

In Reckless Pursuit:
Barry Goldwater, A Team of Amateurs and the Rise of Conservatism

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ABSTRACT

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Before 1964, Barry Goldwater had never lost an election. In fact, despite being the underdog in both of his U.S. Senate elections in Arizona, in 1952 and 1958, he defied the odds and won. His keen ability for organization, fundraising and strategy was so widely respected that his Republican colleagues appointed the freshman senator to chair their campaign committee in 1955, with conservatives and liberals alike requesting his aid during contentious elections. Goldwater himself adamantly believed that in politics, “organization is the whole secret.” For all of these reasons, 1964 seems to be an outlier in the senator’s expansive career. The core qualities of detail, focus and organization present throughout his life were conspicuously absent during the 1964 presidential campaign.

This thesis addresses the question of why Goldwater was unable to succeed in his quest for the presidency, focusing on the roles of ideology and organization. It is a common belief that Goldwater’s conservative ideology was the primary reason for his defeat, but this thesis instead argues that a lack of effective campaign strategy, coupled with poor organization and leadership, was responsible for Goldwater’s failed presidential bid. In strong contrast to his campaigns for the United States

Senate, Goldwater demonstrated uncharacteristic reluctance to run in 1964, as well as an overdependence on individuals who were simply unqualified for a national campaign. The thesis explores these areas in both the primary and general election campaigns to argue that it was the lack of an effective campaign organization, not merely his political ideology, which led to Goldwater's landslide loss.

Research is based on a combination of contemporary media coverage of the campaign, memoirs of instrumental Goldwater aides, and archival documentation. Research was conducted using the collection of Personal & Political Papers of Barry M. Goldwater housed at the Hayden Library of Arizona State University, as well as the Goldwater Papers and the Papers of Congressman William E. Miller at Cornell University.

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This work is dedicated to Rose M. D'Angelo (1937-2012), who lived by the spirited individualism Goldwater championed and inspired it in her grandchildren.

* * *

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I. LITERATURE REVIEW

Barry Morris Goldwater was a detail-oriented organizer, a planner in all regards and mostly predictable. During his three decades in the United States Senate, he rarely strayed from his standard lunch: A deluxe cheeseburger and a chocolate milkshake, eaten alone at his desk. In 1964, his campaign plane was under strict orders to serve it, and the tradition continued until his triple bypass surgery in 1982.¹ Throughout his life, whether it was as a pilot, Phoenix businessman or U.S. Senator, Goldwater displayed a particular devotion to detail. During a single 3,750-mile flight as a World War II pilot, Goldwater kept a thirty-six-page diary, carefully recording every aspect of his mission, the intricate machinery of his P-47 and his solemn recognition of the dangerous overseas journey.²

His unyielding conservative philosophy was no different. From his first public statements in a 1938 *Phoenix Evening Gazette* article to his final years in the United States Senate in the 1980s, Goldwater's conservatism remained simple and predictable. Focused on the individual as an agent of change, a limited role for government and entrepreneurship as the driver of American innovation, "Goldwaterism" was straightforward, as was the senator's overall conduct. Sandra Day O'Connor, who credited Goldwater with her successful confirmation to the U.S. Supreme Court in 1981, described his mindset as black-and-white: "He was either for you, or not," she said.³

¹ Lee Edwards, *Goldwater: The Man Who Made a Revolution* (Washington, DC: Regnery Publishing, 1995), 67.

² *Ibid.*, 25.

³ Julie Anderson, *Mr. Conservative: Goldwater on Goldwater* (2006; Sweet Pea Films, 2007), Film.

Goldwater's personality and ideology had served him well before 1964. He had never lost an election, despite waging three uphill campaigns beginning in 1949. As the underdog in his U.S. Senate elections in 1952 and 1958 he defied the odds. His keen ability for organization, fundraising and strategy was so widely respected that his Republican colleagues appointed the freshman senator chair of their campaign committee in 1955, with conservatives and liberals within the party requesting his aid during contentious elections.⁴ Goldwater himself adamantly believed that in politics, "organization is the whole secret."⁵ However, the core qualities of detail, focus and organization present throughout his life were conspicuously absent during the 1964 presidential campaign. For all of these reasons, 1964 seems to be an outlier in the senator's expansive career.

While an efficient organization may have been lacking in the 1964 campaign, the signature Goldwater ideology was not. Instead, 1964 in many ways signified the beginning of the rise of conservatism in national politics, marking a major milestone in the philosophy's identity within the Republican Party. Conservative columnist George Will wrote, "We who voted for him in 1964 believe he won, it just took 16 years to count the votes."⁶ In 1964, however, that ideology seemed to be summarily rejected by the national electorate. The massive defeat of Goldwater at the hands of President Lyndon Johnson surely shaped our understanding of the arc of postwar conservatism and liberalism.

The historiography on Goldwater has gone through several eras, which aligned with the changing political context of the period. Immediately following

⁴ Robert Alan Goldberg, *Barry Goldwater* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 109.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 161.

⁶ George F. Will, "The Cheerful Malcontent," *The Washington Post*, May 31, 1998.

Goldwater's defeat in 1964, contemporary observers interpreted the loss as a rejection of Goldwater's "radical" ideology by the public. But as conservatism became more palatable to the American electorate, the interpretation of Goldwater's candidacy also began to shift. With the election of Ronald Reagan in 1980, historians began to deeply analyze the divided sects of the Republican Party that contributed to the advancement of the conservative ideology, a narrative that is largely told through the Goldwater candidacy.

While Reagan's election certainly legitimized the conservative philosophy, it was not until the Republican capture of Congress in 1994 that analysts began to more fully appreciate the role Barry Goldwater played in conservatism's popular rise. It is no coincidence that the two longest biographies of Goldwater, largely sympathetic portrayals, were written in 1995. It was this changing political context that allowed the opportunity for historians to more fully examine and scrutinize the long-held assumptions regarding the 1964 campaign. Today, the continuing evolution of the scholarship, as well as the modern political context, allows for the opportunity to further reevaluate the role of ideology in the election of 1964, challenging the arguments that generations of historians have made on the subject. While many scholarly works have dealt with Goldwater's ideology in comparison to campaigns that would follow, few have analyzed it in relation to his past campaigns. In addition, those past campaigns can also further explain Goldwater's weak organization during the presidential election. Just as 1964 has become valuable to explaining the victories in 1980 and beyond, Goldwater's U.S. Senate campaigns in 1952 and 1958 can shed significant light on the reasons for the candidate's overwhelming loss. In this context,

the roles of ideology and organization in the 1964 campaign can help to better understand the chronology of conservatism. Moreover, an examination of the role of organization within the 1964 Goldwater campaign can be more fully dissected in a way that has been largely unexplored by past scholarship, showing that the loss was not based solely on ideology.

Contemporary observers of the 1964 presidential election reiterated the reactions of the popular press, casting conservatism, and Goldwater, as paranoid, destructive and fanatic. During the campaign, and immediately after it, journalists and scholars vilified the Republican nominee as a radical whose ideology was simply too extreme to be acceptable to the American populace. Contemporaries noted Goldwater's colorful expression of his political philosophy as the driving force behind his own defeat, concluding that the basic principles of his ideology were therefore misplaced. In 1965, some scholars, including political scientist Irving Crespi, considered the Goldwater movement as a natural branch of McCarthyism, thereby tainting the acceptability of conservatism.⁷ Writing in 1969, David Halberstam blamed Goldwater's ideology for driving "Americans back to political divisions."⁸ Sheila Koeppen described the conservative cause as an obsession with "conspiracy," while Theodore White referred to the Goldwater movement as one built of pending "resentments, anger, frustrations" and fears within the Republican Party.⁹

⁷ Irving Crespi, "The Structural Basis for Right-Wing Conservatism: The Goldwater Case," *The Public Opinion Quarterly*, Vol. 29, No. 4 (Winter, 1965-66), 523.

⁸ David Halberstam, *The Best and the Brightest* (New York: Random House Publishing, 1969), 402.

⁹ Sheila R. Koeppen, "The Radical Right," *American Academy of Political and Social Science* 382 (March 1969): 72; Theodore White, *The Making of the President 1964* (New York: Atheneum Publishers, 1965), 92.

Above all, contemporary accounts ascertained that the Radical Right, defined as the John Birch Society and Ku Klux Klan, and synonymous with Goldwater's conservatism, was "a distorted and unrealistic response to Communism" rooted in obsessive anti-intellectualism.¹⁰ Scholars saw the foundations of "radical right" conservatism in prior political movements, drawing particular links to the Populism of the 1890s and the radicalism championed by Huey Long and Father Coughlin during the Great Depression. Like those causes, conservatism was assumed to be both marginal and undesirable.¹¹ Moreover, radical conservatism was viewed as simply a response to the social reforms of the New Deal, "expressing not poverty, but sudden prosperity, biting the New Deal hand that fed it."¹²

Shortly after the 1964 election, election analysts included Goldwater campaign hands and contemporary journalists writing for markedly different purposes. Most agreed on the principal weaknesses within the campaign though, including the campaign insiders who provided the greatest insight. Stephen Shadegg, who served as Goldwater's campaign manager during his successful U.S. Senate campaigns, and F. Clifton White, responsible for the grassroots draft movement, both chronicled the handicaps of the campaign organization and ineffectiveness of Goldwater's inexperienced staff.¹³ Shadegg wrote that the 1964 campaign as a whole was "a complete contradiction" to the Goldwater candidacies in 1952 and 1958, which he was intimately involved in. Goldwater demonstrated reluctance in running,

¹⁰ Richard Hofstadter, *The Paranoid Style in American Politics and Other Essays* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1964), 23; Daniel Bell, ed., *The Radical Right*. 1963. (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2002), xiv.

¹¹ Bell, ed., 3.

¹² *Ibid.*, 163.

¹³ Stephen Shadegg, *What Happened to Goldwater?* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1965), 10-1.

a distrust of the media he had always enjoyed, and a suspicion of intellectuals he had previously admired.¹⁴ Shadegg faults the campaign staff for these inconsistencies.¹⁵ White's main focus is the elaborate strategy his team had developed in order to guarantee the nomination for Goldwater at the national convention in July 1964, a level of attention to detail that was largely absent during both the primary and general election campaigns.¹⁶

It is not surprising that Shadegg and Clif White provide few comments on the negative role of ideology. They were among the earliest converts to the Goldwater philosophy, and hardened salesmen by 1964. For them, the failures of the campaign could not have rested on the beliefs, but the imperfect campaign structure. However, White does comment on the elements that allowed political opponents to effectively brand the Goldwater ideology, transforming it into the warmongering, bigoted militarism that became identified with Goldwater. White and Shadegg both conclude that the "extremist" label attributed to Goldwater's ideology was due, in no small part, to the candidate himself and his amateur, insulated, staff. Commenting on Goldwater's acceptance speech, Shadegg writes that Goldwater "emphasized the dissension which his critics had been saying all along he meant to achieve," further casting his right-wing philosophy as something that was both dangerous and unnatural.¹⁷

While the organization was not a major focus for contemporary scholars, Goldwater's poor campaign staff and weak strategy were still noted as components of

¹⁴ Ibid., 78-9.

¹⁵ Ibid., 173, 185.

¹⁶ F. Clifton White, *Suite 3505: The Story of the Draft Goldwater Movement* (New Rochelle, NY: Arlington House, 1967), 98.

¹⁷ Ibid., 167.

his ultimate failure. In 1968, political scientists Karl A. Lamb and Paul A. Smith dissected the organizations of both Barry Goldwater and Lyndon Johnson, offering one of the most complete analyses of Goldwater's defeat. They concluded that Goldwater made decisions early in his campaign "which seemed quite at odds with common assumptions about how political decisions should be organized and made."¹⁸ Goldwater's operation was defined as a "comprehensive" model, a centralized hierarchy based on complete rationality in decision-making.¹⁹ While the model stressed the dual campaign staff that generally defined the 1964 Goldwater campaign, the efficiency purported by the model never materialized.

Offering a third strand of analysis, Lamb and Smith blame the inefficiency of the organization on Goldwater himself, specifically his reluctance to seek the presidency, another variable central to understanding the election defeat. The comprehensive model requires advanced planning and constant communication, neither of which was possible because of Goldwater's hesitance in declaring his candidacy. While he accepted his role as leader of the conservative movement, Lamb and Smith argue he was "more a captive than a leader."²⁰ Moreover, Lamb and Smith argue that Goldwater's ideology was hardly different from that of previous Republican presidential candidate. Had it not been for "a few stark phrases," the political scientists believe he could have represented "the ideological center" of the Republican Party.²¹ Lamb and Smith offer a strong foundation for the arguments of this thesis, but their work occurred so early that it was unable to account for the

¹⁸ Karl A. Lamb and Paul A. Smith, *Campaign Decision-Making: The Presidential Election of 1964* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company, Inc., 1968), vi.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 20.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 67-9, 88.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 91.

shifting interpretations of the conservative ideology. In this context, the shortcomings of the organization can be reexamined and more fully understood.

This was a minority view at the time. Journalists covering the election certainly disagreed that Goldwater represented any ideological center. Robert Novak argued that Goldwater's capture of the nomination and the collapse of the Eastern Establishment led to the "disastrous conclusion" in November, which was "foredoomed" by the contentious primary season.²² Goldwater's blunt sincerity, according to Novak, translated into "ideological inflexibility that would have profound implications for his party."²³ But Goldwater's ideology, although potentially damaging to the party, was exactly what Novak credited Goldwater's nomination to. The "die-hard delegates" had fought their way to San Francisco *because* of Barry Goldwater, a fact Clif White repeated often.²⁴ Novak makes clear that Goldwater's organization was hardly made up of "supermen," and was not the "invincible machine" the post-convention media portrayed it as, despite White's impressive efforts.²⁵ Similar to Shadegg, Novak sharply criticizes the amateur operation in the general election. To Novak, Goldwater's victory was not based on contentious strategy or shrewd campaigning, but pure politics. Although he had inspired a movement, Goldwater had also created an "atmosphere of mutual mistrust."²⁶ In this sense, his defeat is attributed to Republicans' internal divisions.

After these immediate reflections on the campaign, interest in Goldwater's impact on the national political landscape was largely subdued. But by the 1980s,

²² Robert Novak, *The Agony of the GOP 1964* (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1965), 6.

²³ *Ibid.*, 269.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 444.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 467.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 5.

conservatism was truly legitimized. Ronald Reagan's election sparked new interest in the origins of the conservative movement, indicated by a sharp rise in publications, including Barry Goldwater's memoir, *Goldwater*, in 1988. A serious reflection of his candidacy, the memoir offers a frank account of Goldwater's personal feelings through his 1964 campaign. Perhaps most revealing was his personal motivation for staffing decisions. While he understood he needed Clif White's help, Goldwater writes, White was never someone he was particularly comfortable with simply because they did not know each other. Moreover, Goldwater simply was uninterested in the "jockeying for power" that exists in a national campaign. Yearning for a "campaign above reproach," he attempted to neutralize the "politics as usual" by surrounding himself with close friends he trusted had his best interest.²⁷

Recognizing the long-term ramifications of the palpable shift in 1964, historians began to more fully analyze the Republican Party's "greater emphasis on ideology."²⁸ The philosophy of Goldwater was still referred to as the "radical right," but also re-analyzed as "'new' conservatism," which had never before been tested on a national scale.²⁹ Contemporary scholars had blamed Goldwater's ideological purity for the party's disunity, and while that criticism was still largely maintained, an emerging group began to amend that understanding. Historians like Nicol Rae criticized liberal Republicans for failing to articulate a counter ideology based in deep-rooted conviction.³⁰ In addition, Rae blamed the organization of liberal Republicans for "tactical errors" and a "fragile foundation" that led to Goldwater's

²⁷ Barry M Goldwater with Jack Casserly, *Goldwater* (New York: Doubleday, 1988), 164-5.

²⁸ Nicol C. Rae, *The Decline and Fall of the Liberal Republicans: From 1952 to Present* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 3.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 48, 53.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 61.

nomination.³¹ The Goldwater organization also became more fully appreciated with Clif White's initial effort seen as "successful in mobilizing local supporters" and illustrative of "the effectiveness of the activist-oriented campaign."³²

In 1995, when Republicans took control of Congress for the first time in a generation, the permanence and significance of conservatism was first fully appreciated. Historians since have consistently looked to Barry Goldwater to understand the rise of conservatism and the changing interpretations of its history. Goldwater has received more attention than many of his colleagues in the United States Senate, on either side of the aisle, including legendary legislators who were more active or productive members of Congress. Moreover, Goldwater has been more fully examined than any other losing presidential aspirant in the twentieth century, surpassing even his well-known predecessor William Jennings Bryan. The reason, as political consultant James Carville put it, is that Barry Goldwater was not just another presidential candidate. He sparked a powerful, well-respected movement.³³ While Goldwater was largely softened due to the shifting political mainstream, ideology was still generally emphasized as a primary factor for his defeat. Scholars continued to purport that Goldwater's most obvious failings were his "rigid conservatism and unrestrained manner."³⁴

The interpretation of Goldwater did not change drastically, but it was chronicled in greater detail. Goldwater's brand of conservatism was still seen as part

³¹ Ibid., 69-70

³² Ibid., 55.

³³ Anderson.

