan rivalry. About ten thousand who participated in the presidential primary declined to vote in the Griffith-Weston

¹⁶² Ibid., February 21, 1976, 355.

¹⁶³ Ripon Forum, XII (June 15, 1976), 2.

¹⁶⁴ Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, May 15, 1976, 1220; May 29, 1976, 1393.

race.¹⁶⁵

As a result of Reagan's victory in the Arkansas primary, Mrs. Petty headed the state delegation to the Kansas City, Missouri, convention. She ordered one delegate off the official Reagan list because he was suspected by the conservative majority of loyalty to Ford. Jonathan Barnett of Siloam Springs, however, challenged Mrs. Petty's decision to replace him with Glenn Hopkins, Jr., of Van Buren, who was supported by the Reagan organization. The credentials committee ruled in favor of Barnett. To make certain that Barnett remained with Reagan, the party reaffirmed that anyone who voted contrary to their previously expressed position would be "adequately disciplined." While the delegate allocations were determined as a result of the primary, the individual delegates were chosen through caucus. To unify the state party, Mrs. Webb was named vice-chairman of the delegation.¹⁶⁶ The 1976 GOP presidential primary attracted fewer than 35,000 participants; therefore, the party leadership claimed a caucus system would be more conducive to party-building. Hence, the primary was scrapped in 1980 in favor of the party-official caucus. At the time, some Reagan

¹⁶⁵Ibid., May 29, 1976, 1330.

¹⁶⁶Ibid., August 14, 1976, 2187-2188.

supporters claimed the action was an effort to keep the former California governor from again securing a delegate majority in Arkansas.¹⁶⁷

The Carter-Ford presidential race was the main attraction in Arkansas politics in 1976, but Carter's lead was so decisive from the start of the campaign that the Republicans could not make the contest very competitive. The GOP offered a potentially strong candidate against Congressman Alexander in 1976, Harlan "Bo" Holleman, a 49-year-old seed merchant from Wynne in Cross County. Holleman, a staunch conservative, campaigned on the theory that Alexander was weak in the agricultural community. Some farmers had complained that when Alexander vacated his House Agriculture Committee seat in 1975 for a position on the appropriations panel he was in fact ignoring agricultural needs. Others claimed that Alexander had not returned to the district enough to acquaint himself with constituent problems. Holleman hoped to form a majority with farmers and conservative retirees in the district's northern counties. The Republican emphasized his earlier service as director of the oil seeds division of the Agriculture Department and criticized the closing of Blytheville Air Force Base. Holleman also

¹⁶⁷Ibid., February 9, 1980, 353.

supported construction of a federally-built dam on the Strawberry River, one which was expected to attract new tourism to northeastern Arkansas. Holleman's initiative, however, seemed doomed from the start in that the First District was a GOP "longshot even in a strong Republican year."¹⁶⁸

Senator Strom Thurmond of South Carolina campaigned for both President Ford and Holleman. In a Little Rock appearance, Thurmond criticized Carter's proposal to reduce military spending, claiming that the defense budget had "already been cut to the bone." Thurmond's support for the GOP ticket in 1976 was noteworthy in that he backed Reagan at the convention.¹⁶⁹

Holleman attempted to win black support in the First District, winning the backing of Elijah Coleman of Pine Bluff, a black Republican educator and publisher. The black Ministerial Alliance in Helena also endorsed Holleman, but when the votes were tabulated the black community voted overwhelmingly for Carter and Alexander.¹⁷⁰

Besides the Holleman candidacy, Arkansas Republicans supported the re-election of Congressman Hammerschmidt,

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., October 9, 1976, 2774; Arkansas Gazette, November 3, 1976.

¹⁶⁹ Arkansas Outlook, September 1976; Arkansas Gazette, November 3, 1976.

¹⁷⁰ Arkansas Gazette, November 3, 1976.

who the Democrats declined to challenge in 1976, in view of the Third District incumbent's defeat of Bill Clinton two years earlier in a heavily Democratic year. The GOP also fielded James J. Kelly as the token opponent in the Second Congressional District, where Mills was retiring in favor of Attorney General Jim Guy Tucker, the Democratic candidate for the seat. Meanwhile, Clinton captured the Democratic nod to succeed Tucker as attorney general and ran without GOP opposition for the post.

Gubernatorial candidate Griffith often complained about his lack of media coverage and campaign funding. Once he reportedly threatened to withdraw from the race against Pryor unless the state GOP gave him more financial support. During the campaign Griffith moved to North Little Rock and ultimately spent less than \$10,000 on the race, relying on the small GOP staff at state headquarters. The lack of funding for Griffith appeared to be a reflection of the nearly hopeless party position.¹⁷¹ Pryor concentrated on recruiting support for Carter, whose overall Arkansas campaign was directed by the former McGovern staffer, Bill Clinton.¹⁷²

¹⁷¹Ibid.

¹⁷²Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, October 9, 1976, 2756.

A Carter victory was never particularly in doubt in Arkansas, as the Democratic nominee had the support of blacks and moderate whites who took pride in a candidate from their region of the country. Carter ran well with the Arkansas evangelical community. Senator McClellan announced that he would vote for Carter, as he had all earlier Democratic nominees, but he admitted that he felt somewhat philosophically closer to Ford on many issues. McClellan, apparently in a humorous vein, remarked that he and Ford agreed, for instance, that "Congress wants to spend too much money."¹⁷³ The Arkansas Gazette warmly embraced Carter, as it had all earlier Democratic presidential nominees. The paper remarked that it:

is recognized that Ford has much support in the state's upper-income brackets and among knee-jerk conservatives generally, but it is practically impossible to see any way he could carry Arkansas against a native southerner.¹⁷⁴

Little Rock's other daily newspaper, the Arkansas Democrat, issued a weak endorsement of Ford, claiming that Carter's spending proposals were "too extreme."¹⁷⁵ Ironically, Carter campaign spokesman Bill Clinton claimed after the election that the president-elect was "a fiscal

¹⁷³Arkansas Gazette, November 1, 1976.

¹⁷⁴Ibid.

¹⁷⁵Arkansas Democrat, November 1, 1976.

conservative and responsible money manager."¹⁷⁶ In its endorsement of the Democrats, the Pine Bluff Commercial said that Carter offered "a vision for America, an expression of moral concern and a compassionate agenda for the future."¹⁷⁷

Senator Bumpers, who also worked for Carter, told reporters that a Democratic loss in 1976 would "make it hard for another southerner to be elected president." Bumpers assailed President Ford, claiming that the Democratic Congress "has mercifully saved this man from himself and mercifully saved this country from him," referring to congressional action to override numerous Ford vetoes of domestic spending proposals.¹⁷⁸

Ford's Arkansas supporters hoped for a conservative backlash against the increasingly liberal Carter. Yet Ford himself faced the potentially disastrous defection of Reagan backers still heartsick over the verdict at Kansas City.¹⁷⁹ Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report offered this analysis of GOP prospects in Arkansas:

¹⁷⁶Pine Bluff Commercial, November 4, 1976.

¹⁷⁷Ibid.

¹⁷⁸Arkansas Democrat, November 2, 1976.

¹⁷⁹Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, October 9, 1976, 2756.

Ten years after Arkansas Republicans began their resurgence under the late Winthrop A. Rockefeller, they are back where they were before Rockefeller arrived on the scene. . . . The GOP apparatus built by Rockefeller has self-destructed. Republicans have resumed their traditional role as the second party in a one-party state.¹⁸⁰

An unidentified Democratic senator was quoted in 1976 as having remarked that the Carter-Ford race had "all the issue content of a student council race." Carter's speeches were considered "dull and shallow," and Ford was made to appear foolish when he claimed "there is no Soviet domination of Eastern Europe" in one of their three televised debates.¹⁸¹ In Arkansas, the presidential race had to share attention with a labor-initiated campaign to modify the state right-to-work law. Had the AFL-CIO-backed constitutional Amendment 59 passed, it could have increased union membership by an estimated twenty thousand within a decade. In 1976, Arkansas unions represented about 115,000 of the 700,000 workers in the nonfarm labor force. To promote the amendment, labor lined up the support of blacks, feminists, ministers and certain independent unions. In opposition to the amendment were the

¹⁸⁰Ibid., 2773.

¹⁸¹Quoted in Leuchtenburg, A Troubled Feast, 275-276.

Chamber of Commerce, Farm Bureau Federation and other business groups. The National Right-to-Work Committee campaigned against Carter on grounds he would seek to abolish right-to-work. In the campaign, Carter promised to sign into law a bill to abolish state right-to-work laws but indicated that he would not lead the push for such changes in labor legislation.¹⁸² Though Arkansas embraced Carter, it refused to scrap its right-to-work law.

Carter prevailed nationally with 50.1 percent to Ford's 48 percent. Eugene J. McCarthy of Minnesota, running as an independent, drew 1.9 percent of the national popular vote. The Democratic victory was heavily dependent on Carter's sweep of ten of the eleven former Confederate states; only Virginia remained with the Republican president.¹⁸³ U.S. News and World Report concluded that Carter's southern support stemmed "almost entirely on regional pride in a native son, not on issues or policies."¹⁸⁴

In Arkansas, 75.2 percent of registered voters went

¹⁸² "A Right-to-Work Fight Splits Arkansas," Business Week, November 8, 1976, 37, 40.

¹⁸³ Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, March 19, 1977, 488.

¹⁸⁴ U.S. News and World Report, LXXXI (November 15, 1976), 20.

to the polls, and Carter received 498,604 ballots, or 65 percent. Ford trailed with 267,903, or 35 percent. Another 639 votes were cast for independent McCarthy, while the rightist Thomas J. Anderson of Tennessee drew 389 votes on the American Party label. Carter's victory was impressive in size and scope, as Ford polled majorities in just three counties, all traditionally Republican at the presidential level. Even there, the GOP vote was far below that in earlier years. Benton and Sebastian counties each cast 52.9 percent for Ford, and Baxter County gave him 50.5 percent. Ford polled at least 40 percent in twelve other counties, including Union, where he received 49 percent, and Columbia, which gave him 47.7 percent. Ford received only 47.5 percent in traditionally Republican Washington County, 47.1 percent in Newton County and 46.1 percent in both Madison and Searcy counties. Clearly, the gubernatorial coalitions of 1966 and 1968 and the presidential combinations of 1972 had all been shattered in Arkansas Republican politics in 1976.¹⁸⁵

In the gubernatorial contest, Griffith lost every county, polling 121,716 votes, or 16.7 percent, to Democrat Pryor's 605,083, or 83.2 percent. The returns for the gubernatorial race were the worst for the state GOP since 1952, when Jefferson W. Speck polled 12.6 percent

¹⁸⁵Election Statistics, 1976.

against Democrat Francis Cherry.¹⁸⁶ One change that began in 1977 with Pryor's second term was the raising of the gubernatorial salary from the longstanding \$10,000 to \$35,000. Other salaries were increased accordingly.¹⁸⁷

In the First District, Alexander defeated Holleman, 116,217, or 68.9 percent, to 52,565, or 31.1 percent. Holleman received the exact percent as had the first GOP candidate against Alexander, Guy Newcomb in 1968. Holleman fared no better than 42.8 percent in his native Cross County. Turnout in the district was 70.2 percent.¹⁸⁸ In the Second District, Democrat Tucker swamped Republican Kelly, taking 86.4 percent. Time magazine contended that Tucker, Mills' successor, was a "moderate New South Democrat who is considered to be a rising political star."¹⁸⁹ The Republicans gained a single representative in 1976, emerging with one senator and four House members. The new legislator was C.W. Melson of Ozone, representing Newton and Johnson counties.¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁶Ibid.; Diamond, ed., Congressional Quarterly's Guide to U.S. Elections, 399.

¹⁸⁷World Almanac and Book of Facts, 1978 (New York, 1977), 249.

¹⁸⁸Election Statistics, 1976.

¹⁸⁹Ibid.; Time, CVIII (November 15, 1976), 48.

¹⁹⁰Arkansas Gazette, November 4, 1976.

James Sheets, the former legislator and Republican candidate for secretary of state in 1970, managed Ford's 1976 campaign in Arkansas. On Carter's election, Sheets remarked that "they say this is the most Democratic state in the country, and it's true."¹⁹¹ Actually, Arkansas gave Carter his third highest vote, surpassed only by the District of Columbia and Georgia.¹⁹² Congressional candidate Holleman said that he lost because "there is still a stronger Republican-Democrat feeling in Arkansas than we thought."¹⁹³

In the aftermath of the Carter victory, the Arkansas Gazette predicted that the new Democratic administration would lead to long-awaited national health insurance, urban relief and an expansion of black civil rights.¹⁹⁴ For Arkansas Republicans, however, the 1976 presidential election outcome meant a bleak future. Prior to his defeat, Ford had nominated Searcy attorney Ed Bethune to succeed the retiring U.S. District Judge Oren Harris of El Dorado. Senate Democrats, acting on the recommendation of Bumpers, delayed Bethune's confirmation so that

¹⁹¹Ibid.

¹⁹²Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, March 19, 1977, 488.

¹⁹³Arkansas Gazette, November 3, 1976.

¹⁹⁴Ibid., November 4, 1976.

Carter could make the appointment. In voting to postpone Bethune's confirmation, Bumpers claimed that he, not the Republicans, was seeking to end the injection of partisanship into such political appointments.¹⁹⁵ In 1981, Congressman Ed Bethune was in a position to block the reappointment of Bumpers' cousin, Charles Gray, as U.S. marshal for the Eastern District of Arkansas. Bethune not only declined to stop the reappointment; he endorsed Gray as the best qualified choice despite opposition from Republican partisans.¹⁹⁶

Republicans did win a handful of local victories in Arkansas in 1976. Republican Sheriff Loren Reeves won in Searcy County with a 62 percent margin. Searcy County Clerk George Swiderski won by a similar margin. Republican Jim Todd lost in his determined bid to unseat Conway County Sheriff Marlin Hawkins but forced the incumbent to deny that he had ever embezzled public funds. Hawkins was challenged by Todd for placing tax funds in his personal bank account. Meanwhile, the party re-elected Lynn Lowe to a second two-year term as chairman.¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁵Arkansas Outlook, November 1976.

¹⁹⁶Arkansas Gazette, October 23, 1981.

¹⁹⁷Arkansas Outlook, November 1976; December 1976.

As Jimmy Carter and Bill Clinton took their oaths of office in January 1977, the Republican Party appeared at a low ebb both nationally and especially in Arkansas. A renaissance seemed light years away for the GOP, as Arkansas by most accounts was firmly and apparently irrevocably in the grips of the Democrats.

CHAPTER X

A REPUBLICAN RENAISSANCE?

In the early 1970s, Martha Mitchell, the outspoken wife of Attorney General John Mitchell, was often listed among the "most admired" women in America.¹ A native of Pine Bluff, Arkansas, Mrs. Mitchell captivated the nation with her disclosures of wrongdoing in the Nixon White House. While at first enthusiastic about the Nixon administration, Martha began to criticize the president as early as June 1972, when the celebrated break-in occurred at the Democratic National Committee headquarters in the Watergate complex in Washington. During the weekend of the break-in, Martha insisted that she had been "kidnaped" and given an injection against her will by a security official for the Committee to Re-Elect the President, Stephen B. King. Within days after the break-in, Martha threatened to leave her husband unless he resigned as the Nixon campaign manager.² By May 1973, Martha claimed that her husband was "covering" for Nixon, who she insisted had

¹Washington Post, January 3, 1972; Chicago Tribune, January 11, 1972.

²New York Times, June 26, 27, 1972; Los Angeles Times, June 26, 1972; Washington Post, June 26, 1972.

early knowledge of the break-in at the Watergate.³ Four months later, Martha told the press that John Mitchell had walked out on her, attributing the break-up of the marriage to the Watergate affair.⁴ Later, convicted Watergate conspirator James W. McCord, Jr., who had been John Mitchell's bodyguard, confirmed that Martha had been "basically kidnapped" and taken to the Newport Inn in Newport Beach, California, to keep her ignorant of the burglary.⁵ Martha also charged that White House officials had spread "lies and rumors galore" about her, including one involving her alleged commitment to an insane asylum.⁶

By 1970, Martha had begun to criticize the voting record of Senator J. William Fulbright. She specifically objected to Fulbright's opposition to the Nixon Vietnam policies and the nomination of Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals Judge G. Harrold Carswell of Florida to fill a vacancy on the Supreme Court. Nixon initially nominated Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals Judge Clement F. Haynsworth, Jr., of South Carolina to succeed Abe Fortas, who

³Washington Post, May 19, 1973.

⁴Los Angeles Times, September 17, 1973.

⁵Chicago Tribune, February 19, 1975.

⁶New York Times, June 1, 1976.

resigned in 1969 for improperly accepting a \$20,000 foundation fee.⁷ The Senate rejected Haynsworth's nomination on grounds of alleged hostility toward civil rights and labor policies. Nixon subsequently appointed another southerner, Carswell, whose name was suggested by John Mitchell. Mitchell first heard of the Floridian through Chief Justice Warren Earl Burger, who had served on the U.S. Court of Appeals in Washington from 1956 through 1969. Burger had considered Carswell to have been an able U.S. attorney and, later, appeals court judge.⁸

After Fulbright voted against the Carswell nomination (though he had supported Haynsworth), Martha made a late-night telephone call to the Arkansas Gazette newspaper, demanding that the Little Rock daily paper "crucify" the state's junior senator. Actually, Mrs. Mitchell had intended to call the more conservative Arkansas Democrat, but because she thought the name "Democrat" referred to the more liberal publication, she called the Gazette. In view of the controversial nature of the call, the Gazette kept a transcript of the conversation in which Martha said

⁷Winzola McLendon, Martha: The Life of Martha Mitchell (New York, 1979), 96.

⁸Ibid., 102-103; Who's Who in America, 42nd edition (1982-1983), Vol. 1 (Chicago, 1982), 453.

Fulbright's opposition to Carswell "makes me so damn mad, I can't stand it. . . . I want you to crucify Fulbright, and that's it."⁹ The fact that Martha could confuse the two major Arkansas dailies was a testimony to her long absence from the state. She had become more New Yorker than Arkansas, unlike Winthrop Rockefeller who had made the reverse transformation. Opposition to Carswell surfaced when the press revealed that he had once voiced white supremacist views and had allegedly been rude toward civil rights lawyers arguing cases before his court. By a 51-45 vote, the Senate hence halted Nixon's second effort to name a southerner to the Supreme Court.¹⁰ Nixon later named Harry A. Blackmun of Minnesota to fill the court vacancy, claiming at the time that the Senate as then constituted would not confirm any southern appointee.

The mild-mannered Fulbright, always a "polite and proper gentleman," could not forgive Martha for her outspokenness. Later, when the Mitchells attended a French Embassy dinner for President Georges Pompidou, Martha was seated next to Fulbright. He said not one word to her during the occasion. Years earlier in 1938, Martha, as

⁹Arkansas Gazette, April 10, 1970.

¹⁰New York Times, February 6, 1970; April 9, 1970.

a student at the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville, played tennis with the university president, J. William Fulbright. In the midst of the Watergate disclosures, the troubled Martha even threatened to return to Arkansas to become the Republican candidate against Fulbright in 1974. Then, Dale Bumpers defeated Fulbright in the Democratic primary, and Martha was apparently just talking; she never filed for office.¹¹

Martha's outspokenness, at first encouraged by President Nixon, soon became an albatross for the Republicans.¹² One unidentified female Republican remarked that Martha "just embarrasses me out of my socks."¹³ Martha's story is a pathetic one of a weary woman deserted by her husband, daughter and friends in the throes of a losing fight against bone marrow cancer.¹⁴ One month before her death, Martha won a suit against her estranged husband for \$36,000 in back alimony. The suit text stated that she was "without funds and friends." The cancer was initially diagnosed in late 1975, and Martha went into isolation, attended at times only by her son from a

¹¹McLendon, Martha, 41, 156, 295.

¹²Washington Post, July 19, 1972.

¹³Quoted in McLendon, Martha, 111.

¹⁴Los Angeles Times, October 8, 1975.

previous marriage, Jay Jennings. Daughter Marty sided with John Mitchell in the separation and refused to visit her dying mother.¹⁵ John and Marty did not accompany the body to Arkansas for the funeral. No member of the family met the plane in Pine Bluff. In handling the arrangements, the hard-nosed Mitchell requested no visitation at the funeral home. He also refused to reserve a seat for Martha's friend, Cornelia Wallace, then the first lady of Alabama.¹⁶ In 1975, Mitchell had been sentenced to two and one-half to eight years imprisonment on conviction of perjury and conspiracy to obstruct justice in the Watergate scandal. On receiving his sentence, the former attorney general remarked that, "it could have been a hell of a lot worse. They could have sentenced me to spend the rest of my life with Martha."¹⁷

Martha was buried in a Pine Bluff cemetery on June 3, 1976. A green-and-white floral arrangement, sent anonymously by an admirer, said "Martha Was Right."¹⁸ In 1977, the Pine Bluff Commercial announced that it would initiate a fund-raising drive to erect a memorial at the

¹⁵New York Times, June 1, 1976.

¹⁶McLendon, Martha, 381.

¹⁷New York Times, February 22, 1975.

¹⁸Pine Bluff Commercial, June 4, 1976.

municipal civic center to Arkansas' well-known Cabinet wife. The drive developed after the exiled Richard Nixon told British television interviewer David Frost that the Watergate affair resulted from Martha's penchant for media exposure. "If it hadn't been for Martha, there'd have been no Watergate," said Nixon.¹⁹ The Pine Bluff Commercial received letters from Martha's defenders and decided to undertake the drive for a memorial. A bust of Mrs. Mitchell was completed in 1981. In 1978, Martha's girlhood home was placed on the National Register of Historic Places, and a part of U.S. Highway 65 which passes the cemetery was renamed the "Martha Mitchell Expressway."²⁰ Each year, hundreds stop by the grave and visit the home, restored through the efforts of Pine Bluff businessman Robert Abbott and Martha's son. Abbott said many have a "soft spot for Martha. They feel like she was mistreated, and they all say she was right about Watergate."²¹

Meanwhile, Arkansas Republicans faced continuing attrition of appointed officials named to state boards and commissions by the late Governor Rockefeller. In 1968, Rockefeller had first appointed J.C. "Jake"

¹⁹New York Times, May 5, 1977.

²⁰McLendon, Martha, 386.

²¹New York Times, April 3, 1979.

Patterson of Lavaca in Sebastian County to the Arkansas Highway Commission. By 1977, Patterson, who had nearly two years remaining in his term, succeeded to the chairmanship. A long-time advocate of highway construction in northwestern Arkansas, Patterson was forced out as chairman after one month by the commission's Democratic majority who claimed that the Republican could not work well with Director Henry C. Gray.²² After his term on the commission expired, Patterson ran unsuccessfully for the Arkansas Senate from Franklin, Logan and part of Sebastian counties.²³

In the 1978 elections, the GOP was not expected to actively contest either the governorship or the U.S. Senate seat held until November 27, 1977, by John L. McClellan. McClellan died unexpectedly in his sleep six days after he re-confirmed that he would not run in 1978. In his 1972 campaign, McClellan had then announced that he would henceforth not seek another term. McClellan, who had served in the House from 1935-1939, assumed the Senate post after his 1942 election. He lost a 1938 Democratic primary to Senator Hattie W. Caraway.²⁴ Governor

²²Arkansas Outlook, February 1977; March 1977.

²³Ibid., April 1978; November 1978.

²⁴Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, December 3, 1977, 2529.

David Pryor, who had challenged McClellan in the 1972 primary, named an interim replacement, 39-year-old Newport lawyer and minister, Kaneaster Hodges, Jr., as liberal as the late senator was conservative. Under state law, Hodges could not run for the seat in 1978, and Pryor avoided alienating moderates and liberals in selecting Hodges, who while he had backed McClellan in 1972 had aided Pryor in the 1974 and 1976 gubernatorial campaigns. Pryor planned to seek the seat himself.²⁵

Some Republicans wanted Third District Congressman John Paul Hammerschmidt to run for senator, but once again the representative declined. The GOP seemed unable to find a suitable candidate other than the former defeated standard-bearers, Wayne H. Babbitt, McClellan's 1972 opponent, and Harlan "Bo" Holleman, the Wynne seed merchant and soybean farmer defeated in 1976 by First District Congressman Bill Alexander.²⁶ Babbitt and Holleman decided not to run for the seat, leaving the field to a 36-year-old liberal Republican who professed admiration for such figures as Senators Charles Percy of Illinois and Mark Hatfield of Oregon. He was William Thomas "Tom" Kelly, Jr., of Little Rock, a former writer

²⁵Ibid., December 17, 1977, 2615.

²⁶Ibid., February 25, 1978, 422-423.

for the Arkansas Gazette who had a master's degree in international management and spoke four foreign languages. Kelly had headed an international cultural exchange program after a stint in Africa with the Peace Corps. He was the oldest of fourteen children of William Thomas Kelly, Sr., the former Winthrop Rockefeller ally who had sought the state chairman's post against Charles Bernard in 1970.²⁷

Pryor won the Democratic nomination in a heated runoff contest with Representative James Guy Tucker, Jr., the freshman congressman from the Second District. In the first primary, voters had narrowly eliminated a third candidate, Ray K. Thornton, Jr., the former attorney general and Fourth District congressman since 1973.²⁸ Attracting numerous young volunteers, Kelly waged a spirited but futile campaign against Pryor, terming the outgoing governor a "pernicious purveyor of platitudes and a mass of mediocrity."²⁹ Kelly cited Pryor's involvement with Korean rice broker Tongsun Park, who had invited Pryor to Korea at the time the governor was a member of the House. Park thought that Congressman Pryor might

²⁷Ibid., June 3, 1978, 1382; Arkansas Outlook, April 1978.

²⁸Arkansas Gazette, June 14, 1978.

²⁹Arkansas Outlook, September 1978.

provide a conduit to Senator Fulbright, whom Park regarded as "anti-Korea" in his outlook as chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee. Pryor took the trip to Korea but denied trying to influence Fulbright and indicated that he could no longer remember the purpose of the mission. Kelly claimed that since Pryor had problems "remembering what happened to him the last time he was in Washington, it might be better for him to stay home this time around."³⁰

Tucker's defeat in the senatorial runoff encouraged a major Republican push for the open House seat vacated by the freshman representative. Republican attorney Ed Bethune, who had declined to challenge Tucker in 1976, agreed to run in 1978, if the party would offer full, no-holds-barred support. To replace Tucker, the Democrats chose a moderate 45-year-old state representative from Pulaski County, Douglas Brandon. Brandon faced several primary opponents, including William "Bill" Clark of Little Rock and former State Representative Cecil Alexander. In the runoff, Brandon defeated Alexander with 52.1 percent.³¹

³⁰Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, October 14, 1978, 2803.

³¹Ibid., June 17, 1978, 1563; Election Statistics, 1978 (Little Rock: Secretary of State).

Five Democrats entered the race to succeed Pryor, including the acknowledged front-runner, Attorney General William "Bill" Clinton, who had managed Jimmy Carter's Arkansas campaign two years earlier. In the first primary, Clinton defeated his four opponents with 59.4 percent, a showing some considered unimpressive in view of the weak opposition.³² Clinton supported the Equal Rights Amendment, which was never ratified in Arkansas, but he moderated his position by terming ERA a "dead issue" in that the legislature had repeatedly rejected it.³³

To challenge Clinton, the Republicans turned to their state chairman, A. Lynn Lowe of Texarkana. Lowe, however, faced nearly insurmountable odds, as most voters assumed that Clinton would win even before the general election campaign began. While some conservative Republicans would not support the liberal Kelly for senator, the GOP united behind Lowe's campaign. Lowe found few suitable issues on which to test Clinton's appeal but gained some attention after Clinton announced his opposition to a "Proposition 13" style ballot referendum asking voters whether they wished to remove the state sales taxes on groceries

³²Election Statistics, 1978.

³³Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, May 20, 1978, 1233.

and prescription drugs. Clinton contended that the state could not afford to lose the \$60 million the change was expected to cost and pointed to a potentially tight financial picture. Lowe, however, noted an existing \$40 million state surplus and urged repeal of the taxes.³⁴ Not only did the voters select Clinton as governor; they also rejected the removal of the sales taxes by a 55-45 percent margin.³⁵

Among those supporting Lowe was Clinton's nemesis from the 1974 congressional election, Representative Hammerschmidt, himself a former GOP state chairman. Hammerschmidt's influence was considered critical in Lowe's victory in Boone County in 1978.³⁶ Hammerschmidt himself faced a weak Democratic challenger in Hot Springs real estate broker William C. Mears.

Clinton's prospects were considered so bright in the spring of 1978 that the Arkadelphia Southern Standard claimed the Democrat could not lose "unless he stumbles badly or is caught molesting a nun in the process of robbing the church widows' and orphans' funds."³⁷ U.S. News

³⁴Ibid., October 14, 1978, 2804.

³⁵Election Statistics, 1978.

³⁶Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, October 14, 1978, 2804.

³⁷Quoted from Arkadelphia Southern Standard in Ibid., May 20, 1978, 1232.

and World Report agreed, noting that no southern state in 1978 was "tougher to crack for the Republicans than Arkansas, and it's going to stay that way."³⁸ Clinton, at thirty-two, became the youngest person elected governor since Harold E. Stassen won in Minnesota in 1938, at the age of thirty-one. Clinton was termed at the time of his first election "a living monument to the god 'Charisma.'"³⁹

Republican strategists were hopeful that the 42-year-old Bethune could upset Democrat Brandon, the owner of a chain of Little Rock furniture stores, because Bethune had outpolled Tucker in Pulaski County in their 1972 race for attorney general. Tucker had made enemies among conservatives, including the Little Rock business community and police force. Prior to their 1972 race, there were charges that Tucker, as the Pulaski prosecutor, had been slow in pushing a controversial murder case. Brandon, however, was more conservative than Tucker but had been committed for years on behalf of rural road construction and prison reforms. In the Democratic runoff, Brandon campaigned against the more liberal Cecil Alexander as

³⁸U.S. News and World Report, LXXXV (October 16, 1978), 32.

³⁹Ibid., November 20, 1978, 33.

the only Democrat who could defeat Bethune, an assertion that gave the Republican more credibility than he might have otherwise attracted.⁴⁰ Rumors circulated that Tucker supporters were reluctant to work for Brandon on the theory that if Tucker sought a comeback in 1980, he would prefer to oppose a Republican, rather than a Democratic, incumbent.⁴¹ In July, Bethune endorsed the "supply-side" tax reduction plan offered by Representative Jack F. Kemp of New York and Senator William V. Roth of Delaware. After winning the House seat, Bethune became a close associate of Kemp.⁴² In the campaign, Bethune concentrated on federal taxes and spending as his chief issue.⁴³

In the Fourth District, the Democrats chose Union County prosecutor Beryl Franklin Anthony, Jr., a moderate from El Dorado, to succeed Congressman Thornton, who did not seek re-election in order to run for senator. The Republicans did not contest the district in 1978, as Lowe had managed only 35 percent there in a strong Republican year in the race against Pryor. The 1970 census

⁴⁰Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, October 14, 1978, 2804.

⁴¹John C. Topping, Jr., ed., "'78 Election Preview," Ripon Forum, XIV (September/October 1978), 11.

⁴²Arkansas Outlook, July 1978; Arkansas Gazette, August 1, 1982.

⁴³Arkansas Outlook, September 1978.

revealed that the district was 31 percent black; it was also 69 percent blue collar and 31 percent white collar in complexion. The Fourth District includes farmlands across southern Arkansas and numerous smaller cities, such as Texarkana, Pine Bluff, El Dorado, Camden and Arkadelphia. In 1968, the Fourth District gave George C. Wallace his best Arkansas showing, 47 percent. Though many of the white residents of the district share attitudes on national issues with their neighbors in northern Louisiana or northwestern Mississippi, the district has been historically represented in Congress by a moderate-to-liberal Democrat, Oren Harris, David Pryor and Ray Thornton.⁴⁴ Miller, Union and Columbia counties, however, began to reflect growing Republican strength by 1978.

The 1978 elections confirmed Democratic hegemony at the gubernatorial and senatorial levels in Arkansas, but the GOP doubled its congressional representation from one to two members by taking the open Second District seat. It was the first glimmer of hope for the beleaguered party since 1968, excluding Nixon's 1972 triumph. Bethune carried three of the nine counties but won by

⁴⁴Michael Barone, Grant Ujifusa and Douglas Matthews, The Almanac of American Politics, 1972 (New York, 1972), 38; Arkansas Gazette, February 5, 1982.

sufficient margins in Cleburne (56.8 percent), Pulaski (54.5 percent) and his native White County (54.9 percent) to defeat Brandon by 3,148 votes. Bethune received 65,288, or 51.2 percent, to Brandon's 62,140, or 48.8 percent. Brandon carried Arkansas, Conway, Faulkner, Lonoke, Prairie and Saline counties. Bethune polled 49.9 percent in Faulkner, 47.6 percent in Lonoke and 47 percent in Saline. While Brandon had been expected to win Pulaski, Little Rock voters chose the Republican candidate, 34,587 to 28,848.⁴⁵

In the gubernatorial contest, Lowe polled 195,550 votes, or 36.6 percent, to Clinton's 338,684, or 63.4 percent. The Republican carried these six counties, listed in descending order by percent:

Sebastian (62.5)	Polk (54.4)
Crawford (55)	Van Buren (54.1)
Boone (54.9)	Miller (53.6)

Lowe carried his home county of Miller, which had supported Pryor in their 1966 House race. Lowe also polled at least 40 percent in eleven other counties. He drew a surprisingly strong 49.8 percent in Franklin County, home of Senator Bumpers; 49.7 percent in Baxter, 47.7 percent in Newton, 47.1 percent in Lafayette, a Democratic county which borders Miller, and 46 percent in

⁴⁵Election Statistics, 1978.

Benton, Craighead, Searcy and Washington counties.⁴⁶

Clinton's popular vote was almost 37,000 less than Bumpers had received in the 1970 general election, when he drew 61.7 percent.⁴⁷ Clinton's victory was saddened by the untimely death of his friend, political scientist Jim Ranchino of Arkadelphia, who collapsed of a heart attack at the age of thirty-nine while waiting to appear on a Little Rock election night newscast. In 1976, Ranchino became associated with a Little Rock advertising firm as its chief pollster. He was considered the outstanding figure of his day on Arkansas political strategy.⁴⁸

Pryor won every county to defeat Republican Kelly, 395,506, or 76.5 percent, to 84,281, or 16.3 percent. The fact that Kelly trailed Lowe by 111,269 votes reflects that the GOP was not united in the Senate race, probably due to Kelly's outspoken moderate views. A third senatorial candidate, conservative independent John G. Black, received 37,211 votes, or 7.2 percent. In the Third District, Hammerschmidt defeated Mears,

⁴⁶Ibid.

⁴⁷Ibid.; Election Statistics, 1970.

⁴⁸Camden News, November 8, 1978; Arkansas Democrat, November 8, 1978.

123,188 votes, or 74.5 percent, to 42,246, or 25.5 percent.⁴⁹ Republicans lost their lone state senate seat in 1978, as Democrat Kim Hendren of Gravette won the Benton County race to succeed Republican Jim Caldwell, who did not seek re-election. Hendren defeated a Republican opponent. The GOP gained a House seat, however, with the election of Jerry D. King of Greenwood, an ordained Assembly of God minister and outspoken conservative. Among the six GOP lawmakers elected in 1978 were five incumbents, Carolyn Pollan of Fort Smith, Jim Smithson of Marshall, Preston Bynum of Siloam Springs, C.W. Melson of Ozone and Richard Barclay of Rogers.⁵⁰ Barclay had been elected in a special election in Benton County in 1977 to fill the unexpired term of Democratic Representative Ivan Rose, who died. Barclay initially won the seat with a 58 percent majority, subsequently winning re-election in 1978, 1980 and 1982.⁵¹

In 1979, Arkansas legislators approved substantial increases in state spending and taxes, but the actions did not appear to threaten the career of Governor Bill

⁴⁹Election Statistics, 1978.

⁵⁰Arkansas Gazette, November 9, 1978.

⁵¹Arkansas Outlook, May 1977; July 1977; Arkansas Gazette, November 3, 1982.

Clinton. Clinton obtained \$132 million in additional spending on education, partially financing the programs from a one-cent-per-gallon gasoline tax and higher vehicle license fees.⁵² Clinton played a key role in writing the Arkansas budget, a responsibility his predecessors had left to the legislature. Observers contended in 1979 that Clinton was in "good shape" for the 1980 elections, noting that "no strong challengers have emerged."⁵³

Senator Bumpers might have been vulnerable in 1980 had he been running anywhere else but Arkansas. Increasingly liberal, Bumpers supported the Panama Canal and SALT II treaties, both positions unpopular among many conservatives. Bethune was mentioned for a time as a likely challenger to Bumpers in that oil companies opposed to the senator's efforts to increase the windfall profits tax on decontrolled oil were friendly toward the Republican congressman. But Bethune, like his senior GOP colleague, Hammerschmidt, had no intentions to relinquish what could become a safe House seat for a risky shot at the popular Bumpers.⁵⁴

Most Arkansas Republicans in 1980 seemed primarily

⁵²New York Times, February 25, 1979.

⁵³Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, August 25, 1979, 1763-1764.

⁵⁴Ibid., February 23, 1980, 442.

interested in the presidential contest, not long-shot campaigns for state office. The GOP was again locked in a nominating contest featuring 69-year-old Ronald Reagan and a host of opponents, ranging from the Senate Republican Leader, Howard Baker, Jr., of Tennessee, to John B. Connally, the one-time Texas Democratic governor and later Nixon treasury secretary, to Robert J. Dole, the Kansas senator who had been President Gerald Ford's running-mate in 1976, to George H.W. Bush, a former Texas congressman who had also been chairman of the Republican National Committee, United Nations ambassador and director of the Central Intelligence Agency.

On February 2, 1980, twelve GOP delegates were chosen at Arkansas congressional district caucuses. Reagan won six outright; Baker, four; Bush, one; and one was uncommitted. Two of the Baker delegates were challenged because of an alleged ineligible caucus voter who supposedly made the difference. The Arkansas GOP deleted its primary requirement for 1980, expecting the caucus system to enhance party politics even though it was clearly taking the selection from the rank-and-file. At the start of the caucuses, nearly half of the state and local Republican party positions were open. By the close of the procedure, only 5 percent of such positions remained unfilled. The caucus system did therefore probably increase interest in

party affairs among GOP activists. Baker campaigned extensively in Arkansas, while Reagan made a single appearance in the state. Reagan's chief Arkansas sponsor was National Committeeman Harlan Holleman. Even though he carried the endorsement of his former House colleague, Hammerschmidt, George Bush fared poorly in the Arkansas caucuses. At one point, Bush supporters claimed that the Reagan and Baker forces had made a deal to deny Bush delegates, a suspicion shared by the Arkansas GOP executive director, Delia Combs.⁵⁵ Mrs. Combs, a graduate of the University of Arkansas Law School, became executive director on June 24, 1978, succeeding Dr. Robert Luther of Arkadelphia. She held the post until June 1982, when she resigned.⁵⁶ Mrs. Combs, a former associate of Winthrop Rockefeller who professed neutrality in the 1980 caucus struggle, remarked that the alleged Reagan-Baker deal was "the damnedest coincidence that I saw in my life."⁵⁷

Connally made the most lavish effort to woo delegates but came away with nothing initially. He sent members of his family to visit GOP county leaders and hosted likely

⁵⁵Ibid., February 9, 1980, 353.

⁵⁶Arkansas Outlook, June 1978; Arkansas Gazette, June 10, 1982.

⁵⁷Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, February 9, 1980, 353.

caucus participants at an Ozarks resort, Indian Rock Lodge at Fairfield Bay. Finally, Connally won the backing of Ada Mills of Clarksville in Johnson County. She was the only delegate from the entire nation that Connally won in his ill-fated campaign and was often dubbed the "\$12 million delegate" because Connally spent at least \$12.6 million in his quest for the GOP nomination. Connally withdrew from the race after a disastrous showing in the South Carolina primary, where he had the support of Senator Strom Thurmond. Mrs. Mills switched temporarily to Bush but joined the Reagan bandwagon after Bush's withdrawal from the nomination contest.⁵⁸

By late 1981, the Connally campaign still owed the Indian Rock Lodge \$9,000 for the party hosting the caucus participants. Lodge owner Darrell Glascock questioned publicly why Connally had not paid the amount, noting that the Texan "spent more than \$10 million nationwide and got one delegate, and that delegate was the result of what he did here. So we ought to get paid first."⁵⁹ A Connally spokesman said that the debt could not be paid first because the Federal Election Commission

⁵⁸Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, July 12, 1980, 1928; New York Times, March 9, 1980.

⁵⁹Arkansas Gazette, December 10, 1981.

requires the campaign committee to make the same percentage payments to all creditors.⁶⁰

Caucus participants were limited to county and district party officials, an average of forty-five in each of the four U.S. House districts. Regular voters were forbidden from participating in the caucuses, a situation Arkansas Democrats insisted showed the exclusive nature of the GOP. Besides the original twelve delegates, seven others were chosen on February 16 by the 277-member Republican State Central Committee.⁶¹

Before Reagan crushed his primary opposition in numerous showdowns across the nation, the Arkansas delegation was divided as follows: seven for Reagan, four for Baker, two for Bush, one for Connally and five uncommitted.⁶² By the time of the Detroit convention, the delegate complexion proved meaningless, as Reagan remained the sole candidate. To unify the party, Reagan selected Bush for the vice-presidential slot on the ticket. The Arkansas delegation included Congressmen Hammerschmidt and Bethune, party chairman Lowe and National Committeeman

⁶⁰Ibid.

⁶¹Ibid., February 17, 1980.

⁶²Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, February 23, 1980, 572.

Holleman, who headed the group. Bethune and Lowe were technically neutral, but all the delegates voted for the Reagan nomination. Lowe also served as convention sergeant-at-arms. In the delegation was attorney James Burnett of Clinton, who had attended every GOP convention since 1960, when he was twelve years old. In 1980, Burnett, the Arkansas GOP legal counsel, was a delegate for the first time.⁶³

Clinton's popularity as governor seemed so great that only one Democrat challenged the incumbent's renomination, the 77-year-old turkey farmer Monroe Schwarzlose of Kingsland in Cleveland County. In 1978, Schwarzlose drew 1 percent of the primary vote against Clinton and three other rivals on a platform advocating legalized gambling.⁶⁴ Schwarzlose in 1974 had been the unsuccessful Republican candidate for the state legislature from Dallas, Calhoun and part of Cleveland counties, losing to Democrat Thomas Sparks of Fordyce.⁶⁵ In 1980, Schwarzlose became the focus of anti-Clinton sentiment even though he was personally friendly with the governor. Clinton's

⁶³Ibid., July 12, 1980, 1928; Arkansas Outlook, March 1979.

⁶⁴Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, May 17, 1980, 1324; Election Statistics, 1978.

⁶⁵Arkansas Gazette, November 7, 1974.

voter appeal seemed to rest on his advocacy of such issues as utility reform, consumer protection and environmental quality. Some voters though were disturbed. Many objected when the governor's wife, Hillary Rodham, a Little Rock attorney, kept her maiden name in her legal practice.⁶⁶ Others were suspicious of young Clinton as a Rhodes scholar and graduate of Yale Law School. A retired military official, Billy Geren of Fayetteville, had once termed Clinton a "draft dodger" for joining an Army Reserve Officer Training Corps branch after finishing his Rhodes scholarship studies at Oxford University in England. The R.O.T.C. contract provided Clinton a deferment.⁶⁷ Still others objected to Clinton's support of a 30 percent increase in motor vehicle registration fees, a one-cent-per-gallon increase in motor fuel taxes and a 20 percent boost in state aid to local school districts. Moreover, there was a provision in the proposed new state constitution, which voters rejected in 1980, that would have permitted Governor Clinton to seek a four-year term beginning in 1982. Hence, by the time Clinton was forty years old, he could theoretically have served a full eight

⁶⁶"Fresh Faces of '78," Newsweek, XCII (November 20, 1978), 53.

⁶⁷Camden News, October 28, 1978.

years in the governorship.⁶⁸ Some motorists were angry with Clinton for doubling the vehicle registration fees so as to avoid placing greater burdens on the trucking industry. Others felt Clinton had presidential ambitions and was bored with his job as an administrator of state affairs. Yet, no prognosticators initially believed that Clinton could possibly fail to win a second term. No Arkansas governor since 1954 had been defeated for a second term.⁶⁹

Before the filing deadline, desperate Republican leaders persuaded Frank Durward White, a Little Rock savings-and-loan association president, to carry the GOP banner against Clinton. White, who had turned Republican only at the beginning of 1980, had served from 1975-1976 as chairman of the Arkansas Industrial Development Commission under Democratic Governor Pryor. This was the same position that the late Winthrop Rockefeller had held for nearly nine years under former Governor Orval Faubus. An editorial in the Arkansas Gazette examined White's tenure at AIDC and termed it "the worst in the history of the organization." In 1975, for instance, there were

⁶⁸Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, February 23, 1980, 442.

⁶⁹Ibid., May 17, 1980, 1324.

only 5,903 manufacturing jobs created in Arkansas, explained the Gazette, compared to 13,712 in 1974. The newspaper noted the impact of a recession in 1974-1975 and added that while White "cannot be condemned for the record, there is no record to boast about either."⁷⁰

White was born in Texarkana in June 1933 as Durward Kyle, Jr. His father died when he was six, and his mother married Frank White of Highland Park, Texas. He took his stepfather's name and became "Frank D. White." The family returned to Arkansas in the early 1950s, and White was subsequently appointed to the U.S. Naval Academy by Senator John McClellan. White is married to the former Gay Daniels and has three children by his first wife from whom he is divorced. In 1961, White became an account executive for Merrill Lynch, Pierce, Fenner and Smith, Inc., holding that position until 1973. After resigning from AIDC, he became president of Capital Savings and Loan Association in Little Rock. He graduated from the Naval Academy in 1956.⁷¹ By the late summer of 1980, White was perceived as the strongest Republican gubernatorial candidate since Rockefeller but still

⁷⁰Arkansas Gazette, November 1, 1980.

⁷¹Who's Who in the South and Southwest, 18th edition (1982-1983), 803.

trailed Clinton by as much as twenty-two points in the pre-election polls.⁷²

Another Republican, former State Representative Marshall Chrisman of Ozark, also filed for the gubernatorial nomination even though party officials had discouraged him to avoid the need for a primary. White was somewhat better known throughout the state than Chrisman, a contractor who was chairman of the Franklin County Republican Committee. White had greater campaign resources than Chrisman and a more polished style. White indicated that his party switch came in part to oppose Clinton's spending policies as governor and to promote the movement toward a two-party system.⁷³

White prevailed in the Republican primary, defeating Chrisman, 5,867 votes, or 71.8 percent, to 2,310, or 28.2 percent. The turnout of 8,177 Republicans was miniscule compared to participation in the Democratic primaries. The 1976 GOP primary had drawn a greater turnout as a result of the Ford-Reagan rivalry. Eight counties cast 6,218 GOP primary votes, or 76 percent of the total. Benton, Washington and Pulaski counties alone cast 56.1

⁷²Arkansas Gazette, November 1, 2, 1980.

⁷³Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, May 17, 1980, 1324.

percent of the statewide total. White won majorities in sixty-five counties; Chrisman, in five counties, Ashley, Johnson, Madison, Marion and his native Franklin. Two counties, Scott and Phillips, split between White and Chrisman. No primary ballots were cast in Clay, Desha, Greene, Lincoln and Woodruff counties. Many counties also cast fewer than ten Republican primary ballots, reflecting the absence of even the most skeletal Republican organizations.⁷⁴

The biggest Democratic primary surprise was the unexpectedly large vote polled by Schwarzlose, the farmer known for the overalls in which he campaigned. Schwarzlose polled 31 percent and carried six counties, three near Fort Smith and three in his home area of south-central Arkansas. Observers said that Schwarzlose's vote represented those opposed to the Clinton tax program and to the relocation by the Carter administration of Cuban refugees into Fort Chaffee army base near Fort Smith. About nineteen thousand Cubans, temporarily housed at Chaffee, were welcomed by Clinton "in the spirit of Christian charity." Area residents, however, became alarmed when about one thousand of the refugees rioted at Chaffee

⁷⁴Election Statistics, 1980.

to protest delays in their processing.⁷⁵ Other area residents feared that the Cubans might enter the Fort Smith job market, which was already feeling the pinch of a somewhat depressed economy. Most of the Cubans, however, lacked skills and training to pose a threat to the area labor force. Clinton's 69 percent primary showing was the greatest for an Arkansas Democratic gubernatorial candidate in thirty-eight years, but the perception was that Schwarzlose had come close to embarrassing the governor. Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report said that Clinton would "have to mount a vigorous campaign in the fall to convincingly turn back a challenge from the Republican nominee," even though polls showed White far behind Clinton throughout most of the race.⁷⁶

Unlike Rockefeller, White was not a long-time Republican activist. He joined the party to run for governor and had no personal fortune with which to bankroll the GOP. He nevertheless assembled a powerful volunteer campaign organization.⁷⁷ White's potential for an upset

⁷⁵Arkansas Gazette, June 2, 1980.

⁷⁶Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, May 31, 1980, 1473.

⁷⁷Arkansas Gazette, November 9, 1980.

climbed after the violence erupted at Chaffee. The GOP candidate authorized television advertisements linking the situation to Clinton and President Carter, who by late summer seemed vulnerable to Reagan's determined challenge. Fort Chaffee had been used as a resettlement camp in 1975 for the housing and processing of about fifty thousand Vietnamese refugees. The Fort Smith community had welcomed the Indochinese.⁷⁸ The Cuban resettlement was bitterly opposed, especially after the riots. White promised if elected to work for the removal of the refugees, many of whom were elderly, handicapped or retarded.⁷⁹

White soon began to draw newspaper editorial endorsements. The El Dorado News-Times supported White by reprinting a forceful endorsement from the Fort Smith Southwest Times Record. The News-Times claimed that Clinton had neglected the drive to attract industry to the state; the paper also endorsed Reagan with a stinging denunciation of the Democrats.⁸⁰ In its endorsement of White, the Arkansas Democrat claimed that the GOP candidate would

⁷⁸U.S. News and World Report, LCCCVII (August 6, 1979), 56.

⁷⁹Arkansas Gazette, August 20, 1981.

⁸⁰El Dorado News-Times, November 2, 1980.

bring the state a "business-like government" and promote the two-party system. "Arkansas is fortunate to have someone of White's caliber running for governor," the paper remarked.⁸¹ The Democrat, a formerly Democratic paper that began to turn increasingly independent in political thinking in the late 1960s, also endorsed Reagan, terming Carter, whom it had also opposed in 1976, as "the most incompetent president we have had in this century."⁸² The Arkansas Gazette, which endorsed the entire Democratic ticket, claimed that the records of Carter, Clinton and Bumpers were superior to those of their GOP challengers.⁸³

Besides capitalizing on the tax increases under the Clinton administration, White criticized the governor for opening a Washington office to lobby on behalf of state interests.⁸⁴ White contended that the Arkansas congressional delegation was already meeting such needs, making Clinton's office duplication of services. White further criticized a federal-state program designed to train the unemployed to cut firewood for the elderly. The program, which Clinton conceded had been ill-administered, was

⁸¹Arkansas Democrat, October 31, 1980.

⁸²Ibid., November 2, 1980.

⁸³Arkansas Gazette, November 2, 1980.

⁸⁴New York Times, July 9, 1979.

subsequently abandoned. White referred to Clinton as a "poor administrator" who had been careless in spending state revenues. Clinton accented his accomplishments, including greater funding for education and a new state energy conservation plan. Clinton proved to be handicapped though by a situation he could not change -- the growing political problems of President Carter, a man Clinton had long admired and supported.⁸⁵ As the national economic outlook, specifically high inflation and spiraling interest rates, worsened, Carter faced a heavy barrage of Republican fire. Nevertheless, prognosticators always included Arkansas as Carter's most likely southern triumph besides his native Georgia. Few Republicans believed that Reagan had even an outside chance of carrying Arkansas.

The liberal Republican policy group Ripon Society contended that Reagan lacked full GOP support in Arkansas and could not carry the state even if he had such backing. The organization claimed that Arkansas was:

one of the most Democratic states in the nation . . . Carter's best bet of any southern state besides Georgia. . . .

⁸⁵Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, October 11, 1980, 2990.

The state's relatively moderate Republican establishment is not universally enamored of Reagan. The Democratic establishment which controls virtually all state and local offices can be expected to stay solidly behind Carter.⁸⁶

The Ripon Society further claimed that independent presidential candidate Representative John B. Anderson of Illinois might fare well in a few Arkansas campus communities but would not affect the race statewide.⁸⁷ Anderson's 2.7 percent tally in Arkansas was sufficient, however, to narrowly tip the state into the Reagan column, if one presumes that Anderson's votes came almost entirely at Carter's expense.

Signs began to appear by late summer that Carter no longer could count on certain victory in Arkansas. A poll taken after the Republican National Convention actually showed Reagan with a six-point lead in Arkansas. A few months later, a Little Rock television station claimed that Carter was leading with 48 percent to 39 percent for Reagan, with the remainder undecided. Anderson's impact again was considered statistically insignificant. Reagan's major strength was perceived in northwestern

⁸⁶ John C. Topping, Jr., "1980 Presidential Outlook," Ripon Forum, XVI (May/June/July 1980), 19.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

Arkansas, which largely had deserted Ford in 1976. The Fort Smith area, in particular, seemed perturbed at the Carter-Clinton Fort Chaffee policy. Carter was expected to prevail with ease in Democratic southern and eastern Arkansas as well as hold his solid base among blacks.⁸⁸

The White-Clinton campaign was among the most divisive races in the country. In Searcy, Clinton told an audience that he had never been in a campaign in which "the difference between rhetoric and reality has been more clear."⁸⁹ Clinton's finance chairman, Comer Boyett, Jr., of Searcy called White's commercials about the refugee problem "a scurrilous, racist attack without foundation and which we good Democrats are not going to stand for."⁹⁰ Reagan, in a campaign appearance at Texarkana, also blasted the Carter policies regarding the refugees, prompting the Arkansas Gazette to term the Republican presidential nominee's speech "a blatant appeal to our worst instincts in Arkansas."⁹¹

Probably the least noticed Arkansas campaign was the Senate contest between Bumpers and a 37-year-old Little

⁸⁸Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, October 11, 1980, 2969.

⁸⁹Arkansas Gazette, November 1, 1980.

⁹⁰Ibid.

⁹¹Ibid.

Rock investment banker, William P. Clark. Clark, who had run unsuccessfully as a Democrat for the Second District House seat in 1976, became the Republican senatorial standard-bearer one hour before the filing deadline closed on April 1. No Democrat stepped forth to challenge Senator Bumpers.⁹² When Clark ran for the House, he passed out about twenty thousand Clark candy bars but polled fewer votes and was left with a \$31,600 unpaid campaign debt.⁹³ By 1980, Clark was under court order to repay the money and indicated that he would do so as soon as he could afford to.⁹⁴

Clark took a more aggressive stance than had the lackluster John Harris Jones in his 1974 race against Bumpers. The Republican candidate accused Bumpers of the familiar refrain of running "on his shoeshine and his smile because he is fuzzy on the issues," the same theme employed unsuccessfully by earlier rivals. In his first Senate term, Bumpers fought deregulation of oil and natural gas prices and was an early supporter of gasoline rationing, which ultimately proved unnecessary.⁹⁵ Clark

⁹²Ibid., April 2, 1980

⁹³Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, October 11, 1980, 2990.

⁹⁴Arkansas Gazette, November 2, 1980.

⁹⁵Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, October 11, 1980, 2990.

further declared that Bumpers had voted against defense appropriations twenty-three times between 1975 and 1978. "Only this year has he voted for a couple of defense items," said Clark in a capitol press conference.⁹⁶ Clark termed Bumpers "a liberal," as had the senator's previous opponents as far back as Faubus in their 1970 Democratic gubernatorial runoff race.⁹⁷ Clark derided the incumbent for supporting the Panama Canal treaties of 1978 and his opposition to voluntary prayer in public schools. Clark further claimed that in 1979 Bumpers had referred to some Newton County constituents as "stupid hill people." Whether Clark's accusation was true or not, Newton County cast 57.2 percent for the GOP senatorial nominee. Clark generally supported positions taken by the "New Right," including the newly-formed "Moral Majority."⁹⁸ Clark often asked voters, "if Dale Bumpers doesn't vote for you, why should you vote for him?"⁹⁹

The GOP ran a lieutenant governor candidate in 1980, 51-year-old James Canfield, publisher of the Jacksonville Daily News, opposing Democratic nominee Winston Bryant,

⁹⁶Arkansas Gazette, November 1, 1980.

⁹⁷Ibid., November 2, 1980.

⁹⁸Ibid.; Election Statistics, 1980.

⁹⁹Arkansas Outlook, August 1980.

the 42-year-old former secretary of state and state senator from Malvern who had won the primary to succeed the retiring Joe Purcell. Bryant and Canfield ran low-key campaigns, and few issues emerged. The lieutenant governor's position in 1980 supervised a budget of only \$55,144 annually. Bryant, who lost the 1978 Fourth District House race to Beryl Anthony, was endorsed by such traditional Democratic groups as the Arkansas Education Association, the AFL-CIO and the Arkansas Gazette. Canfield accused Bryant of being "a tool of Bill Becker and the big labor bosses," a charge the heavily-favored Democrat dismissed as "ridiculous."¹⁰⁰ In 1982, the Republicans did not even bother to contest Bryant's second-term bid, in view of the Democrat's convincing win over Canfield.

Arkansas voters balloted on just one House race in the 1980 general election, as Hammerschmidt, Alexander and Anthony were unopposed. Republican Representative Ed Bethune faced token Democratic opposition from Jacksonville Mayor James G. Reid. Reid was damaged by accusations that he had used mayoral funds to travel to Fayetteville for the popular University of Arkansas football and basketball games.¹⁰¹ Bethune did not even

¹⁰⁰Arkansas Gazette, November 2, 1980.

¹⁰¹Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, May 17, 1980, 1324.

begin campaign advertising until the week prior to the election.¹⁰² Bethune's popularity had increased after he was honored by his freshman House colleagues in 1979 by being named chairman of the group.¹⁰³ Hammerschmidt, freed from the burdens of his own campaign endeavor, spent much of his time speaking for White, whom he termed "a grand, impressive candidate who has the ability to do the job once he's elected." On the weekend prior to the election, Hammerschmidt declared that the GOP "momentum required for a winning race is there and is building toward a victory Tuesday."¹⁰⁴

The 1980 elections brought the greatest Republican victories in the nation since 1952 and in Arkansas since 1968. Reagan polled 50.8 percent of the national popular vote, compared to 41 percent for Carter and 8.2 percent for Anderson. In the electoral totals, Regan scored his most impressive sweep, 489 to 49 for Carter. In fact, Carter trailed Herbert Hoover's electoral vote of 1932. Reagan carried every southern state except Georgia, which elected a Republican senator. The border states of West

¹⁰²Arkansas Gazette, November 2, 1980.