³⁴ Jeffrey J. Matthews, "To Defeat a Maverick: The Goldwater Candidacy Revisited, 1963-1964," *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 27, No. 4, Rules of the Game: How to Play the Presidency (Fall, 1997), 662.

of the rising movement “to turn back the central institutions and the reigning ideas of New Deal liberalism, and revive and age of laissez-faire.”³⁵ Still, more sophisticated explanations were developing. Brennan referred to Goldwater’s “unabashedly conservative philosophy” as a major problem for his campaign because it tainted his overall public image and made it easy for opponents to “portray him as an extremist.”³⁶

Goldwater’s personal style was increasingly separated from ideology as well. Scholars began to argue that Goldwater aided his enemies by basing a platform on vague “generalities” and allowing the party to rupture, making his ideology appear more extremist than it may have actually been.³⁷ The benefits of that approach were also seen though. Goldwater was viewed as a catalyst to expand the party base beyond business supporters and conservative activists by “wooing white voters in the North and South.”³⁸ The 1964 campaign strategy yielded significant Republican gains in the South even while the overall campaign organization largely crumbled. Regardless, historians continued to blame Goldwater’s loss on his inability to maintain the support of traditional Republican blocs due to his ideological agenda.³⁹

As late as 2002, Goldwaterism was still being portrayed as “radical,” further proof of the lasting impressions of the contemporary literature. In 2001, Lisa McGirr, who wrote on the concentration of Goldwater supporters in Orange County, California, noted the difficulty with these “pejorative labels that served in the past to

³⁵ Kim Phillips-Fein, *Invisible Hands: The Making of the Conservative Movement from the New Deal to Reagan* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2009), ix.

³⁶ Mary C. Brennan, *Turning Right in the Sixties: The Conservative Capture of the GOP* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1995), 93.

³⁷ Phillips-Fein, 101.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 132

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 138-40.

dismiss this movement.”⁴⁰ With a refocus on the intellectual foundations of conservatism and the grassroots activists that made its national strength possible, scholars began to challenge the long-held notion that 1960s conservatism was simply a burst of radicalism. Rather, it was now seen as part of a larger intellectual movement that started with William F. Buckley Jr. and the *National Review* in 1955 and Russell Kirk’s scholarly quarterly, *Modern Age* in 1957.⁴¹ These elements were mostly ignored by earlier historians, such as Hofstadter, demonstrating the changing views from the “previous understandings of American conservatism as ‘fringe’ or ‘marginal.’”⁴² The Goldwater campaign was now understood as a learning experience that later helped the Right secure political dominance. “Despite his massive defeat,” Plotke wrote, “Goldwater’s campaign reduced the marginality of the radical right.”⁴³

Still, the extremist label had not been completely eliminated from modern scholarship. Whitney Strub writes that modern historians such as Robert Brent Toplin still employed the brand, particularly in works focusing on modern conservatism. Toplin argued in 2006 that conservatism remains “radical,” drawing comparisons between the conservatism of the 1960s and the continuing “‘militant, closed-minded expressions’ that undeniably characterize radcon thought” within the George W. Bush administration.⁴⁴ Such interpretations simply do not constitute the majority trend

⁴⁰ Lisa McGirr, *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 9.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 63.

⁴² Heather Ann Thompson, “Rescuing the Right,” *Reviews in American History*, Vol. 30, No. 2 (June 2002), 323.

⁴³ Bell, ed., xxviii.

⁴⁴ Whitney Strub, “Further into the Right: The Ever-Expanding Historiography of the U.S. New Right,” *Journal of Social History*, Vol. 42, No. 1 (Fall 2008), 193.

though, with many historians arguing that Goldwater's ideology must be viewed differently now due to the changing political landscape.

Overhauling the existing assumptions of ideology in Goldwater's defeat, Rick Perlstein drew largely on the foundation provided through the major biographies by Edwards and Goldberg, offering a new interpretation. In the context of rising social conservatism, Perlstein argued Goldwater's ideology became even easier to digest. In retrospect, "Mr. Conservative" did not seem all that conservative at all. In 2006, Walter Cronkite even went so far as to suggest that Goldwater had actually become a liberal.⁴⁵ An overall sympathetic portrayal, Perlstein writes extensively about the unfair treatment Goldwater received from the Democrats and especially the press.⁴⁶ In this context, analyses like Perlstein's have shown greater kindness to the Goldwater ideology, a demonstration of the significant softening of the Goldwater legacy. An ardent liberal, Perlstein defends Goldwater throughout his work, blaming media bias for making the Goldwater ideology unpopular. In fact, the media, asserts Perlstein, actually began to believe the extremist charges against Goldwater and "their objectivity began failing them," making the campaign coverage "one of the most dramatic failures of collective discernment in the history of American journalism."⁴⁷ Perlstein's work also added to the increased attention to poor organizational choices as an element of Goldwater's defeat.⁴⁸ Perlstein contends that while it was obvious that the grassroots efforts Clif White had developed were "rare and marvelous," Goldwater never took advantage of them, relying solely on the inexperience of close

⁴⁵ Anderson.

⁴⁶ Perlstein, 429.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 439, ix.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 255.

friends.⁴⁹ Within a more modern context, Perlstein focuses on the lasting effects of Goldwater's ideology, rather than its initial handicaps in 1964.

The rise of the Tea Party movement in 2010 led to another spike in writings on Goldwater's presidential campaign, with his ideology further analyzed and related to social issues that have become increasingly important to a modern conservative agenda. Shermer and others focused on Goldwater's political views as related to women and civil rights, providing a new analysis of Goldwater's conservative philosophy and his strategy in articulating it. Seen largely as a man before his time, it has also become widely accepted that Goldwater was a bellwether to conservatism. Nickerson notes that the themes of law and order, embraced by Goldwaterism, did not become popular political issues until 1968. Further, issues on social morality did not begin to grip the national political agenda until the early 1970s, with Goldwater as a precursor to, albeit not an active participant in, the rise of the Moral Majority.⁵⁰ Shermer further reflected on the foundation Goldwater provided for the conservative cause, embracing a "cowboy ethos" associated with examples of "western free-enterprise Republicanism" that became a consistent theme for Ronald Reagan and George W. Bush.⁵¹ The simple belief in rugged individualism was a central component of Goldwaterism, and became a lasting element of the modern conservative philosophy. This "cowboy ethos," celebrated by some modern historians, was the same philosophy labeled as "extremism" half a century ago. In a

⁴⁹ Ibid., 257.

⁵⁰ Elizabeth Tandy Shermer, ed., *Barry Goldwater and the Remaking of the Political Landscape* (Tucson: Arizona University Press, 2013), 185.

⁵¹ Ibid., 199.

modern context, Goldwater has become more mainstream as the national sentiment has experienced a center-right shift.

II. AN UNDEFEATED UNDERDOG

In 1952, Ernest McFarland was unbeatable. A veteran of World War I who had seen combat in the Navy, McFarland earned his law degree from Stanford University and won his first election in 1924. Over the course of fifteen years he served as an Arizona assistant attorney general, Pinal county attorney and county judge.¹ Elected comfortably in 1940 to the United States Senate as a Democrat, he went on to capture nearly 70 percent of the vote in his 1946 reelection, despite Harry Truman's growing unpopularity and Republicans gaining control of Congress for the first time in two decades.² A legislative legend, he was a principal author of the G.I. Bill and a popular advocate for veterans' benefits and expanded water projects vital to Arizona. Elected by his Senate peers as Majority Leader in 1951, and relatively young compared to them at fifty-eight, the chamber's most powerful Democrat seemed assured of another sweeping victory.

Moreover, Arizona had not sent a Republican to the United States Senate since 1920. As late as 1950, Democrats outnumbered Republicans five-to-one in the Grand Canyon state and the party boasted 85 percent of the state's registered voters as members.³ If anyone was going to win against McFarland, reasoned veteran Arizona campaign hand Stephen Shadegg, they would need 90 percent of Republican votes

¹ James E. McMillan, *Ernest W. McFarland: Majority Leader of the United States Senate, Governor and Chief Justice of the State of Arizona* (Prescott, AZ: Sharlott Hall Museum Press, 2004), 26-8.

² James E. Campbell, *The Presidential Pulse of Congressional Elections* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 1997), 221

³ Lee Edwards, *Goldwater: The Man Who Made a Revolution* (Washington, DC: Regnery Publishing, 1995), 40.

and at least 25 percent of Democrats'.⁴ This was the formidable challenge that the political newcomer Barry M. Goldwater, a freshman Phoenix city councilman, accepted when he announced his candidacy on the steps of the Yavapai County Courthouse in his hometown of Prescott.⁵

Goldwater, who turned forty-three in 1952, embodied Arizona; his family had guided the infant territory to statehood, a feat achieved three years after his birth. Business entrepreneurs who recognized the importance of community enrichment, the Goldwater clan were devoted citizens who occasionally dipped into politics. Michael Goldwater, Barry's grandfather and founder of Goldwater's department store "set a high standard for community service," donating substantial funding for railroads and telegraph lines linking their tiny hometown to Phoenix, the growing hub of the west.⁶ Barry's uncle, Morris, for whom he was named, was elected mayor of Prescott in 1879 and would serve for forty-eight years, becoming an Arizona legend. Morris, a Democrat at a time when Republicans dominated the territorial government, helped organize the Arizona Democratic Party in the 1880s, building what his favorite nephew would look to tear down a generation later.⁷

But while Morris and many other Arizonans had identified with the Democratic Party, it was a wholly different party than the one which Barry would challenge. Considering themselves "Jeffersonian," the Democrats of Morris's generation were conservative believers in small government and individual liberty. New Deal liberalism would be a philosophical game changer that forced the

⁴ Rick Perlstein, *Before the Storm: Barry Goldwater and the Unmaking of the American Consensus* (New York: Nation Books, 2001), 24-5.

⁶ Edwards, 9.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 10-1.

Goldwaters to reevaluate their party identity. Young Barry had accompanied Uncle Morris around the political circuit during his childhood and in 1938, as an adult, had made his own foray into the arena by challenging the New Deal in a *Phoenix Evening Gazette* op-ed. Criticizing the president for campaigning on reducing taxes and spending, Goldwater wrote that taxes had “increased 250 percent and I fear greatly that I ain’t seen nothin’ yet.”⁸ By the time Barry Goldwater was appointed to his first political office, as a member of the citizens’ committee to revise the Phoenix city charter in 1947, he was far from an amateur.⁹ In 1949, when a nonpartisan group of reform candidates looked to unseat the Phoenix City Council, the organizers found a strong candidate in the outspoken department store owner.

Goldwater masterfully used his decades of connections to boost his campaign. Goldwater had served as president of the Chamber of Commerce, chairman of the community chest, and a board member of the YMCA, an art museum and two hospitals. With his name recognition helping to boost the independent slate, Goldwater received three times as many votes as any other candidate. The “nonpartisan, broad-based clean up crew,” which included Jews, Mormons and a woman, won in every precinct.¹⁰ Mayor Nicholas Udall, the scion of a Democratic political family and the leader of the Reform ticket Goldwater won his Council seat on, aptly noted the “young merchant prince who liked to get his picture taken and fly airplanes” was surely destined for higher office.¹¹ And, in fact, Goldwater was

⁸ Ibid., 29.

⁹ Edwards, 28.

¹⁰ Barry Goldwater with Jack Casserly, *Goldwater* (New York: Doubleday, 1988), 89; “Phoenix Mayor Leads Reform Ticket Victory,” *Tucson Daily Citizen*, November 9, 1949, 1.

¹¹ Perlstein, 23.

already planning for it. Originally considered the front-runner for the Republican nomination for Governor of Arizona, he instead set his sights on the U.S. Senate.¹²

While the notion of a newly minted councilman challenging the Senate Majority Leader might have seemed far-fetched, Goldwater was more than that. Chosen by his colleagues as the Council's vice chair, Goldwater was the highest-ranking Republican in the state in 1949.¹³ Over the next three years, Goldwater would continue to build his Rolodex of loyalists, while also hammering out an impressive record as a diligent reformer. He certainly had much to boast about: In a single year, the new City Council had reversed a \$400,000 budget deficit into a \$275,000 surplus, reduced the number of city departments by more than 50 percent, eliminated rampant corruption and boosted local business. In 1950, *Look* magazine and the National Municipal League honored Phoenix with the All-American City award, noting the impressive progress achieved through "intelligent citizen action."¹⁴ Prominent Arizona Democrats, used to easy victories, clearly had something to fear from the bronzed cowboy who was quickly shaking up the Arizona political landscape.

Beaming with confidence from the productive first year, Goldwater set out to expand his political machine, which would soon reinvigorate the state Republican Party. Radio host Howard Pyle, a Republican, announced that he would be a candidate for governor in 1950, and while historian Rick Perlstein refers to this as a "dirty trick" (as Goldwater had been seen as the presumptive nominee), Goldwater

¹² "Talk GOP Candidates for Governorship Race," *Tucson Daily Citizen*, April 17, 1950, 13; Bob Brooks, "GOP Chiefs Eye Goldwater, Pyle For Governorship," *Tucson Daily Citizen*, April 26, 1950, 2.

¹³ Perlstein, 23-4.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 23.

took it in stride.¹⁵ A genuine loyalist, and recognizing an opportunity to strengthen the dormant Republican organization, Goldwater agreed to become Pyle's campaign manager. For six months, Goldwater *was* the Republican Party, and introduced the state to unmatched political organization and discipline. Personally flying his candidate more than twenty-five thousand miles in his single-engine airplane, Goldwater handled scheduling, speechwriting and fundraising.¹⁶ The Goldwater style became synonymous with high energy and powerful charisma.¹⁷

In contrast, Democratic nominee Ana Frohmiller, a pioneering female politician, was carelessly confident. One of the first women ever elected to statewide office, she had served as State Auditor since 1926. At the time of her nomination, it seemed she was destined to become the first female Governor of Arizona. But Frohmiller, certain in the authority of her party's registration numbers, opened no campaign office, served as her own campaign manager and spent a measly \$875. In the end, she lost the "red-hot Arizona gubernatorial race" by 3,000 votes out of 195,000 cast.¹⁸ Howard Pyle became the first Republican governor since 1928, and "the handsome young campaign manager [who] usually upstaged the balding candidate" earned a statewide reputation as a disciplined organizer and gifted orator.¹⁹

In 1951, Senator Everett Dirksen of Illinois visited Arizona. While his formal purpose was to address the state convention, his private mission was to convince Barry Goldwater to run for the U.S. Senate against Ernest McFarland. "I felt overwhelmed," Goldwater wrote, "Here was a veteran national politician coming into

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ "Pyle's Speech Tonight Opens GOP Campaign," *Tucson Daily Citizen*, June 6, 1950, 12.

¹⁷ Robert Alan Goldberg, *Barry Goldwater* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 85.

¹⁸ Ibid.; "Pyle Will Attack Huge Tax Problem," *Tucson Daily Citizen*, November 10, 1950, 1.

¹⁹ Perlstein, 23.

my home town, and he not only knew my name but suggested I run to help him in the Senate.”²⁰ For all his imaginary astonishment, Goldwater had considered running for at least two years before Dirksen’s cocktail reception visit. He was deeply and genuinely disturbed by the national trend. Disgusted with New Deal-Fair Deal liberalism and disenchanted by Truman’s no-win war in Korea, Goldwater saw an opportunity to expand the ideological agenda of individual free enterprise. Even more disturbing to Goldwater was the conduct of incumbent Ernest McFarland, who he viewed as a “servile handmaiden” for the president obsessed with his own promotion.²¹

Goldwater listed six reasons why he would enter the race in his campaign announcement: One, his “life-long familiarity” with the people and plights of Arizona; two, his belief in combating the “growth of the federal government;” three, his business acumen of “giving a dollar’s value to each dollar received;” four, his duty to fight the New Deal; five, an independent mind and his vow to never serve as “a mere rubber stamp for any administration;” and, finally, his overall opposition of the “‘present tragic trend toward the destruction’ of individual freedom.”²² The brief treatise served as Goldwater’s guiding mantra throughout the campaign, and encapsulated his life-long philosophy against “bureaucratic authority in Washington.”²³

²⁰ Edwards, 38; Goldwater with Casserly, 95.

²¹ “Send Goldwater to the Senate,” *Tucson Daily Citizen*, October 24, 1952, 12.

²² “Goldwater In Race for Senatorship,” April 24, 1952 [Press Release], Folder 16, Box 102, The Personal and Political Papers of Senator Barry M. Goldwater, Arizona Historical Society, Hayden Library, Arizona State University.

²³ “Goldwater to Run For U.S. Senate Seat,” *Winslow (AZ) Mail*, April 25, 1952, 1.

Friends had warned Goldwater that if “I ever opposed [McFarland], he’d saw me in half,” but Goldwater had his own reputation for tough politicking.²⁴ As Robert F. Kennedy would write years later, “[Goldwater] could cut you to ribbons, slit your throat, but always in such a pleasant manner that you would have to like him.”²⁵ And while Goldwater’s constant pledge was a campaign of principles, not personalities, there is no doubt that personality was partially responsible for his victory.²⁶ After all, he had spent years cultivating his own powerful message and the skill with which to deliver it.

Additionally, he surrounded himself with some of the most influential individuals in the state. Eugene Pulliam, a wealthy newspaper publicist originally from Dirksen’s home state of Illinois, had been a Goldwater ally since his City Council run. The owner of both the *Phoenix Gazette* and *Arizona Republic*, Pulliam guaranteed favorable press coverage from two of the state’s leading papers. In addition, Goldwater hired one of the state’s premier operatives, Stephen Shadegg, as his campaign manager. A registered Democrat until meeting Goldwater, Shadegg had managed veteran Democratic Senator Carl Hayden’s reelection effort in 1950.²⁷ Asked by Shadegg why he thought he could win, Goldwater depended solely on the power of his personality: “I can call ten thousand people in this state by their first name.”²⁸

²⁴ Edwards, 38.

²⁵ Goldberg, 92.

²⁶ “Goldwater In Race for Senatorship,” April 24, 1952 [Press Release], Folder 16, Box 102, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

²⁷ Glenn Fowler, “Stephen Shadegg, Goldwater Adviser And Alter Ego, 80,” *New York Times*, May 24, 1990.

²⁸ Perlstein, 24.

Goldwater's success was due in part to his natural ability to build coalitions, a talent that would later be absent in his 1964 presidential campaign. While emerging Republicans in other states quarreled in an attempt to balance the 1952 feud between the conservatism of Senator Robert Taft and the moderation of General Dwight Eisenhower, Goldwater played both sides. Although sympathetic to Taft's ideology, Goldwater recognized Eisenhower's influence and engineered a deal to give the war hero a healthy representation within the Arizona delegation to the national convention.²⁹ This brokering won Goldwater widespread appeal within the party. He faced little opposition in the primary, allowing him to focus squarely on McFarland, and both Taft and Eisenhower traveled to Arizona to campaign for him.³⁰

Furthermore, Shadegg urged Goldwater that he needed to create a full slate of candidates in order to energize Republicans to turn out in the colossal number he would need for victory. Republican voters had been typically denied the ability to vote a straight ticket in Arizona, but Goldwater convinced forty of the state's young professionals to run for office, filling candidacies for every statewide offices. Coalescing an infant party from scratch, Goldwater crisscrossed the state, building momentum, as well as an intricate network of loyalists.³¹ In the process, Goldwater also worked to supply his campaign with an impressive war chest. Harry Rosenzweig, a close personal friend and the finance guru behind the Phoenix city council campaign, filled the campaign coffers using Goldwater's sizeable list of acquaintances.³² More than half of Goldwater's \$45,000 came from the generous out-

²⁹ Goldberg, 93.

³⁰ Ibid., 96; James Cooper, "Giant Rally Greets Taft," *Tucson Daily Citizen*, October 30, 1952, 1.

³¹ Perlstein, 25.

³² Edwards, 46.

of-state donations of wealthy conservatives and the Republican Senatorial Campaign Committee covered nearly 16 percent of the expenses.³³

The 1952 campaign exemplified Goldwater's discipline. The candidate rarely strayed from his core message, and although Shadegg had written every word of his carefully tailored speeches, Goldwater himself served as a devoted architect of his own ideology.³⁴ Announcing his candidacy in an April 24, 1952 press release before the May convention, Goldwater wasted no time in crafting his oft, repeated campaign theme: "I am an Arizonan who doesn't like the spectacle of our junior senator, who instead of paying attention to the needs and wants of the people of Arizona, is busy being the personal representative and spokesman of Harry Truman."³⁵ Throughout the spring, as Goldwater looked to diminish McFarland's large lead, the Republican wedded the incumbent to the unpopular president, who he referred to as "the architect of socialism."³⁶ "We find McFarland trying to loosen from his neck the terrific weight of Truman," Goldwater railed. In addition, Guy G. Gabrielson, chairman of the Republican National Committee, called McFarland "the Senate spokesman for the Truman New Deal-Fair Deal crowd," sent to "defend their pitiful record."³⁷ The *Tucson Daily Citizen* endorsed Goldwater in October, writing that as Senate Majority Leader, McFarland "must be held accountable for the star-spangled shame," which, in

³³ Goldberg, 94-5.

³⁴ Edwards, 44.

³⁵ "Goldwater In Race for Senatorship," April 24, 1952 [Press Release], Folder 16, Box 102, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

³⁶ Goldberg, 92.

³⁷ McMillan, 258-9; Jerry Poole, "Republicans Take Aim At Control Of Senate," *Arizona Republic*, May, 19, 1952, 1.

their view, included high taxes, runaway spending, appeasement of Communism, and rising national debt.³⁸

These issues were constantly on Goldwater's mind throughout the campaign. Writing to Senator Dirksen on June 2, Goldwater pushed for solid conservative talking points on the questions of the "financial mess" of the federal budget that many voters had asked him about on the campaign trail. "This being a strong Democratic state," Goldwater wrote, "we have got to give reasonable, intelligent answers to those questions and I want to be sure to include the experience and the thinking that you have on the subject."³⁹ Although he had little formal education, Goldwater was quickly becoming a political intellectual, forcing his fellow Republicans to create a rational and reasoned foundation for the popular oratory on spending, Communism and the Korean War.

While he had been introducing himself to Arizona for months, Goldwater formally kicked off his campaign on September 18 on the steps of the Yavapai County Courthouse, the seat of power occupied for so many years by his mentor, Uncle Morris. The speech surprised the audience of seven hundred. Goldwater refused to be "caricatured as a neanderthal Republican," instead acknowledging the gains made through the Social Security system, unemployment insurance and old-age assistance, fragments of the New Deal he otherwise opposed with religious fervor.⁴⁰ Goldwater did not fully accept the legislation though, and continued to charge that "the New Dealers don't begin to comprehend what made this country great," arguing

³⁸ "Send Goldwater To The Senate," *Tucson Daily Citizen*.

³⁹ Goldwater to Dirksen, June 2, 1952, Folder 4, Box 5, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

⁴⁰ Edwards, 47; Kim Phillips-Fein, *Invisible Hands: The Making of the Conservative Movement from the New Deal to Reagan* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2009), 119.

that “the enterprise system” was truly behind America’s well-being, not government programs.⁴¹ In addition, the audience came away awed by Goldwater’s impressive oratory, especially as he came to the closing salvo of his speech. Days earlier, Senator McFarland had referred to the Korean War as a “cheap war,” as Chinese casualties outnumbered American casualties 9-to-1. “I’d challenge the junior senator from Arizona,” Goldwater argued, “to find anywhere within the border of this state...a single mother or father who counts our casualties as cheap—who’d be willing to exchange the life of one American boy for the nine Communists or the nine hundred Red Communists or nine million Communists.”⁴²

Aided by a friendly state press corps, the September 18 speech marked the turning point in the campaign. Confident in victory, and indifferent to the important lessons of the Frohmiller campaign two years earlier, McFarland hardly took his challenger seriously.⁴³ When the *Arizona Republic* published a September poll showing the gap had narrowed, with McFarland at 49 percent and Goldwater at 46 percent, it was already too late.⁴⁴ By the end of October, the poll had flipped: Goldwater stood at 49 percent and McFarland at 46 percent.⁴⁵ While Eisenhower carried Arizona over Adlai Stevenson by a wide margin of 55%-45% on Election Day, either due to his own strong candidacy or the unpopularity of Truman, Goldwater’s slim victory of 6,725 votes of nearly 260,000 cast was still remarkable

⁴¹ “Goldwater Brands Demo Claim ‘Big Lie Of 1952,’” *Arizona Republic*, August 24, 1952, 8.

⁴² Perlstein, 25.

⁴³ Stephen Shadegg, *Barry Goldwater: Freedom Is His Flight Plan* (New York: MacFadden-Bartell, 1963), 107.

⁴⁴ “Goldwater Presses McFarland in Poll,” *Arizona Republic*, September 23, 1952, 1.

⁴⁵ Goldberg, 95, 97.

considering the political prowess of McFarland, and his relative popularity only months earlier.

Clearly, Goldwater had ridden Eisenhower's coattails to Washington, but he had also developed an impressive organization, which deserved tremendous credit for his victory. Over the course of only three years, Goldwater had provided the Arizona Republican Party with a well-articulated philosophy, a national network of donors, a registry of activists and the discipline and energy to win.⁴⁶ Moreover, he achieved this while vocalizing a deeply conservative ideology, albeit with some moderate touches, in an overwhelmingly Democratic state. He became the first Republican to represent Arizona in the United States Senate in twenty-six years, and in the process had won the endorsement of 50,000 Democrats.⁴⁷

* * *

Goldwater had already accrued national fame when he was sworn in to the United States Senate on January 3, 1953, the day after he turned forty-four. But while defeating the Majority Leader brought him celebrity status amongst insiders, he was still a rookie legislator, contributing little to the emerging Eisenhower agenda.⁴⁸ Moreover, Arizona constituents relied more heavily on his more senior colleague, Carl Hayden, who sat atop his perch on the powerful Appropriations Committee.⁴⁹ But Goldwater was still extremely valuable to his caucus. A young, energetic freshman, Goldwater knew how to win, and how to win in states that Republicans were not ordinarily competitive in. Attempting to capitalize on that talent, his eager

⁴⁶ Shadegg, *Freedom Is His Flight Plan*, 117.

⁴⁷ Stephen Shadegg, *What Happened to Goldwater?* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1965), 3.

⁴⁸ Goldberg, 101.

⁴⁹ Perlstein, 26.

colleagues appointed him chairman of the National Republican Senatorial Committee (NRSC) in 1955.⁵⁰ The move showed a recognition of Goldwater's ability, his popularity with the rank-and-file across the country, and the growing appeal of conservatism. The most senior conservatives in the Senate, Dirksen and Minority Leader William Knowland of California, were running for reelection in 1956 and were eager for their young colleague's assistance.⁵¹ Goldwater was a natural. He enjoyed traveling to every corner of the country, as well as the interaction with millions of Republican voters. During his first term as chairman, he logged more miles than any of the post's predecessors, a testament to his work ethic and determination.⁵²

Republican audiences loved him just as much as he enjoyed meeting them. During one stop in California in 1959, Hannah Milhous Nixon, the mother of the vice president, was in the audience. In a letter to Goldwater on November 19, Richard Nixon wrote that his mother had described the Arizonan as "excellent" and "sincere," making the luncheon "one of the best I have ever attended." "My mother, incidentally, is quite a judge of character and does not go in for flamboyant exaggeration," Nixon continued, "You must indeed have made a lasting and favorable impression upon her."⁵³ Goldwater was an effective cheerleader and spokesman, and a committed loyalist to his colleagues who yearned for his aid, regardless of their conservative credentials. During the 1956 midterm election, despite the expectation that the president's party would lose seats, the Republicans clung to every single

⁵⁰ "Goldwater to Lead Campaign," *New York Times*, January 12, 1955, 12.

⁵¹ Goldberg, 109.

⁵² Perlstein, 26.

⁵³ Nixon to Goldwater, November 19, 1959, Folder 12, Box 15, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

one.⁵⁴ Although they could not win the majority, the feat was still impressive, and no doubt partially due to Goldwater's efforts. Howard Pyle, who had lost his 1954 reelection bid to Ernest McFarland and now served as an assistant to Eisenhower, had originally urged Goldwater to reject the NRSC chairmanship. "I take it all back," Pyle wrote his one-time campaign manager, "To be sure there have been disadvantages from your standpoint personally, but I am convinced that the advantages to all concerned far outweigh the disadvantages."⁵⁵

By 1958, Goldwater was conducting his own reelection effort, and Ernest McFarland, elected governor in 1954, was eager for a rematch. But while many had believed 1952 was merely a fluke, Goldwater and his erstwhile campaign sage Stephen Shadegg were confident of victory this time as well. McFarland's most noted biographer called it a contest of "style versus substance," pitting the "flamboyant incumbent and the experienced challenger" in a race destined to become "one of the most controversial in senate history."⁵⁶ While Goldwater had become a national conservative icon, early observers of the race viewed it as a tough battle for him. During his six years in Washington, Goldwater had done little to distinguish himself and McFarland, already well-known for his decade in the Senate, had already defeated the Goldwater operation created for Governor Howard Pyle only two years earlier when he seized the governorship.

⁵⁴ "GOP Is Warned On Senate Races," *New York Times*, February 21, 1955, 1; "The Senate After January 3, 1957," *New York Times*, November 6, 1956, 24.

⁵⁵ Pyle to Goldwater, March 2, 1956, Folder 15, Box 17, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

⁵⁶ McMillan, 361.

Carl Hayden, Arizona's most revered leader, divided legislators between show horses and workhorses.⁵⁷ Despite all his work on behalf of his party, Goldwater was viewed by many as a mere show horse, unable to keep pace with the diligent work, and lacking the intellectual capacity, expected of senators. For his part, McFarland was itching to capitalize on the caricature, juxtaposing his own intellectualism with Goldwater's meager education. It quickly gained traction and in the midst of the campaign Shadegg wrote Goldwater regarding an awkward ordeal his children had witnessed during classes at Camelback High School. Two of the school's teachers, Mr. Powell and Mr. Mote, were "constantly making derogatory remarks about you and about your service in the Senate." The class discussion quickly turned to the 1958 campaign, leading Powell to conclude "he would prefer to have a P.H.D. representing him in the Senate than a man who had to spend an extra year to get through grammar school and an extra year to get through high school."⁵⁸ While Goldwater had always been defensive, and embarrassed, of his educational performance, he let the ordeal slide.

McFarland maintained the representation of his opponent as an incapable class-clown as a constant portrayal. He referred to Goldwater as "a desperate man" and "reactionary opponent" who resorted to "every conceivable means of building up prejudices" instead of tackling "the real issues that are important to the people of Arizona."⁵⁹ Goldwater's poor academic performance became an important theme in characterizing his weak legislative agenda, leading Goldwater to rely on his holdover

⁵⁷ "The Congress: Old Frontiersman," *Time*, February 9, 1962.

⁵⁸ Shadegg to Goldwater, 1958, Folder 13, Box 59, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

⁵⁹ "Mac Claims Goldwater Disregards Real Issues," *Arizona Republic*, October 25, 1958, 1.

operation from six years earlier, which emphasized the Shadegg expertise and the Pulliam press.

The “real issues” of the campaign, to Goldwater, had always been the power of labor unions, an issue he had dealt with throughout his first term. A wave of discontent against elements of the New Deal was emerging and Goldwater quickly became an active participant.⁶⁰ At the start of his Senate career, Goldwater begged the Republican leader, Robert Taft, to place him on the Armed Services Committee. Taft refused, instead assigning him to the Labor Committee. Goldwater protested that he was a businessman who had little experience with unions, but that was precisely the reason Taft wanted him.⁶¹ Although dissatisfied, Goldwater saw opportunity in his new assignment.

The Labor Committee did not deal solely with labor issues, but also with education, the minimum wage and social welfare issues.⁶² His diligence led to his appointment in 1957 to the famed McClellan Rackets Committee (where he served with John F. Kennedy), which was responsible for the investigation of union leaders Dave Beck and Jimmy Hoffa. The work became a cornerstone issue of Goldwater’s 1958 campaign. Six years earlier, McFarland had depended heavily on union support for his election and he was determined to resurrect that network during his rematch. By 1957, union membership had reached 17.5 million nationwide, representing over a quarter of the civilian work force.⁶³ While union membership was less substantial in

⁶⁰ Elizabeth Tandy Shermer, “Origins of the Conservative Ascendency: Barry Goldwater’s Early Senate Career and the Delegitimization of Organized Labor,” *Journal of American History* (December 2008): 2.

⁶¹ Goldberg, 99.

⁶² Edwards, 52.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 64.

the Southwest, it had still been steadily rising, and the number of Arizona unionists had increased from 16,600 in 1939 to 57,400 in 1953.⁶⁴ To Goldwater, the shift represented a threat to the principles he championed, such as free enterprise, entrepreneurship and individual choice.

Throughout the campaign, Goldwater blasted his opponent for his allegiance to “labor bosses.” The *Prescott Courier* noted, “Goldwater hasn’t courted the approval of labor chiefs; rather he has paid more heed to the union membership rank and file than to them.”⁶⁵ The sharp contrast allowed Goldwater to continue to bill himself as “a man of independence and integrity.”⁶⁶ The labor narrative was a strong one, mostly because of the ease in connecting McFarland to the issue. During his 1954 gubernatorial campaign, McFarland had collected \$4,000 from the Western Teamsters and he was strongly endorsed in 1958 by the AFL-CIO Committee on Political Education (COPE).⁶⁷ The subject became so contentious that it drew national attention, with the *Saturday Evening Post* endorsing Goldwater as “the most aggressive, articulate, colorful, and possibly the most conservative conservative in the U.S. Senate.”⁶⁸ Goldwater seemed to be crafting the narrative of the entire campaign, centralizing it on the single issue of labor, one which he had become intimately familiar with over his legislative tenure. By October the labor issue was gaining traction and Jim Cooper listed “labor influence” as one of the deciding factors in the

⁶⁴ Shermer, 5.

⁶⁵ What Arizona Editors Think of Barry Goldwater, 1958, Folder 24, Box 102, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ McMillan, 363, 365.

⁶⁸ Paul F. Healy, “The Glittering Mr. Goldwater,” *Saturday Evening Post*, June 7, 1958, 38.

Goldwater-McFarland race.⁶⁹ In some ways, it must have seemed as if Goldwater was not running against McFarland at all, but Beck, Hoffa and, above all, Walter Reuther of the United Auto Workers.

More importantly, Goldwater understood how to link the labor narrative to both the concerns of his Arizona constituents and his conservative dialogue. Moderately conversant with labor issues as a local businessman, he had aggressively fought against the Wagner Act, which he referred to as “sweetheart legislation” for forcing companies to hire union members and negotiate solely with union leadership.⁷⁰ Through those debates Goldwater became closely acquainted with Denison Kitchel, a Harvard-educated easterner who had moved to Arizona and served as the labor counsel to the mining company Phelps Dodge. It was Kitchel who would help Goldwater frame the union issue, and quickly become his best friend.⁷¹ Just as Goldwater had tied McFarland to Truman six years earlier, in 1958 the name McFarland became synonymous with labor, the “growing and evil concentration of power in the American business community.”⁷² “We must remember in the November 4 general election,” Goldwater told audiences in September, “that the Republican opposition will not come from the Democratic Party. It will come from COPE.”⁷³

Despite the impressive rhetoric though, the election was still in McFarland’s favor. He had universal name-recognition, a remarkable record, a serious campaign and his opponent’s ticket would not be headed by Dwight Eisenhower this time

⁶⁹ Jim Cooper, “The Goldwater-McFarland Contest,” *Tucson Daily Citizen*, October 28, 1958, 12.

⁷⁰ “GOP Senators In Split Over Labor Measure,” *Los Angeles Times*, May 7, 1958, 6.

⁷¹ Perlstein, 28-9.

⁷² Edwards, 80.