¹⁰³Arkansas Outlook, December 1978.

¹⁰⁴Arkansas Gazette, November 2, 1980.

Virginia and Maryland remained with Carter, as did Minnesota, Hawaii, Rhode Island and the District of Columbia.¹⁰⁵ Republicans also seized control of the Senate for the first time since 1954, but Democrats retained their hold on the House by a comfortable margin.

Reagan polled 403,164 votes, or 48.1 percent, in Arkansas, compared to Carter's 398,041, or 47.5 percent. Anderson received 22,468 votes, and four minor candidates polled another 13,909 ballots. Reagan received majorities in twenty-one counties and pluralities in four others. Sebastian County, which gave Reagan 63.5 percent, was crucial to his Arkansas victory. Had the Sebastian totals been excluded from the statewide count, Carter would have carried Arkansas by 8,303 votes. Sebastian began casting a relatively reliable Republican vote in most major races with Dwight D. Eisenhower's election twenty-eight years earlier. Pulaski County nearly split between Carter and Reagan, 54,839 to 52,125, respectively. Anderson drew 4,657 votes in the state's most populous county. Here is the listing of the twenty-five counties which supported Reagan in descending order by percent:

¹⁰⁵Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, April 25, 1981, 713.

Crawford (66.2)	Franklin (53.7)
Benton (64)	Sharp (53.3)
Baxter (63.9)	Garland (53)
Sebastian (63.5)	Columbia (52.8)
Newton (60.1)	Miller (52.4)
Searcy (58.8)	Craighead (51.3)
Washington (58.7)	Pope (50.7)
Polk (58.5)	Logan (50.6)
Marion (57.1)	Fulton (49.4)
Boone (56.1)	Van Buren (49.1)
Carroll (55.3)	Lonoke (48.5)
Union (55.1)	Cleburne (48.4) ¹⁰⁶
Madison (54.5)	

The plurality forged by Reagan in Arkansas hardly resembled the old Rockefeller coalition; nor was it as broad-based and overwhelming as the 1972 Nixon presidential combination in the state. Reagan forged for the first time in Arkansas a modest coalition of traditionally Republican voters allied with dissident conservative Democrats. This was the type of coalition which Republicans had been forging successfully in other southern states, one lacking the black and moderate elements which had stood behind Rockefeller in 1966 and 1968. Carter led in fifty counties in 1980, but his majorities were too small in staunch Democratic counties to overcome Reagan's base in northwestern Arkansas. Of the counties supporting Reagan, all but five -- Union, Columbia, Miller, Craighead and Lonoke -- are located in northern or western Arkansas. Had Carter run as strongly in Little

¹⁰⁶Election Statistics, 1980.

Rock as he did in Pine Bluff, he would have carried the state by plurality.¹⁰⁷

By most accounts, Clinton had enjoyed at least a two-to-one edge in opinion polls at the beginning of the campaign. By late September, the Democrat remained the "overwhelming favorite."¹⁰⁸ Yet, Clinton carried only twenty-four counties, compared to the fifty-one that supported Republican White. White's victory was more impressive in depth and scope than the small Reagan plurality over Carter. Ironically, White had more gubernatorial coat-tails than did presidential candidate Reagan in Arkansas. White polled 435,684 votes, or 51.9 percent, to Clinton's 403,241, or 48.1 percent. About one thousand more voters participated in the gubernatorial contest than in the presidential race, which drew 837,592 to the polls. White won all six counties carried in 1978 by Lynn Lowe in his challenge to Clinton and added forty-five others. Here is the county breakdown for White in 1980, listed in descending order by percent:

¹⁰⁷Ibid.; Election Statistics, 1966, 1968, 1972.

¹⁰⁸U.S. News and World Report, LXXXVIII (September 22, 1980), 25.

Crawford (71.2)	Calhoun (57.7)
Scott (68.1)	Polk (57.2)
Sebastian (66.9)	Madison (57.1)
Searcy (66.1)	Clay (57)
Franklin (65.2)	Montgomery (56.2)
Lawrence (63.9)	Cleveland (56)
Union (63.4)	Perry (56)
Baxter (62.6)	Sharp (55.9)
Howard (61.3)	Boone (55.2)
Randolph (61.1)	Grant (54.4)
Newton (60.8)	Greene (53.5)
Pike (60.1)	Lonoke (53.5)
Poinsett (59.5)	Van Buren (53.5)
Pope (59.5)	Independence (53.2)
Carroll (59.5)	Washington (53.1)
Fulton (59.4)	Prairie (52)
Benton (59.3)	Garland (51.9)
Logan (59.3)	Jackson (51.6)
Marion (59.1)	White (51.4)
Lafayette (58.9)	Conway (50.8)
Yell (58.8)	Cleburne (50.7)
Johnson (58.7)	Izard (50.4)
Stone (58.7)	Dallas (50.2)
Columbia (58.6)	Ouachita (50.2)
Craighead (58.2)	Hot Spring (50.04) ¹⁰⁹
Miller (58.1)	

White won twenty-three of the thirty-five counties carried by Rockefeller in 1966 and nineteen of the twenty-seven the late governor won in 1968. White's coalition was sharply different from the Rockefeller combination. While Rockefeller depended heavily on Pulaski and Jefferson counties, White lost both by fairly large margins. Washington led the Rockefeller charts in both 1966 and 1968, but it ranked only forty-first among the counties carried by White. Rockefeller ran nearly ten percentage points ahead of White in heavily Republican Benton County

¹⁰⁹Election Statistics, 1980.

in both years. Yet, White carried several northwestern counties that Rockefeller never won, including Faubus' Madison, Bumpers' Franklin and Rockefeller's own Conway. White also ran about 10 percent ahead of Rockefeller's performance in Union County and about 3 percent better than Rockefeller ever did in Sebastian County. White failed to poll at least 40 percent in only nine heavily Democratic counties, mostly in southeastern Arkansas. Even unionized Saline County cast 49.2 percent for White, a sign that the Republican made inroads into the rank-and-file of organized labor. Black counties remained heavily with Clinton and Carter. While Rockefeller had carried the three Mississippi River counties of Lee, Phillips and Chicot, White lost all of them, taking less than 34 percent in each. White did well in those counties surrounding Fort Chaffee; the Cuban refugee question was sufficiently strong to have enabled him to upset the favored Democrat. Among the five counties casting the heaviest vote for White, four are in the area that was affected by the refugee issue. White also fared well in Democratic Texarkana, his hometown, where Carter had joined Clinton and Bumpers in a campaign appearance three weeks before the election. Even such Democratic bastions as Dallas, Grant, Ouachita, Hot Spring, Calhoun and Perry counties deserted Clinton. Schwarzlose's home county of

Cleveland supported White, who also showed surprising strength in northeastern Arkansas in such counties as Clay, Greene, Craighead and Randolph.¹¹⁰ White's election seemed more impressive than the 51.9 percent tabulation indicates due to the broadness of his victories in two-thirds of the counties. Democrats, however, did not believe that White's victory would usher in a new GOP era in the state. Even in defeat, the charismatic Clinton was immediately pronounced the frontrunner to reclaim the governorship in 1982.¹¹¹

In the senatorial race, Bumpers received 477,905 votes, or 59.1 percent, to Clark's 330,576, or 40.9 percent. Clark polled the exact percent as did Republican Charles Bernard in his 1968 challenge to Fulbright. Clark carried twelve counties, including Crawford and Sebastian, where his totals exceeded 70 percent each. Crawford County, north of Fort Smith, led the Republican charts in the presidential, gubernatorial and senatorial races, reflecting disenchantment with the refugee question. Bumpers for the first time lost his home county of Franklin by an embarrassing margin, as Clark polled 59.1 percent there. Clark ran poorly, however, in most

¹¹⁰Ibid.; Election Statistics, 1966 and 1968.

¹¹¹U.S. News and World Report, XCI (December 28, 1981/January 4, 1982), 32.

of southern and eastern Arkansas with the exceptions of increasingly Republican-oriented Union and Columbia counties, the centers of opposition to the windfall profits tax. Bumpers also ran rather well in most of northwestern Arkansas except in the counties most directly affected by the refugee question. In the only contested House race, Bethune won his second term with ease, receiving 159,148 votes, or 78.9 percent, to Reid's 42,278, or 21 percent.¹¹²

Republican strength at the presidential and gubernatorial levels did not filter to the lieutenant governor's race. Bryant, who in his advertisements vowed to be "frugal with the taxpayers' dollar," lost only four counties to the more conservative Canfield. Bryant received 502,637 votes, or 65.7 percent, to Canfield's 262,865, or 34.3 percent. Canfield carried Baxter, Benton, Newton and Sebastian counties. Nearly 75,000 who participated in the gubernatorial contest did not cast ballots in the Bryant-Canfield contest.¹¹³ While Rockefeller had twice pulled his lieutenant governor running-mate to victory, White could not do so for Canfield.

¹¹²Election Statistics, 1980.

¹¹³Ibid.; Arkansas Gazette, November 1, 5, 1980.

In legislative contests, Travis A. Miles of Fort Smith became the second Republican since 1968 to win an Arkansas state senate election. Miles polled 55.7 percent in his Sebastian County race against Democrat Jerry Fleming. The GOP also won seven state representative seats. Among the victors were Judy Petty of Little Rock, the 1974 Republican opponent to Congressman Wilbur Mills, and J.E. "Jerry" Hinshaw of Springdale, the 1964 GOP candidate against Third District Congressman James Trimble. Mrs. Petty won with a 59 percent margin in a Pulaski district; Hinshaw was elected in a heavily GOP area to succeed Preston Bynum of Siloam Springs, who did not seek another term. Winning re-election were Representatives Carolyn Pollan of Fort Smith, Jim Smithson of Marshall, Jerry King of Greenwood, Richard Barclay of Rogers and C.W. Melson of Ozone.¹¹⁴ C.W. Melson died in 1981, and that seat reverted to the Democrats in a special election in which Melson's brother, Virgil Melson, was the GOP nominee.¹¹⁵

National publications were surprised at Clinton's defeat. While Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report

¹¹⁴Election Statistics, 1980; John Clements, Taylor's Encyclopedia of Government Officials, Federal and State, 1981-1982, Vol. 8 (Dallas, 1981), 66.

¹¹⁵Arkansas Gazette, August 26, 1981.

conceded that Clinton's "once bright prospects have dimmed," it stressed that the defeated governor could "take heart" in the political resurrection of Missouri GOP Governor Christopher Bond. After losing re-election in 1976, Bond regained the office in 1980, defeating incumbent Joseph Teasdale.¹¹⁶ The publication further contended that White defeated Clinton strictly on the strength of the Cuban refugee and state financial issues. White's advertisements criticizing Clinton for "allowing" Carter to settle refugees in Arkansas proved effective. In those controversial advertisements, White claimed that Republican Governors Richard Thornburgh of Pennsylvania and Lee Sherman Drefus of Wisconsin had "stood up" to Carter and refused to accept the refugees.¹¹⁷ After his election, White secured the relocation of the remaining refugees to prison facilities in Georgia and Missouri. The relocation took more than eight months and came only after White's repeated communications with President Reagan, Health and Human Services Secretary Richard S. Schweiker, Congressman Hammerschmidt and White House aides James A. Baker, III, and Edwin Meese.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁶Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, November 8, 1980, 3327.

¹¹⁷Ibid., 3328.

¹¹⁸Arkansas Gazette, December 19, 1981.

Time magazine termed White's victory the "biggest upset of the gubernatorial elections." The publication referred to White as a "budget-paring conservative" who promised to reduce license fees and the number of state employees.¹¹⁹ The Houston Post also declared White's triumph as the "biggest upset" in the governor races.¹²⁰ The Arkansas Gazette termed White's finish "one of the more stunning upsets in Arkansas political history" and further decried the apparent "complacency" on the part of Democratic rank-and-file. The Gazette also acknowledged that Clinton seemed "arrogant, aloof and egotistical" to some voters.¹²¹

White initially termed his election "a great victory for the Lord, who guided me," adding, "I'm really touched with the awesome responsibility given to me by the people."¹²² White said that his first priority would be the "human needs of the state," referring to state employee and teacher salary increases. The Arkansas Gazette contended that White's campaign was almost exclusively anti-Clinton, noting the Republican offered "few programs and

¹¹⁹Time, CXVI (November 17, 1980), 65.

¹²⁰Houston Post, November 6, 1980.

¹²¹Arkansas Gazette, November 5, 6, 1980.

¹²²Ibid., November 6, 1980.

wasn't specific on the few he did mention."¹²³ The paper added that:

Frank White discerned this year what other Arkansas politicians did not -- which was that it was not a season for convention or caution. White abandoned the Democratic Party, challenged an astonishingly successful young governor for a second term and attacked him with a virulence that has rarely been witnessed in state politics in a decade. It paid off for Frank White, and he has won a shocking and even convincing victory over Bill Clinton. This was clearly not a year for Democrats anywhere, even down at the statehouse level in Arkansas.¹²⁴

The El Dorado News-Times termed the 1980 returns the awakening of a "sleeping giant within America." The newspaper termed White's triumph "one of the most amazing displays of the voters' power . . . ever witnessed."¹²⁵

The Arkansas Democrat hailed the triumphs of Reagan and White and lashed out against the only major Democratic victor in Arkansas, Senator Bumpers. The Democrat, which had written sympathetically for Clark, predicted that Bumpers would remain senator "until enough Arkansans see through the image to the cold facts of the man's misrepresentation of their interests."¹²⁶

¹²³Ibid.

¹²⁴Ibid., November 7, 1980.

¹²⁵El Dorado News-Times, November 6, 1980.

¹²⁶Arkansas Democrat, November 1, 1980.

Arkansas voters in 1980 also rejected by a 63 to 37 percent margin the proposed new state constitution. Besides the four-year gubernatorial term, the proposed constitution, drafted by a state convention, would have made changes in the powers of local governments and permitted municipalities to exercise powers not specifically denied to them by the state. Yet, the new constitution, like the one voted down in 1970, met an array of opponents. While Governor Clinton and the Arkansas Gazette supported passage of the proposed charter, a curious coalition of critics emerged, including conservatives, organized labor and the Arkansas Education Association. The Gazette lamented the defeat of the second proposed constitution in a decade, claiming that the existing Constitution of 1874 is unsuited for the needs of the 1980s and beyond. The constitutional issue in 1980 was largely overshadowed by the presidential and gubernatorial contests.¹²⁷

On taking office in January 1981, White assembled a staff consisting largely of former Republican officeholders or candidates. Former Representative Preston Bynum was named as White's chief aide, and Len E. Blaylock, the 1972 Republican opponent to Governor Bumpers,

¹²⁷Arkansas Gazette, November 2, 5, 1980; Election Statistics, 1980.

became appointments secretary.¹²⁸ White appointed the defeated 1974 gubernatorial candidate and former GOP executive director Ken Coon as administrator of the Arkansas Employment Security Division.¹²⁹ For press secretary, White turned to young Barbara Pardue, who had served as communications director for the Mississippi Republican Party for three years prior to working in White's campaign. Though she was born in Mississippi, Miss Pardue's parents had resided in Malvern since 1975.¹³⁰ White fired former Democratic Auditor Jimmie Jones of Magnolia as the adjutant general of the Arkansas National Guard, a position to which Jones had been appointed in 1979 by Clinton. To replace Jones, White turned to the Jacksonville automobile dealer Harold L. Gwatney, whose appointment became effective on June 15, 1981.¹³¹ When Clinton regained the governorship in 1983, he reappointed Jones as adjutant general, a post which does not require a military background and has become one of the major gubernatorial appointments.¹³²

¹²⁸Arkansas Gazette, July 11, 1981; August 4, 1981.

¹²⁹Arkansas Outlook, December 1980.

¹³⁰Arkansas Gazette, October 12, 1981.

¹³¹Ibid., August 28, 1981.

¹³²Ibid., January 10, 1983.

White's most controversial appointment was the 1981 selection of former Governor Faubus as director of the Arkansas Veterans Affairs Department, which assists returning servicemen in finding jobs or obtaining vocational training. Blaylock said that White was indebted to Faubus because the former governor had stood nearly alone in 1980 in insisting that White had a realistic chance to defeat Clinton. Blaylock said that Faubus' comments gave White greater credibility in the general election drive.¹³³ White said that he selected Faubus because the former governor was "uniquely qualified" for an administrative role. Numerous Republicans, including National Committeewoman Leona Troxell objected to the appointment. Mrs. Troxell said that she had "mixed feelings" on the selection, adding, "obviously, I don't want to go back to the kind of regime we had when he was governor. . . . Believe me, that was machine politics at its worst."¹³⁴ National Committeeman Holleman claimed that Faubus was "one of the reasons I became a Republican," but indicated that he would stand behind White's decision. Former state GOP chairman Lynn Lowe would not comment on the selection, telling reporters that he did

¹³³Ibid., August 5, 1981.

¹³⁴Ibid.

not wish to "second guess" the governor. William Kelly, Sr., the Little Rock moderate GOP activist, suggested that some "kindred spirit has drawn them together," noting that Arkansas Republicans must have more "latitude" in appointments in view of the small number of GOP applicants available for state employment.¹³⁵

Several black Republicans threatened to quit the GOP over the Faubus selection. Elijah Coleman, chairman of the Arkansas Black Republican Council, said that he was "grieved" by the appointment, adding that:

in the absence of not having appointed many Republicans to higher-echelon state jobs, it seems strange to me that he would have appointed a man known as a Democrat -- and the most notorious Democrat in the nation at that.¹³⁶

Coleman said that he "personally" liked Faubus but objected to the ex-governor's conservative political viewpoints.¹³⁷

Robert McIntosh of Little Rock, vice-chairman of the Black Republican Council, expressed his opposition more forcefully than Coleman. McIntosh, who lost the 1980 Democratic lieutenant governor nomination and then switched to the GOP, strapped himself to a cross in front of the capitol and governor's mansion in July 1981 to

¹³⁵Ibid.

¹³⁶Ibid.

¹³⁷Ibid.

protest White's overall appointments.¹³⁸ When Faubus was sworn in as veterans affairs officer on September 14, McIntosh disrupted the proceedings, yelling, "let's pray for this sick state." Four state troopers and two members of the governor's security force had to forcibly carry McIntosh from the room. He was later charged with obstruction of government operations and released on a \$600 bond.¹³⁹ Another black critic of Faubus, Annie Abrams, termed it "shameful" for Vietnam-era veterans:

to be subjected to one more demeaning insult by having to seek help from Faubus, whose place is etched in history as a symbol of what those veterans were fighting against.¹⁴⁰

Regardless of its merits, the Faubus appointment reminds one of the remark made years earlier about the former governor: "men fall around him, but the old fox comes through without a scratch."¹⁴¹ The self-styled "po' boy from Greasy Creek" had found his renaissance in a Republican administration! Faubus' career hence spanned a thirty-two-year period from highway commissioner under Governor Sid McMath to veterans affairs officer under

¹³⁸ Ibid., August 9, 1981.

¹³⁹ Ibid., September 15, 1981.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., September 13, 1981.

¹⁴¹ New York Times Magazine, October 9, 1966, 53.

Governor White. In between, he served twelve years as governor and was a candidate in eight gubernatorial election years. Faubus was a partisan Democrat until 1980, when he worked quietly by telephone lining up support from his former backers on behalf of Reagan and White.¹⁴²

In January 1983, Governor Bill Clinton, on regaining the office from Frank White, announced that he would replace Faubus as veterans affairs director effective February 15 with Grady L. Brown, a 60-year-old retired career Army officer who had served in Vietnam. Brown, who left the Army in 1970, had been a full-time volunteer worker in the 1982 Clinton campaign. When informed of the decision, Faubus said that he had "no criticism of Governor Clinton for this. It is his right and privilege."¹⁴³ Earlier, the Arkansas Gazette urged Clinton to let Faubus "go quietly. He owes his black supporters, at the least, a decision to let Faubus return to private life." The Gazette again derided Faubus as a "racist," although Clinton admitted that he had been under "little pressure" from the black community to remove Faubus as veterans director.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴²Arkansas Gazette, August 5, 1981.

¹⁴³Ibid., January 23, 1983.

¹⁴⁴Ibid., November 16, 1982.

Voters gave the Arkansas Republican Party an apparent renaissance in 1980, but many Democrats confidently predicted that they could easily re-emerge in 1982 to reclaim the governorship and, moreover, carry the state in the 1984 presidential race. The successes and failures of both the Reagan and White administration would determine whether the GOP resurgence of 1980 was real or merely another temporary departure from the longstanding hegemony of the Democratic Party, both nationally and in Arkansas.

CHAPTER XI

ARKANSAS DEMOCRATS REGAIN HEGEMONY

Throughout his brief administration as governor, Frank D. White felt overshadowed and unfairly impugned by his young Democratic predecessor, William "Bill" Clinton. To White, no matter what action he took or policy he proposed, he met the immediate hostile opposition of the Arkansas Democratic Party and the leading Little Rock newspaper, the Arkansas Gazette. Republicans had long viewed the Gazette as a mouthpiece for the Democratic viewpoint, and the paper seemed to never cease in its condemnation and ridicule of the state's second Republican governor of the twentieth century. In September 1981, for instance, White complained that Clinton had unjustifiably criticized him, adding, "I don't know of any governor in the history of Arkansas who has received more criticism than I have from a man who's not in office."¹ The youthful Clinton labeled the middle-aged White as "immature" and charged that the Republican chief executive had mismanaged the issue of the Cuban refugees in northwestern Arkansas. "White hasn't handled it. The federal

¹Arkansas Gazette, September 15, 1981.

government has handled it," said Clinton in reference to the efforts by White to relocate the refugees.² Moreover, Clinton partisans insisted that White had himself mercilessly attacked Clinton during and after the 1980 campaign and repeatedly chided the Republican governor as a proponent of rightist ideology far out-of-step with the earlier Winthrop Rockefeller wing of the Arkansas GOP.

White angered moderates and liberals in both political parties by endorsing a controversial measure which would have required Arkansas public schools to offer "creation science" along with the Darwinian theory of evolution in regular biology classes. The measure, approved by a House vote of sixty-nine to eighteen and a Senate ballot of twenty-two to two, was signed into law by Governor White in the spring of 1981. The law was heartily praised by the Reverend Jerry Falwell of Lynchburg, Virginia, founder of the political interest group, Moral Majority. Falwell told a Vilonia, Arkansas, church group that White had the American Civil Liberties Union "all shook up, and that's good for you."³ In January 1982, however, an Arkansas district judge, William Overton, declared the law unconstitutional, claiming that it

²Ibid., August 24, 1981.

³Ibid., September 14, 1981.

was a "blatant attempt to force religious teaching in the public schools." Overton continued his ruling by warning that no group "may use the organs of government, of which the public schools are the most conspicuous . . . to force its religious beliefs on others."⁴ White was further embarrassed when he admitted that he had signed the "creation science" measure into law without personally having read its contents after it cleared the legislative hurdles. White explained his position as follows:

I do not agree that 'creation science' is teaching religion in the public school system, I think it is a theory just like evolution is, and if we're going to have true educational freedom, then I think we deserve equal treatment.⁵

The Moral Majority raised \$250,000 to unsuccessfully fight the ACLU suit challenging the Arkansas "creation science" law.⁶

White vowed to implement the death penalty for capital crimes in Arkansas, while his gubernatorial predecessors, Clinton, David Pryor, Dale Bumpers and Rockefeller, had all either opposed capital punishment or declined to press for the death penalty. In a moment of impatience before an El Dorado civic club, White vowed

⁴Arkansas Democrat, January 6, 1982.

⁵Shreveport, Louisiana, Times, January 7, 1982.

⁶Bryan-College Station, Texas, Eagle, October 11, 1981.

that he was "gonna electrocute somebody" if the courts did not block him in the process. That remark brought abhorrence to John L. Ward, editor of the Conway Log Cabin Democrat and former campaign manager for the late Governor Rockefeller. The Log Cabin Democrat claimed that White:

wants to be the first governor since dear old Orval Faubus to have an electrocution carried out during his administration. . . . Mr. White, should he continue making remarks of this nature, could well be on his way to being the most thoughtless governor in this state's history.⁷

White scheduled twenty-four executions, but all were stayed by the courts. It was the judicial system which White said most frustrated his gubernatorial tenure.⁸ Even before his second campaign against Clinton began, White criticized the former governor for setting only one execution date and for commuting the life sentence of a 75-year-old inmate who later was paroled and subsequently was convicted of murder and bank robbery.⁹ White's efforts in implementing the death penalty were the subject of a humorous Arkansas Gazette cartoon in September 1981. The sketch shows four chairs, one Chippendale, one Queen Anne, one Hepplewhite and the

⁷Reprinted from Conway Log Cabin Democrat in Arkansas Gazette, September 13, 1981.

⁸Arkansas Gazette, November 3, 1982.

⁹Ibid., September 11, 1982.

other, Frank White. The "Frank White" chair was an electric chair.¹⁰

White also enraged certain moderate and liberal elements in both parties when he claimed that "97 percent" of Arkansas welfare clients could work if they were determined to find jobs. In October 1981, Arkansas had about 28,000 families on public assistance, and about 2,000 were dropped under various program reductions implemented under the Ronald Reagan administration.¹¹ The Arkansas Gazette called White to task noting increasing levels of unemployment both in the state and nationwide. "It is an easy shot, but the governor ought not to get away with such sweeping exaggerations. . . ." ¹²

White angered feminists when he refused to include the proposed Equal Rights Amendment in his call for a special legislative session in November 1981. In turning down the request, White even declined to meet with Arkansas' long-time Republican national committeewoman, Leona Troxell of Rose Bud, an ERA proponent. "I asked if there was any opportunity for a group to see the governor, but his schedule was completely full," Mrs.

¹⁰ Ibid., September 16, 1981.

¹¹ Ibid., October 16, 1981.

¹² Ibid., October 18, 1981.

Troxell said.¹³

White supported the Reagan administration economic programs, including the "New Federalism" proposal to transfer more than forty federal programs to the states over a ten-year period. White did express concern that rising costs might make it impossible for states to assume such additional financial burdens.¹⁴ White often lauded the Reagan program as "good and healthy for the country," but he also expressed hope that proposed federal spending cuts for law enforcement, child nutrition and public works would be withdrawn.¹⁵ As he prepared for his re-election campaign, however, White avoided mentioning the Reagan administration, fearing that recurring plant closings and resulting joblessness could become an albatross around his Republican neck. Instead, White attempted to capitalize on unfavorable memories of Clinton's own brief term as governor, referring to his predecessor's commutation from death to life imprisonment of thirty-seven criminals convicted of first-degree murder. Clinton later announced that he would indeed not again commute capital sentences if given a second lease on the state's

¹³Ibid., November 13, 1981.

¹⁴Ibid., February 18, 1982.

¹⁵Ibid., December 11, 1981.

highest office.¹⁶

Despite his ideological conservatism, in contrast to his more moderate gubernatorial predecessors, White worked rather well with the heavily Democratic Arkansas legislature, especially with such figures as State Senator Joe T. Ford of Little Rock. Some legislators, however, objected to White's efforts to lead the General Assembly. Representative George Wimberly of Little Rock, for instance, termed the November 1981 special session to have been "silly, useless, ridiculous. I haven't found one person or one member who thinks we ought to be here."¹⁷ White called the special session to prohibit utility companies from being allowed to put proposed rate hikes into effect (subject to later refund) prior to the approval of the Public Service Commission. Other issues were also considered, many of the lesser ones given easy legislative concurrence. While White termed the results of the special session to have been "great," Representative John Paul Capps of Searcy criticized the governor's leadership. "He just proposes these bills and says, 'Here, do what you want with it,'" claimed Capps.¹⁸

¹⁶Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, October 9, 1982, 2485.

¹⁷Arkansas Gazette, November 29, 1981.

¹⁸Ibid.

In June 1981, White allowed a comprehensive re-districting plan for Arkansas' four U.S. House seats to become law without his signature, a standard practice in states with governors and legislative bodies of the opposite party. The redistricting transferred Garland County and Hot Springs from the Third District of Republican Congressman John Paul Hammerschmidt to the heavily Democratic Fourth District represented by Beryl Franklin Anthony, Jr., of El Dorado. Other adjustments were made in the districts of Representatives Ed Bethune, the Second District Republican, and William "Bill" Alexander, the First District Democrat who serves as a majority floor leader. The measure drew little protest except in normally Republican Garland County, where a small group of partisans loyal to Hammerschmidt insisted that the county remain in the Third District. Hammerschmidt's supporters claimed that they preferred the incumbent because of his widely acknowledged expertise in handling constituent services.¹⁹ Indeed, it was this personal popularity that enabled Hammerschmidt to handily defeat his 1982 Democratic opponent, Kingston banker James "Jim" McDougall, who once served on the staff of

¹⁹Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, October 9, 1982, 1802.

former Senator J. William Fulbright.²⁰

In January 1982, a three-judge federal panel declared the 1981 redistricting plan unconstitutional on grounds that the population variance of 1.87 percent was too large.²¹ In the plan finally approved by the judges, Hammerschmidt's district gained Sevier and Howard counties from Anthony's territory but lost Yell and Perry counties to Bethune's district as well as Garland to the Fourth District. Alexander in turn gained Cleburne, Arkansas and Prairie counties from Bethune but lost no counties in that his First District had declined slightly since the 1970 census. The plan ironically had been voted down by the General Assembly earlier. Hammerschmidt said that it "emotionally grieves me to lose Garland County," but noted his long-time good relationship with constituents in Hot Springs.²² The alterations brought no change to the two-two Democratic-Republican split among the Arkansas delegation in the 1982 mid-term elections.