⁷³ Jim Cooper, “Goldwater Calls COPE’s Hand,” *Tucson Daily Citizen*, September 18, 1958, 10.

around. But on October 31, four days before the election, McFarland's supporters made a crucial mistake. Frank Goldberg, a former official of the International Association of Machinists, and Earl Anderson, former Arizona chairman of the Machinists Nonpartisan Political League, published a cartoon. Picturing a winking Joseph Stalin smoking a pipe, the ad read: "Why Not Vote for Goldwater"?⁷⁴ The bizarre attempt to link Goldwater, the most outspoken Red-baiter since McCarthy, to Communism was an abysmal flop. Although McFarland had had no knowledge of the leaflet production (and had even called for a formal Senate investigation once he found out), the event permanently damaged his campaign.⁷⁵ On November 3, while columnist H.V. Kaltenborn predicted that the Democrats were "slated to win an outstanding victory," he also conceded that "labor scandals...have hurt labor unions with the general public," as well as the Democratic candidates they endorsed.⁷⁶

Goldwater relied heavily on the press to disseminate his criticisms of labor interests. His most willing ally, Eugene Pulliam had eagerly bashed McFarland whenever an opportunity arose. "If Goldwater recited 'Mary Had a Little Lamb,'" one critic joked, "The Pulliam press would make it the banner story of the day."⁷⁷ Pulliam's *Arizona Republic* wrote that Goldwater was "frank enough to say that the nation had too many rubberstamp senators in the last two decades," a not-so-subtle jab at McFarland's tenure. The *Phoenix Gazette* lauded Goldwater for "voting as his conscience dictated and as he thought his constituents wanted him to," adding,

⁷⁴ What Arizona Editors Think of Barry Goldwater, 1958, Folder 24, Box 102, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

⁷⁵ "Mac In Tears About Smears," *Arizona Republic*, November 1, 1958, 1.

⁷⁶ H.V. Kaltenborn, "How The Election Looks Today," *Tucson Daily Citizen*, November 3, 1958, 14.

⁷⁷ Edwards, 91.

“That’s all the great state of Arizona can expect of any elected official.”⁷⁸ Towards the close of the campaign, Pulliam reported that COPE was spending \$450,000 on state races, attempting to buy the election from honest citizens. The *Chicago Tribune* alleged that \$500,000 was being “wielded by labor’s political education committee to beat Senator Goldwater.”⁷⁹ In reality, the actual amount was \$14,000.⁸⁰ More independent newspapers had also joined the Goldwater team though. The *Mesa Daily Tribune* called Goldwater “a true champion” for his support of better military pay and the *Arizona Range News* urged readers to force their other representatives to “be as brave as Senator Goldwater.”⁸¹ “It is a small wonder that in every corner of the country they hold you in high esteem,” Dirksen wrote to Goldwater, “It is simply a tribute to your courage, your singleness of purpose and your determination to get a job done.”⁸²

On November 4, 1958, Republicans went down in defeat across the country. Twenty-five of the thirty-two Senate candidates endorsed by COPE had won. Conservative candidates from California to Ohio were defeated, including Republican leader William Knowland. The anti-union message seemed to have failed universally—except in Arizona.⁸³ Goldwater won a double-digit victory over McFarland, capturing 56 percent to his opponent’s 43 percent. The remarkable win in a year when Democrats picked up fifteen Senate seats was because of Goldwater’s

⁷⁸ What Arizona Editors Think of Barry Goldwater, 1958, Folder 24, Box 102, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

⁷⁹ “Paper Cites Fund Against Goldwater,” *Arizona Republic*, October 24, 1958, 2.

⁸⁰ Perlstein, 41.

⁸¹ What Arizona Editors Think of Barry Goldwater, 1958, Folder 24, Box 102, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

⁸² Dirksen to Goldwater, September 11, 1959, Folder4, Box 5, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

⁸³ Perlstein, 41.

political acumen. A believer in the simplicity of a campaign message, Goldwater had faithfully maintained control of his, constantly hammering away at labor leaders in a way in which Arizonans could identify. Moreover, he was an avid fundraiser. With Rosenzweig once again in charge, Goldwater raised five times as much as he had in 1952 and outraised McFarland by over \$75,000.⁸⁴ In addition, he had padded his coffers with thousands of dollars from wealthy out-of-state contributors, just as he had done in his previous campaign. His greatest advantage, though, had always been his close alliance with the Arizona press.

Sworn into his second term in January 1959, Goldwater began to emerge as a significant figure on the national political stage. The next four years would be crucial as he attempted to balance his personal ambition to be a dutiful senator with the hopeful wishes of activists who urged him to be a candidate for president in 1960. So magnetic was his appeal that delegates from South Carolina and Arizona began actively pushing him to announce his intention to challenge Richard Nixon for the nomination. Buoyed by his conservative credentials, and his new best-selling book *Conscience of a Conservative*, Goldwater cautiously permitted the planning for a conservative insurgency.

* * *

On March 26, 1960, a full five months before the national convention, South Carolina declared their thirteen votes for Goldwater, during a time when open presidential primaries were still an oddity. Refusing to be outdone in praise for their favorite son, the Arizona delegation quickly asked Goldwater what to do. In a letter to a young

⁸⁴ Edwards, 96.

William Rehnquist, then an Arizona Republican leader, Goldwater wrote simply that Nixon was “our man.”⁸⁵ Still, after Nixon secretly conceded points in the party platform to Governor Nelson Rockefeller, Goldwater criticized the vice president as an apathetic conservative who strayed too far from party principles with his support of New Deal and Fair Deal policies.⁸⁶ And Goldwater was not the only insurgent Nixon had to defend himself from. Despite Nixon’s Madison Avenue concessions, Rockefeller remained uncommitted to ending his own bid for the presidency. Only in his first term as the chief executive of New York, Rockefeller began earnestly courting delegates after he was inaugurated in January 1959. In a letter to Goldwater on May 31, 1960, Rockefeller praised Goldwater’s independence and candor, writing, “I wish that everybody in public life expressed his view as forthrightly as you do.”⁸⁷ Hardly sincere, these were no doubt words Rockefeller would come to regret.

A month before the convention opened, the infant Goldwater operation was assured of one hundred delegate votes on the first ballot. The real fight, though, was the vice presidential nomination, where Goldwater was the first choice of nearly three hundred delegates.⁸⁸ During the same time period, Robert Croll, a graduate student at Northwestern University, founded Youth for Goldwater for Vice President. In the organization’s maiden press release, Croll announced that chapters had already been founded across the country, at Stanford, Yale, Harvard, Wellesley and the University of Virginia.⁸⁹ By the time of the convention, Youth for Goldwater for Vice President

⁸⁵ Goldberg, 143-4.

⁸⁶ Robert T. Hartmann, “Nixon, Rockefeller OK Platform in Secret Talk,” *Los Angeles Times*, July 24, 1960, B1; “Goldwater Hints He May Join Race,” *New York Times*, July 25, 1960, 16.

⁸⁷ Rockefeller to Goldwater, May 31, 1960, Folder 12, Box 19, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

⁸⁸ Goldberg, 144.

⁸⁹ Youth for Goldwater Organization Announced, 1960, Folder 16, Box 96, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

boasted sixty-five campus chapters in thirty-two states. “All of the young Goldwater supporters have one thing in common,” Croll said, “We are conservatives.”⁹⁰

While Goldwater won the nomination neither for president nor vice president, his convention showing furthered his reputation as a Republican heavyweight. In only eight years he had moved from the Phoenix city council to the national stage, creating an army of devoted followers along the way. The defeat of Richard Nixon in November 1960 further convinced Goldwater that the party needed serious help. Viewing the election loss as a replay of Republican defeats in 1944 and 1948, Goldwater reasoned that Nixon had been too indistinguishable from Kennedy. The “me-tooism” that Republicans of the Eastern Establishment employed simply offered voters insufficient alternatives, and Goldwater believed Nixon himself had failed to give the electorate “a clear-cut choice.”⁹¹ As Goldwater headed back to Washington for the beginning of the New Frontier in 1961, he did so with a strong concern for the future of conservatism, as well as that of the country.

In January 1961, the Republican caucus went about choosing its leadership. Among the easier decisions was chairman of the National Republican Senate Committee. During Goldwater’s previous tenure he had steadfastly defended every incumbent, and his political influence across the country had only grown since. While Senator Jacob Javits, a liberal Republican from New York, fumed at Goldwater’s reelection to the post, other ideological foes were more aware of Goldwater’s remarkable strength. Margaret Chase Smith, a Maine moderate, gave Goldwater “an unsolicited endorsement,” saying that the two had come to a “considerable

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Goldwater quoted by Goldberg, 147.

convergence” of views and that the Arizonan “had made an ‘excellent chairman.’” Noting that Goldwater had greatly aided her own reelection in 1960, Smith continued that her colleague was “imaginative, energetic, forceful and effective,” working tirelessly for every candidate “regardless of differing political philosophies.”⁹² The great Goldwater machine had clearly emerged as an unmatched organization, and the chairman would go to any length to aid his peers. In 1962, for example, when the NRSC was hampered by a series of bookkeeping errors only days before the election, Goldwater advanced its operating funds out of his own pocket without hesitation.⁹³

Goldwater maintained a packed agenda in 1961, scheduling 225 speaking engagements and receiving over eight hundred pieces of mail every day.⁹⁴ Consistently compared to the new president for his energy, enthusiasm and good looks, *Business Week* gushed that the conservative was “as handsome as a movie star” and *Time* added he was “the hottest political figure this side of Jack Kennedy.”⁹⁵ The *New York Times* wrote that after President Kennedy, “Senator Goldwater is the most exciting and provocative figure on the political landscape today.”⁹⁶ Many already considered Goldwater a presidential aspirant—including Kennedy himself. During a meeting in the Oval Office, the president turned to his old Senate friend and said, “So you really want this fucking job, huh?”⁹⁷ Whether or not Goldwater truly wanted to be president is unknown. He was a popular, national figure who had devoted his life

⁹² “Goldwater Backed By a One-Time Foe,” *New York Times*, January 5, 1961, 10.

⁹³ Goldwater to Joseph Fitzpatrick, October 31, 1962, Folder 4, Box 92, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

⁹⁴ Goldberg, 149-50.

⁹⁵ “Apostle of Conservatism,” *Business Week*, March 25, 1961, 34; “Salesman for a Cause,” *Time*, June 23, 1961, 12.

⁹⁶ Cabell Phillips, “Goldwater Busy Bolstering G.O.P.,” *New York Times*, July 3, 1961, 1.

⁹⁷ Goldberg, 150.

to an ideology based on the liberty of the individual, but he had hardly sought the level of stardom that enveloped him.

There is considerable evidence that Goldwater truly did not want to be president. In 1962, he confided in his journal: “Maybe it’s old age but for the first time in a rather long career of ‘hilling the husting’ I feel tired.”⁹⁸ He added in a separate entry, “I must make a reluctant admission, namely that I can no longer make three to eight speeches and meetings a day. It isn’t so much the physical fatigue as it is a mental one and this is not occasioned so much by the demands of the presentation as by the demands of the people.”⁹⁹ Exhausted from his double-life as both a campaigner and legislator, Goldwater was not ready to commit to a campaign for the presidency. But regardless of his personal ambitions, the organization he was consistently developing seemed to suggest that he was still entertaining the possibility of a national campaign.

That same year, Goldwater headed to the far reaches of Alaska to aid the Republican efforts there. He toured oil fields and learned about the concerns of the small communities that dotted the vast state, including the wage rate and cost of living. “It is a state that in many ways reminds me of Arizona in my youth,” Goldwater wrote, “Wide open—a variety of geography and challenges on every turn.”¹⁰⁰ Ted Stevens, who lost that year but would be elected to the U.S. Senate in 1968, never forgot Goldwater’s kindness in assisting with that first campaign. At the conclusion of one of his speaking engagements, Stevens presented Goldwater with the traditional gift given to male visitors: a petrified walrus penis. As Goldwater held

⁹⁸ Goldwater Personal Journals, 1962, Folder 4, Box 26, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

the *oosik*, he remarked, “I don’t know why, but this makes me think of Lyndon Johnson.”¹⁰¹ The charm, wit and personality of the Westerner earned him many admirers, and his loyalty to the shared cause of his colleagues allowed him to curry dozens of political favors.

The true prowess of the Goldwater equation was felt in Texas during the 1961 special election to fill the vacant Senate seat of Vice President Johnson. A Republican had not been elected in the Lone Star state since Morgan C. Hamilton won reelection in 1871. The GOP’s rising star was determined to change that ninety-year trajectory. John Tower, a college professor who had garnered 41 percent against Lyndon Johnson in his 1960 campaign for the U.S. Senate, was the only Republican of the seventy-one candidates who had filed to run. The *New York Times* reported that Goldwater was acclaimed as “Texas’ favorite son” as he campaigned across the state for Tower in March. Four thousand spectators appeared for his speech in San Antonio, and “Senator Goldwater did not disappoint.”¹⁰² Tower, a self-professed “Goldwater Republican,” won with 50.6 percent in a tight race, demonstrating the strong rise of national conservatism.¹⁰³

The newly minted leader of this political shift was indisputably Barry Goldwater, who had done more for the Republican Party than any figure in the preceding decade. In only ten years, the Phoenix businessman turned reformer had demonstrated exceptional skills, including oratorical power, political messaging, structural organizing and fundraising. He was able to simplify lofty goals and

¹⁰¹ Edwards, 150.

¹⁰² Tom Wicker, “Goldwater Acclaimed in Texas As He Helps a Lone Republican,” *New York Times*, March 18, 1961, 1.

¹⁰³ Goldberg, 157.

translate political themes into a vernacular. Most importantly, he proved that ideological purists could win in the strongest Democratic strongholds. The Goldwater strategy demonstrated a unique set of variables that could be employed in the West, South and Northeast to ensure Republican victories. It was no wonder that many Republicans, tired of the Eastern Establishment's dominance over the party, yearned for his entry in the 1964 contest. And if he would not willingly enter the race, Indiana State Treasurer Bob Hughes noted that there was only one thing the rank-and-file could do: "Let's draft the s.o.b."¹⁰⁴

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 169.

III. MISCALCULATIONS, MISSTEPS & VICTORY

Barry Goldwater arrived in his hometown to announce his candidacy for president on the same Yavapai County Courthouse steps where he had kicked off his 1952 campaign for the U.S. Senate. Goldwater hobbled to the podium on crutches, still recovering from surgery he had had weeks earlier, richly symbolic of the campaign to come. It was January 3, 1964, with a little more than two months before the first primary, and years after Goldwater had first considered a national campaign. His hometown paper, the *Arizona Republic*, an important ally through each of his campaigns, hailed its favorite son. Under the headline “Senator Looks Able and Ready,” the paper reported, “The press agreed that Barry was never sharper than for his big moment.”¹ The UPI wire wrote that national GOP leaders “across the entire party spectrum...cheered Sen. Barry Goldwater’s entry into the ranks of presidential candidates,” calling the primary campaign “evidence of GOP vitality.”² But behind all the confidence and celebration stood a man deeply torn over his decision.

For years, Goldwater had agonized over whether he even wanted to be president, whether he should run for president, and whether he would be a good president. By January 1964 when he announced his candidacy, the excitement that had led him to consider it in the first place had all but faded. Shortly after Nixon’s defeat in November 1960, a campaign that Goldwater had worked tirelessly for, the Arizonan’s inner circle began actively weighing the 1964 race. But as early as 1961,

¹ “Senator Looks Able and Ready,” *Arizona Republic*, January 4, 1964, Folder 6, Box 127, The Personal and Political Papers of Senator Barry M. Goldwater, Arizona Historical Society, Hayden Library, Arizona State University.

² “National GOP Leaders Hail Goldwater Move,” *UPI*, January 4, 1964, Folder 6, Box 127, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

Goldwater was publically shrugging off a campaign, offering a Sherman-esque declaration to *Time*, “I have no staff for it, no program for it, and no ambition for it.”³ Even while the senator outwardly dismissed a national campaign, he was also quietly organizing an advisory committee of close friends, leaving the possibility open. And he was not the only candidate preparing. With Nelson Rockefeller already actively courting national party leaders, Goldwater asked his advisers to draft a campaign plan in December 1962, a full year before his formal announcement. “The Program,” as it was dubbed, outlined fundraising and public relations staffs, as well as the advantages of a campaign. The chief reason for a Goldwater candidacy, it argued, was for the preservation of the Republican Party through conservative values. “Failure to act now ensured the success of Nelson Rockefeller...If conservatives surrendered without a fight, ‘modern Republicanism’ would vault to control of the party, and the right ‘might not recover for a generation.’”⁴ More than anything, the fear of a continuation of what he perceived as status quo, “me-tooism” Republicanism was what convinced Goldwater to run.

In addition, a growing contingent of grassroots activists, separate from Goldwater’s internal operations, was busy building a respectable organization for the senator.⁵ Shadegg noted after the election, “In a very real sense, Senator Barry Goldwater was nominated for President by the men who met in Chicago thirty-three months in advance of the Republican convention.”⁶ As late as January 1963 though,

³ “Salesman for a Cause,” *Time*, June 23, 1961, 16.

⁴ Robert Alan Goldberg, *Barry Goldwater* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 169.

⁵ Lisa McGirr, *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001), 110.

⁶ Stephen Shadegg, *What Happened to Goldwater?* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1965), 44.

Goldwater had told the mastermind behind the draft operation, F. Clifton White, that he would not be a candidate. Furthermore, Goldwater was insulted by the idea that supporters would “paint him into a corner,” chastising White that it was his “political neck on the line and I intend to have something to say about what happens to it.”⁷ But White continued, with or without his candidate’s blessing, to try to elect him president of the United States. That Chicago meeting, organized by White in 1961 to build a coalition of die-hard conservative intellectuals for Goldwater, quickly erupted into a powerful movement. Along with his friends from the Young Republicans, such as Congressman John Ashbrook of Ohio and William Rusher, publisher of the infant *National Review*, White hoped to provide legitimacy to a Goldwater candidacy. While Rusher felt that the country, still jubilant over the emerging New Frontier, was not ready for an abrupt ideological shift, he also felt that the senator’s personality and political reputation could overcome that handicap.⁸ Further, with young conservatives outraged by Eisenhower’s moderation and Kennedy’s liberalism, Goldwaterism was perfectly timed to capture the energetic support of these organizers.

The inaugural Chicago session brought twenty-two representatives from sixteen states, representing the Midwest, south and northeast.⁹ Among the attendees were state party chairmen, wealthy financiers and a lobbyist for Standard Oil (ironic, considering Goldwater’s chief opponent was a Rockefeller). Perhaps most interesting was that the group was packed with Harvard graduates and well-pedigreed lawyers, a fact that would quickly force Goldwater to distrust them. The mission, the group

⁷ Ibid., 168.

⁸ Lee Edwards, *Goldwater: The Man Who Made a Revolution* (Washington, DC: Regnery Publishing, 1995), 146.

⁹ F. Clifton White, *Suite 3505: The Story of the Draft Goldwater Movement* (New Rochelle, NY: Arlington House, 1967), 38.

decided in 1961, was to work to combat the “Orwellian prophecy of the Big Brother state,” not necessarily supporting a specific candidate, although many had argued for tying the effort to Goldwater from the outset.¹⁰ Regardless of their stated intentions, Goldwater for President was always on the minds of these organizers, and White was dispatched to inform the senator of the meeting shortly after they adjourned.

While he pleaded with White to cease a draft, Goldwater was still considering a campaign, and clearly seemed to be preparing for a run. In June 1961 alone he made twenty-three speeches across the country without ever once missing a significant Senate roll call vote.¹¹ Because he had never given the group a firm and specific “no” about his presidential intentions, the members of the Chicago meeting continued to lay the groundwork for a full-fledged movement. When the group reconvened in December 1962, this time with twice as many attendees, the mission was clear: Barry Goldwater would be their candidate in 1964.¹² Working at the grassroots level, Suite 3505, as the organization became known, was devoted to raising funds for the primary campaign as well as convincing state delegations to support Goldwater, beginning with those who had in 1960. “The organization of local draft-Goldwater clubs... is now well under way,” wrote William Rusher, “and is plainly going to result in catalyzing a nationwide grass-roots movement of unmistakable size and seriousness.”¹³ After he won the nomination, the *New York Times* noted that Goldwater could not have achieved the feat without the seemingly spontaneous movement that had sprung up due to White’s efforts. “This amorphous

¹⁰ Ibid., 40.

¹¹ Edwards, 157.

¹² F.C. White, 95.

¹³ William A. Rusher, “The Draft-Goldwater Drive: A Progress Report,” *National Review*, September 10, 1963, 185.

movement...provided the hard core base of Mr. Goldwater's support in every state."¹⁴ And while the *Times* noted that those efforts had started as early as 1963, it was clearly much earlier.

Still, Goldwater had doubts. Dean Burch, an assistant and close associate of Goldwater's, wrote to the senator in January 1963 to outline the disadvantages of running for president. Topping the list was the "improbability" of defeating Kennedy in 1964. Additionally, if Goldwater were to run he could not run for the Senate, and would lose a job he dearly cherished. If Goldwater did run and was defeated, he would be left without a platform to continue to espouse conservatism until at least 1968.¹⁵ And finally, there were dozens of "practical problems...inherent in a national campaign" that would be both difficult and bothersome to overcome, such as developing a functioning national organization. Burch concluded that the real contest would be in 1968. "After Kennedy and his brand of back-biting, personal politics, the country will be desperate for maturity," he wrote.¹⁶ Almost breathing a sigh of relief, Goldwater thanked Burch for his well-reasoned response, once again stressing that he did not want the nomination:

I think that my request to hold off any pressure for at least a year will slow down the almost hourly pressure to seek the nomination which I assure you I do not want. By that time, I feel either Rockefeller will have developed an overwhelming lead or somebody promoted by the kingmakers will have been offered as a sacrificial lamb, and I can go my way happily seeking a third term in the Senate.¹⁷

¹⁴ "Goldwater Built His Power in States' Conventions," *New York Times*, July 16, 1964, 17.

¹⁵ While Goldwater could have legally ran for both the presidency and the U.S. Senate, he had sharply criticized Lyndon Johnson for doing so in 1960, and refused to entertain the idea.

¹⁶ Burch to Goldwater, January 14, 1963, Folder 20, Box 49, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

¹⁷ Goldwater to Burch, January 21, 1963, Folder 20, Box 49, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

But Goldwater had not entirely dismissed the idea. In an intricate mind game that seemed to fluctuate with his emotions, Goldwater still desperately wanted to aid a country he felt was on the wrong track. While he considered John F. Kennedy a good friend and inspirational colleague, Goldwater felt the young president was ill-prepared to handle the mounting tasks facing him. As early as 1961, only months after Kennedy had been inaugurated, Goldwater commented in his journal on “JFK’s very apparent inability to lead.” Goldwater, along with much of the country he believed, was growing increasingly concerned over the president’s interactions with the Soviet Union, especially as Cuba became involved. In May 1963, Goldwater had written to Defense Secretary Robert S. McNamara, arguing that the administration’s policy “is to permit the Soviet such wide latitude in expanding its entire weapons complex...that it may, in fact, achieve first a balance of power and then a lead.” In response, McNamara wrote, “I know of no responsible person in public life, military or civilian, who would agree with you.”¹⁸ Goldwater was hardly deterred. Further, Goldwater’s criticism was not limited to nuclear threat, but on the general conduct of the Kennedy administration. He wrote, “The concern in the country is over the proposals of the New Frontier, the fuzzy headed group who surround the President and the President’s lack of leadership.”¹⁹

While Goldwater fundamentally disagreed with Kennedy’s policies, he had a great respect for him. It was the thrill of a head-to-head contest with his former Senate colleague that assured Goldwater that a campaign would be worthwhile. With Goldwater appearing to be a strong frontrunner for his party’s nomination in 1964, he

¹⁸ McNamara to Goldwater, May 11, 1963, Folder 10, Box 14, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

¹⁹ Goldwater Personal Journals, 1961, Folder 4, Box 26, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

and the president often discussed what the election would look like if they were to campaign against one another. Above all, both men envisioned a high-stakes philosophical debate. They would travel together on the same plane, argue ferociously at different stops across the country, and then return to the same plane.²⁰ After months of internal debating, Goldwater had been set to announce his candidacy in early December 1963. In one of the great what-ifs of political history, the Kennedy-Goldwater election may have provided unmatched maturity to an otherwise bitter era. Years later, Goldwater wrote to a New York supporter that a campaign against Kennedy would “have been an illuminating experience for the American people because we would have argued the issues.” When he learned of the president’s assassination on November 22, his own aspirations seemed to have faded. “I told my wife I would not consider running for the Presidency,” he wrote to the same supporter. “Of course, I later changed my mind but it never was the campaign that it would have been with Jack on the other side.”²¹

While he may have considered dropping the campaign for a short period of time, Goldwater still actively began preparing. On November 30, less than a week after Kennedy’s state funeral, Goldwater was soliciting the advice of Dwight Eisenhower on talking points regarding the Tennessee Valley Authority, an object of conservative ire since the 1930s.²² And observers were not taking a break from the forthcoming campaign either. On November 25, the day of the president’s funeral, Louis Harris’s survey released an updated poll for the New Hampshire primary, over four months away. In a head-to-head match up against the only declared candidate,

²⁰ Edwards, 188-90; Goldberg, 178.

²¹ Goldwater to Goldstein, May 15, 1973, Folder 13, Box 10, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

²² Eisenhower to Goldwater, November 30, 1963, Folder 6, Box 6, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

Nelson Rockefeller, Goldwater took 52 percent to the New York governor's 33 percent. Noting that this was the "first authoritative poll of New Hampshire's key presidential primary," Harris nonetheless cautioned "Goldwater's hold on GOP voters is not really solid and the Arizona senator appears strongest when pitted against Rockefeller."²³ An earlier November *Associated Press* poll though, surveying Republican state and county leaders nationwide, declared Goldwater "the runaway choice of Republican Presidential preferences." 85 percent of the 1,404 party faithful surveyed chose the Arizonan as the party's strongest candidate. In New Hampshire, 32 of the 39 county committeemen responded to the survey, and 22 declared their allegiance to an unannounced Goldwater.²⁴ Even as his dreams for the perfect campaign were slain along with John F. Kennedy, Goldwater had many promising reasons to enter the race. "Barry, I don't think you can back down," said Denison Kitchel, Goldwater's closest confidant.²⁵ Although perhaps against his better judgment, Goldwater rode on to the national stage.

Only days before his official announcement in January 1964, David Lawrence wrote in his national column that Goldwater's popularity was due to his "evident conviction" and his staunch sense of morality. "The Arizona senator's popularity is related to the spontaneous response of many Republican voters who feel he reflects their militancy," he wrote.²⁶ Although his convictions and deep-rooted morals may have been exemplary, those men he chose to make up his close-knit personal staff were not. Goldwater's construction of his campaign team was odd in both who he

²³ Louis Harris, "Sen. Goldwater Holds Lead in New Hampshire," *Oelwein Daily Register* (IA), November 25, 1963, 6.

²⁴ "Goldwater Wins Wide Lead In Poll," *New York Times*, November 3, 1963, 1.

²⁵ Edwards, 199.

²⁶ David Lawrence, "Barry's Popularity," *Steubenville Herald* (OH), January 1, 1964, 6.

included, and who he did not. Among the most questionable appointments was that of campaign manager, which would have widespread ramifications in the coming campaign. Since 1952, Goldwater had had only one manager, the well-known and well-respected Arizona heavyweight Stephen Shadegg. It was Shadegg who had helped jumpstart Goldwater's infant candidacy for the United States Senate, had worked to articulate the conservative philosophy and had carefully orchestrated Goldwater's rise to national prominence. It would have been obvious for Goldwater to appoint his long-time deputy to lead his presidential run. Despite that decade-long friendship though, Goldwater cast Shadegg aside, one of his most substantial strategic errors.

Historians have written that Goldwater cast off his friend for his presidential run due to Shadegg's personal quest for Arizona's other Senate seat. According to biographer Robert A. Goldberg, Goldwater "hit the ceiling" when he heard that Shadegg planned to challenge Senator Carl Hayden, one of the body's most senior members, in 1962. He "personalized the dispute," feeling both "exposed and used" by Shadegg.²⁷ Lee Edwards added that Shadegg remained "outside the pale as a result of his failed 1962 attempt" to dethrone Hayden.²⁸ The cause for the rift in the relationship was not so simple though. Deeply appreciative of genuine friendships, Goldwater valued loyalty as a key character trait. Although he was probably not disappointed in Shadegg for choosing to run (Goldwater had often repeated that the decision to run is one's "own decision to make for himself"), he was surely distraught

²⁷ Goldberg, 167; Rick Perlstein, *Before the Storm: Barry Goldwater and the Unmaking of the American Consensus* (New York: Nation Books, 2001), 259.

²⁸ Edwards, 184.

that he had found out about Shadegg's intentions through a press release.²⁹ In addition, Goldwater was probably most concerned with his own image. The sight of his closest friend as a candidate made it appear that Arizona's highest ranking Republican was acting as a puppeteer. Only days after Shadegg's announcement, the *Arizona Journal* wrote that while Goldwater would declare neutrality in the Republican primary, he would "have a hard time disassociating himself from the contest. And it will be even more difficult for him to emerge from the election without losing some support." Moreover, the column argued, a Shadegg victory "will be attributed to Goldwater's influence."³⁰

As expected, Goldwater did all he could to disassociate himself from the Senate race. In a blunt telegram to reporters sniffing for hints of favoritism, Goldwater wrote, "My position relative to primary is absolutely neutral, as it should and must be."³¹ Goldwater was not completely sitting on the sidelines though. Throughout the primary race, which Shadegg would ultimately lose, Goldwater made small steps to aid Shadegg. When Goldwater made Senator Hayden's voting record available to a mutual friend, he suggested Shadegg reach out to her, "If you wanted to copy them for use in your campaign."³² That type of aid continued throughout Shadegg's campaign, with Goldwater supplying information concerning Hayden's votes well into August.³³ Further, stories that there had been a rift disturbed both men.

²⁹ Western Union Telegram, Goldwater to Shadegg, April 2, 1964, Folder 15, Box 59, Goldwater Papers (ASU); News Release, March 29, 1962, Folder 15, Box 59, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

³⁰ Edward Lee, "GOP Fight Can Hurt Goldwater," *Arizona Journal*, April 5, 1962, 3A, Folder 15, Box 59, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

³¹ Western Union Telegram, Goldwater to Darwin K. Craner, April 2, 1962, Folder 15, Box 59, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

³² Goldwater to Shadegg, April 11, 1962, Folder 15, Box 59, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

³³ Shadegg to Goldwater, August 27, 1962, Folder 15, Box 59, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

“They are saying that you and I had a hell of a fight and that in a fit of anger I made my announcement,” Shadegg confided to Goldwater. “I’m positive the people who know me and know you,” he continued, “will realize I am completely dedicated to your cause and to your future and would never do anything of a political nature against your wishes.”³⁴ For all those rumors though, and biographers’ speculations, Goldwater maintained a close relationship with Shadegg.

By December 1962, only months after the Senate primary election, Goldwater asked Shadegg to manage his 1964 campaign, which they both clearly understood could be for *either* the U.S. Senate or the presidency. On February 9, 1963 though, Goldwater abruptly changed his mind. Whether it was truly due to the 1962 Senate campaign, as biographers argue, or to Shadegg’s involvement with the Salt River Project in the 1950s, the official reason Goldwater gave, is unknown. Regardless, the decision took Shadegg by surprise, and he told Goldwater that he “was totally unprepared” for it. Clearly disappointed, and believing it had more to do with 1962 than Goldwater revealed, Shadegg wrote to his old friend, “I want it to be clear between us that despite the events of 1962, I was still eager to devote what talent I have in this business to your cause in 1964.”³⁵ Shadegg, the mastermind who had devoted so much to Goldwater’s popular rise, would be relegated to the sidelines during the presidential race, depriving the campaign of the single greatest expert on Goldwater conservatism.

Originally, Goldwater hoped to replace Shadegg with “the only pro in the Republican Party,” Leonard Hall. Hall had served as chairman of the Republican

³⁴ Shadegg to Goldwater, April 4, 1962, Folder 15, Box 59, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

³⁵ Shadegg to Goldwater, March 5, 1962, Folder 16, Box 59, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

National Committee for most of Eisenhower's administration and was a gifted party organizer. David W. Reinhard contends that Hall was Goldwater's choice as campaign manager, but Hall refused.³⁶ In the place of political professionals like Hall and Shadegg, Goldwater turned to a man "who had neither the skill nor the temperament to direct a national campaign."³⁷ Denison Kitchel, the least experienced presidential campaign manager in decades, was "selected because he was a warm friend of the senator."³⁸ Charles Mohr described him simply as "a newcomer," but also a positive "contrast to the candidate's Western exuberance."³⁹ Kitchel, a Harvard-trained lawyer who had become acquainted with Goldwater through their mutual interest in labor issues, had little political experience. In fact, the *only* political experience he could list was serving as the general counsel to the Arizona Republican Party. Goldwater hadn't chosen him for his experience though. Goldwater himself wrote that Kitchel's appointment was a "twist of fate," referring to him as the senator's "antithesis" for his lack of both political experience and connections.⁴⁰ Robert Novak commented towards the end of the campaign that one of Goldwater's chief failings was his criterion for filling campaign jobs, "not so much on political astuteness as on unquestioned loyalty."⁴¹ Kitchel himself noted the oddity in his selection, writing to the senator, "You have picked a real green horn, but if enthusiasm and determination can eventually produce a qualified campaign manager,

³⁶ David W. Reinhard, *The Republican Right Since 1945* (Lexington, KY: University of Kentucky Press, 1983), 183.

³⁷ Edwards, 182.

³⁸ "Man Behind Goldwater: Denison Kitchel," *New York Times*, June 5, 1964, 14.

³⁹ Charles Mohr, "Goldwater's Nine," *New York Times*, September 13, 1964, SM28.

⁴⁰ Barry M. Goldwater with Jack Casserly, *Goldwater* (New York: Doubleday, 1988), 146.

⁴¹ Rowland Evans and Robert Novak, "The Men Around Goldwater," *Saturday Evening Post*, October 24, 1964, 33.

I expect to make the grade.”⁴² Neither enthusiasm nor determination ever truly made the grade though.

In addition to Kitchel, Goldwater’s other chief selections were Dean Burch, as Kitchel’s deputy, and Richard Kleindheist as director of field operations. Tony Smith, the senator’s longtime press secretary, although in failing health, was tasked with managing the national press.⁴³ None of these men had any particular experience outside of Arizona politics, but all were completely loyal to Goldwater. Although a Harvard graduate, Novak described Kleindheist as “the Western cowboy roughneck: tactless, boisterous, and professionally profane in two languages (English and Navajo).” Simply put, he was “not necessarily the most suitable personality for wooing political support.”⁴⁴ Burch had begun working as a legislative aide for Goldwater in 1955, when he was just twenty-seven years old. He held his boss in such high esteem that when his child was born in January 1963, he asked Goldwater to serve as the godfather.⁴⁵ The *New York Times* described Burch as a Goldwater “protégé” who, like Kitchel and Kleindheist, was “relatively unknown in national politics.”⁴⁶

By May 1963, Kitchel and Burch were still under the impression that the campaign they had joined was for the United States Senate. Burch was eagerly making preparations to organize Goldwater’s Pima County headquarters for the race. Soliciting Kitchel’s advice, Burch asked, “What sort of thoughts do you have on the staffing and furnishing of such an office?,” a clear indication that their minds were

⁴² “Kitchel to Goldwater. March 5, 1963.” Folder 16, Box 59. Goldwater Papers (ASU).

⁴³ Edwards, 205.

⁴⁴ Robert Novak, *Agony of the GOP 1964* (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1965), 285.

⁴⁵ Goldwater to Burch, January 11, 1963, Folder 20, Box 49, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

⁴⁶ Charles Mohr, “Chairman Chosen,” *New York Times*, July 17, 1964, 1.

elsewhere.⁴⁷ By August, only four months before Goldwater planned to announce his campaign for the presidency, Kitchel and Burch still lacked a clear understanding of Goldwater's intentions and remained unprepared. With the Tucson campaign office opened, Burch was unsure what to do next. "We still don't have a typewriter, nor do I have any real work for the girl to do," he wrote to Kitchel, "Could you give me a ring at your earliest convenience so we can figure out a program?"⁴⁸ For the next year and a half, the two would face the same dilemma: clearing lines of communication and figuring out the program.