In other legislative dealings, White persuaded lawmakers to reduce automobile license fees but not to the

²⁰Arkansas Gazette, November 4, 1982.

²¹Shreveport, Louisiana, Times, January 6, 1982.

²²Arkansas Gazette, February 26, 1982.

pre-1980 level he had initially proposed.²³ Later, White compromised with legislators to devise a formula for the distribution of \$21 million in Fort Chaffee federal mineral lease funds between the state and the counties of Sebastian, Franklin, Crawford and Logan. Under the plan, the state received 75 percent of the funds, while the remaining 25 percent was divided among the counties. The state funds were earmarked for one-time bonuses for teachers and school administrators as well as employee insurance funds. Legislators from the affected counties sought a 50-50 distribution but accepted the 75-25 compromise drafted by White and the Democratic leadership in the General Assembly.²⁴ The Arkansas Gazette attacked the distribution formula on grounds that White was "paying off political debts," noting the four candidates had rejected Democrat Clinton in 1980. Yet, the Fort Smith Southwest Times Record questioned the "ruthless greed of certain . . . political forces, whose voice appears to be the Arkansas Gazette." The paper added, "We resent the implication by the Gazette that Governor White is paying off political debts by attempting to be fair in the distribution of the lease

²³Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, August 29, 1981, 1592.

²⁴Arkansas Gazette, November 26, 1981; Shreveport, Louisiana, Times, November 26, 1981.

money."²⁵ In his 1982 campaign, White managed to carry these counties in losing to Clinton.²⁶

Under the White administration, the Arkansas GOP shifted to the right. For instance, Asa Douglas, a Fort Smith advertising agent, had left the Republicans in 1968 to support the presidential campaign of George C. Wallace, claiming at the time that the party was dominated by "eastern liberal" interests. By 1980, however, Douglas returned actively to the GOP to support Reagan and White and was elected vice-chairman of the influential Sebastian County Republican Committee. The remaining Rockefeller GOP factional adherents claimed that White was unnecessarily alienating potential moderate and black support by his strident conservatism. Speaking for these dissidents was Bob K. Scott, a former Rockefeller staff attorney and former Pulaski County GOP chairman. Scott charged that the "more liberal voice in the party has been completely cut out."²⁷ Scott also objected to White's signing of the "creation science" law as an

²⁵Reprinted from Fort Smith Southwest Times Record in Arkansas Gazette, November 22, 1981.

²⁶Election Statistics, 1982 (Little Rock: Secretary of State).

²⁷Arkansas Gazette, November 22, 1981.

"unnecessary abuse nationally . . . and could make Arkansans look like a bunch of country bumpkins."²⁸ Also disturbed by the apparent lack of emphasis on black issues was Representative Bethune, himself an original Rockefeller activist. Bethune explained:

I think it's essential to the life of our party that we attract diverse groups. . . . When Rockefeller headed the party in Arkansas, we had a broader reach across the economic, social and political spectrum than we have now, and we attracted blacks to our cause in greater numbers than we have today. I think we had a more balanced Republican Party then, and I think it's essential to the life of a party that it include diverse groups.²⁹

Dr. Morris S. "Buzz" Arnold, a law professor at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, for a time considered challenging White's second-term bid in the GOP primary on grounds that the governor had alienated too many moderate Republicans and blacks to be able to win another general election. In retrospect, perhaps Arnold was correct. After the 1982 elections, Arnold was named GOP state chairman with White's support.³⁰

Despite his call for a more open state party, Bethune remained a strong supporter of Governor White,

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹Ibid.

³⁰Ibid., December 5, 1982.

whom the congressman introduced at a fund-raising dinner as the "happy warrior from the Naval Academy," a reference to White's attendance of the naval institution in Annapolis, Maryland. That particular gathering was attended by Vice-President George Bush, who termed White's re-election a "national priority" for the Republican Party.³¹ Near the close of the campaign, Bethune termed White's election as "the best thing that ever happened to this state."³²

It was the appointment of former Governor Faubus as director of veterans affairs which most disturbed the moderate Republicans. Bob Scott explained that he felt "about Orval Faubus like I did Richard Nixon. He lost his right to hold any political office and certainly any Republican patronage."³³ However, Sharon Shipley of Fort Smith, co-chairman of the 1980 Reagan campaign in Arkansas, applauded the Faubus appointment, adding, "if you look at the past history of Arkansas events, they represented the feelings of the state at the time," referring to Faubus' actions in the desegregation of Central High School in Little Rock in 1957. Moreover,

³¹Ibid., February 27, 1982.

³²Ibid., October 29, 1982.

³³Ibid., November 22, 1981.

Mrs. Shipley criticized Congressmen Hammerschmidt and Bethune for recommending federal appointments without consulting the county party leadership in advance, a standard practice among the Arkansas delegation. Conservatives specifically objected to Hammerschmidt's nomination of the moderate H. Franklin Waters of Springdale for a vacant federal judgeship. Others objected to Bethune's insistence that Democrat Charles H. Gray, a cousin of Senator Dale Bumpers, be retained as the U.S. marshal for the Eastern District. White had sought to return former Marshal Len E. Blaylock to the position. Blaylock had been recommended for the post by the GOP patronage committee as well, having held the job from 1973-1977, during the Nixon and Gerald R. Ford administrations. When Jimmy Carter became president in 1977, Blaylock was replaced by Gray. Bethune successfully urged the retention of Gray because "he is one of the top marshals in the country," though then GOP Chairman Harlan "Bo" Holleman of Wynne said the reappointment "doesn't help to build a party." Holleman, who was stricken with cancer in the fall of 1981 and died in early 1982, explained that "my business is building the party, and building strength and patronage is one of the ways to do it."³⁴ David Vandergriff, a conservative

³⁴Ibid., October 23, 1981.

attorney from Fort Smith, claimed the rightist faction had gained full control of the Arkansas party by 1981:

The Reagan Republicans didn't run off the Rockefeller Republicans, but they left for whatever reasons. . . . A lot of the Rockefeller Republicans disappeared when he left office, and those that remained have continued to fall by the wayside.³⁵

In 1982, a former Rockefeller partisan, Bob Nash of Little Rock, the assistant director of the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation, worked frantically for Democratic gubernatorial nominee Clinton, noting that "blacks have a feeling of a personal relationship with him."³⁶

The seven Republican state legislators in 1981 and 1982 followed the conservative line promoted by White. Among the most outspoken GOP lawmakers was Jerry King, the fundamentalist pastor from Greenwood. King drew fire from the American Civil Liberties Union after the organization opposed the legislator's efforts to have cancelled a noncredit course about homosexuality taught by a pastor during the spring semester of 1981 at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. King, who called homosexuality a "perversion," later attacked a second noncredit course entitled "American Gay History."³⁷

³⁵Ibid., November 22, 1981.

³⁶Ibid., November 11, 1982.

³⁷Shreveport, Louisiana, Times, October 31, 1981.

During the debate over the Fort Chaffee mineral lease funds in 1981, King got into a shouting match on the House floor with former Representative Preston Bynum, White's top aide. King claimed that White was supporting a different distribution plan than King had been initially led to believe.³⁸ Later, King apologized for embarrassing Bynum and White, adding, "I love my governor. I may not always agree with him, but I love him. If I embarrassed my governor, I'm sorry."³⁹ King's flamboyant style did not damage his chances at the polls; he won a third term in 1982, while White failed in his re-election bid.

Perhaps the best known of the GOP lawmakers was Judy Petty of Little Rock, who waged an aggressive challenge to then Congressman Wilbur Mills in 1974. Mrs. Petty, who also was re-elected in 1982, was a target of the Arkansas Gazette, which termed the one-time aide to Winthrop Rockefeller as an "ultraconservative Republican whose record is her worst reference."⁴⁰ Ironically, Mrs. Petty was endorsed in 1982 by the United Transportation Union, which passed up the pro-labor Democratic choice,

³⁸ Ibid., November 26, 1981.

³⁹ Arkansas Gazette, November 26, 1981.

⁴⁰ Ibid., October 27, 1982.

Jim Brandon, who had accused Mrs. Petty of having a negative legislation record regarding worker and employment issues.⁴¹

Despite rumblings from the former Rockefeller supporters, White had little difficulty gaining renomination in 1982, although his rival from 1980, Marshall Chrisman, again filed for the GOP nomination. Chrisman's candidacy was lauded by the anti-White Arkansas Gazette after the former Republican lawmaker from Ozark endorsed a proposed state tax increase:

Already Mr. Chrisman has set a refreshing example for the campaign in both parties by actually addressing a substantive issue. He said the state needed to raise taxes to improve education, drug rehabilitation and other public services, and he promised a statewide work-release system for the prisons.⁴²

After the general election, the Gazette still claimed that a "tax increase is essential to maintain services and to stimulate long-term economic growth," predicting that Clinton as governor would be virtually compelled to raise state revenues.⁴³ Specifically, Chrisman proposed increasing the sales, tobacco and alcohol taxes, moves opposed at the time by both White and Clinton. In fact,

⁴¹ Ibid., October 5, 1982.

⁴² Ibid., March 4, 1982.

⁴³ Ibid., November 12, 1982.

Clinton even suggested that he would call a "plebiscite" when he saw a need for additional revenues, reflecting the former governor's caution over higher taxes, which he helped to push through the legislature in 1979.⁴⁴

Some Arkansas newspapers speculated that former Supreme Court Justice James "Jim" Johnson of Conway might switch parties and challenge White for renomination. The pro-Clinton Searcy Daily Citizen claimed that the White candidacy could be stopped cold in the GOP primary should Johnson enter. "Johnson can count on thirty thousand to forty thousand votes for anything, anytime, and that's more than enough to beat White in the GOP primary," the paper maintained.⁴⁵ Yet Johnson and his wife, Virginia, the 1968 Democratic gubernatorial aspirant, took no active role in the 1982 campaign other than to express support for White. The Arkansas Gazette went so far as to label Johnson, the Democratic opponent to Rockefeller sixteen years earlier, as an "old Dixiecrat firebrand . . . finally out of the closet and making no pretensions about being a Democrat." The paper noted

⁴⁴Ibid., March 4, 1982.

⁴⁵Quoted from Searcy Daily Citizen in Arkansas Gazette, March 14, 1982.

that Johnson might receive a "frosty welcome" to the GOP from former Rockefeller partisans but emphasized that party conservatives might cheer, noting Johnson had long been friendly with South Carolina Republican Senator Strom Thurmond, who in 1981 recommended Johnson for a vacancy on the U.S. Parole Commission.⁴⁶ Despite the Gazette's prediction, Johnson did not switch parties. In the midst of the general election campaign, Mrs. Johnson met with White in Conway and told the governor "Don't you believe those polls," which repeatedly and correctly showed Clinton with his 55 percent to 45 percent victory margin.⁴⁷

Republicans had hoped to discourage Chrisman from filing once again, but the Ozark businessman still paid his \$1,500 entrance fee. At the time, the crusty Chrisman said the atmosphere at GOP headquarters was so cool that he had to "scrape the icicles off me when I left."⁴⁸ Finally, a third Republican candidate also filed for the gubernatorial nomination, Connie Voll, a resident of Lonoke and a nutritionist and management consultant in Little Rock. A Searcy native, Mrs. Voll hence became the

⁴⁶Arkansas Gazette, March 14, 1982.

⁴⁷Ibid., October 28, 1982; Time, CXVI (September 20, 1982), 11.

⁴⁸Arkansas Gazette, March 20, 1982.

first woman to run for governor since Mrs. Johnson was a candidate fourteen years earlier. Mrs. Voll's only political activity had been to appear at legislative hearings in Little Rock to urge the state to continue employing nutrition consultants for the various agencies.⁴⁹

Two other Republicans initially filed for statewide office. Benjamin Paul Talbot, Jr., a businessman from Magnolia, filed as the GOP candidate against Lieutenant Governor Winston Bryant. Talbot's father was a supporter of White in 1980 and 1982. Young Talbot withdrew from his race due to a lack of apparent support, and Bryant won his second term without opposition in the general election. Republicans ran Little Rock attorney Tom Ferstl as the standard-bearer against Attorney General Steve Clark of Cabot, who had gained attention in the "creation science" trial. Ferstl proved to be no match for the experienced incumbent. The GOP also fielded a dozen state senate candidates, including incumbent Travis A. Miles of Fort Smith and Dr. John Giller of El Dorado, a physician who had opposed Lieutenant Governor Bryant in the 1980 Democratic primary. Twenty-two GOP candidates, including the six incumbents, ran for House seats in 1982.⁵⁰

⁴⁹Ibid., March 31, 1982.

⁵⁰Ibid.

Most of the primary attention of course was focused on the Democratic race for governor. The man regarded by many as the strongest possible nominee in late 1981, former Congressman Ray Thornton, the president of Arkansas State University in Jonesboro, declined to challenge White despite encouragement from moderate-to-conservative Democratic elements. Thornton said he felt that he must fulfill his commitment to the university.⁵¹ Therefore, Clinton became the most likely party nominee but faced determined opposition from four others, including his former lieutenant governor, Joe Purcell, former Congressman and Attorney General James Guy Tucker, Jr., of Little Rock, State Senator Kim Hendren of Gravette in Benton County and perennial candidate Monroe A. Schwarzlose of Kingsland in Cleveland County, a former Republican who challenged Clinton in both the 1978 and 1980 Democratic primaries as well. Hendren ran to the right of Clinton and Tucker, who competed for the state's traditional liberal voting blocs. At the eleventh hour, Purcell, also a former attorney general, entered the race and soon proved to be a major obstacle to Clinton's expected election drive.⁵²

⁵¹Ibid., October 7, 1981.

⁵²Ibid., March 31, 1982.

U.S. News and World Report in March 1982 contended that "even Republicans concede the party will lose governorships in Minnesota, Michigan and Arkansas." The publication also said that Clinton "is favored to recapture the chair he lost two years ago to White."⁵³ Yet, Republicans, noting White's amazing strength in 1980 in southern and central Arkansas felt certain the incumbent could again defeat Clinton. In the words of National Committeeman Holleman, "If the Democrats win in 1982, they are going to have to come up with somebody besides Bill Clinton for sure."⁵⁴ White's supporters were optimistic because the governor's fiscal conservatism appeared to be popular in rural Arkansas. And despite White's initial awkward television appearances and press-conference misstatements during his first year in office, the governor seemed by early 1982 to have developed a good campaign style and an effective stump speech.⁵⁵

In April 1982, Joseph "Jody" Powell, former press secretary to President Carter, told a University of Arkansas at Monticello audience that Carter felt partly responsible for Clinton's 1980 defeat, referring to the sending

⁵³U.S. News and World Report, CII (March 29, 1982), 26.

⁵⁴Arkansas Gazette, September 20, 1981.

⁵⁵Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, February 27, 1982, 361.

of nineteen thousand Cuban refugees to Fort Chaffee. "We put quite a political burden on Governor Clinton . . . and he shouldered it," Powell said.⁵⁶ Clinton accepted blame for his defeat, apologized to voters for failing to oppose the relocation of the refugees and for seeking higher automobile license fees. "I was too inflexible. This is a very personal state that requires a high level of accessibility. I'm ready to correct past mistakes," Clinton added.⁵⁷

Chrisman made few waves after his initial announcement of candidacy in the Republican primary. Calling White a "do-nothing governor," Chrisman charged that the incumbent did not relate well to the general public and had failed to consult Republican county committee members regarding patronage appointments. Chrisman also addressed himself to the issue of industrialization by claiming that the relocation of more factories paying low wages was not the solution to Arkansas' economic woes.⁵⁸ Mrs. Voll made few appearances but did voice support for a one-cent state sales tax increase to boost funding for schools. She also pledged to commute all death sentences to life

⁵⁶Arkansas Gazette, April 14, 1982.

⁵⁷Time, CXVI (September 20, 1982), 11.

⁵⁸Arkansas Gazette, February 18, 1982.

imprisonment.⁵⁹ When the returns were tabulated, Mrs. Voll received just four votes in her home county.⁶⁰

White polled 83.2 percent of the primary ballots, compared to Chrisman's 10.6 percent and Mrs. Voll's 6.2 percent. Actually, Chrisman had run better in 1980, when he received 28.2 percent. White polled 11,111 of the 13,347 primary ballots cast. As low as it was, the 1982 GOP primary turnout was almost double that in 1980, as Democrats fully dominated the preliminary political events in the state. Only four counties, Benton, Pulas-ki, Searcy and Washington, cast at least one thousand GOP primary votes. White received pluralities in seven-ty-two counties; Chrisman led with 52.5 percent in Mad-ison County. Lincoln County split one vote apiece be-tween the two Republicans. Not a single GOP primary bal-lot was even cast in Conway County, home of the late Gov-ernor Rockefeller.⁶¹ The Conway party organization dis-banded in January 1982, when county chairman Jerry Mahan of Morrilton resigned from the party. Subsequently, the vice-chairman and secretary also quit. The absence of a GOP committee in the county embarrassed new Chairman Robert "Bob" Cohee of Little Rock, who succeeded the late

⁵⁹Ibid., April 7, 1982.

⁶⁰Election Statistics, 1982.

⁶¹Ibid.

Harlan Holleman. Cohee, noting fifteen GOP ballots had been cast in Conway County in 1980, vowed to hold a primary in every county but was unable to do so. Mahan claimed that he had resigned from the party out of dissatisfaction with the state organization and its alleged lack of interest in GOP activities.⁶²

The Democratic results were somewhat encouraging to White in that Clinton, though the favorite, was forced into a runoff with Purcell. Purcell, in announcing for governor, told reporters, "The truth is I've been running for governor all my life," referring to his heartbreaking loss in the first primary in 1970, when Bumpers forced Faubus into a second election.⁶³ Human Events, the conservative "New Right" periodical which supported White, expressed hope that the infighting between Clinton and Purcell might allow White an unexpected opening. The publication also claimed that White was somewhat popular because of past efforts to curtail utility rates and for closing the refugee center.⁶⁴ Clinton, however, repeatedly claimed that White's actions as governor had

⁶²Arkansas Gazette, May 11, 1982.

⁶³Ibid., March 26, 1982.

⁶⁴Human Events, XLII (May 1, 1982), 14.

led to sharp increases in utility rates. "The first act of his governorship was to fire people from the Energy Department who had succeeded in holding down utility rates," Clinton charged.⁶⁵ White stole the limelight from both Clinton and Tucker when he called the special legislative session in November 1981, at which lawmakers approved a measure to prohibit utility companies from proceeding with rate hikes prior to Public Service Commission hearings. Clinton though suggested that White had failed to achieve a really tough utility reform measure. Instead, Clinton claimed that White had spent more time to "hitting the big special interests up for money for his next campaign" and shunning legislative responsibilities.⁶⁶

Among those supporting White was John Ed Anthony of Bearden, owner of Anthony Timberlands, Inc., and a cousin of Democratic Congressman Beryl Anthony. Anthony, who described Clinton as "catastrophic" for the timber industry, delivered such a crushing attack on his fellow Democrat at a Malvern civic luncheon that observers said he seemed more anti-Clinton than did White.⁶⁷ He

⁶⁵Arkansas Gazette, February 21, 1982.

⁶⁶Ibid., November 30, 1981.

⁶⁷Ibid., October 19, 1982.

insisted that Clinton had a "vendetta" against the timber industry as a result of the Democratic candidate's position on environmental issues. On the other hand, Anthony described White as a "friend" of the interest.⁶⁸ White was also friendly with Congressman Anthony's father, Beryl F. Anthony, Sr., of El Dorado, whom the governor appointed in 1981 to a seven-year term on the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission. Anthony, Sr., said his decision to support White in 1980 marked the first time he had ever voted for a Republican.⁶⁹

Clinton criticized White for riding in an Arkansas Power and Light Company airplane in 1981, while on an industrial recruitment trip to Richmond, Virginia. White in turn emphasized that Clinton, as governor-elect in late 1978, had also ridden on an AP&L plane.⁷⁰ White pointed out that Clinton's 1980 campaign manager, Richard "Dick" Herget, is an AP&L official. Moreover, Clinton was supported by Thomas F. "Mack" McLarty, a board member of Arkansas Louisiana Gas Company. Yet, McLarty's firm received no rate increase while Clinton was governor from 1979-1981.⁷¹

⁶⁸ Ibid., October 6, 1982.

⁶⁹ Ibid., July 11, 1981.

⁷⁰ Ibid., October 8, 1982.

⁷¹ Ibid.

In November 1981, the Democratic Searcy Daily Citizen offered this analysis of White's potential to win in 1982:

We've become fascinated by watching Governor Frank White's acumen as a politician. While he still doesn't have any hint that he understands the governor's job or has the faintest idea how to run state government, he is turning his flair for salesmanship into political hay. . . . Mr. White is about as fast on his feet as any politician in memory, and although he doesn't impress us even slightly as an administrator of state government, he isn't going to be anyone's pushover in the 1982 election.⁷²

The Stuttgart Daily Leader in February 1982 also suggested that White could be unbeatable, especially in light of Clinton's television advertisements which showed the candidate apologizing for mistakes while he was governor. "Clinton, backed by his pseudoapologetic television commercials . . . is setting himself up for a defeat long before he meets Frank White."⁷³

In addition to the White re-election drive, Arkansas Republicans fielded four potentially powerful congressional candidates in 1982. It marked the first time in sixty-two years that the Arkansas GOP had contested all the available House seats from the state. After the

⁷²Quoted from Searcy Daily Citizen in Arkansas Gazette, November 29, 1981.

⁷³Quoted from Stuttgart Daily Leader in Arkansas Gazette, February 28, 1982.

1920 election, the party increasingly abandoned its practice of offering "sacrificial lambs" in every district and instead ran candidates, many of them token in fact, in only two or three districts.⁷⁴ The two GOP incumbents, Congressmen Bethune and Hammerschmidt ran again for their third and ninth terms in the Second and Third districts, respectively. The party also attracted two unknown conservatives, both of whom were adequately financed, to challenge incumbent Democrats Bill Alexander and Beryl Anthony in the First and Fourth districts, respectively. Opposing Alexander was attorney Charles "Chuck" Banks of Osceola, a former Democrat who had once been a member of the staff of Attorney General Jim Guy Tucker. Opposite Anthony was the former legal counsel for the state Republican Party, Robert "Bob" Leslie of Redfield in Jefferson County.⁷⁵

Leslie, who defended the Reagan administration economic policies in his race, blasted Anthony as a "straight Ted Kennedy-Tip O'Neill" supporter.⁷⁶ Banks, the 35-year-old son of former Mississippi County Judge A.A. "Shug" Banks, turned Republican to make the congressional

⁷⁴Robert A. Diamond, ed., Congressional Quarterly's Guide to U.S. Elections (Washington, 1975), 741.

⁷⁵Arkansas Gazette, January 15, 1982; March 3, 1982.

⁷⁶Ibid., January 15, 1982.

race. A former supporter of Jimmy Carter, Banks said that he had steadily become disillusioned with the Democrats, especially at the national level. He further charged that Alexander had "supported the tired old programs of the northern liberals more than 60 percent of the time in the last five years." Banks added that voters in 1980 had "sent a strong message . . . supporting decreases in the size of the federal government, reduced taxes and strong national defense but Bill Alexander didn't hear us." Banks also said that the Reagan program had the potential to succeed but indicated that compromises would also be required.⁷⁷

Alexander and Anthony were initially targeted for defeat by the conservative action group Committee for the Survival of a Free Congress, partially funded by Colorado beer magnate Joseph Coors. An advertisement in the Jonesboro Sun urged a conservative to step forward to challenge Alexander, who was labeled "a rubber stamp to Tip O'Neill and the eastern liberal establishment."⁷⁸ Alexander later admitted that he had been placed under intense pressure to support the Reagan program in mid-1981. Prominent Democrats told Alexander that he could not

⁷⁷Ibid., March 3, 1982.

⁷⁸Ibid., September 27, 1981.

be re-elected unless he supported Reagan. Yet, Alexander, as a deputy House whip, became Arkansas' most caustic and consistent critic of the Reagan administration. After winning re-election in 1982, Alexander said he was more determined than ever to "change the direction" of the Reagan program.⁷⁹

The Democrats had difficulty in finding opponents to Hammerschmidt and Bethune, as the party's big-name possibilities declined to run in view of the incumbents' presumed natural advantage. The Arkansas Gazette lamented quite prematurely that:

Every state has its own political context, but as the 1982 election season begins, it appears that Arkansas' two Democratic incumbents in the U.S. House will have opposition from Republicans, but the two incumbent Republicans will not have opposition from Democrats. This is an odd circumstance in a state where most of the officeholders are Democratic. The paradox is even stranger in a time of steep recession . . . and at a time when the Republican president's poll ratings have dropped well below the 50 percent level. . . . Bethune and Hammerschmidt have been outspoken champions of the Reaganomics that has gotten the economy into so much trouble, but they may go unopposed into a fall election in which, nationally, the Republicans are probably going to lose at least a score of seats in the lower house.⁸⁰

Hammerschmidt, however, drew a potentially strong foe,

⁷⁹Ibid., November 14, 1982.

⁸⁰Ibid., March 24, 1982.

James McDougal, who had long supported liberal Democratic programs. McDougal termed Hammerschmidt "a pleasant fellow who provided good constituent service" but claimed that the Republican "has supported Reagan down the line." "It has become clear that we need a Democratic congressman with the business and political experience to fight against the ruinous economic policies of this Republican administration," McDougal charged.⁸¹ The Gazette embraced McDougal as "a man with impressive credential . . . one who has served with a statesman of world stature," referring to Fulbright. The paper continued:

There is some reason to believe that most of Hammerschmidt's constituents are not really familiar with his voting record, which is barely to the left of Jesse Helms. Perhaps the constituents of the Third District approve of Reaganomics; perhaps they endorse the dismantling of the government programs on which Arkansas has depended so heavily as a state with more than its fair share of poor people. A great mass of voters in the Third District may simply know Mr. Hammerschmidt as a benign nurturer of constituents' convenience but are unaware of his near-encyclopedic support of right-wing legislation.⁸²

The Gazette repeatedly criticized Hammerschmidt in editorials through 1982, endorsing McDougal one week prior

⁸¹ Ibid., March 26, 1982.

⁸² Ibid., March 27, 1982.

to the election. The paper did not begin its process of endorsements until mid-October. The Gazette reiterated its dislike for Hammerschmidt's policies, claiming that "the only good thing about Hammerschmidt . . . is the staff answers his mail."⁸³

Moderate Democrats hoped to persuade Sandy McMath, an attorney from Little Rock and son of former Governor Sid McMath, to challenge Congressman Bethune in 1982. McMath, fearing the second-term congressman too strong, backed away from the challenge. Finally, a little-known former state senator from Cabot, Charles Lindbergh George, filed as the Democratic candidate. Though closely identified with New York Congressman Jack F. Kemp and the Reagan economic program, Bethune also publicly endorsed the continuation of the Voting Rights Act in 1982, as well as the federal legal services program.⁸⁴ While a survey noted that Bethune had supported the Reagan administration 82 percent of the time on House roll calls, he had shown considerable independence. Bethune broke with the state GOP over the reappointment of Federal Marshal Charles Gray. He opposed the sale of the AWAC fighter planes to Saudi Arabia in late 1981. Bethune

⁸³Ibid., October 26, 1982.

⁸⁴Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, February 27, 1982, 362.

led the successful fight in Congress to strike down a proposal to override Arkansas' 10 percent interest ceiling for retail loans, a move supported by Senators Bumpers and Pryor. Bethune also objected when Congressman Anthony attempted to form a "Congressional Sunbelt Caucus," charging that such a group would be divisive and could pit regional interests against each other.⁸⁵ Though George was initially seen as a token Democratic candidate, he proved to be adept at campaigning. He warned Bethune that "unless the economy improves between now and the election, which I don't expect, he's going to get himself beat." The Democrat also criticized heavy defense spending, as supported by Reagan and Bethune, charging that "if the United States and the Soviet Union don't watch it, they're going to both spend themselves into bankruptcy by building all these weapons."⁸⁶ George advocated delaying the scheduled third phase of the Reagan tax cut as a possible means to keep down the federal deficit. George refused to commit himself on the proposed constitutional amendment to require a balanced budget, instead charging that the Reagan program was designed to "aid the wealthy."⁸⁷

⁸⁵Arkansas Gazette, November 29, 1981.

⁸⁶Ibid., March 31, 1982.

⁸⁷Ibid., July 31, 1982.

In August 1982, Bethune broke with the administration over a measure to raise nearly \$99 billion over a three-year period in a series of controversial tax increases, termed by the Republican leadership as "loop-hole closings." To Bethune, the 1982 tax hike seemed a repudiation of the 1980 GOP platform, and he warned that such measures could delay, not hasten, economic recovery.⁸⁸ Joining Bethune in opposition to the 1982 tax hikes were Hammerschmidt and Alexander, while Anthony was the only Arkansan to vote with the administration.⁸⁹ Bethune claimed that such revenue measures were unwise until more cuts had been made in federal spending. The Republican congressman noted that it was a GOP president, Herbert Hoover, who had supported a tax increase in the midst of the Great Depression, a factor which may have prolonged hard economic times. Bethune, a member of the House Budget and Banking Committees, also charged that the 1982 tax bill was unconstitutional in that it originated in the Senate, not the House, as required by the law.⁹⁰ The Arkansas Gazette published a series of editorials blasting Bethune's opposition to the 1982 tax hikes, which the newspaper embraced. "Mr. Bethune wants

⁸⁸Arkansas Democrat, August 18, 1982.