It was not only who Goldwater included in his staff that handicapped his candidacy, but also who he excluded. Shadegg's exclusion was the most damaging, but Goldwater also purged the greatest conservative intellectuals of the era, including William F. Buckley, Bill Rusher and Brent Bozell, all of whom had been enthusiastic Goldwater supporters. Most intellectuals and academics were "prevented from making any significant contribution to the 1964 campaign."⁴⁹ The protective advisers, and Goldwater himself, "drew the curtains so tightly that Buckley was relegated to advising Goldwater through the pages of *National Review*," wrote Goldberg.⁵⁰ Barry Goldwater, while at one point an admirer of the intellectual elite, had grown distrustful of them. Either because he lacked a formal education himself or because of his uncertainty in seeking the presidency, Goldwater felt most secure and comfortable

⁴⁷ Burch to Kitchel, May 21, 1963, Folder 20, Box 49, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

⁴⁸ Burch to Kitchel, August 5, 1963, Folder 20, Box 49, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

⁴⁹ Edwards, 183.

⁵⁰ Goldberg, 183.

surrounding himself with fellow Arizonans. Calling themselves “a bunch of cowboys,” Perlstein notes that they were “proud, almost, of what they didn’t know.”⁵¹

Despite his insecurities, the senator was still greatly respected for his ideological contributions. The *National Review* had written in 1963 that while “Goldwater may not be an intellectual...he has those other qualities of mind, character, heart and humor that we need in a President.” Noting that Goldwater possessed “a good mind, as well as a conscience,” the profile continued that America would “require a President possessed not only of charismatic qualities of leadership, but also of an intellect decisive, quick, and strong.”⁵² Despite the praise, Goldwater was still uncomfortable with those he viewed as intellectually intimidating. And while such well-known academics as Robert Bork and Milton Friedman would advise the campaign in various capacities, their expertise would never match the influence of the “Arizona Mafia.”⁵³

* * *

Thus, Barry Goldwater headed towards the first contest, the New Hampshire presidential primary. Despite a campaign team lacking political acumen, the Arizonan was the new favorite in the Granite State, whose motto “Live Free or Die” seemed to encapsulate so much of what he advocated. Moreover, the Goldwater campaign had received an important boost when Senator Norris Cotton, the highest-ranking Republican in New Hampshire, agreed to lead his colleague’s primary efforts in the state. That Goldwater convinced Cotton, a northeastern moderate, to work on his behalf before he even formally announced his campaign was surely a tactful

⁵¹ Perlstein, 255.

⁵² Russell Kirk, “The Mind of Barry Goldwater,” *National Review*, August 27, 1963, 149.

⁵³ Goldberg, 173; “Goldwater’s ‘Brain Trust,’” *U.S. News & World Report*, July 27, 1964, 36.

maneuver. Heading a slate of fourteen convention-delegate candidates pledged to Goldwater, Cotton provided “an all-out endorsement of the Arizona conservative as a national leader.”⁵⁴ Recognizing the importance of the triumph, Goldwater wrote to his fellow senator, “Seldom in the life of any man comes a compliment such as you are paying me by your endorsement. I pray that I will never do anything to cause you to regret this.”⁵⁵

Despite such high profile endorsements, Goldwater’s political opponents were also actively preparing for the campaign. In 1962, Nelson Aldrich Rockefeller had been the uncontested front-runner for the 1964 Republican presidential nomination. A Gallup poll showed him outpacing his nearest rival, Goldwater, by double-digits, 43 percent to 26 percent.⁵⁶ The *Saturday Evening Post* quoted Robert F. Kennedy saying, “If it had been Rockefeller instead of Nixon [in 1960], we would have lost.”⁵⁷ A year later, the lead virtually reversed, with Goldwater crushing the New Yorker nationwide. The single issue that had brought Rockefeller from president-in-waiting to third-tier-candidate was his divorce and subsequent remarriage. As Stewart Alsop noted, “Rockefeller could have remarried or run for president, but he could not do both.”⁵⁸ “If there’s something about Nelson Rockefeller that doesn’t quite come off, despite the squads of PR men who cluster around him,” commented the *National Review* in early 1963, “maybe the reason is he’s just unlucky.”⁵⁹ By June 1963, the

⁵⁴ Warren Weaver, Jr. “Cotton Will Direct Goldwater’s Drive in New Hampshire,” *New York Times*, September 22, 1963, 1.

⁵⁵ Goldwater to Cotton, September 20, 1963, Folder 22, Box 4, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

⁵⁶ Michael Kramer and Sam Roberts, *I Never Wanted To Be Vice-President of Anything!* (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1976), 270.

⁵⁷ Peter Maas, “Nelson Rockefeller: Does He Have a Future with the GOP?,” *Saturday Evening Post*, September 15, 1962, 72.

⁵⁸ Edwards, 176.

⁵⁹ “The Rocky, Rocky Road,” *National Review*, February 26, 1963, 143.

Saturday Evening Post declared that Rockefeller's new wife "may cost him the presidency in 1964."⁶⁰

Desperate to remain relevant, Rockefeller began an all-out assault on the party's new front-runner and the philosophical differences between the two men. Referred to as the "Bastille Day Declaration," Rockefeller delivered a savage manifesto against the right wing of his party on July 14, 1963. In an abrupt shift from his friendly correspondence in 1960, Rockefeller denounced the Goldwater brand of Republicanism, stating it "would not only defeat the Republican Party in 1964 but would destroy it altogether." Moreover, the governor added that the alternative to "the unprincipled opportunism" of the Democratic Party "will never be found in a party of extremism, a party of sectionalism, a party of racism, a party that disclaims responsibility for most of the population before it even starts its campaign for their support."⁶¹ While Rockefeller never mentioned Goldwater by name, the desired target was clear. More than any other single event, the Rockefeller speech was the definitive moment that convinced Goldwater to enter the race.⁶²

The move that was meant to reinvigorate Rockefeller's candidacy failed tremendously, with philosophical allies such as Richard Nixon and Dwight Eisenhower shying away from him because of the speech. By the fall of 1963, it was becoming increasingly difficult to see how Rockefeller could manage to capture the nomination. "The first primary, in New Hampshire, next March," wrote Stewart

⁶⁰ Joe David Brown, "The Governor's Happy Lady," *Saturday Evening Post*, June 22, 1963, 15.

⁶¹ Jack Bell (AP), "Rockefeller Challenges Goldwater: Offers All-Out Liberal vs. Conservative Battle," *Indiana Evening Gazette*, July 15, 1963, 2.

⁶² Edwards, 177.

Alsop, “is the hurdle which Rockefeller at all costs must overleap.”⁶³ But with the moderate Republican Norris Cotton, someone who should have so easily been classified as a Rockefeller ally, squarely for Goldwater, the possibility of an upset simply seemed out of reach.

As much as Rockefeller’s missteps were aiding Goldwater though, the senator’s own mistakes were providing easy fodder to his political nemesis. Accustomed to the Arizona press, where his blunt rhetoric was appreciated as honesty, Goldwater was unprepared for the increasing scrutiny of the national media. During his first swing through New Hampshire, Goldwater was already being pummeled for remarks he had made. Months earlier, the senator had suggested that the entire East Coast should be “cut off and set adrift” because political views differed from those of the Midwest, a comment more than offensive to the New Hampshire voters he was now courting.⁶⁴ Even more damaging in the long run, as he opened his drive in Concord on January 7, he told reporters he “would favor giving Gen. Lyman L. Lemnitzer, Supreme Allied Commander in Europe, authority to fire tactical atomic weapons without referral to the White House.”⁶⁵ With a campaign staff better equipped to deal with the national press, Goldwater may have been better able to clarify his positions, potentially avoiding the dangerous caricature of a nuclear war monger. In what would become a months-long debate over Goldwater’s *true* feelings regarding nuclear war, the senator did himself no favors. Only two weeks later, Goldwater told a New Hampshire crowd that eventually the United States would have to unleash another armed attack against Cuba, prompting the *New York*

⁶³ Stewart Alsop, “Is Nelson Rockefeller Dead?,” *Saturday Evening Post*, October 12, 1963, 18.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵ John H. Fenton, “Goldwater Opens His Primary Drive,” *New York Times*, January 8, 1964, 1.

Times to ask: “Can the Republican party afford to continue to unleash Barry Goldwater?”⁶⁶ Although it was later disclosed that what Goldwater had suggested was also considered under both the Eisenhower and Kennedy administrations, the fact hardly mattered. Goldwater was forever caricatured as a madman hell-bent on mutually assured destruction.⁶⁷

His missteps were not limited to nuclear weapons either. On January 22, Goldwater denounced United States membership in the United Nations because of the body’s recognition of Communist China, threatened to cut diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union, and continued to warn voters of America’s internal threat of “Fascism on the Left.”⁶⁸ Days later, the senator was walking back his comments, telling a group in Hillsboro that he did not advocate withdrawal from the United Nations, but “we ought to do something to make the U.N. better.” The senator was also put on the defensive for his criticism of the Social Security system, which he now believed should be restructured and made voluntary, a shift from his position during the 1952 Senate campaign. Explaining that he was not opposed to the program, Goldwater told voters that the government “will have to take a long look at Social Security.”⁶⁹ The message never truly resonated due to the immense popularity of the program and Goldwater would be continually defending those poorly chosen remarks throughout the rest of the campaign.

⁶⁶ “Barry Goldwater Unleashed,” *New York Times*, January 23, 1964, 30.

⁶⁷ Edwards, 208; Perlstein, 338.

⁶⁸ “Goldwater Would Threaten a Break With the Soviet,” *New York Times*, January 6, 1964, 17; Associated Press, “Seat for China in U.N. Hit By Goldwater,” *Portsmouth Herald*, January 22, 1964, 1.

⁶⁹ Jay Gallagher, “Undecided Voters’ Expected to Surprise Goldwater and Rockefeller,” *Portsmouth Herald*, January 30, 1964, 18; Shadegg, 95.

By the end of January, after less than a month of campaigning, Goldwater saw his wide lead quickly fade. “I don’t think the outcome can possibly be convincing, as of now,” the candidate told reporters in Washington, referring to the likelihood of a primary victory.⁷⁰ The spiral downward was most readily due to Goldwater’s own loose style, but also to the amateurish operation ran haphazardly by Kitchel and Burch. In comparison, Rockefeller’s operation was well financed, relentlessly efficient and “highly professional.”⁷¹ While Senator Cotton had refused to head Rockefeller’s delegate drive, another well-respected New Hampshire politician, former Governor Hugh Gregg, had agreed.⁷² The New York millionaire was funneling nearly \$200,000 through donations from his mother and brothers, and was running television ads on nearby Massachusetts stations in order to keep within the New Hampshire expenditure limits.⁷³ Easily portraying Goldwater as an out-of-touch extremist, Rockefeller cast himself as the safe alternative, well within the Republican mainstream. “How can there be security when he wants to take the United States out of the United Nations,” Rockefeller asked a Concord crowd of his opponent, “How can there be sanity when he wants to give area commanders the authority to make decisions on the use of nuclear weapons?”⁷⁴ The governor continued to use Goldwater’s unfortunate remarks on Social Security throughout the campaign, charging that a voluntary system would result in bankruptcy “and be a personal

⁷⁰ Charles Mohr, “Goldwater Fears Unclear Primary,” *New York Times*, January 29, 1964, 16.

⁷¹ Goldwater Special Report Summary, February 18, 1964, Folder 7, Box 141, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

⁷² Mohr, “Goldwater Fears Unclear Primary,” *New York Times*

⁷³ Campaign Summary on Financial Reports, March 4, 1964, Folder 7, Box 141, Goldwater Papers (ASU); Goldwater Special Report Summary, February 10, 1964, Folder 7, Box 141, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

⁷⁴ “Toward the Day of Reckoning,” *Time*, January 10, 1964, 22.

disaster to millions of senior citizens and their families.” “I would preserve and protect social security,” Rockefeller stated in Keene, “because I understand it and support it.”⁷⁵

In response, the Goldwater camp remained paralyzed. Months earlier, Peter F. O’Donnell, the former Texas Republican Party chairman and an associate of Clif White, had warned Kitchel and Burch not to settle for the defensive. “Damage control,” O’Donnell cautioned, “pitted Goldwater’s image, and inhibited the mobilization of supporters and funds.”⁷⁶ Upon visiting New Hampshire, O’Donnell advised Kitchel that there were serious flaws in the organization that could lead to disaster, including the campaign’s political messaging and its underutilization of the national grassroots movement. “We stand a great chance of being clobbered,” O’Donnell wrote in December 1963.⁷⁷ But Kitchel, and especially Goldwater, did not want to hear it. O’Donnell was an outsider. Despite his strenuous efforts as chairman of the Draft Goldwater Committee, the Arizona Mafia would not trust him. The tremendous groundwork that White’s committee had spent years developing had been completely ignored by Kitchel and his staff and the ramifications were being felt. Had Shadegg, White or O’Donnell been in charge of the campaign, it is likely that a different strategy would have been chosen in order to better highlight the senator’s positions. By February 10, the campaign summary noted that local correspondents predicted that Goldwater could still “come out ahead but with no clearcut victory.”⁷⁸

⁷⁵ Associated Press, “Rocky Again Hits Out on Social Security,” *Portsmouth Herald*, February 28, 1964, 1.

⁷⁶ Goldberg, 177-8.

⁷⁷ Edwards, 205.

⁷⁸ Goldwater Special Report Summary, February 10, 1964, Folder 7, Box 141, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

As the campaign stretched into February, Goldwater's chances of victory continued to rapidly fade. In the February 18 summary report, the campaign staff wrote, "Rocky getting good crowds, takes more advantage of them than does BG." The *Portsmouth Herald* noted that Goldwater's February 20 crowd was less than half the size of Rockefeller's a few days earlier.⁷⁹ In addition, Henry Cabot Lodge, the U.S. ambassador to South Vietnam, had also become the subject of a devoted following as a write-in candidate. Although he remained in Saigon, miles away from active participation or interest, New Hampshire election laws stipulated that a candidate could be put forward as a write-in by anyone. There's "lots of Lodge money," the Goldwater campaign reported, "In his campaign literature, he now claims the lead."⁸⁰ Still, Goldwater and his team were hopeful.

The senator was working relentlessly, making nearly a dozen campaign stops a day. But he still had not fully recovered from his December foot surgery and he remained irritated by the nasty campaign Rockefeller was waging.⁸¹ The combination made the senator stressed, agitated and bitter. While the *New York Times* argued in early February that Goldwater was still the favorite to win the primary, an *Associated Press* poll showed that he was losing ground. Supported by 22 New Hampshire committeemen in an October survey, Goldwater fell to 14 by February. "Mr. Goldwater," the *New York Times* wrote, "despite recent hard campaigning, has not

⁷⁹ "Goldwater Directs Heavy Fire At Johnson's Administration," *Portsmouth Herald*, February 21, 1964, 1.

⁸⁰ Goldwater Special Report Summary, February 18, 1964, Folder 7, Box 141, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

⁸¹ Theodore White, *The Making of the President 1964* (New York: Atheneum Publishers, 1965), 307.

improved his position.”⁸² Increasingly frustrated, and taking Rockefeller’s bait, Goldwater began lashing out at his opponent, appearing mean and angry. He stated that Rockefeller was in the pocket of union bosses like Jimmy Hoffa. Rehashing his long-held anti-labor sentiments, Goldwater argued that labor leaders were the reason for his slide in the polls. The charge drew an angry response from William Loeb, publisher of the *Manchester Union-Leader* and a devoted Goldwater supporter. In a February 20 editorial, Loeb chastised Goldwater on the meaning of conservatism:

Conservatism does not consist, Sen. Goldwater, of fighting with labor unions or blaming the confusion about your views...on the head of the Teamster’s Union...The trouble is, however, you have not made [your views] clear and have thus laid yourself open to attack. Don’t blame labor unions for this. Blame yourself and your public relations staff.⁸³

It seemed that Goldwater was actually making more enemies than supporters as he thumped through New Hampshire. After Loeb’s editorial, and a rumor that Senator Cotton had threatened to resign, Goldwater’s advisors wrote, “‘Family trouble’ hurting Goldwater campaign...victory in NH will be ‘in spite’ of his friends.”⁸⁴ More importantly, he was further alienating an already distant press corps. In a campaign summary, the staff wrote that Del Marbrook, a new reporter from the *Concord Monitor*, had “‘tried hard to get along with Goldwater but was badly treated.”⁸⁵

Senator Cotton had urged his colleague that in order to win he needed to employ a “Kefauver strategy,” a reference to Democrat Estes Kefauver’s upset

⁸² “Goldwater Retains Lead in Poll of New Hampshire Republicans,” *New York Times*, February 8, 1964, 24.

⁸³ Editorial, *Manchester Union-Leader*, February 20, 1964, Folder 7, Box 141, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

⁸⁴ Goldwater Special Report Summary, February 20, 1964, Folder 7, Box 141, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

⁸⁵ Goldwater Special Report Summary, February 18, 1964.” Folder 7, Box 141, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

victory over Harry Truman in the 1952 New Hampshire primary. The formula was straightforward: “Try to shake hands with as many of the expected one hundred thousand Republican voters as possible between January 7 and March 10.” But while Goldwater had once thrived on the personal touches of campaigning, he now found them unbecoming. During some of the tours arranged by his staff, Goldwater “would plow through, eyes straight ahead, shaking no hands, and giving no greetings.” On February 19 he blurted out to a group of supporters, “I’m not one of these baby-kissing, handshaking, blintz-eating candidates.”⁸⁶ In a state like New Hampshire, where retail politicking was glorified, observers were horror-struck. Meanwhile, Rockefeller was moving “full steam ahead” with the candidate planning a full-on assault between March 1 and the March 10 primary.⁸⁷

The campaign seemed almost hopeless by February 22, when the campaign staff noted, “All reports seem to indicate that BG has been sliding. Rocky gaining ground.”⁸⁸ Further, with only a little more than a week before the primary, Concord newspapers were predicting that Rockefeller would edge out Goldwater by 2,000 votes.⁸⁹ Despite the discouraging news, Goldwater remained optimistic. Instead of conceding defeat, he began to raise expectations. On March 6, Goldwater told a large crowd in Concord that he expected to receive 40 percent in the election, an increase from what he had predicted a week earlier. “He said that the estimates of his vote made by him and his advisers were going up ‘almost hourly,’” reported the *New York*

⁸⁶ Novak, 306-7, 316; Edwards, 210.

⁸⁷ Goldwater Special Report Summary, February 18, 1964, Folder 7, Box 141, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

⁸⁸ Goldwater Special Report Summary, February 22, 1964, Folder 7, Box 141, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

⁸⁹ Goldwater Special Report Summary, March 1, 1964, Folder 7, Box 141, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

Times. Despite the pitfalls though, it appeared that Goldwater had finally figured out his campaigning strengths, focusing on emotional themes rather than more specific policy points. Momentum was beginning to build. At a Deerfield town hall an elderly woman grabbed Goldwater's hand and told him, "You're the only man I've wanted to vote for the Presidency since Teddy Roosevelt." "He showed himself [to be] an able sidewalk campaigner," commented columnist Charles Mohr after his stump speech.⁹⁰ For the first time, the candidate was also staying on message, delivering remarks in Durham on his themes of good government and solid principles. "Public office," Goldwater declared, "is an office bestowed upon those who share your values and in whom you can believe. No grab-bag of political promises is as important as this basic agreement."⁹¹

The burst of energy was still too little, too late. While he had been cordial and friendly on March 6, earlier that week his tone was still described as "almost harsh." Spending the majority of his speech in Berlin, New Hampshire, criticizing Nelson Rockefeller, Goldwater dismissed his opponent as "me-too echoes of the Democrats," as he bitterly pledged to take on the governor in the New York primary.⁹² Meanwhile, Rockefeller was spending thousands of dollars pummeling the airwaves with a myriad of advertisements. Under the keen command of P.R. firm Fuller, Smith & Ross, the Rockefeller campaign had purchased airtime from major television companies in Boston, Poland Springs, Maine and Burlington, Vermont. "Rocky looms an even choice to beat Barry," the campaign advisers wrote in a memo on

⁹⁰ Charles Mohr, "Goldwater Expected 40% of New Hampshire Vote," *New York Times*, March 7, 1964, 9.

⁹¹ "Sen. Goldwater Says His Candidacy Offers 'A New and Clean Political Slate'" [News Release], Folder 6, Box 141, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

⁹² Charles Mohr, "Goldwater Gives a Dare to Voters," *New York Times*, March 3, 1964, 25.

March 7. Even more revealing, for the first time Ambassador Lodge was viewed as a growing threat. “The amateurs running the Lodge write-in may surprise the nation,” the memo read, “They have sharp organization in some spots, and the Lodge name is hot.”⁹³ The potential danger of Lodge’s candidacy was correct, but recognized too late. The inability of Goldwater’s staff to judge Lodge as a credible threat earlier was a fatal mistake and made the remaining primary process much more difficult.

As the primary came to a close, the individual campaigns flew into full gear. Goldwater, in a “confident declaration,” told supporters, “I have it made.” Despite the growing confirmation that he would not win the primary, he continued to increase expectations of his performance, predicting he would take up to 10 of the state’s 14 delegates. While 35 percent would be a “decisive victory,” Goldwater was still confident he would receive 40 percent, and his advisers were reportedly even more optimistic.⁹⁴ As for Lodge, Goldwater stated he would not be surprised if the ambassador came in second.⁹⁵ In his final weekend of campaigning, Rockefeller issued no attacks against Senator Goldwater or President Johnson as he focused his energy in urban areas, such as Nashua, Amherst and Manchester. The small towns and rural areas of the north were written off as Goldwater territory.⁹⁶ Predicting their candidate would receive 27,000 votes, the draft-Lodge officials compared Lodge’s position to Dwight Eisenhower’s upset victory over Robert Taft in 1952.⁹⁷

⁹³ Concord Memo, March 7, 1964, Folder 7, Box 141, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

⁹⁴ Walter R. Mears (AP), “Rockefeller, Goldwater Wind Up New Hampshire Primary Battles,” *Indiana Evening Gazette*, March 7, 1964, 8.

⁹⁵ “‘I Have It Made,’ Goldwater Says,” *Associated Press*, March 7, 1964.

⁹⁶ Robert T. Gray, “Rockefeller Speeds Up Campaign,” *Associated Press*, March 7, 1964.

⁹⁷ “Supporters Say Lodge A Candidate,” *UPI*, March 7, 1964.

As voters headed to the polls on March 10, the day of the primary, Goldwater received a morning telegram from his children: “Believe in God and your country we believe in you.”⁹⁸ The senator came in a distant second, capturing only 21,775 votes. Although he had managed to beat Rockefeller by less than 2,000 votes, Ambassador Lodge, without ever setting foot in the state, won with an overwhelming 33,000 votes, surpassing even his supporters’ best predictions.⁹⁹ While the *Associated Press*’s Jack Bell had predicted “some spectacular fireworks,” the Lodge victory surpassed any observer’s expectations.¹⁰⁰

Stunned by the results, all Goldwater could say was that he had “goofed up somewhere.”¹⁰¹ Still, the signs of an energetic Lodge insurgency had been clearly present. A well-respected member of the party establishment from neighboring Massachusetts, Henry Cabot Lodge should never have been underestimated. If there was anyone who competed with Rockefeller to be Goldwater’s most dreaded enemy, it was surely Lodge. An elitist, Ivy Leaguer from the northeast, the former senator represented everything Goldwater detested about the Republican Party. A famous poem, which originated at a Holy Cross Alumni Dinner in 1910, described Lodge’s pedigree and outlook: “And this is good old Boston / The home of the bean and the cod / Where the Lodges speak only to Cabots / And the Cabots speak only to God.”¹⁰² Moreover, Goldwater despised Lodge for his lackluster campaigning as the vice

⁹⁸ Goldwaters to Goldwater, Western Union Telegram, March 10, 1964, Folder 13, Box 7, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

⁹⁹ New Hampshire Results of Primary, Folder 7, Box 141, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

¹⁰⁰ Jack Bell (AP), “New Hampshire Primary Voting Could Surprise,” *Wisconsin State Journal*, March 8, 1964, 6.

¹⁰¹ Charles Mohr, “Goofed In Race, Goldwater Says,” *New York Times*, March 11, 1964, 18.

¹⁰² J. William Middendorf, *A Glorious Disaster: Barry Goldwater’s Presidential Campaign and the Origins of the Conservative Movement* (New York: Basic Books, 2006), xii.

presidential nominee in 1960 (one of the reasons Goldwater underestimated him) and for crossing party lines to accept Kennedy's ambassadorial nomination. "We are not going to beat the Democrats with a man who will campaign only once a day," Goldwater quipped, referring to Lodge's 1960 schedule.¹⁰³ While Goldwater had considered dropping his campaign after New Hampshire, in some ways the result must have energized him. He had never lost an election before and now he was ready to work. New Hampshire "got his dander up," said Clif White.¹⁰⁴ The Friday after the New Hampshire primary, Goldwater was already in California, where the biggest contest would be held on June 2. California was a bastion of conservative uprising, one of the most energetic centers of the Draft Goldwater movement, and to Barry Goldwater the Golden State primary would be different.

* * *

In the months before that final showdown in California, which would most likely decide the 1964 Republican nominee, Goldwater and his rivals jockeyed for momentum. Despite his defeat in New Hampshire, Goldwater picked up victories in Illinois, Texas, Indiana and Nebraska. Rockefeller won primaries in West Virginia and Oregon. Novak commented:

It was as if the Red Queen in *Through the Looking Glass* had planned the elections of 1964—all should win, all should have a prize. Lodge should have New Hampshire, Rockefeller should have Oregon, Goldwater should have California—and Lyndon Johnson should have the country.¹⁰⁵

On April 9, 1964, Novak and Evans wrote in their national column that a new national Gallup poll showed that Lodge had jumped to 42 percent, up from just 16

¹⁰³ Robert Thompson, "Goldwater to Push Bid in California Primary," *Los Angeles Times*, March 11, 1964, 11.

¹⁰⁴ Goldberg, 187.

¹⁰⁵ T. White, 117.

percent a month earlier. But Novak and Evans cautioned that while Barry Goldwater had been “pronounced dead weeks ago,” after the New Hampshire primary, he “may have been a victim of premature burial.”¹⁰⁶ Licking their wounds, the infant Goldwater staff reassessed their strategy. The team blamed the loss on an unfair media bias and a grueling campaign schedule.¹⁰⁷ California would become the glimmer of hope that showed the true potential of the Goldwater organization. Headed into California, the number of appearances would be scaled back, press access would be limited and the candidate would speak only in the broad generalities that seemed to resonate towards the end of the New Hampshire primary. Moreover, in the West, Goldwater felt more at home. He was confident and eager, and had nearly 50,000 die-hard volunteers at his disposal. Despite the New Hampshire setback, the campaign was steadily raising money, taking in close to \$1 million for the primary campaign.¹⁰⁸ Perhaps most importantly, Kitchel and the Arizona Mafia realized they needed help, and the New Hampshire defeat forced them to recognize the expertise of Clif White.

Dick Kleindheist worked to have White appointed his co-director of field operations, bringing him back from obscurity and placing him in firm control.¹⁰⁹ The Goldwater campaign had been building an organization in California since January. Under the tutelage of Western Management Consultants, a team of professionals based in Phoenix, the campaign identified key strongholds where Goldwater should

¹⁰⁶ Novak, 331-2.

¹⁰⁷ Perlstein, 313, 340.

¹⁰⁸ Edwards 218; McGirr, 125, 136.

¹⁰⁹ Novak, 337; Goldberg, 187.

devote his plentiful resources.¹¹⁰ William Knowland, who had served as a U.S. Senator from California until 1959 and was now publisher of the *Oakland Tribune*, agreed to head the state operations for the campaign. In addition, Assemblyman Joseph Shell, who had challenged Nixon for the gubernatorial nomination in 1962, also joined the state campaign committee.¹¹¹

Knowland and White, along with Lee Edwards who had been brought on as public information director, worked together to devise a new strategy of working to collect delegates at the county and precinct level, rather than following the previous “Kefauver strategy” of reaching individual primary voters. These men understood that it would be the convention delegates that would actually select the Republican nominee in July.¹¹² Dean Burch, who had proven himself to be more capable than expected at Washington headquarters, was also sent to California. Novak credits the efficient California operation to Burch’s ability, noting that his presence brought “a degree of coordination to the campaign for the first time.”¹¹³

While there were certainly many assets to the California Goldwater organization, there was also plenty that needed to be improved. The California Republican Party had been fractured since 1958, when Senator Knowland and Governor Goodwin Knight switched races, with each running for the other’s office. They both went down in disastrous defeat. Further, Richard Nixon’s unsuccessful return to politics through the 1962 gubernatorial race had split the state party, creating

¹¹⁰ Notes on Goldwater Campaign, Western Management Consultants, January 20, 1964, Folder 17, Box 138, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

¹¹¹ Robert Thompson, “Goldwater Picks Aides for California Survey,” *Los Angeles Times*, September 21, 1963, 1.

¹¹² Shadegg, 117-8.

¹¹³ Novak, 409.

deep divisions. The far-right grassroots organizations had steadily grown since then, and by 1963 “the formation of a new Republican organization in California which is distinctly conservative in spirit” was evident. Moreover, there was “not the slightest doubt that the new California organization...[would] strive for the nomination of Sen. Barry Goldwater at the 1964 convention.”¹¹⁴ While this new groundswell of conservatism was powerful, it was also difficult to control.¹¹⁵

As early as January 1964, consultants had warned that Knowland’s conservatism had led the Republicans to defeat in 1958 and “the Goldwater people are making the same mistakes, taking violent sides” on local issues, such as “right-to-work” laws, fair housing and constitutional amendments.¹¹⁶ But the enthusiasm grassroots activists had for Goldwater’s candidacy was nonetheless unprecedented. As Goldwater attempted to qualify for the California primary by collecting the required 13,000 signatures, the organization proved remarkably effective, collecting 86,000 in two days. In contrast, Nelson Rockefeller relied on pay-per-signature professionals and was still struggling to attain the required number a week before the deadline.¹¹⁷

Still, victory was far from assured. “Despite this advantage in manpower quality,” an internal campaign memo announced, “the Goldwater quarterback still seems pressing for a victory...anything can happen.”¹¹⁸ Incumbent Republican Senator Thomas Kuchel had endorsed Rockefeller early in the race, and the New

¹¹⁴ “Republican Conservatism Gains,” *Bakersfield Californian*, May 16, 1963, Folder 17, Box 138, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

¹¹⁵ McGirr, 120, 126.

¹¹⁶ Memo for Week Ending January 26, 1964, p. 2, Folder 17, Box 138, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

¹¹⁷ McGirr, 124.

¹¹⁸ Memo for Week Ending January 26, 1964, p. 1, Folder 7, Box 138, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

Yorker could also count on the support of other California luminaries, including Earl Warren, Eisenhower Labor Secretary James Mitchell and Congressman William S. Mailliard.¹¹⁹ Unlike New Hampshire, write-in campaigns were not allowed under California election law and so this primary would be a one-on-one fistfight between Goldwater and Rockefeller. As the *Associated Press* described it, California would “be a two-man contest between the big losers” of months earlier.¹²⁰

Also in Rockefeller’s favor was the campaign script that had already been written in New Hampshire, as well as the energy within the GOP establishment. Rockefeller campaign hand Stuart Spencer reflected years later that the Rockefeller strategy had always been straightforward: “We had to destroy Barry Goldwater as a member of the human race.”¹²¹ And all the material they needed was already available. Moreover, liberal Republicans across the country were well aware that California might be the last chance to deny Goldwater the nomination. In an April 30 campaign memo, correspondents in California wrote, “There is a definite stop-Goldwater movement afoot here...Rockefeller forces seem to be facing certain defeat, but are hoping to make hay out of the movement.”¹²² With a sizeable and unexpected victory in Oregon less than a month earlier reinvigorating his candidacy, and because it was almost certainly his last shot, Rockefeller was determined to fight hard. And he would wage a particularly nasty campaign. The inevitable bare-knuckled contest would define the intraparty conduct in the general election with

¹¹⁹ List of Rockefeller Supporters, Folder 17, Box 138, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

¹²⁰ “California To Be Two-Man Contest,” *Freeport Journal Standard* (IL), March 11, 1964, 1.

¹²¹ Goldberg, 189 quoting “Campaigning for the Presidency,” PBS Documentary, August 19, 1992.

¹²² California Summary, April 30, 1964, Folder 17, Box 138, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

Goldwater refusing to make peace with the liberal faction, and the liberal faction refusing to actively support Goldwater.

Portraying himself as the *de facto* leader of the Republican mainstream, in the mold of Nixon, Lodge and Scranton, Rockefeller rehashed the same talking points against Goldwater's "extremism." "Which do you want," a new Rockefeller ad read, "A Leader—or a Loner?" It pictured Rockefeller surrounded by his fellow Republican candidates above the slogan: "These men stand together on the party's principles." Pictured off to the side, alone, the slogan below Goldwater read: "This man stands outside."¹²³ Goldwater responded on May 28 that he had "never heard of anything like this in a primary where all the rest gang up on one." And while he cleared Nixon and Scranton of being involved in the Rockefeller campaign, he also declared himself "the only serious candidate" in the race.¹²⁴

The senator remained on message though, dismissing Rockefeller's criticisms by stressing party unity. Goldwater also changed his rhetoric on nuclear weapons, U.S. membership in the United Nations and Social Security. The *New York Times* noted he had "softened the speech and reined the combativeness," appearing "not so militant and belligerent as he used to be."¹²⁵ When Goldwater was told that the governor had referred to him as "out of the mainstream" the senator merely responded, "I don't pay any attention to what Governor Rockefeller says."¹²⁶ When Rockefeller charged that his opponent did not represent "responsible Republicanism," Goldwater simply amended his stances. Without giving specifics, the senator said of

¹²³ Kramer and Roberts, 281.

¹²⁴ "Nixon California Backers 'Will Flow to Me:' Goldwater," *Oakland Tribune*, May 28, 1964, 5.

¹²⁵ Joseph A. Loftus, "Goldwater in '64 Softens His Stand," *New York Times*, April 15, 1964, 17.

¹²⁶ "Republican Rivals Vie for L.A. Votes," *Star News* (Pasadena, CA), April 29, 1964, 3.

Social Security, “I favor a sound Social Security system and I want to see it strengthened.”¹²⁷ The remarks did not contradict his statements in New Hampshire, but merely phrased them more obliquely. It seemed that Barry Goldwater had finally figured out how to run for president.

The budding Goldwater strategy did not seem to make a difference though. A May 26 Harris poll showed Rockefeller with 51 percent to Goldwater’s 41 percent. A Field poll from the same period gave Rockefeller 46 percent to Goldwater’s 33 percent.¹²⁸ Then, suddenly, everything changed. On May 30, Governor Rockefeller and his new wife announced the birth of Nelson Jr., marking possibly the worst timing in American political history.¹²⁹ The lead Rockefeller had commanded for months evaporated overnight and a June 1 poll showed the candidates virtually tied at 42 percent to 40 percent. In an article for the *Washington Post*, pollster Louis Harris wrote, “The vote for Rockefeller remains soft and even mushy” as the infamous tales of his divorce and remarriage rushed back into the minds of voters.¹³⁰

“We’re going to win,” Goldwater told the *Los Angeles Times* the night before the election. With fresh polls showing a closer race than expected, the senator added, “I’ve never been so confident.”¹³¹ By 7:30 pm the California primary was called in Barry Goldwater’s favor in a narrow 51 percent to 48 percent result. With the Golden State’s 86 delegates firmly in the Arizonan’s column, Nelson Rockefeller predicted on June 4 that the nomination would be Goldwater’s on the first ballot.¹³² A Gallup

¹²⁷ “Save Your Social Security,” *Daily Independent* (Corona, CA), June 1, 1964, 5.