⁸⁹Ibid., August 20, 1982.

⁹⁰Ibid., August 10, 1982.

to have it both ways, taking credit for tax reduction but no responsibility for deficits."⁹¹

The 1982 campaign in Arkansas soon degenerated into a tense contest which a leading magazine termed "about the ugliest ever."⁹² Herby Branscum, Jr., of Perryville, the outgoing Democratic state chairman, even called upon Governor White to resign, telling a partisan gathering that "we have a total idiot in the governor's office now. He's a disgrace to the people of this state." Auditor Julia Hughes Jones added that when White speaks of "running the state like a business, he must be thinking about Braniff Airlines," referring to the firm which went bankrupt in the spring of 1982.⁹³

To bolster support for his campaign, Clinton invited Kentucky Governor John Young Brown, Jr., and Brown's wife, former television personality Phyllis George, to Little Rock. Brown told a partisan luncheon he was only vaguely acquainted with White but insisted that Clinton had been "the most talented, dynamic and energetic governor I met." Brown also charged that a Clinton victory would mean a repudiation of Reagan's "disastrous economic plan."

⁹¹Arkansas Gazette, August 1, 1982.

⁹²U.S. News and World Report, CII (November 1, 1982), 18-19.

⁹³Arkansas Gazette, September 18, 1982.

Yet, the Kentuckian was placed on the defensive by reporters when he seemingly sought to blame Frank White for a high unemployment rate in Arkansas while the Kentucky jobless level was at the time even greater.⁹⁴

In mid-September, the Arkansas Gazette reported that White had sent several potential appointees to the Public Service Commission to be interviewed by the leadership of Arkansas Power and Light. The newspaper indicated that White had sought AP&L clearance for the appointees. Almost immediately, White countered with the defense that he had sought no such clearance but had sent the prospective appointees to receive a technical briefing on utility matters. Moreover, White produced documentation that Governor Clinton in 1980 had himself consulted with two utility executives about a person he was considering for appointment to the PSC. The executives, including White's supporter Senator Joe Ford, said that they had talked with Clinton about the nomination of Jerrell Clark of Cabot. Hence the question of clearance of PSC appointees degenerated into a name-calling tirade from which neither White nor Clinton gained a clear advantage.⁹⁵

⁹⁴Ibid., September 14, 1982.

⁹⁵Ibid., September 18, 24, 1982.

White also accused Clinton of failure to contest a federal decision which allowed the sending of hydroelectric power generated in Arkansas to other states. Clinton replied that the federal ruling had not been challenged because he was unaware of the situation, published in the voluminous Federal Register. When White raised the question, the irate Clinton charged that the governor "is a liar, he's just lying, and I think he knows he's lying."⁹⁶

In early October, White sent telegrams to twelve thousand potential contributors under the title "Crisis Appeal." White, noting that he needed \$50,000 in additional funds for a last-minute media push, urged contributors to beware of the impact of a Clinton victory. An amused Clinton charged that White, in sending such appeals, was "desperate." "He's trying to convince people I'm a threat to their way of life, and he's their savior," Clinton added.⁹⁷

The Arkansas Gazette formally endorsed Clinton on October 17, after months of recurring anti-Republican editorials and probing news columns. The newspaper actually criticized the campaigns of both candidates as "abysmal" but insisted that Clinton would be "more apt to bring the ideas and leadership that the state

⁹⁶Ibid., September 30, 1982.

⁹⁷Ibid., October 8, 1982.

desperately needs," whereas it claimed that White "represents the status quo."⁹⁸ After defeating Purcell by a 54 to 46 percent vote in the Democratic runoff, Clinton won the support of his defeated rivals. Purcell, when attending a reception for congressional candidate Charles George merely said, "I'm voting for all Democrats," indicating he was somewhat less than enthusiastic about Clinton.⁹⁹ Purcell's campaign manager, Joe K. McCarty of Little Rock, coordinated the "Democrats-for-White" movement after the runoff election.¹⁰⁰

Although the Democratic leadership viewed White as unintelligent about government, the governor improved on his campaign style and oratory. Yet, he made occasional mistakes, once referring to Arkansas department store magnate Sam Walton, the head of Wal-Mart, as the president of "K-Mart." Wal-Mart is the leading employer in largely Republican Bentonville. White, who received the support of the National Rifle Association, an anti-gun-control lobby, walked into the sports department of a West Memphis discount store and told a passive customer, "I'm against gun control. Bill Clinton is not." The

⁹⁸Ibid., October 17, 1982.

⁹⁹Ibid., October 15, 1982; Election Statistics, 1982.

¹⁰⁰Arkansas Democrat, June 13, 1982.

customer did not even answer the governor.¹⁰¹

White, who grew up in wealth in the Dallas, Texas, suburb of Highland Park, was a member of the contingent of federal troops who oversaw the integration of Central High School in 1957.¹⁰² As governor, White never attracted significant black backing despite efforts to win such support. In Phillips County, for instance, White was endorsed by the Reverend Sam Bennett, a NAACP official, but the county voted overwhelmingly for Bill Clinton.¹⁰³ Ernest Dumas of the Arkansas Gazette editorial staff surveyed key black precincts in the east side of Little Rock and concluded that Clinton drew 98 percent of the black vote. Sample precincts bore such results as 1,006-31, 900-18 and 784-13 in favor of the Democratic candidate. Dumas estimated that 90,000 Arkansas blacks voted in the Clinton-White race, more than enough to account for the Democrat's 78,000-vote victory margin.¹⁰⁴

To prepare for the 1982 race, Clinton's wife, attorney Hillary Rodham of Little Rock, began referring to herself as "Mrs. Bill Clinton," after earlier insisting

¹⁰¹Arkansas Gazette, October 16, 1982.

¹⁰²Oklahoma City Sunday Oklahoman, October 24, 1982.

¹⁰³Election Statistics, 1982; Arkansas Gazette, October 16, 1982.

¹⁰⁴Arkansas Gazette, November 11, 1982.

on retention of her maiden name in her law practice.¹⁰⁵

A Democratic activist, Larry Don Rose, explained Clinton's prospects in connection with his 1980 defeat. "Too many people voted against Clinton just to get even with him for something or other. Nobody thought he'd lose in 1980," Rose said.¹⁰⁶

Overshadowed by the gubernatorial race was the attorney general campaign between Democrat Steve Clark seeking re-election and Republican Tom Ferstl. Clark's wife, Kathryn, filed for divorce in the midst of the campaign. Ferstl called a news conference and mentioned his opponent's divorce but claimed that he was not trying to make an issue of the matter. Instead, Ferstl accused Clark of conflict-of-interest regarding a half-million-dollar Medicaid fraud scheme involving Home Health Services of America in North Little Rock. Clark denied any knowledge of the firm's activities, but Ferstl noted that the attorney general's brother-in-law had previously been employed by the company.¹⁰⁷ In its endorsement of Clark, the Gazette praised the attorney general's "meritorious record," noting he would become the first person to hold the position for three terms since the 1940s.

¹⁰⁵Ibid., February 28, 1982; Oklahoma City Sunday Oklahoman, October 24, 1982.

¹⁰⁶Oklahoma City Sunday Oklahoman, October 24, 1982.

¹⁰⁷Arkansas Gazette, October 11, 1982.

The newspaper claimed that Ferstl "lacks understanding of the office."¹⁰⁸

Most observers expected all four Arkansas congressmen to win again in 1982; that's exactly what happened, but few detected George's growing strength against Bethune. Bethune in fact was so confident of victory that he did not begin campaigning on an active basis until about three weeks prior to the general election. While most prognosticators were forecasting Republican losses in the 1982 House races, Bethune, citing what he termed "outstanding qualifications" of national GOP congressional candidates, predicted the party would gain a few seats. The Gazette, continuing its pro-George editorial policy, urged Democrats to turn out in mass to defeat Bethune. "It is a great year to vote Democratic, particularly in races for Congress," the newspaper claimed, portraying George as a "staunch Democrat who has defined with unmistakable clarity the leading economic and fiscal issues." The paper also criticized Bethune for his alleged "pro-Pentagon" position and hostility to government social programs, which it insisted were essential to the well-being of Arkansas.¹⁰⁹ Bethune had a close encounter with defeat, as George polled 46 percent, much

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., October 23, 1982.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., October 24, 1982.

greater than political analysts had foreseen.¹¹⁰

Observers also believed that McDougal could seriously threaten Hammerschmidt or at least offer him the first real challenge since the incumbent defeated Bill Clinton in their bitter 1974 race. Hammerschmidt, however, proved that he had kept close ties to his constituents, many of whom are retirees and professional persons who had moved into the Third District since 1970. His high standing in the community had been dramatized when the Garland County residents fought to remain in Hammerschmidt's district. While Hammerschmidt has not been in the forefront of the passage of national legislation, he is the ranking Republican member of the House Veterans Affairs Committee. Hammerschmidt's name is also held in high esteem in Fort Smith, the largest city in the district and the undisputed center of social and economic conservatism in Arkansas.¹¹¹ Yet, unemployment has remained a persistent problem in the Third District, which depends heavily on summer tourism for its economic sustenance. Democrats felt certain that the state of the economy in 1982 could indeed sweep Hammerschmidt into the ranks of the defeated.¹¹² The Evans-Novak Political Report claimed in mid-October that

¹¹⁰Election Statistics, 1982.

¹¹¹Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, October 9, 1982, 2486.

¹¹²Time, CXX (October 18, 1982), 22.

McDougal could win on the basis of the "miserable economy."¹¹³ The reserved, confident Hammerschmidt was little surprised to learn that he had not only defeated McDougal but had done so with a 66 percent margin. Hammerschmidt accused McDougal of campaigning from texts prepared by the Democratic National Committee. Moreover, Hammerschmidt knew that for sixteen years he had been assiduously corresponding with his constituents. He is on a first-name basis with literally hundreds of voters in northwestern Arkansas, having made innumerable public appearances during his congressional career.¹¹⁴

Republicans were hopeful that Banks could unseat Alexander in the First District, seeming to ignore the overwhelmingly Democratic geography of the area. Banks attempted to win farm support by chiding Alexander for vacating the House Agriculture Committee in 1981, to instead gain membership on the more prestigious Appropriations Committee.¹¹⁵ Banks waged an active campaign, endorsing such items as technical training programs, tax credits for industries that locate in high-unemployment areas, mortgage credit assistance for first-time home

¹¹³Evans-Novak Political Report, October 12, 1982, 3.

¹¹⁴Election Statistics, 1982; Arkansas Gazette, October 10, 1982.

¹¹⁵Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, October 9, 1982, 2486.

buyers and older citizens and rigid controls on embargo sanctions. He suggested that the Reagan administration take \$1 billion from the federal Synfuels Foundation for the funding of the mortgage assistance program. The Arkansas Gazette determined that Banks was running "neck-and-neck" with Alexander as of mid-October.¹¹⁶ Banks also received publicity and financial assistance when former President Gerald Ford appeared with the GOP candidate in a Jonesboro rally.¹¹⁷ Yet, when the returns were in, Banks fell far short of victory.¹¹⁸

Like Banks, Republican Leslie was disadvantaged by the Democratic nature of the Fourth Congressional District, which had elected moderate-to-liberal Democrats for more than forty years. Leslie, the son of a sharecropper who worked his way through law school, painted Anthony as the "silver spoon" candidate, claiming Arkansas needed a congressman "who knows what it's like to work for a living." Anthony is the wealthy heir of south Arkansas timber and oil interests. Leslie criticized Anthony for supporting the windfall profits tax on petroleum and for vacating the House Agriculture Committee for a seat on the tax-writing Ways and Means Committee, once chaired by the

¹¹⁶Arkansas Gazette, October 19, 1982.

¹¹⁷Ibid., October 22, 1982.

¹¹⁸Election Statistics, 1982.

Arkansan Wilbur Mills. Indications were that Anthony would lead with ease in his home county of Union but face some difficulty in Hot Springs and Pine Bluff. As it turned out, Anthony handily carried every county in the race but fared worst in Union.¹¹⁹ The candidates held a series of debates in the various cities of the district, but none were televised. Hence few voters saw the exchanges, and probably most of those who did were already committed to a particular candidate.¹²⁰

One week prior to the election, child psychologist and pediatrician Dr. Benjamin Spock, who had retired to Rogers, Arkansas, addressed a Democratic rally at the state capitol. The rally was held at a makeshift "Reagan Ranch," patterned after a 1930s-style "Hooverville," which was supposed to dramatize the hardships of high unemployment. Spock urged voters to retire Reagan, Bethune and Hammerschmidt, claiming that the president's policies were "ruining the country" and that the two GOP congressmen were "following Reagan around like little doggies." Spock said that he could "only hope that this country will be here" in 1984 "so we can retire Reagan."¹²¹

¹¹⁹Ibid.; Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, October 9, 1982, 2487.

¹²⁰Arkansas Gazette, October 20, 1982.

¹²¹Ibid., October 27, 1982.

The Democratic tide was too strong for Frank White to withstand, as Bill Clinton became the first Arkansas governor in history to regain the office after having been voted out. Clinton seized an early lead, held on to it from the start and pushed ahead steadily. All three television networks projected Clinton as the winner by a relatively comfortable margin. In that the media had done the same thing in 1980, only to become red-faced with White's upset victory that year, some Republicans still were hopeful that the early returns were misleading. Soon though it became clear that Clinton had regained much of the Democratic vote he had lost in 1980, especially in such cities as Texarkana, Jonesboro, Camden and West Memphis. And in northwestern Arkansas, White was clearly winning but not by the huge majorities he had received in 1980. Clinton received 431,855 votes, or 54.7 percent, to White's 357,496, or 45.3 percent. White carried only nineteen counties, compared to the fifty-one he had won two years earlier. Here is the county breakdown of the White vote in 1982, listed in descending order by percent:

Carroll (65.1)	Scott (55.3)
Crawford (64.6)	Newton (55.1)
Sebastian (64.3)	Logan (53.9)
Benton (61.7)	Polk (53.1)
Baxter (59.9)	Howard (51.9)
Marion (58)	Washington (51.9)
Searcy (56.2)	Pike (51.6)
Madison (55.5)	Union (51)
Boone (55.5)	Johnson (50.9)
Franklin (55.4)	

With the exceptions of Union, Howard and Pike counties, where he received narrow majorities, White carried only the northwestern, more traditionally Republican areas in 1982. His earlier inroads into Democratic southern and central Arkansas were eradicated in 1982.¹²²

In his concession speech, White said that he had achieved "my dream to build a good two-party system in Arkansas," and he added, "there is a time to win and a time to lose in every man's life."¹²³ Although the Republicans could take some solace in the re-election of Congressmen Hammerschmidt and Bethune, the party had clearly lost a major test of strength. Democrat Steve Clark trounced Republican Ferstl in the attorney general contest, amassing 74.1 percent.¹²⁴

In legislative races, the Republicans ran better in 1982 than at any previous time in the twentieth century. The party gained a House seat, increasing the membership from six to seven, and it won two additional senate contests, boosting the number of Republicans in the upper house to an all-time high of three. The new House member was Ted Mullenix of Percy in Garland County, who defeated incumbent Democrat Jim Montgomery with 54.3

¹²²Election Statistics, 1982.

¹²³Arkansas Gazette, November 3, 1982.

¹²⁴Election Statistics, 1982.

percent in a Garland-Saline counties district. In the Senate races, Joe E. Yates of Bentonville defeated Democrat Bob Crafton of Rogers with 57.5 percent for the right to succeed Kim Hendren, the unsuccessful Democratic gubernatorial candidate who forfeited his legislative post to run in the May primary. And Bill Walters of Greenwood defeated Democrat C.E. Patton of Hartford with 52.5 percent to win an open seat in Scott, Logan, Polk and Sebastian counties. Incumbent Senator Travis Miles was unopposed in his Fort Smith district. The GOP senatorial candidate in south Arkansas, Dr. John Giller of El Dorado lost by a nearly two-to-one margin to incumbent W.D. "Bill" Moore, the senate president pro tempore.¹²⁵

Though he won a third term, Ed Bethune lost six of the eight counties in his Second District, winning only in Faulkner and Pulaski, which clearly provided his victory margin. Bethune received 96,775, or 53.9 percent, compared to George's 82,913, or 46.1 percent.¹²⁶ George's initial strategy had been to work the outlying counties early, quietly and thoroughly and then to go public with a media saturation of Pulaski County in the final two weeks prior to the election. The strategy nearly worked,

¹²⁵Ibid.

¹²⁶Ibid.

as the Democratic nominee carried six of the outlying counties, Conway, Perry, Yell, Lonoke, Saline and Bethune's native White County.¹²⁷ Bethune's relatively small margin seemed to surprise the Arkansas Gazette, which insisted that Democrat George had been handicapped by a lack of media exposure. "George never received much news coverage in the urban media," claimed the Gazette associate editor, Ernest Dumas.¹²⁸ However, the Gazette alone carried numerous items in the September and October editions about George and his political philosophy, which was considerably to the left of Bethune's usually conservative positions. The newspaper officially endorsed George on October 24 and repeatedly praised his candidacy in many editions prior to that time.¹²⁹ Dumas claimed that George would have defeated Bethune had the state Democratic leadership taken their nominee more seriously. The Gazette offered this comment on Bethune's third-term victory:

Ed Bethune is one of the most pleasant and charming figures in Arkansas' public life, but his arch-Republican voting record nearly caught up with him this year.¹³⁰

¹²⁷Ibid.; Arkansas Gazette, November 4, 1982.

¹²⁸Arkansas Gazette, November 5, 1982.

¹²⁹Ibid., October 14, 21, 22, 23, 26, 1982.

¹³⁰Ibid., November 5, 1982.

The newspaper, noting the Second District is really "heavily Democratic," urged Bethune to reconsider his past votes to restrict such federal programs as school lunches and student loans.¹³¹

The pro-Bethune Benton Courier predicted that the GOP congressman would face strenuous Democratic opposition in 1984, perhaps from a leading woman politician such as Treasurer Jimmie Lou Fisher or Auditor Julia Hughes Jones. The Courier, which decided to endorse Bethune after meeting privately with George, said that the big-name Democrats had declined to challenge Bethune in 1982 because of the widespread perception that the incumbent was unbeatable.¹³² The Searcy Daily Citizen noted the importance of straight ticket voting among some Democrats and Republicans in Arkansas in 1982. Bethune and White, for instance, received nearly identical tallies in most White County boxes. Similarly, George and Clinton ran comparable totals. "The straight ticket once thought to be outmoded . . . has staged a comeback this year for both Democrats and Republicans," the paper noted, especially in reference to rural counties. Yet, Bethune's victory was possible only because about ten

¹³¹Ibid.

¹³²Quoted from Benton Courier in Arkansas Gazette, November 14, 1982.

thousand Clinton supporters in Pulaski County split their tickets to back the GOP incumbent.¹³³

Hammerschmidt defeated McDougal, polling 133,909 votes, or 66 percent, to the Democrat's 69,089, or 34 percent.¹³⁴ In analyzing Hammerschmidt's victory, the Arkansas Gazette said that voters did not seem to care whether the Third District congressman was a "Republican or a Rosicrucian," adding:

To them, he was the man who had untangled some red tape for a relative in the service, or helped get a little municipal airstrip lengthened or a water system approved. . . . He made statesmanlike appearances at nursing home dedications and housing authority meetings, tacitly reminding those present of the services he had performed for them in the past.¹³⁵

In the First District, Alexander defeated Banks, 124,208, or 64.8 percent, to the Republican's 67,427, or 35.2 percent.¹³⁶ In fact, Banks, despite his solid financial base, did little better than had Alexander's last Republican challenger, the late Harlan Holleman, who ran for the seat in 1976. Alexander carried every county, mostly by huge margins. In the Fourth District, Anthony defeated Leslie, 121,256, or 65.6 percent, to

¹³³From Searcy Daily Citizen in Arkansas Gazette, November 14, 1982.

¹³⁴Election Statistics, 1982.

¹³⁵Arkansas Gazette, November 4, 1982.

¹³⁶Election Statistics, 1982.

63,661, or 34.4 percent.¹³⁷ Anthony also carried every county in the district, including Leslie's home county of Jefferson. Anthony attributed his success to his Democratic affiliation "at a time of Republican-led economic problems."¹³⁸

Three days after the election, White assessed the outcome, claiming his defeat was not a personal rejection but "a sign of the times," referring to the 10.1 percent national unemployment rate as of October 1982. White said "the Lord has a purpose with my life. I don't know what it is. . . . Sometimes out of defeat comes perhaps the greatest gains in your life." The governor noted Democrats were better organized at the local level in Arkansas and said that the black vote was "devastating" to him.¹³⁹ Prior to the election, White had remarked that blacks would vote Democratic if the party nominee were "a goose."¹⁴⁰ Still, White insisted that he had been sensitive to black needs, stressing his support for funding health clinics and the appointment of a black woman, Shirley Thomas, as his commerce secretary.¹⁴¹

¹³⁷ Ibid.

¹³⁸ Arkansas Gazette, November 4, 1982.

¹³⁹ Ibid., November 6, 1982.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., October 24, 1982.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., November 6, 1982.

White, who attended the Republican Governor's Conference in Kansas City, Missouri, on November 13-14, 1982, claimed that the GOP was not in "shambles" after the mid-term elections. He pointed to the recruitment of "young blood" to the Republican fold and praised the GOP statewide victories in California and Virginia. White said that he would not seek elective office again, apparently shutting the door on a possible rematch with Clinton in 1984. White predicted that Clinton will face difficult problems over the next two years but offered his rival best wishes. White claimed that he was personally most worried about expected increases in utility bills. "I woke many a night worrying how people would make ends meet," White told the Arkansas Gazette.¹⁴²

The Pine Bluff Commercial, which endorsed Clinton in both 1980 and 1982, praised White's concession:

Few things became Frank White so well in office as leaving it. His concession, so much more affecting than his unfortunate victory statement two years ago, showed how much he had grown in two years. His words revealed a strength and generosity that one might not have suspected from his campaign. It is as impossible to dislike the man as it is to admire some of his political tactics. . . . He confirms that defeat is a greater teacher than victory.¹⁴³

¹⁴²Ibid.

¹⁴³Pine Bluff Commercial, November 4, 1982.

The Fort Smith Southwest Times Record commended White for "the gracious manner in which he accepted defeat." The newspaper praised White for having supported prison improvements, recruited high-technology industries to the state and managed government in a "businesslike manner."¹⁴⁴ The Arkansas Democrat described White as an "unabashed, practicing conservative, who richly deserved re-election and has nothing to be sorry for. He was never more eloquent than in defeat." The Democrat also insisted that White "remains politically intact" despite the loss to Clinton.¹⁴⁵

Susan Power, a political scientist at Arkansas State University and a former treasurer for the state GOP, analyzed the 1982 results and concluded that White's organization was weaker than it had been two years earlier despite his incumbency status. Dr. Power, noting the death of the former chairman, Harlan Holleman, claimed that White had not cultivated the GOP organizational structure. Some former supporters of the late Winthrop Rockefeller deserted White in 1982 and were "sorely missed in the second contest," she explained, attributing the

¹⁴⁴Fort Smith Southwest Times Record, November 4, 1982.

¹⁴⁵Arkansas Democrat, November 4, 1982.

defections to the appointment of Orval Faubus as veterans director. Furthermore, Dr. Power said that White had no final strategy to seize victory, while Clinton came forth with new programs for jobs and agriculture. White did not expand his business-oriented, conservative base, she explained. "Many Democrats were determined to prove that they could and would win with their most articulate and handsome candidate," Dr. Power said. Ironically, despite White's defeat, she claimed that many Arkansans viewed the Republican as "more honest, more religious, more conservative, more mature but less intelligent than his tough, determined, pragmatic and tireless opponent," referring to Clinton.¹⁴⁶

Despite the re-elections of Hammerschmidt and Bethune and the gain of three legislative seats, 1982 would initially be viewed as a crushing defeat in the drive to make Arkansas a true two-party state. The Arkansas Gazette urged Republicans to take solace in the fact that the 1982 election came exactly when they did. Had the contests been held one week later, the newspaper noted that the national unemployment rate would have been 10.4 percent, not the 10.1 percent figure, and Republican election losses might have been larger.¹⁴⁷ The Gazette,

¹⁴⁶ Arkansas Gazette, November 7, 1982.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., November 9, 1982.

which urged national Democratic victories for the congressional seats, added that:

It is just as well that the Democrats did not gain control of the Senate, because President Reagan will have more difficulty blaming anything that happens in the next two years upon Democrats. . . . The tool in unemployment continues to drive nails in the coffin that is being built for Reaganomics.¹⁴⁸

In Arkansas, turnout reached a high level for a midterm election. Of the 1,100,000 registered voters, 72.1 percent voted. The large turnout probably aided Clinton in his drive to reclaim the governorship, but it also helped Hammerschmidt and Bethune to turn back determined Democratic challengers.¹⁴⁹ The Arkansas turnout, which reached 789,351, was among the greatest in the nation, nearly double the overall 39 percent of eligible voters across the country who cast ballots.¹⁵⁰

The 1984 elections in Arkansas could hinge in part on the national presidential outlook. Should the economy improve significantly during 1983 and 1984, a Republican could emerge as the favorite to win the White House, perhaps President Reagan, Vice-President Bush, Senator Howard Baker of Tennessee or Congressman Jack Kemp of New York. If the Democratic tide accelerates,

¹⁴⁸Ibid.

¹⁴⁹Ibid., November 17, 1982.

¹⁵⁰Time, CXX (November 15, 1982), 30.

Arkansas could return to its customary position as a supporter of the party's presidential candidate. The removal of Senator Edward M. Kennedy of Massachusetts as a presidential prospect in 1984 could enhance Democratic chances of winning in Arkansas and much of the South as well in that the "liberal" Kennedy has been seen as unpopular in much of the region, which consistently rejected him in the 1980 Democratic primaries. Republicans may be hard-pressed to challenge Clinton in 1984. With White removing himself from contention, the GOP will undoubtedly turn to a newcomer, assuming neither Hammerschmidt nor Bethune has gubernatorial ambitions. Bethune may have his own tough fight to win a fourth term in the House. Moreover, the GOP almost surely will have difficulty recruiting viable candidates to Democratic Congressmen Alexander and Anthony, both of whom crushed their GOP foes in 1982. The GOP also has no apparent prospects to unseat Senator David Pryor in 1984. Hence, long-range party prospects in Arkansas appear rather bleak.

Democrats seem to have a lock on the two Senate seats, perhaps the governorship and lesser state offices and two of the four congressional districts. To gain a breakthrough, the GOP must rely on mistakes of the Democratic officeholders, which may indeed never occur. A bold Republican initiative could be risky. Should Hammerschmidt ever run for governor, a possibility thought

remote, the Third District House seat could wind up in Democratic hands. Clinton, who lost to Hammerschmidt in their 1974 House race, might well defeat the congressman in a statewide campaign. Should Bethune run for the Senate in 1984, he could fall far short in defeating Pryor, and the Second District House seat might wind up in the Democratic column.

An intriguing possibility for 1984 is the belief that Clinton, bored with another term as governor, might challenge Bethune for the congressional seat in hopes of shoring up his national aspirations. Sterling R. Cockrill, Jr., the GOP candidate for lieutenant governor in 1970, and a sideline Republican since that time, frankly believes that Clinton will challenge Bethune in 1984. "Clinton has high aspirations for national office," said Cockrill. Should Clinton vacate the governorship, White or some other Republican will surely step forward, Cockrill explained. While White has disclaimed any likelihood of challenging Clinton once again, Cockrill said certain conditions might result in a third Clinton-White match for 1984, if Clinton seeks a third term, as he has indeed pledged to do.¹⁵¹

After the 1982 elections, National Committeeman

¹⁵¹Interview with Sterling R. Cockrill, Jr., of Little Rock, November 30, 1982.

Lynn Lowe told the state GOP executive committee that he had observed the "exchange of paper money" at a Texarkana polling precinct. Lowe said he feared that the "ugly monster" of corrupt election practices was returning to Arkansas and could "play havoc" with any future Republican opportunities. When pressed for details about possible fraud, Lowe would not answer reporters, however.

Barbara Pardue, White's press secretary, explained that the governor did not feel that the Democrats had "stolen" the election. Instead, she urged the party leadership to look toward 1984, not to moan the lost opportunities of 1982.¹⁵² Perhaps the young press secretary, who the Democrats claimed had been given the impossible job of clarifying White's public remarks, was offering the only realistic advice the Arkansas GOP could heed.

Actually, Arkansas Republicans ran no worse in 1982 than did GOP candidates in most other southern states. With the exceptions of the re-election of Governor Lamar Alexander in Tennessee (the first southern GOP governor to gain re-election since Rockefeller in 1968) and the triumph of Representative Paul Trible, Jr., to the Senate from Virginia, southern Republicans fared poorly. The party suffered devastating losses in Texas, Oklahoma,

¹⁵²Arkansas Gazette, November 14, 1982.

Alabama, Georgia, Florida and the Carolinas. To regain the initiative, Arkansas Republicans knew that they must develop a bold strategy and recruit superior candidates.

In a secret ballot on December 4, 1982, the Republican State Central Committee elected Morris "Buzz" Arnold, the University of Arkansas at Little Rock law professor, as chairman, succeeding Robert "Bob" Cohee, who had moved into the position the previous March on the death of Holleman. Cohee had resigned a \$27,000 per year position as deputy director of the Arkansas Housing Development Agency in Little Rock to serve as a full-time unpaid chairman during the election. After the elections, however, Governor White and Congressmen Hammerschmidt and Bethune quietly announced they preferred Arnold as the permanent chairman. The exact vote of the 119 delegates to the state convention was not released. Cohee later said that he would not have sought a full term had he known in advance of the opposition from the party's "Big Three." Arnold's nomination was made by State Representative Carolyn Pollan of Fort Smith, who called him a "bringer-together, a unifer," noting the GOP must over the next several years "rally around strong leadership." Arnold, in accepting the position, indicated that he would "like to be the guy that calls Bill Clinton out if he fails to keep his promises." A Texarkana native, Arnold said that he would keep his professorship and

would serve part-time in the chairman's position. Arnold promised to seek black support but indicated that the task would be difficult in view of Clinton's popularity among blacks. In a keynote address at the convention, White said that his administration had performed to its capacity, adding that the GOP had been unfairly accused of being "insensitive." Instead White noted that "substantial payments are being made to people who can't take care of themselves," referring to government social programs. The convention elected former congressional candidate Bob Leslie as first vice-chairman and named Little Rock party activist William T. Kelly, Sr., as treasurer.¹⁵³

Regardless of their efforts, Arkansas Republicans seem certain to remain a victim of national and regional factors. Such limitation exist within any minority party. This dichotomy between state organizational initiative and overriding national trends contributes to the difficulty of the Republicans in making Arkansas into a two-party state. The struggle, though inevitable, seems likely to be fought throughout the remaining seventeen years of the twentieth century and beyond.

¹⁵³Ibid., December 5, 1982; Arkansas Democrat, December 5, 1982.

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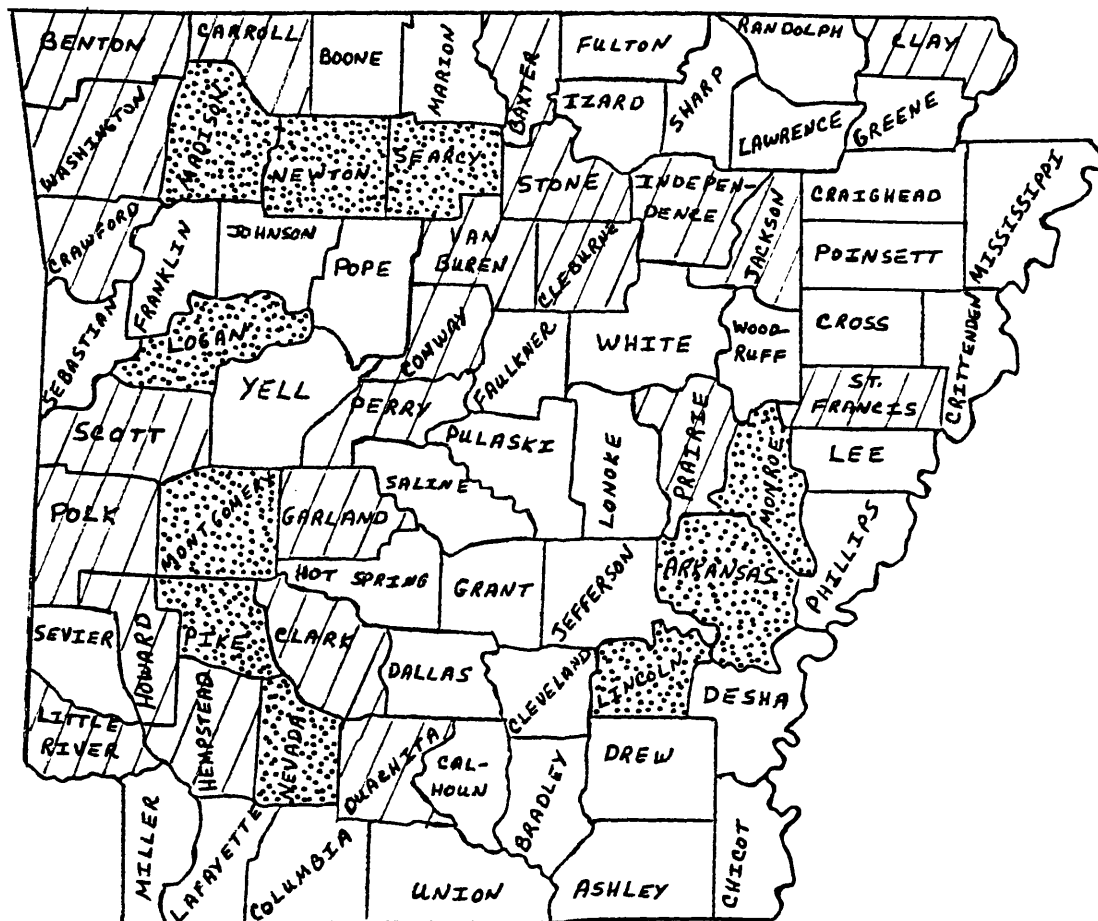
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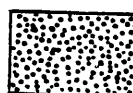
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APPENDIX

ARKANSAS POLITICAL MAP

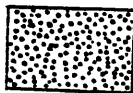
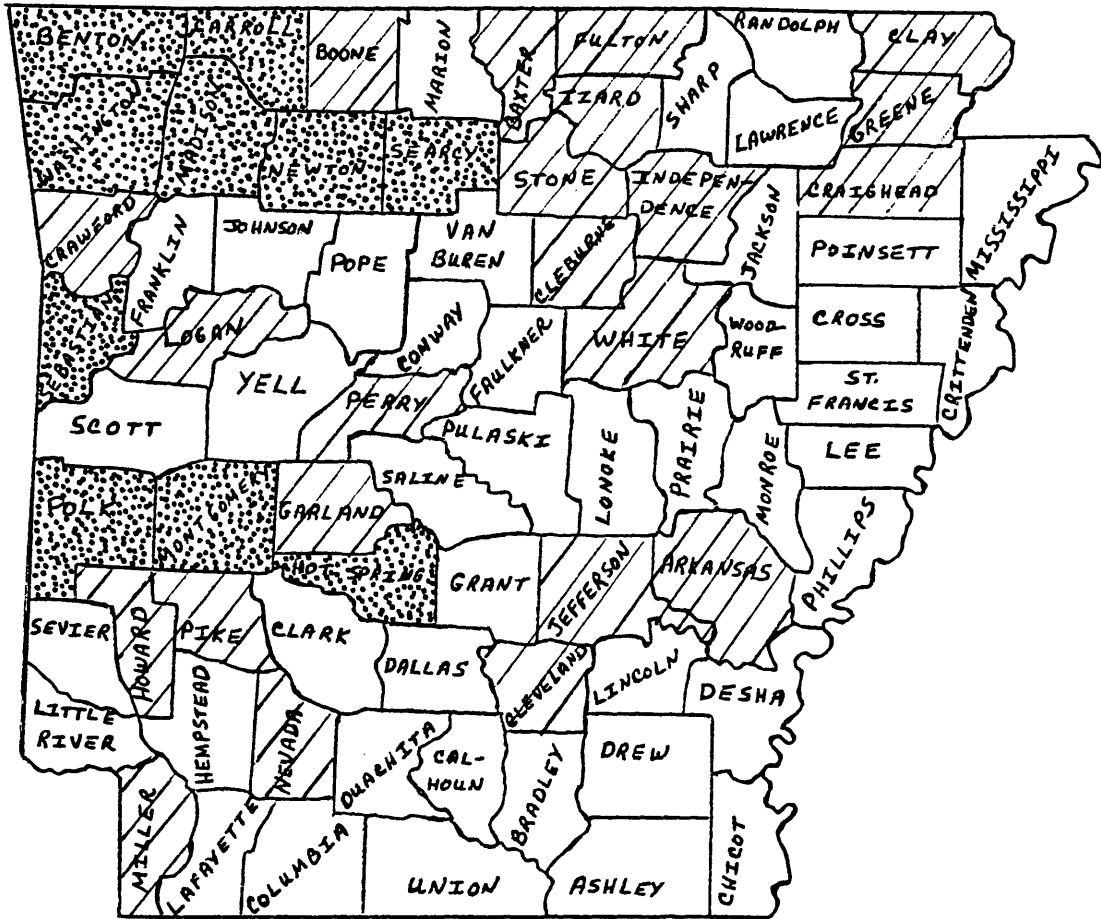
Presidential Election of 1920



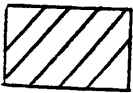
 Counties casting majority for Warren Harding (R)

 Counties casting at least 40 percent but no majority for Republican slate

ARKANSAS POLITICAL MAP
 Presidential Election of 1928



Counties casting majority for Herbert Hoover (R)

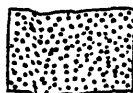


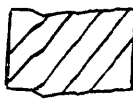
Counties casting at least 40 percent but no majority for Republican slate

ARKANSAS POLITICAL MAP

Presidential Election of 1948



 Counties casting majority for Thomas Dewey (R)

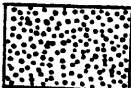
 Counties casting at least 40 percent but no plurality for Republican slate

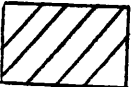
*These three counties cast majorities for States Rights Democrat J. Strom Thurmond of South Carolina.

ARKANSAS POLITICAL MAP

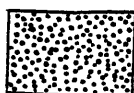
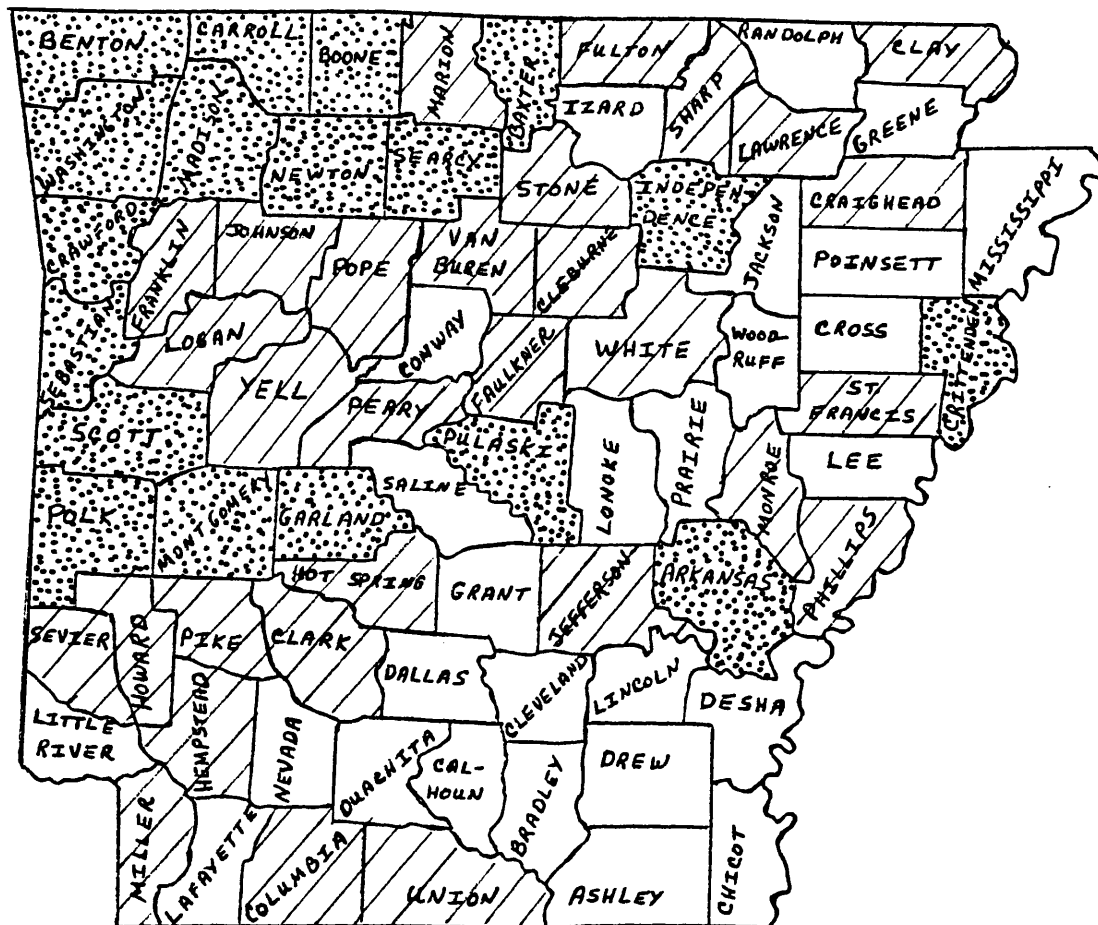
Presidential Election of 1952



 Counties casting majority for Dwight Eisenhower (R)

 Counties casting at least 40 percent but no majority for Republican slate

ARKANSAS POLITICAL MAP
 Presidential Election of 1956

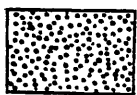
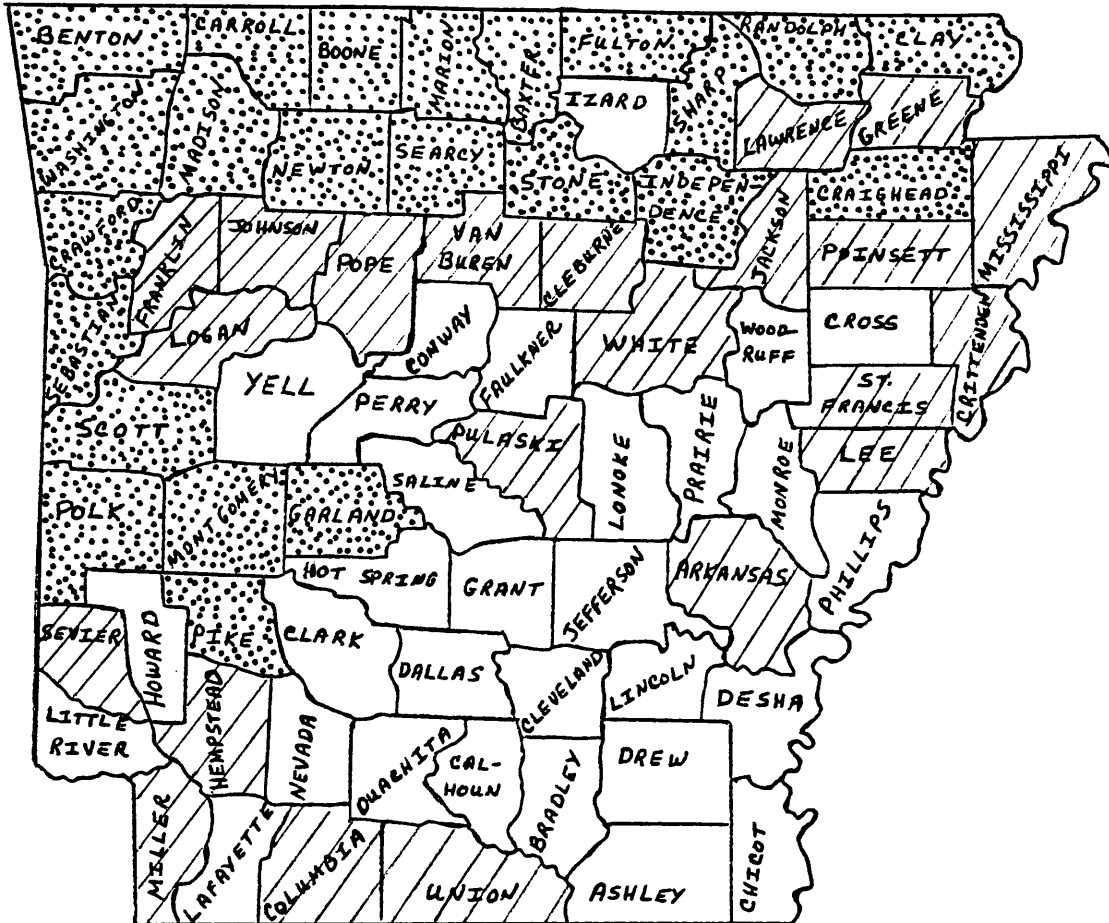


Counties casting majority
 for Dwight Eisenhower (R)

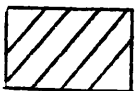


Counties casting at least
 40 percent but no majority
 for Republican slate

ARKANSAS POLITICAL MAP
 Presidential Election of 1960



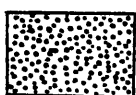
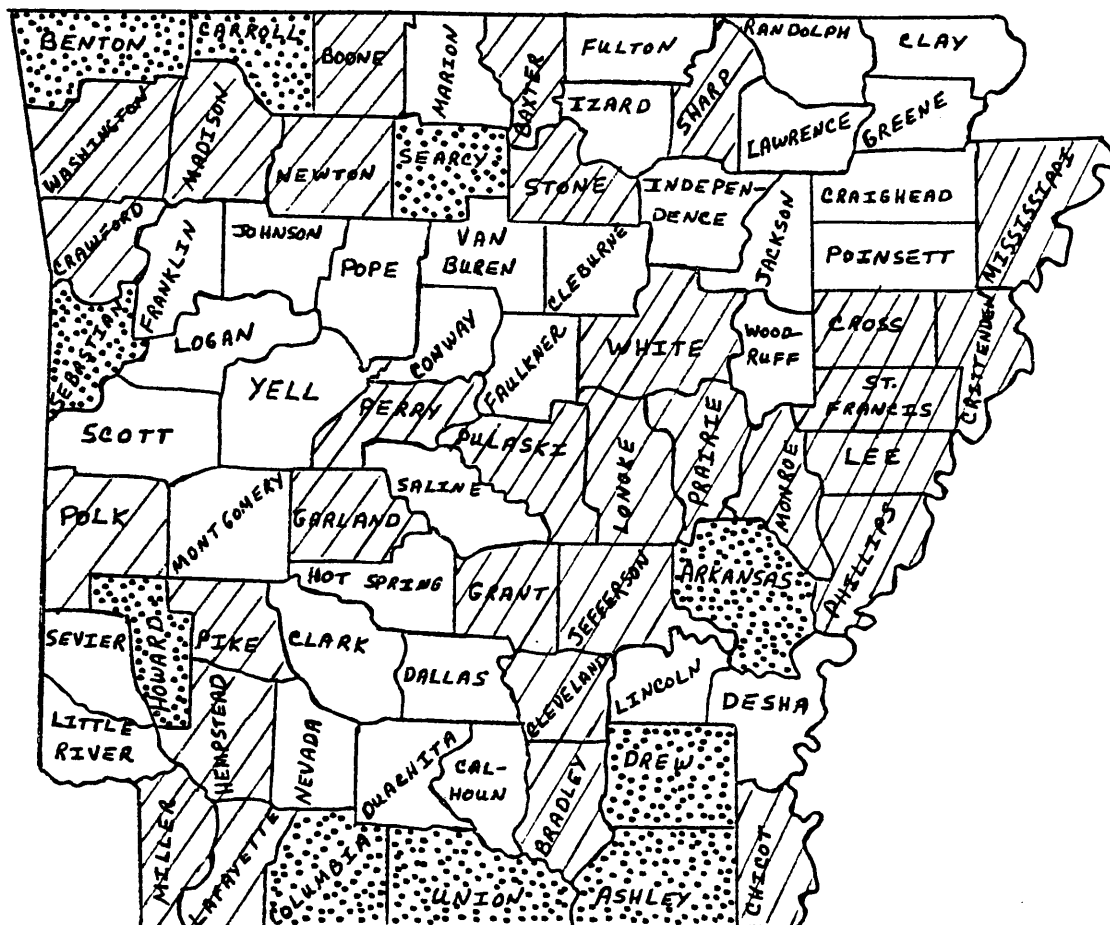
Counties casting majority
 for Richard Nixon (R)



Counties casting at least
 40 percent but no majority
 for Republican electors

ARKANSAS POLITICAL MAP

Presidential Election of 1964



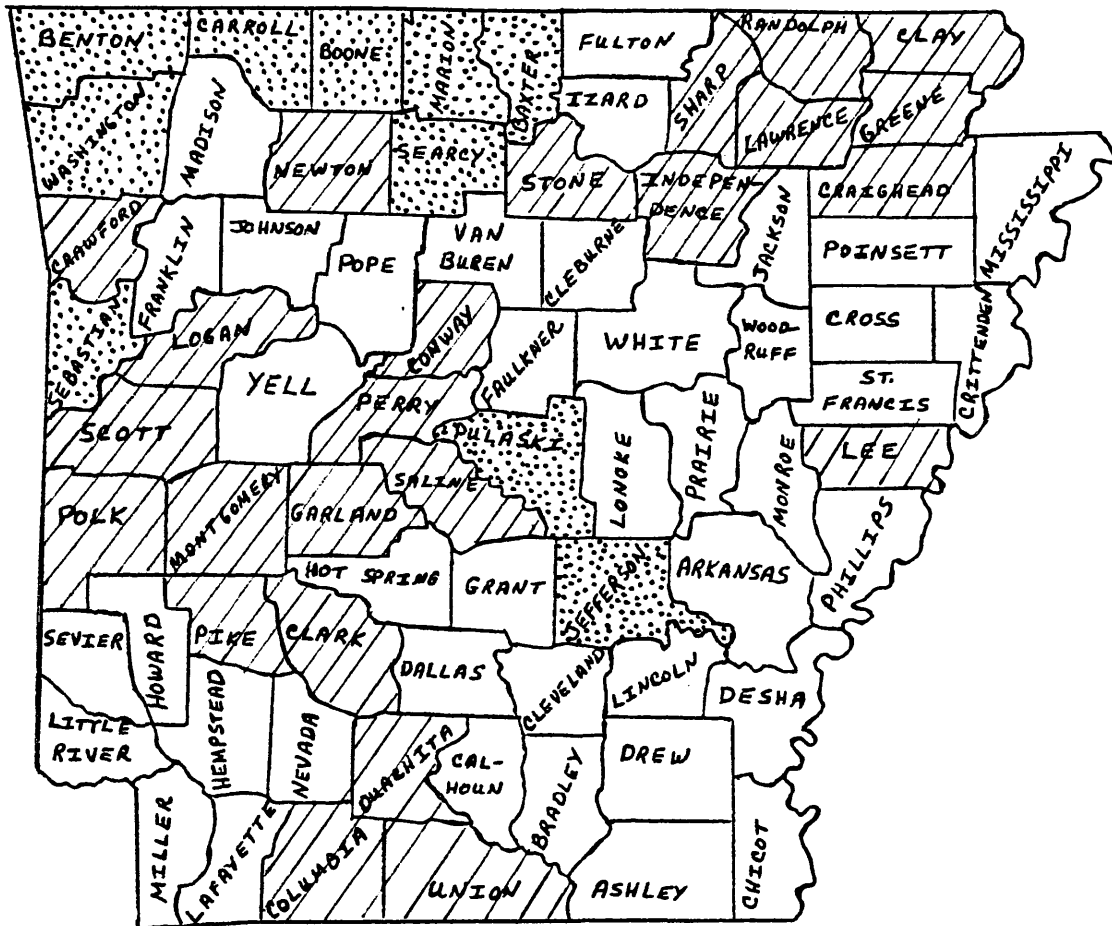
Counties casting majority
for Barry Goldwater (R)

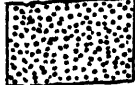



Counties casting at least
40 percent but no majority
for Republican slate

ARKANSAS POLITICAL MAP

Gubernatorial Election of 1964
 Faubus (D) vs. Rockefeller (R)

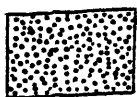


 Counties casting majority for Winthrop Rockefeller (R)

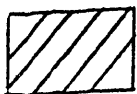
 Counties casting at least 40 percent but no majority for Republican candidate

ARKANSAS POLITICAL MAP

Lieutenant Governor Election of 1964
 Gordon (D) vs. Beeson (R)



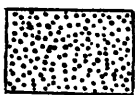
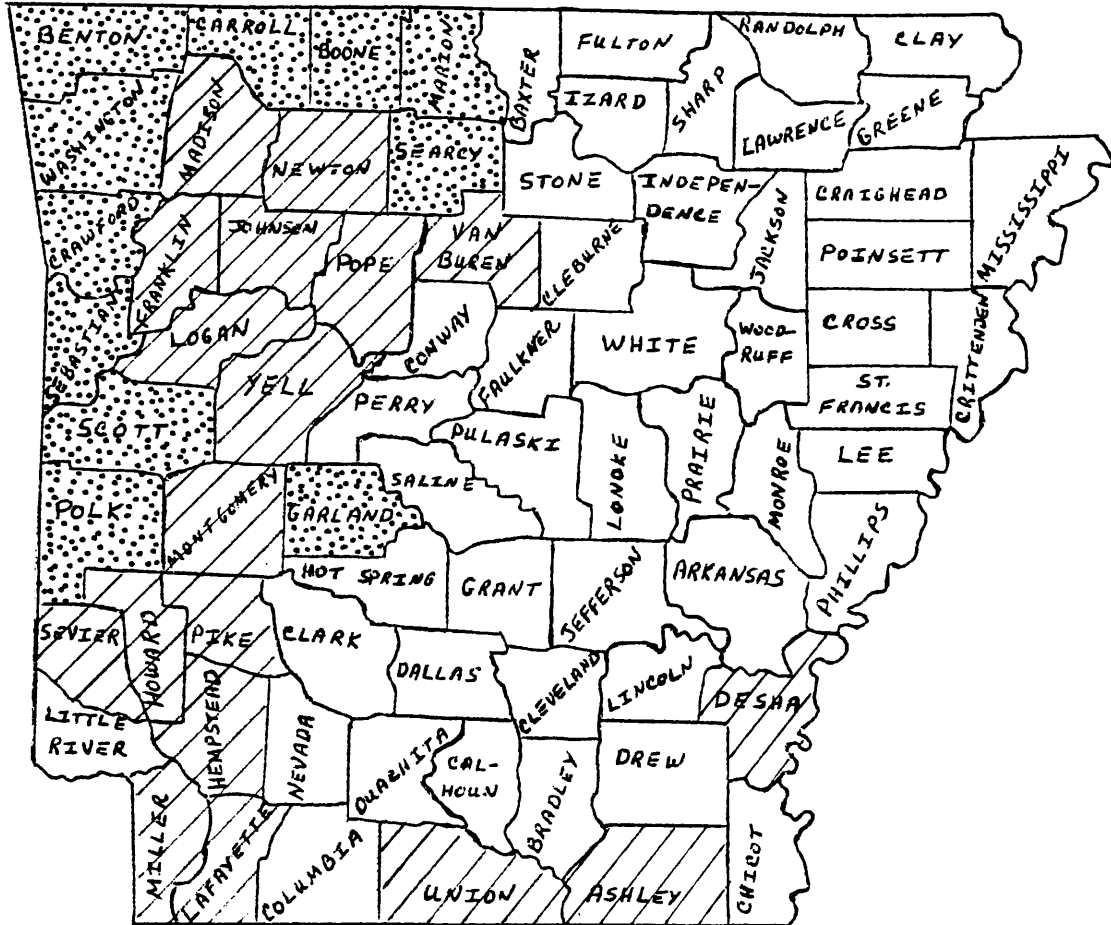
County casting majority
 for Travis Beeson (R)



Counties casting at least
 40 percent but no majority
 for Republican candidate

ARKANSAS POLITICAL MAP

U.S. House Elections of 1966



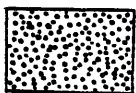
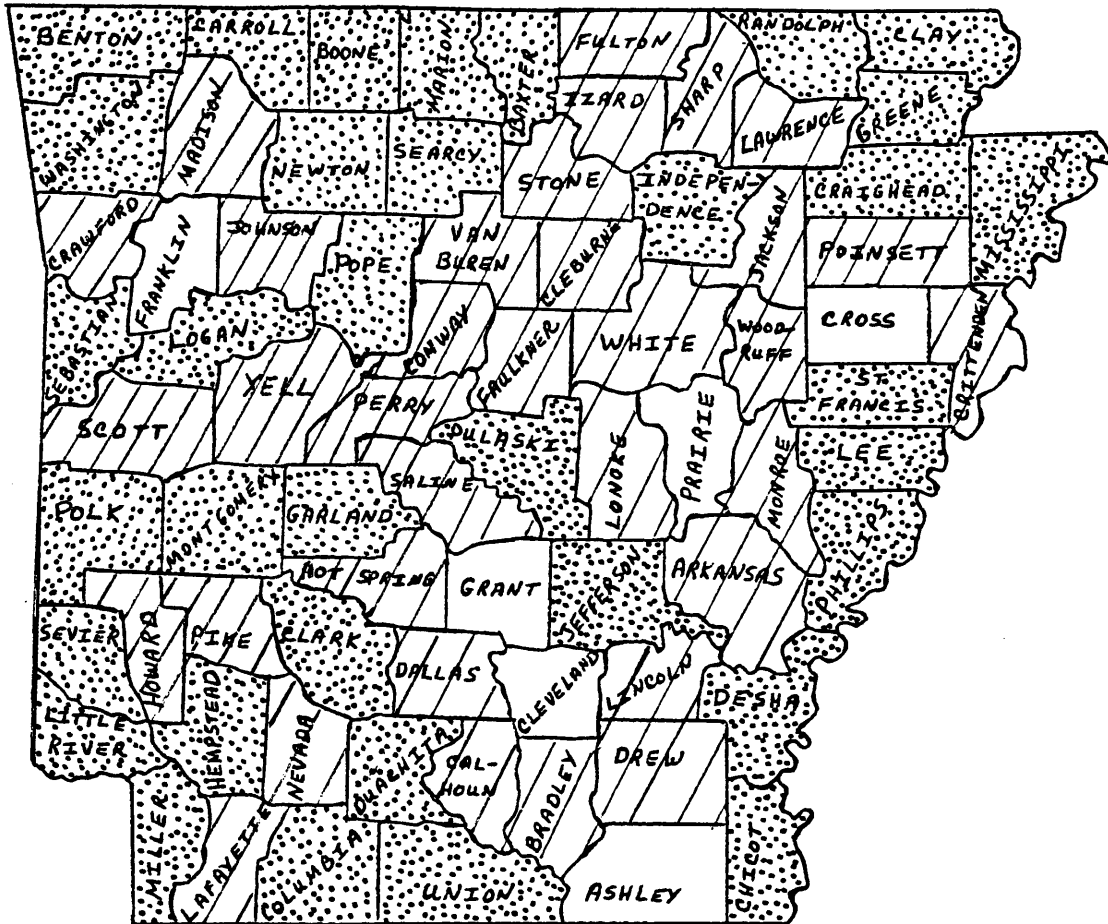
Counties casting majority
for Republican candidates
in U.S. House races



Counties casting at least
40 percent but no majority
for Republican House nominees

ARKANSAS POLITICAL MAP

Gubernatorial Election of 1966
 Rockefeller (R) vs. Johnson (D)



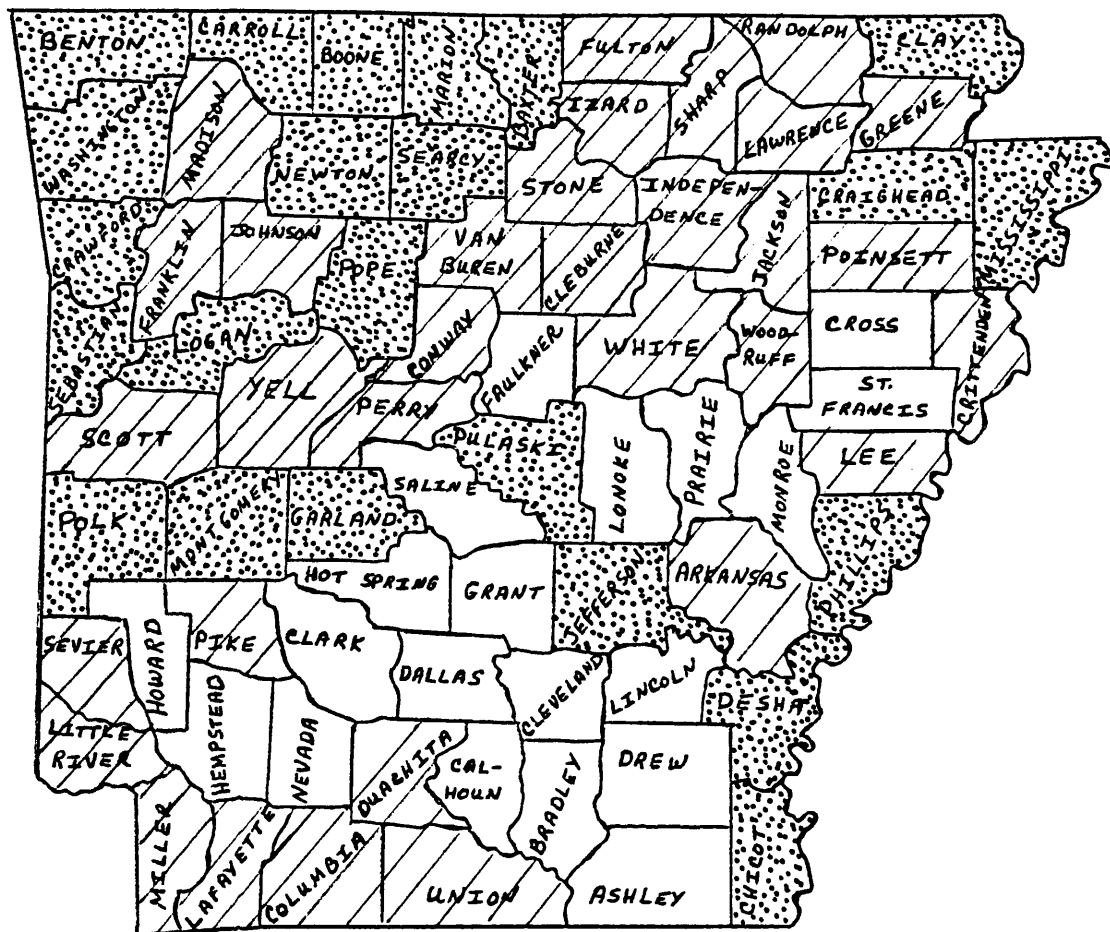
Counties casting majority
 for Winthrop Rockefeller (R)

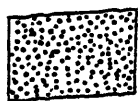


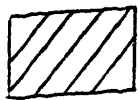
Counties casting at least
 40 percent but no majority
 for Republican candidate

ARKANSAS POLITICAL MAP

Lieutenant Governor Election of 1966
Britt (R) vs. Pilkinton (D)

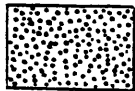
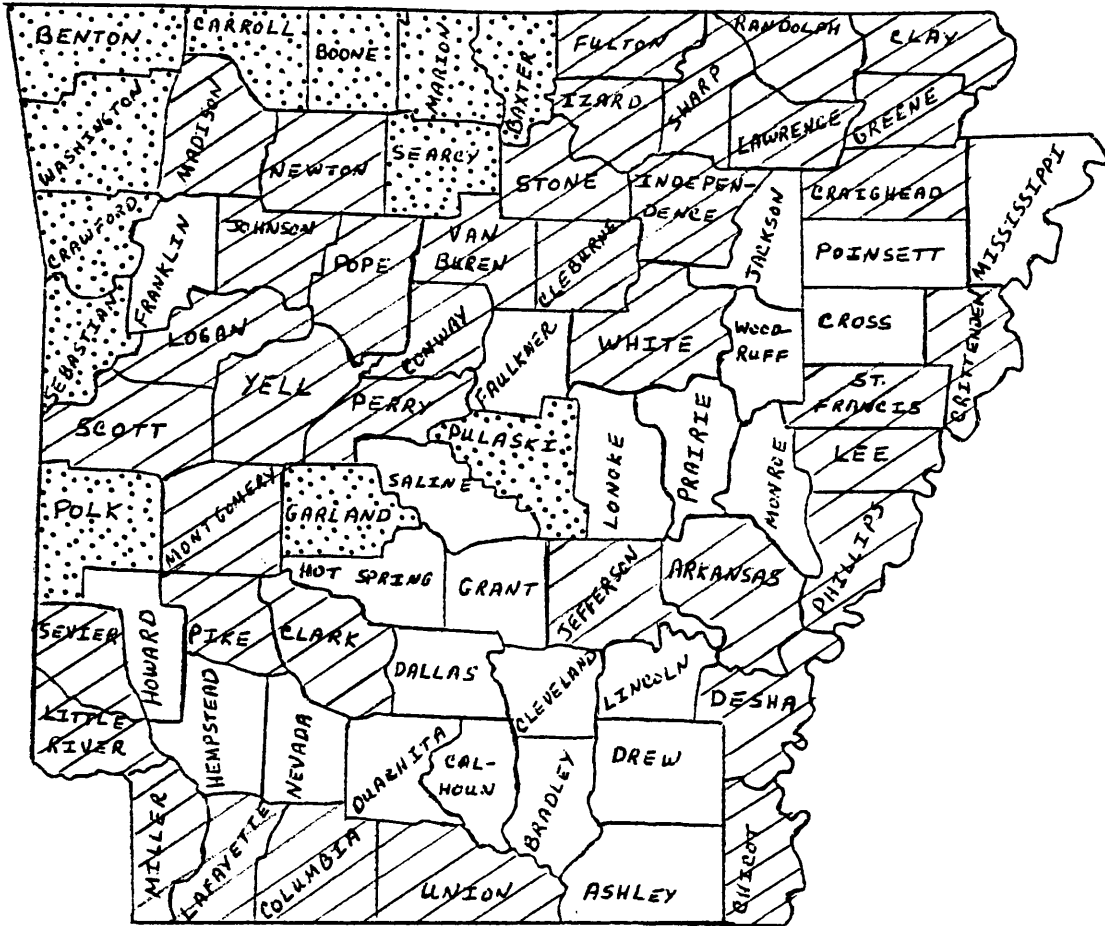


 Counties casting majority for Maurice "Footsie" Britt (R)

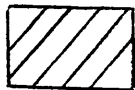
 Counties casting at least 40 percent but no majority for Republican candidate

ARKANSAS POLITICAL MAP

Attorney General Election of 1966
 Purcell (D) vs. Thomasson (R)



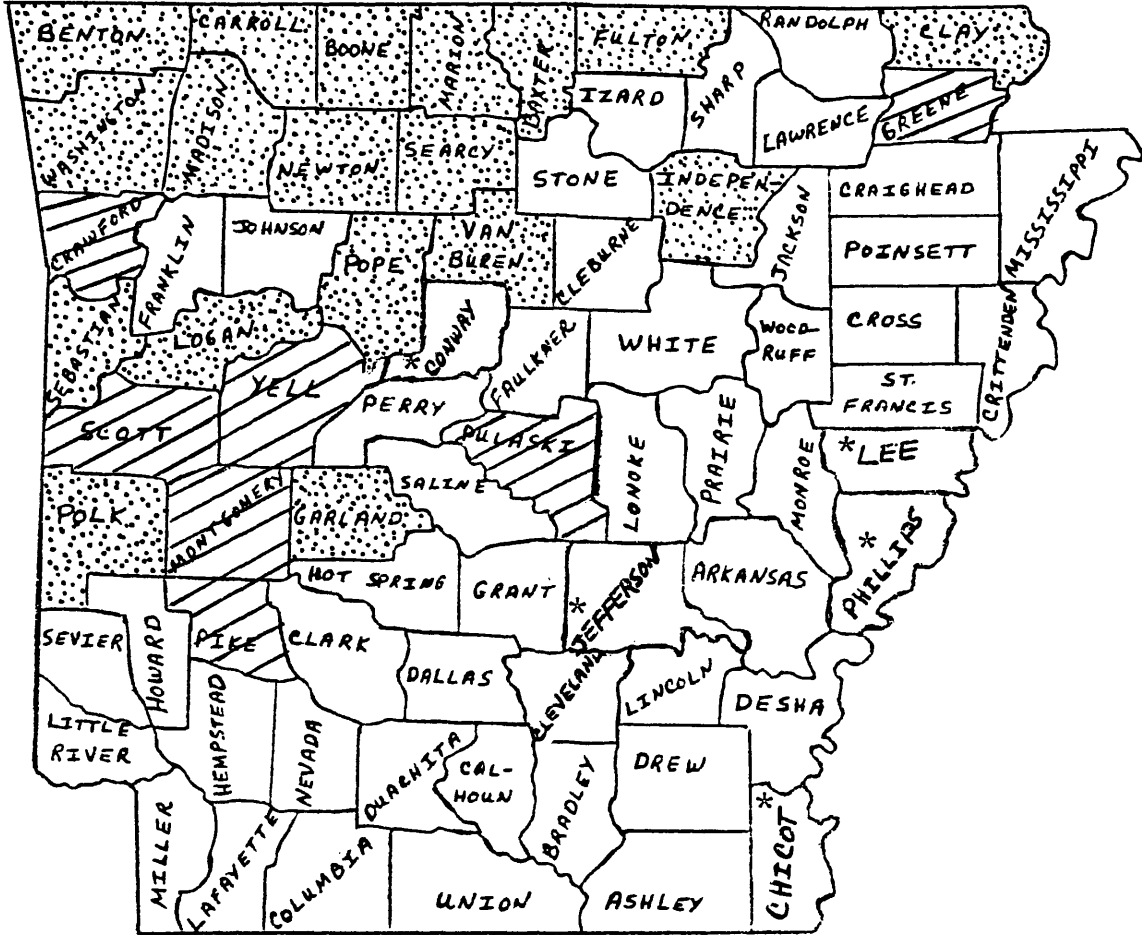
Counties casting majority for Jerry Thomasson (R)

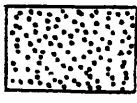


Counties casting at least 40 percent but no majority for Republican candidate

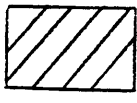
ARKANSAS POLITICAL MAP


Presidential Election of 1968



 Counties casting majority or plurality for Richard Nixon (R)

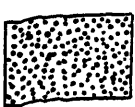
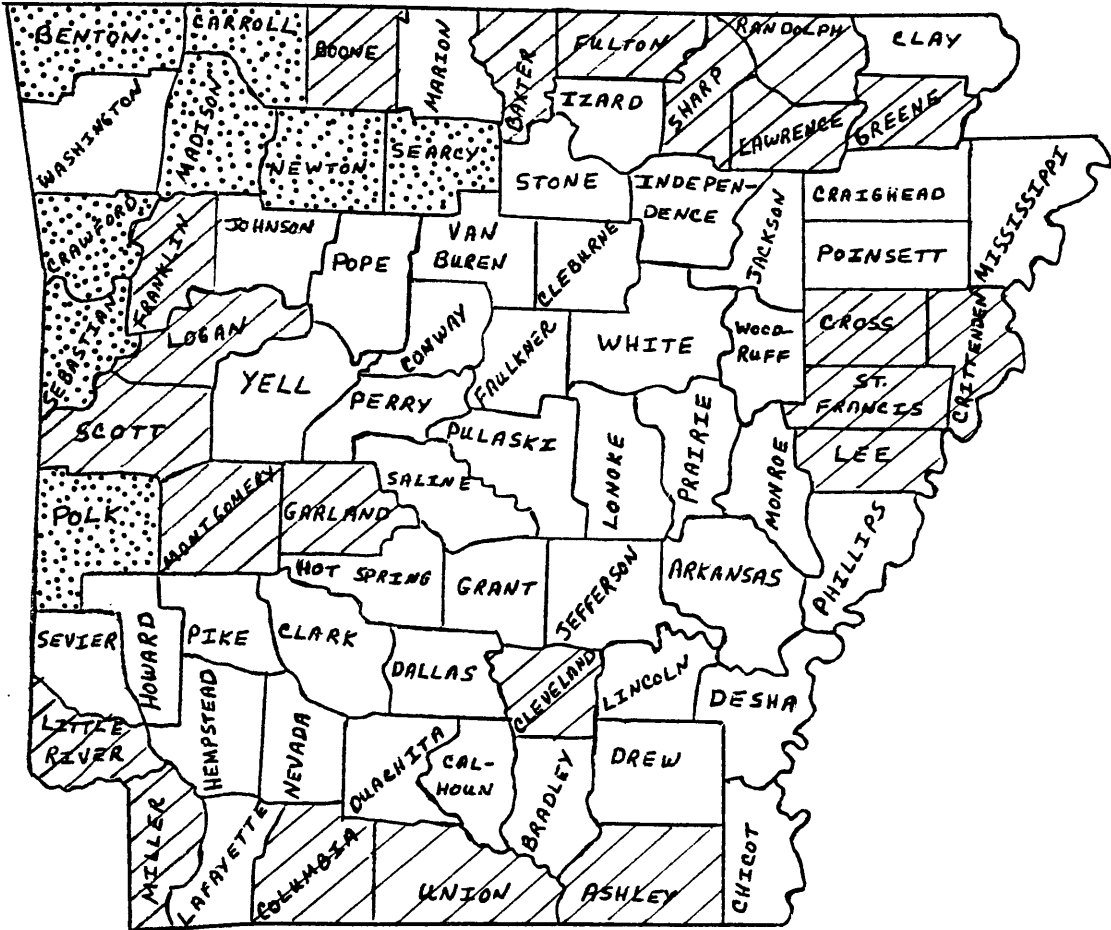
 * Counties supporting Democrats

 Counties casting at least 33 percent but no plurality for Republican slate

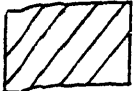
 Counties supporting Wallace (I)

ARKANSAS POLITICAL MAP

Senatorial Election of 1968
 Fulbright (D) vs. Bernard (R)



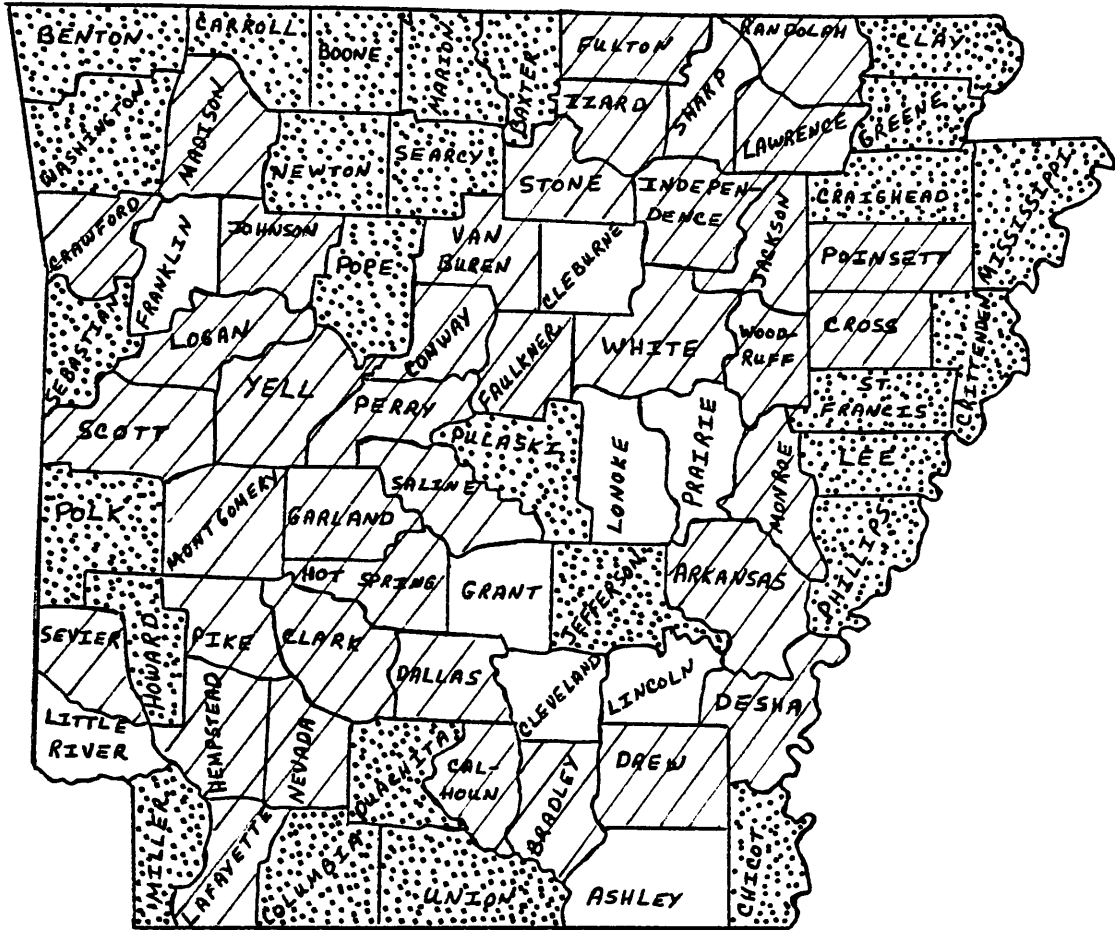
Counties casting majority for Charles Bernard (R)

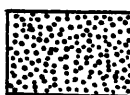


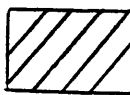
Counties casting at least 40 percent but no majority for Republican candidate

ARKANSAS POLITICAL MAP

Gubernatorial Election of 1968
Rockefeller (R) vs. Crank (D)

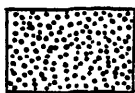
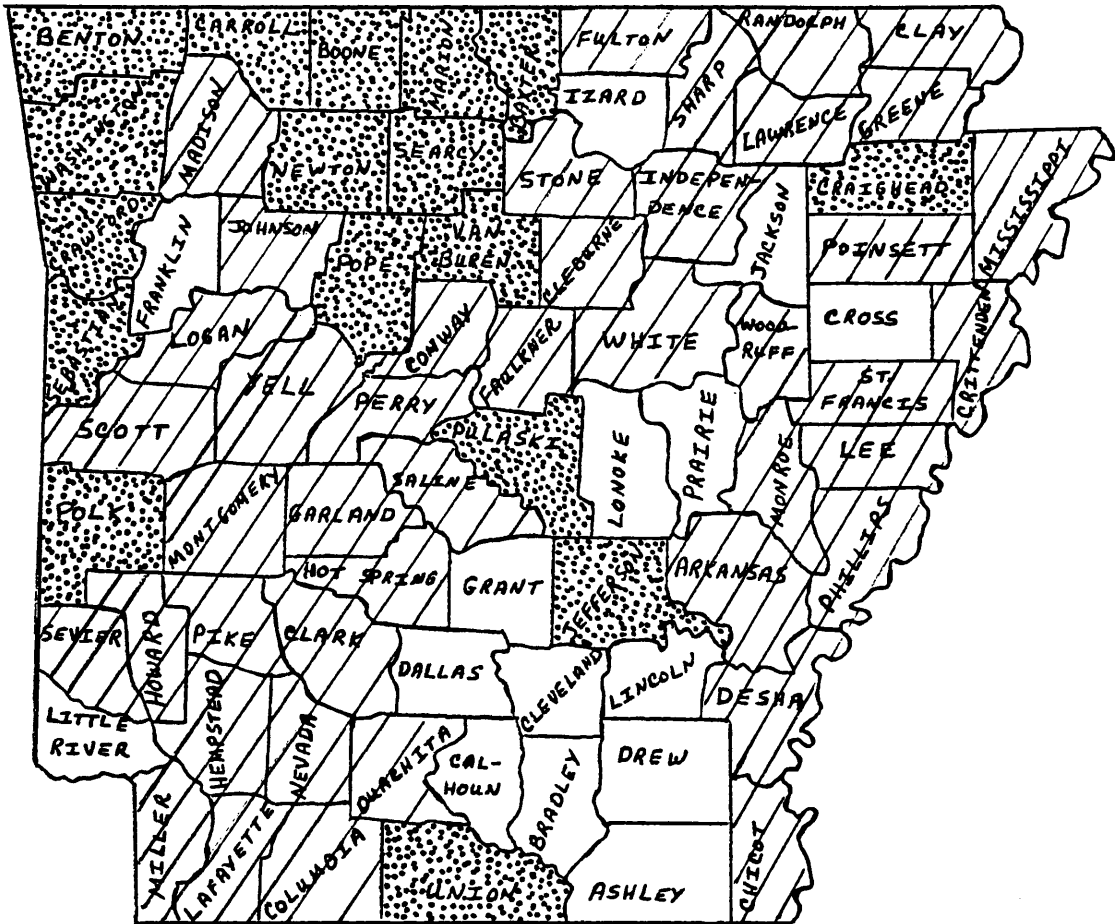


 Counties casting majority for Winthrop Rockefeller (R)

 Counties casting at least 40 percent but no majority for Republican candidate

ARKANSAS POLITICAL MAP

Lieutenant Governor Election of 1968 Britt (R) vs. Wells (D)



Counties casting majority for
Maurice "Footsie" Britt (R)

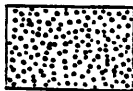



Counties casting at least 40
percent but no majority for
Republican candidate

ARKANSAS POLITICAL MAP

Attorney General Election of 1968
 Purcell (D) vs. Thomasson (R)

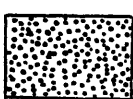
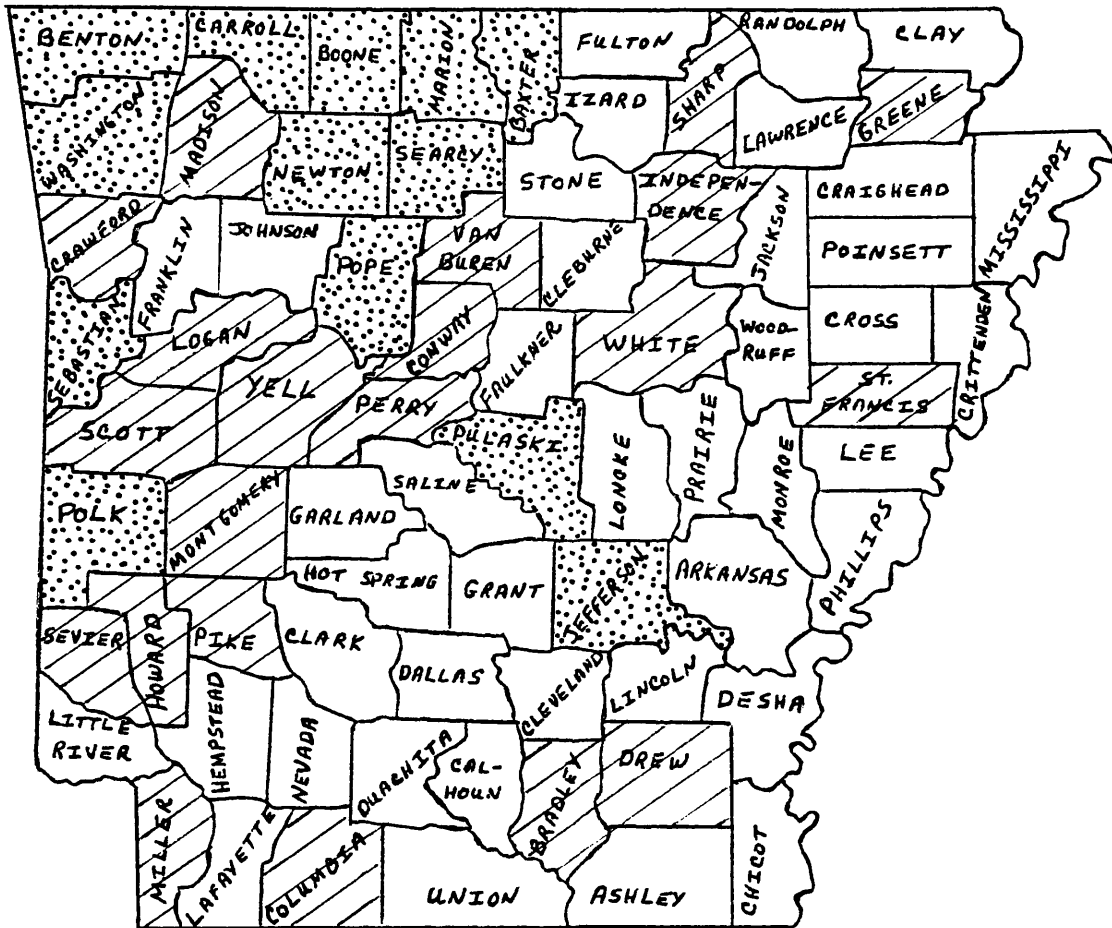


 Counties casting majority for Jerry Thomasson (R)

 Counties casting at least 40 percent but no majority for Republican candidate

ARKANSAS POLITICAL MAP

Secretary of State Election of 1968
 Bryant (D) vs. Davis (R)



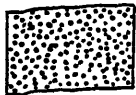
Counties casting majority
 for Lynn Davis (R)



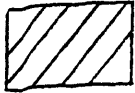
Counties casting at least
 40 percent but no majority
 for Republican candidate

ARKANSAS POLITICAL MAP

Gubernatorial Election of 1970 Bumpers (D) vs. Rockefeller (R)



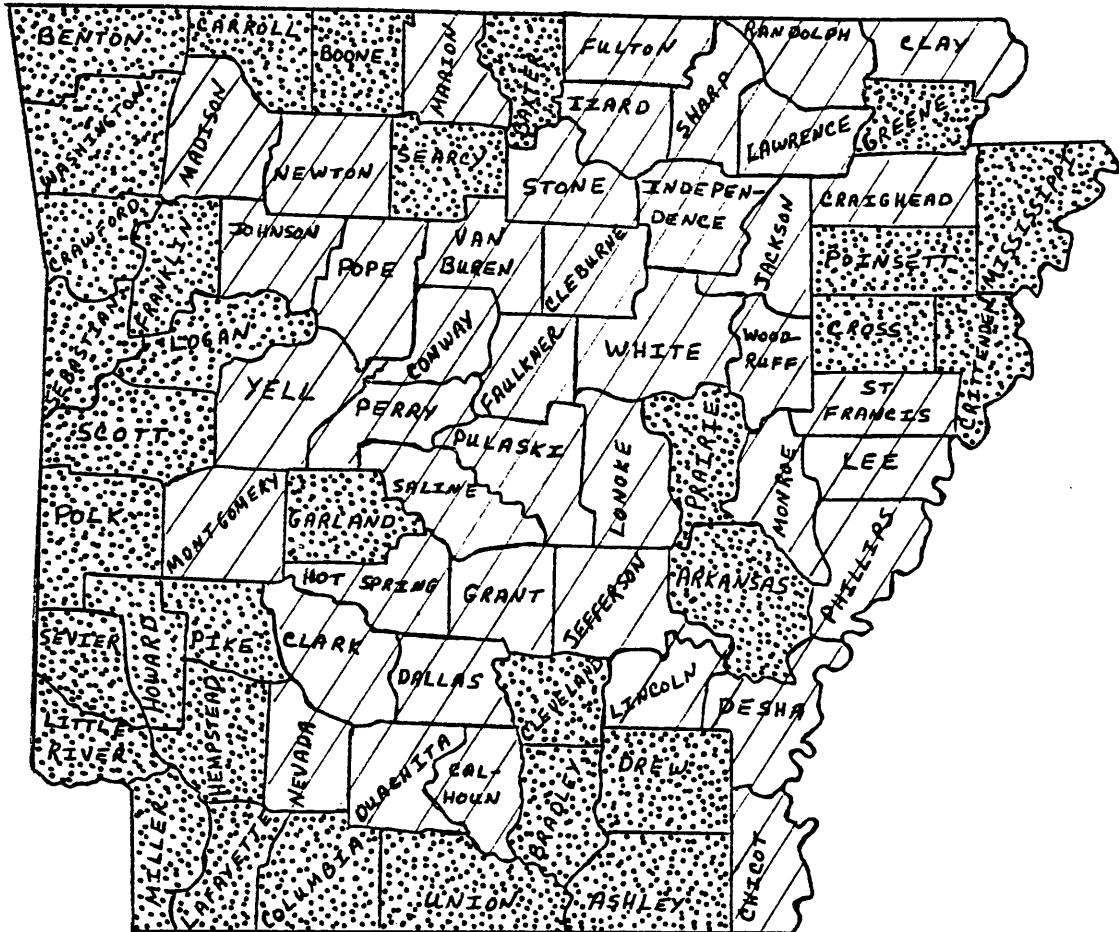
Counties casting plurality for Winthrop Rockefeller (R)

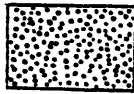


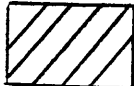
Counties casting at least 40 percent but no plurality for Republican candidate

ARKANSAS POLITICAL MAP

Presidential Election of 1972




 Counties casting at least 70 percent of vote for Richard Nixon (R)


 Counties casting from 58.2 percent to 69.9 percent for Republican ticket

ARKANSAS POLITICAL MAP

Senatorial Election of 1972
McClellan (D) vs. Babbitt (R)

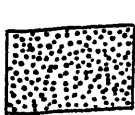


 Counties casting majority
for Wayne Babbitt (R)

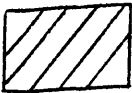
 Counties casting at least
40 percent but no majority
for Republican candidate

ARKANSAS POLITICAL MAP

Lieutenant Governor Election of 1972
Riley (D) vs. Coon (R)



Counties casting majority
for Ken Coon (R)

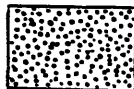


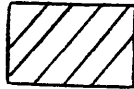
Counties casting at least
40 percent but no majority
for Republican candidate

ARKANSAS POLITICAL MAP

Attorney General Election of 1972
Tucker (D) vs. Bethune (R)

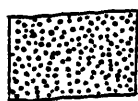
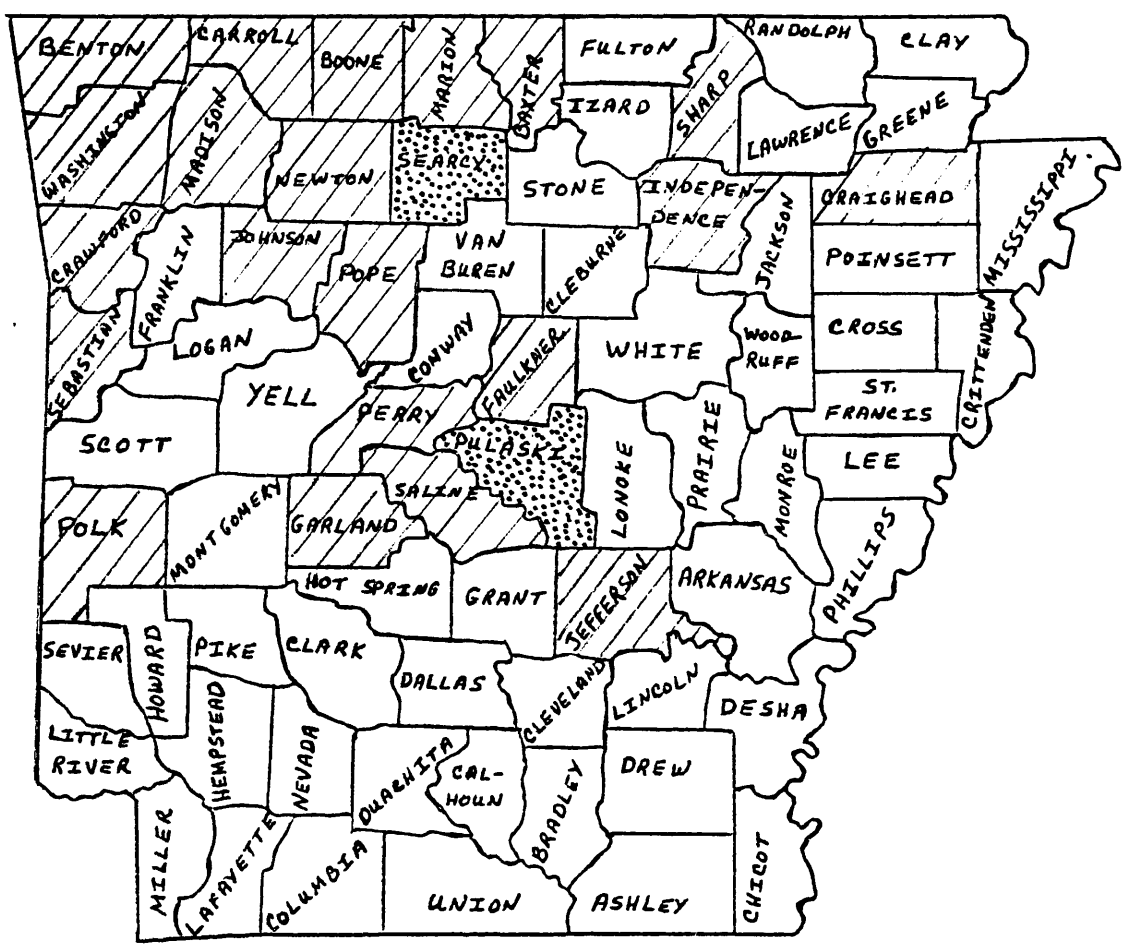


 Counties casting majority
for Ed Bethune (R)

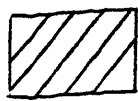
 Counties casting at least
40 percent but no majority
for Republican candidate

ARKANSAS POLITICAL MAP

Secretary of State Election of 1972
Bryant (D) vs. Climer (R)



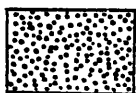
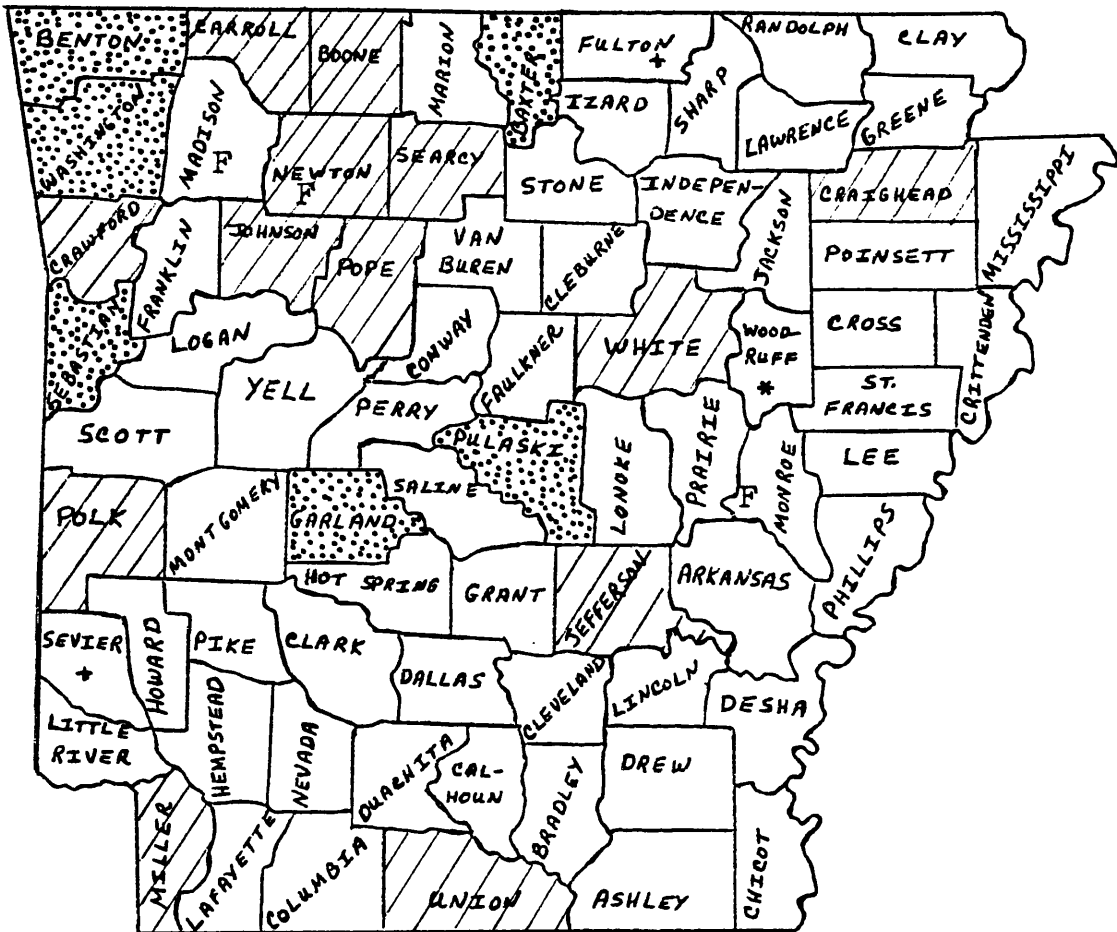
Counties casting majority for Jerome Climer (R)



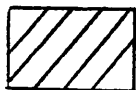
Counties casting at least 40 percent but no plurality for Republican candidate

ARKANSAS POLITICAL MAP

Republican Presidential Primary of 1976
Reagan vs. Ford



Counties casting more than 1,000 votes in GOP primary

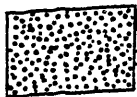


Counties casting at least 250 votes but fewer than 1,000 votes in primary

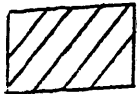
+Fulton and Sevier counties produced tie results.
*County casting no votes in GOP primary
An "F" denotes a Ford victory in the county.

ARKANSAS POLITICAL MAP

Presidential Election of 1976

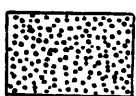


Counties casting majority for Gerald Ford (R)

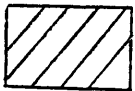


Counties casting at least 40 percent but no majority for Republican slate

ARKANSAS POLITICAL MAP
U.S. House Elections of 1978



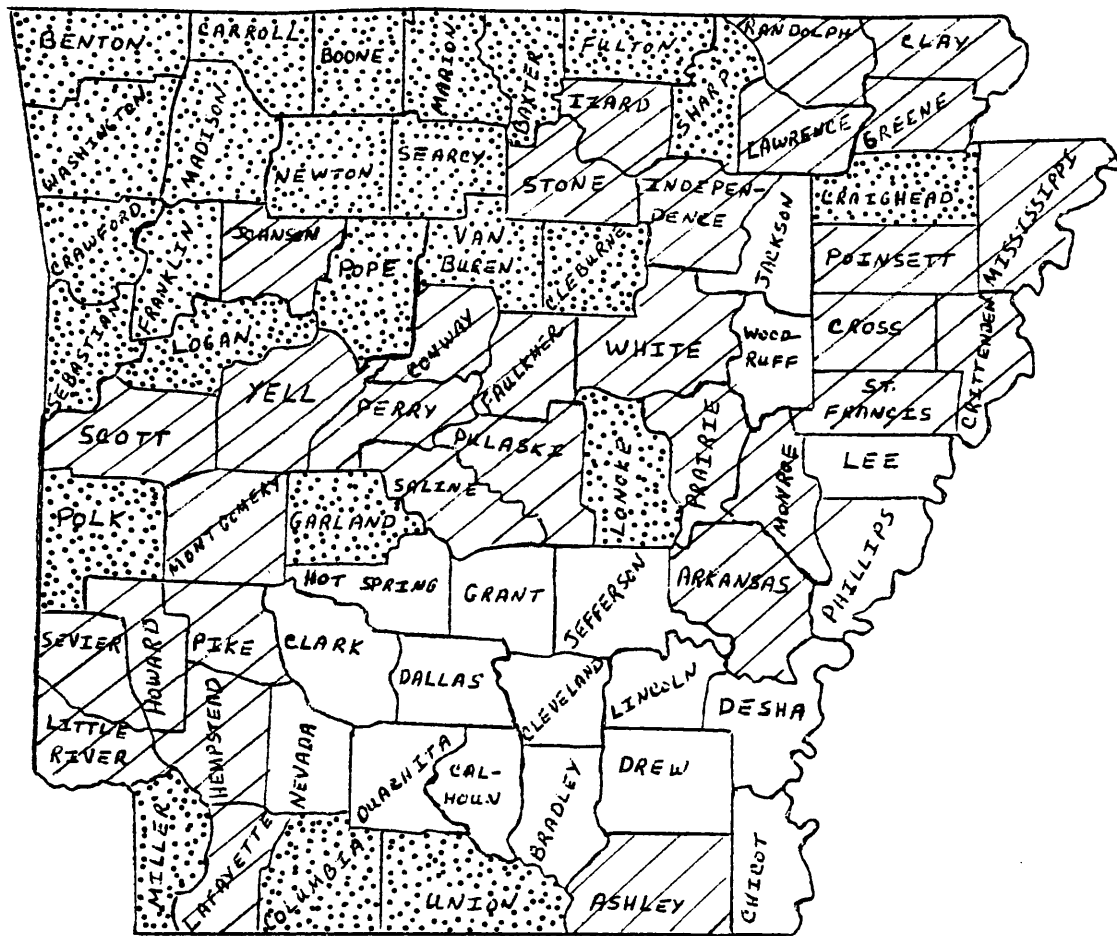
Counties casting majorities
for Republican candidates
for U.S. House

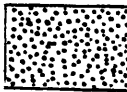


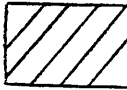
Counties casting at least
40 percent but no majority
for Republican House nominees

ARKANSAS POLITICAL MAP

Presidential Election of 1980

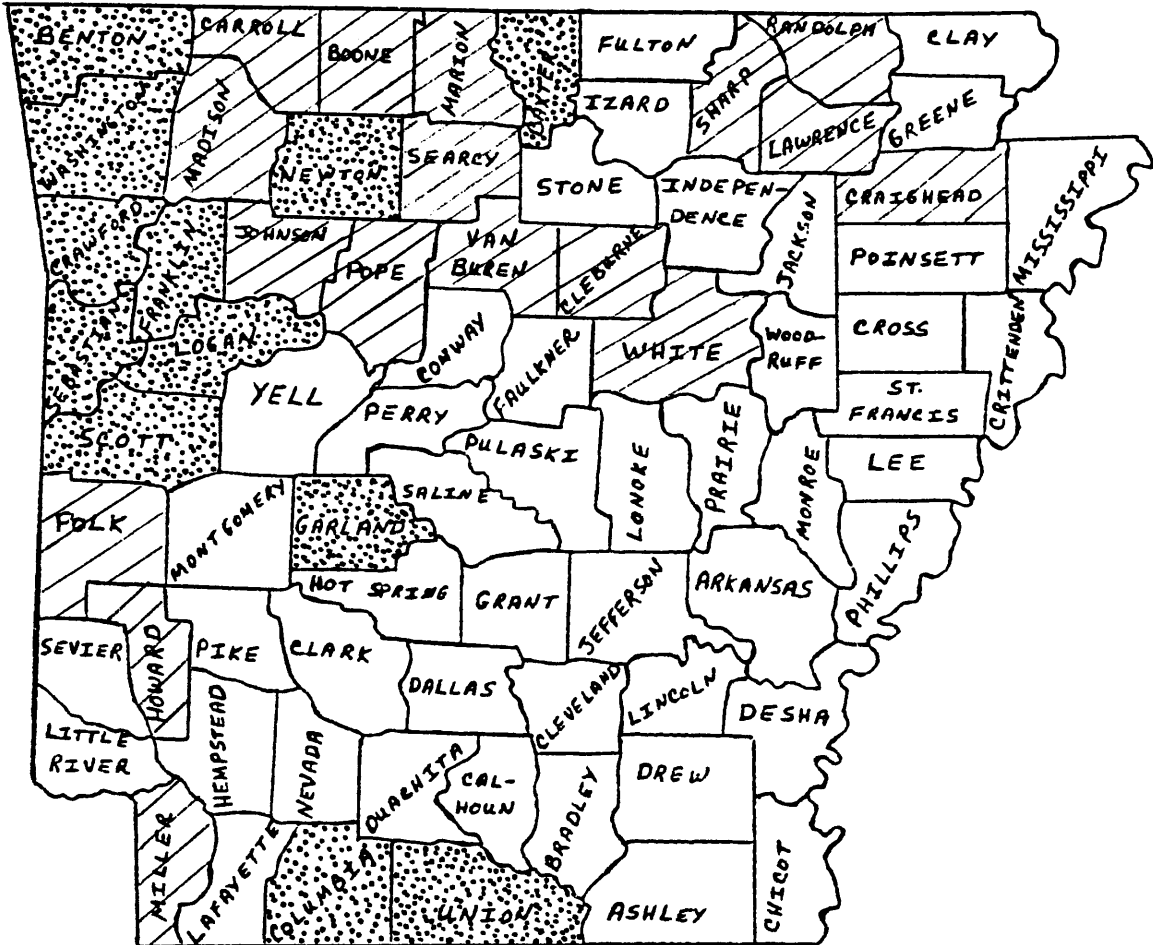


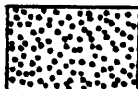
 Counties casting majority or plurality for Ronald Reagan (R)


 Counties casting at least 40 percent but no plurality for Republican slate

ARKANSAS POLITICAL MAP

Senatorial Election of 1980
Bumpers (D) vs. Clark (R)

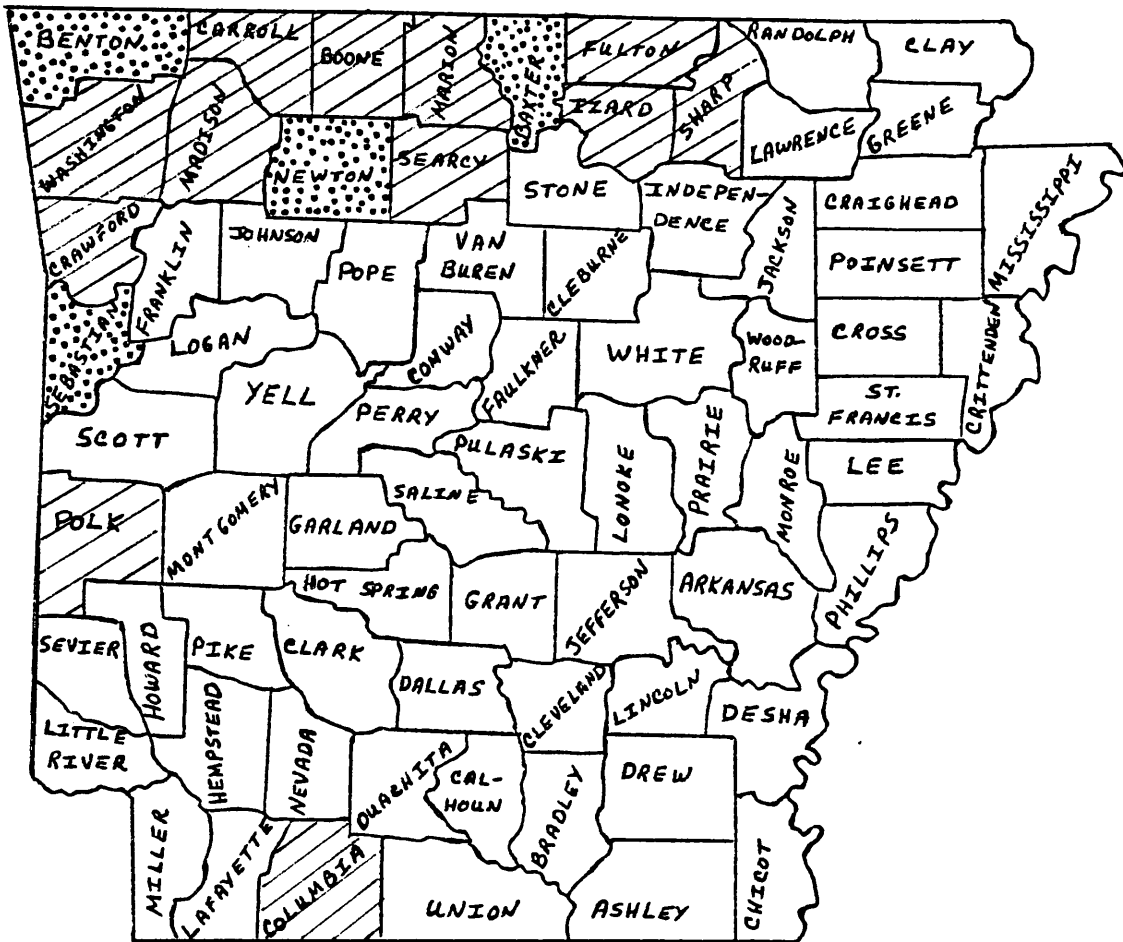


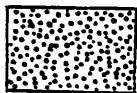
 Counties casting majority for
William Clark (R)

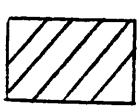
 Counties casting at least 40
percent but no majority for
Republican candidate

ARKANSAS POLITICAL MAP

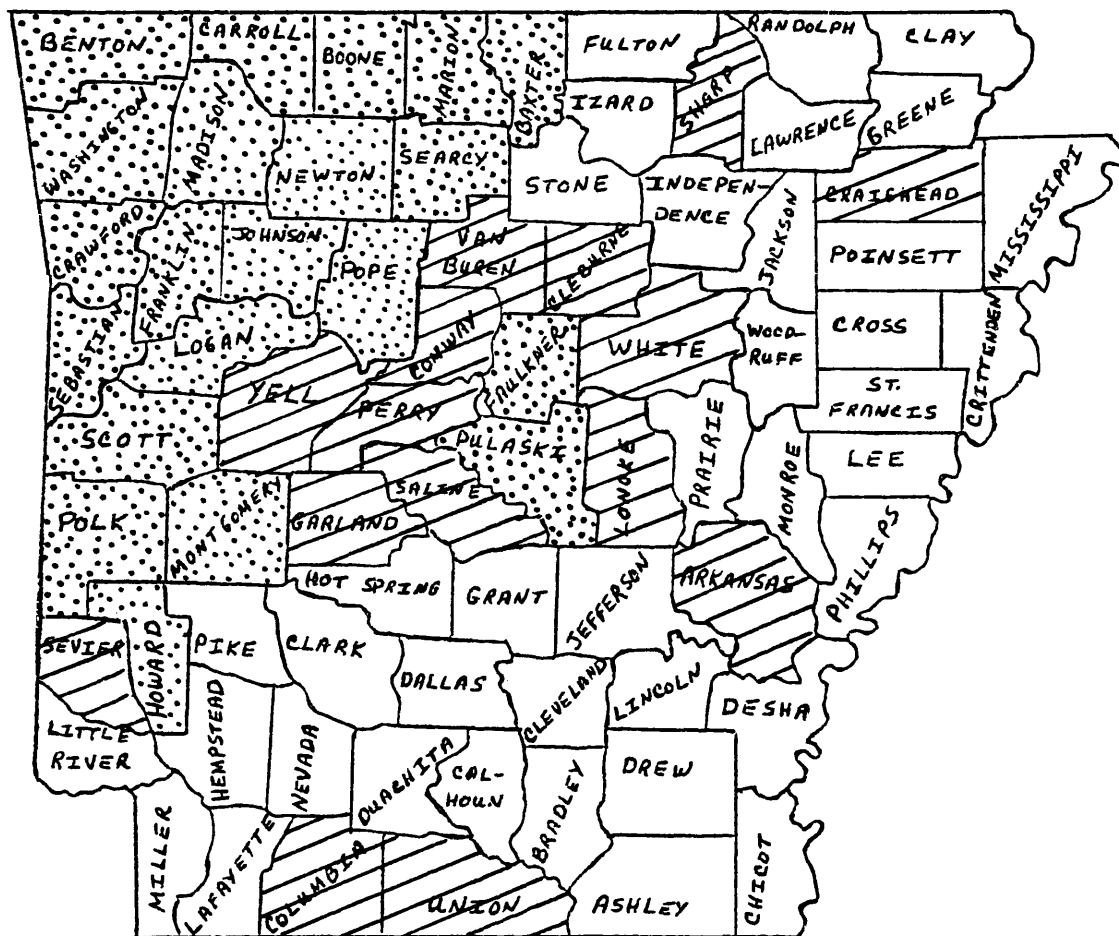
Lieutenant Governor Election of 1980
 Bryant (D) vs. Canfield (R)





 Counties casting majority for James Canfield (R)

 Counties casting at least 40 percent but no majority for Republican candidate

ARKANSAS POLITICAL MAP
U.S. House Elections of 1982

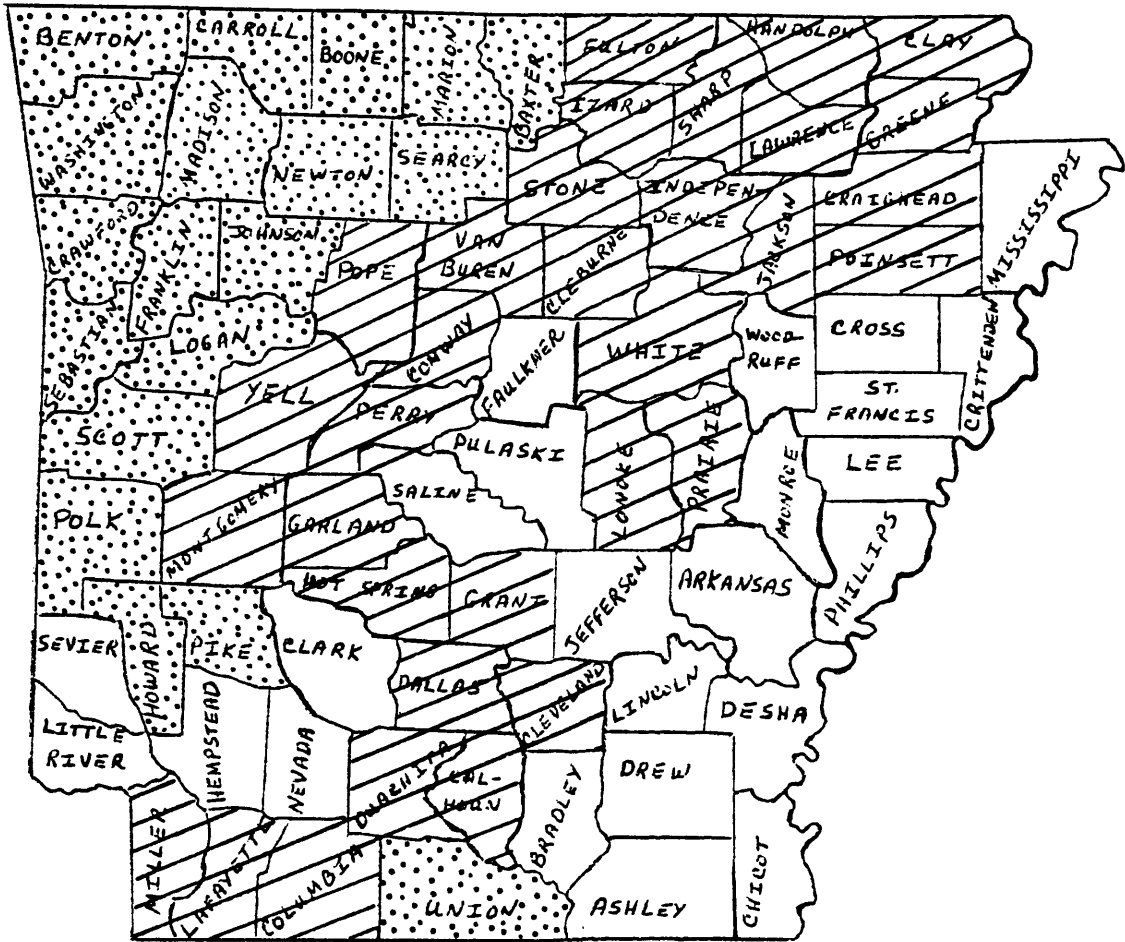


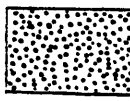
 Counties casting majorities
for Republican candidates
for U.S. House seats

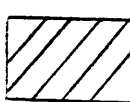
 Counties casting at least
40 percent but no majority
for Republican House nominees

ARKANSAS POLITICAL MAP

Governor Races Compared, 1980 and 1982

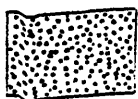


 Counties supporting Frank White (R) in both 1980 and 1982

 Counties supporting White in 1980 and Clinton (D) in 1982

ARKANSAS POLITICAL MAP

Republicans in Arkansas Legislature, 1983



Counties represented by
at least one Republican
in state legislature