¹²⁸ Novak, 402.

¹²⁹ “Nelson Junior arrives weighing 7 lb. 10 oz.,” *Daily Facts* (Redlands, CA), June 1, 1964, 1.

¹³⁰ Louis Harris’s *Washington Post* column quoted by Novak, 408.

¹³¹ Carl Greenberg, “Close Primary Victory Seen By Goldwater,” *Los Angeles Times*, June 2, 1964, 2.

¹³² “Platform Battle On,” *Arizona Republic*, June 4, 1964, 1.

poll released after the election noted that support was quietly coalescing behind Goldwater among Republican delegates, with his victory enhancing his image nationwide.¹³³

California had changed the nature of the Republican Party for generations. Historian Richard Hofstadter would write towards the end of the general election, “When, in all our history, has anyone with ideas so bizarre, so archaic, so self-confounding, so remote from the basic American consensus, ever gone so far?”¹³⁴ But as McGirr noted, California was not representative of the nation as a whole. “True to its leading role in the grassroots conservative movement,” McGirr wrote, “[California] reversed the national trend and sided resoundingly with Goldwater.”¹³⁵ Walter Lippmann agreed. “California is by no means a true sample of the Republican Party,” he wrote in his national column, “Sen. Barry Goldwater’s victory in California is the beginning, not the end, of the drama and ordeal of the Republican Party.”¹³⁶

As he moved tantalizing close to seizing his party’s nomination, Goldwater’s organization had seemed to finally come together. He had managed to espouse the same ideological views that had guided him since his first campaign for the United States Senate in 1952, but neutralize his opponent’s attacks and rein in his own flamboyant oratory. At the same time, his inexperienced managers had matured through turbulent trials on the national stage. But Lippmann was right. This was only

¹³³ George Gallup, “California Enhances Image of Goldwater,” *Los Angeles Times*, June 21, 1964, A.

¹³⁴ Richard Hofstadter, “A Long View: Goldwater In History,” *New York Review of Books*, October 8, 1964, 20.

¹³⁵ McGirr, 142.

¹³⁶ Walter Lippmann, “Goldwater’s California Win Hints GOP’s Ordeal Is Just Beginning,” *Los Angeles Times*, June 7, 1964, F7.

the beginning of the 1964 campaign and while he had seized the nomination, the task of uniting his party behind his candidacy would become Goldwater's greatest challenge.

IV. NO TURNING BACK

Writing to the *Oakland Tribune* in July 1964, only weeks before Barry Goldwater would become the Republican nominee for president, Garrett Odell of Hempstead, New York vehemently defended the Arizonan against his critics. “What Republicans need is a man, not a party,” Odell wrote, “and the man is Mr. Goldwater.”¹ That same month, Charles Christiano of Arizona condemned his state’s senator, writing to the *Tucson Daily Citizen*: “The civil rights issue concerns me more than Barry Goldwater’s ‘principles.’ The ‘rights’ of millions of exploited people outweigh Barry’s ‘principles.’”² The senator’s reluctance to effectively address the issues of civil rights, Social Security and nuclear weapons led to some of his harshest criticisms. His inability to articulate his views made his ideology appear harsh, archaic and outdated. Moreover, Goldwater’s style was so unpolished that it often opened his views to caricature, distorting his true positions. At the same time though, Goldwater’s blunt forwardness won immense loyalty from a devoted following and was among his most admired qualities. “You see that building over there?” one devoted fan said, “If Goldwater told me to jump off it, I wouldn’t even ask why. I’d just go jump.”³ Barry Goldwater had clearly become a divisive national figure with a force that could either rally individuals to passionate support or emotional opposition.

Even before becoming a presidential candidate, Barry Goldwater had attracted an impressive following. Compared to Theodore Roosevelt for his steadfast

¹ Garrett Odell, Letter to the Editor, “Elect the Man,” *Oakland Tribune*, July 3, 1964, 18B.

² Charles Christiano, Letter to the Editor, “A Case of Dignity or of Principle?” *Tucson Daily Citizen*, July 6, 1964, 12.

³ Tom Wicker, “Anatomy of the Goldwater Boom,” *New York Times*, August 11, 1963, 171.

independence and Harry Truman for his confidence despite being the ultimate underdog, Goldwater was seen as a politician with potential.⁴ Tom Wicker wrote that “an air of unreality” hung over the rise of the Arizonan, who Wicker noted was “not a philosopher, an intellectual or a high-powered political manipulator.” Still, professional observers like Wicker remained unconvinced. The Goldwater movement, to Wicker and others like him, seemed merely a coalition of “professional exploiters—fake preachers...fake professors...Southern Kleagles [and] financiers of the far-right.”⁵ David Lawrence wrote that Goldwater’s esteem was simply due to his “evident conviction” against the Democratic administration, adding, “The Arizona senator’s popularity is related to the spontaneous response of many Republican voters who feel he reflects their militancy.”⁶

Often derided as “nuts and kooks,” the adherents of “Goldwaterism” quickly showed that they were far more than just “the little old ladies in tennis shoes.”⁷ Months after his initial assessment of Goldwater’s presidential ambitions, Wicker made minor adjustments to his analysis. Although Goldwater had appeared to be a “minor-league extremist,” he “had a far broader base of support” than Wicker suspected. Still, Wicker believed that this was simply because of “the Senator’s personal attractiveness” or the understanding within the Republican Party that because no candidate could defeat Lyndon Johnson, “this was the year to ‘let the conservatives have it.’”⁸ While Wicker’s speculation regarding the Republican

⁴ Stewart Alsop, “Can Goldwater Win?” *Saturday Evening Post*, August 24, 1964, 13-5.

⁵ Wicker, “Anatomy of the Goldwater Boom.”

⁶ David Lawrence, “Barry’s Popularity,” *Steubenville Herald* (Ohio), January 1, 1964, 6.

⁷ Alsop, “Can Goldwater Win?” *Saturday Evening Post*.

⁸ Tom Wicker, “Goldwater Appeal: Not Only ‘Nuts and Kooks,’” *New York Times*, June 21, 1963, SM9.

establishment was incorrect, others agreed with his assessment of Goldwater's personal appeal. Joseph Loftus had also written that the Right envisioned their leader as "warlike," and that both men and women were attracted to Goldwater because of his "ruggedly handsome good looks." Loftus, though, conceded that the senator's "moral courage" also played a role in his popularity.⁹ Robert E. Arnold attempted to explain the growing fascination with Goldwater to the *Wall Street Journal*. In a Letter to the Editor, Arnold wrote that he found Goldwater's followers "distressing" in their "hopes for a magical reversal of history" that they believed would accompany a Goldwater presidency, touching on the very reason why individuals like Garrett Odell of Hempstead, New York saw him as the country's last hope.¹⁰

As commentators across the country tried to explain the Goldwater phenomenon, these devoted followers excitedly made their way to San Francisco to formally anoint their candidate as the leader of their party. While the entire contest for the Republican nomination had been bitter, ugly and juvenile, those months of grueling campaigning would pale in comparison to the events that would transpire over the course of four days at the Cow Palace.

After the California primary on June 2, Goldwater had virtually sealed the nomination. Despite the loss, the Eastern establishment, which had dominated the nominating conventions for decades, refused to give in. Under the direction of Nelson Rockefeller, the liberal wing of the party was determined to thwart Goldwater's golden moment. Only ten days after he lost the California primary, Rockefeller

⁹ Joseph Loftus, "Goldwater—What Are His Chances Now?" *New York Times*, April 26, 1964, E5.

¹⁰ "Leery of Barry," Letter to the Editor, *Wall Street Journal*, National Newspapers July 9-12, 1964, Folder 8, Box 128, The Personal and Political Papers of Senator Barry M. Goldwater, Arizona Historical Society, Hayden Library, Arizona State University.

warned that “the positions taken by the Arizonan could spell disaster for the Republican party and the country.” Firmly in control as the chairman of New York’s 92-member delegation, Rockefeller declared that he would fight “all the way in San Francisco” to ensure “responsible Republican principles of moderation.” Former Governor Thomas Dewey, the nominee in 1944 and 1948, was actively pushing his protégé to fight to the finish, but New York as a whole was far from united behind Rockefeller. Congressman William Miller of Niagara, chairman of the Republican National Committee, declared that the party was obligated to unite around Goldwater.¹¹ But while Goldwater was assured of securing the Republican nomination, the process would not be pleasant. The actions of liberal Republicans at the convention, and the reactions of their conservative counterparts, would set the tone for the uphill general election campaign against a united and energized Democratic Party. “The immediate problem for Senator Barry Goldwater of Arizona and the Republicans,” wrote the *Washington Star*, “will be reunification of the Republican Party.”¹²

Goldwater was uninterested in leading a united party though. In the days leading up to the opening of the national convention, Goldwater seemed to quit campaigning all together. It was a return to the reluctance he demonstrated during the beginning of the campaign. “National politics has seen nothing quite like this since Franklin D. Roosevelt stayed home in Albany before the 1932 Democratic convention—while James A. Farley scoured the country for delegates,” commented

¹¹ Douglas Dales, “Rockefeller Declares Goldwater Could Bring Disaster,” *New York Times*, June 12, 1964, 1.

¹² Gould Lincoln, “The Goldwater Unity Two-Step,” *Washington Star*, July 6, 1964, A4, National Newspapers July 1-8, 1964, Box 7, Box 128, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

the *Washington Post*. And while the paper referred to the senator as “one of the coolest modern candidates” for his interest in beefed-up ham radios and sports cars, it also noted that the aggressive pace he had adopted during the California primary seemed to be missing.¹³ Obviously, Goldwater should have been actively preparing for the general election. A Gallup poll released on July 1 showed Lyndon B. Johnson outpacing the presumptive Republican nominee by nearly 60 points. Moreover, Goldwater performed worse in the poll than Richard Nixon or Governor William Scranton of Pennsylvania in hypothetical match-ups, although all three were soundly defeated by Johnson.¹⁴

The candidate also had a significant amount of explaining left to do. His policy statements were so ambiguous that the majority of Americans believed the distorted views presented by Rockefeller in the primaries, making the clarification of his policies a struggle.¹⁵ Goldwater made matters worse by jockeying between broad generalities and blunt rhetoric, both of which appeared radical and harsh. In Arizona, Goldwater’s frankness had won accolades as honesty, but on the national stage it gave the impression that Goldwater had not fully developed his positions. In the California primary, his broad generalities had helped save his tattered image, but now he lumped subjects together, such as hashing out one-liners on foreign policy to Midwestern farmers who cared more about federal subsidies.

Congressional Quarterly noted that Goldwater’s “stand on a number of issues have become points of serious controversy,” including his positions on the use of

¹³ James McCartney, “Goldwater Toys as Others Spin,” *Washington Post*, July 4, 1964, A2, National Newspapers July 1-8, 1964, Box 7, Box 128, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

¹⁴ “Barry Places Third in Strength Test,” *Washington Post*, July 1, 1964, National Newspapers July 1-8, 1964, Folder 7, Box 128, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

¹⁵ James Reston, “Goldwater’s Dilemma,” *New York Times*, July 11, 1964, 9.

nuclear weapons, the United Nations, Social Security and civil rights because of a combination of the bluntness that made him appear radical, and the ambiguity that made it hard for onlookers to know whether he actually was or not. The *CQ* “Fact Sheet” continued, “The record shows that Goldwater has never made some of the most controversial proposals attributed to him by opponents, such as abolishing Social Security or doing away with the income tax.”¹⁶ But on July 5, the *New York Times* published a collection of positions Goldwater had taken, commenting:

The senator often speaks of “principles,” and his supporters admire him as a man of rugged adherence to strong views no matter what they may cost him. But when one searches his past statements to apply this general philosophy to particular issues, it is apparent that his concrete proposals have been changing. Goldwater, the serious candidate for the Republican presidential nomination, was quite different from Goldwater, the Arizona senator, and Goldwater the prospective nominee, is more moderate still.¹⁷

While his movement towards the political center would be typical of a presumptive nominee, it was difficult to understand given his reputation for strict principles. The sudden shift was so sloppy that it confused observers who had only known Goldwater as the unchallenged spokesman of right-wing conservatism. For months, his primary opponents had distorted his record so much that it was difficult to decipher where Goldwater actually stood. Moreover, the moderates of his own party continued to distance themselves from him, despite his efforts to soften his ideology. Governor Scranton called Goldwater “impulsive” to explain why the senator was unqualified to

¹⁶ “Goldwater’s Positions Examined on 9 Controversial Issues,” *Congressional Quarterly* 22, July 10, 1964, National Newspapers July 9-12, 1964, Folder 8, Box 128, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

¹⁷ “Goldwater—The Positions He Has Taken,” *New York Times*, July 5, 1964, 10E.

be president, as did Ambassador Lodge upon his return to the United States from Saigon.¹⁸ Clearly, his repeated “clarifications” were not resonating.

The public concurred with the attacks by Goldwater’s political opponents. In a “Letter to the Editor” to the *Wall Street Journal*, Andrew Patterson of Alexandria, Virginia wrote, “As a citizen I am appalled by the lack of knowledge about our Government as displayed by Senator Goldwater and his supporters.” With Goldwater and his supporters cast as “extremists” because of caricatured beliefs, Patterson continued, “It is disgusting that there are leaders in the Republican Party who abstain from acting to stop the Goldwater movement for the sake of maintaining ‘party unity.’”¹⁹ But that was hardly the case. Rockefeller had been responsible for many of the misrepresentations of Goldwater’s ideology, and he was determined to continue to paint a portrait of a troglodyte extremist. As his own prospects doused, Rockefeller quietly pushed Scranton to challenge Goldwater on the floor of the convention, ensuring a fight that would weaken the nominee.

William W. Scranton, described by Novak as a multimillionaire “whose family had been contributing to the Republican Party since the days of Abraham Lincoln,” “was wise enough to keep his mouth shut when committing heresy.”²⁰ Other moderate governors had been discussed as presidential timber along with Rockefeller, including George Romney, Mark Hatfield and Scranton. For months Scranton quietly flirted with the possibility of running for president, observing the actions of Nixon, Lodge and, of course, Rockefeller. But once it became clear that

¹⁸ David Lawrence, “‘Impulsive’ Is Popular Word,” *Courier* (Prescott, AZ), July 6, 1964, 4, Arizona News July 1-15, 1964, Folder 7, Box 127, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

¹⁹ “Nice Guy, But...,” Letter to the Editor, *Wall Street Journal*, National Newspapers July 9-12, 1964, Folder 8, Box 128, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

²⁰ Robert Novak, *Agony of the GOP 1964* (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1965), 95.

none of the three would be desirable to convention delegates, the Eastern establishment, led by Rockefeller, began to gently nudge the soft-spoken Pennsylvanian towards the spotlight. If Goldwater's grappling with the decision to run was reluctance, then Scranton was displaying outright unwillingness. As Goldwater and Rockefeller dueled in New Hampshire and California, Scranton waited. In April, Scranton insisted he would not be a candidate, but still suggested his supporters try to draft him. The non-campaign strategy was to count "on the convention's turning to the Governor after other candidates fail to receive a majority of votes on the early ballots," resulting in a third or fourth ballot compromise.²¹ While Scranton often shied from the national spotlight, "the assassination of President Kennedy transformed him instantly from a very dark horse into a fairly bright prospect" for the nomination.²² Prodded by Rockefeller and newly eager to make his mark on the national scene, Scranton was swooned into the contest.

Internally conflicted, he traveled to Gettysburg in early June to visit his most famous constituent, Dwight D. Eisenhower. Scranton was granted a total of 85 minutes with the former president, leading many to believe that Eisenhower was actively working to stop Goldwater by propping up his fellow Pennsylvanian. And while Eisenhower later denied any desire to influence the convention, he was hardly enthusiastic about Goldwater's likely nomination. In a letter from a year earlier, Eisenhower associate Bryce N. Harlow, who had served as special assistant to Eisenhower, wrote him regarding the Republican front-runner. Harlow noted that

²¹ Joseph A. Loftus, "Scranton Insists He's No Candidate But Open to Draft," *New York Times*, April 10, 1964, 1; Joseph A. Loftus, "Scranton Camp Predicts Victory," *New York Times*, July 12, 1964, 57.

²² James Welsh, "Portrait of a Not-so-Dark Horse: Pennsylvania's Governor Scranton," *New York Times*, January 12, 1964, SM12.

Eisenhower had been a frequent target of Goldwater in several columns he had written for the *Los Angeles Times* in the early 1960s, and the senator continued to hold the former president partly responsible for the Cuban missile crisis and the construction of the Berlin Wall. “On examination of most of this material,” Harlow concluded, “Goldwater’s only consistent refrain respecting your Administration has been that you and he have seemingly agreed on virtually all matters of Republican principle but, Goldwater contends, you were driven off course by ‘liberal advisers.’”²³ Therefore, it was not entirely unrealistic to assume Eisenhower was, in fact, pushing his home state executive to save *his* Republican Party.

Regardless of what Eisenhower actually said in Gettysburg, the meeting surely had a strong effect on Scranton’s mindset. Shortly after his meeting with the former president, Scranton “opened a fighting campaign for convention delegates,” just as Goldwater had seemingly wrapped up the nomination in California. As Scranton opened his campaign in Des Moines, Iowa, Goldwater supporters interrupted his speech with shouts of “We want Barry,” a constant reminder of the odds Scranton truly faced.²⁴

Despite most pundits writing him off, Scranton still believed he could “upset the well-organized team that intends to nominate Sen. Barry Goldwater.” “Why does the Pennsylvanian refuse to play dead?” asked the *Los Angeles Times*. The answer, wrote Don Irwin, was the conviction that “Goldwater’s ‘extremism’ represents a

²³ Among the “liberal advisers” referenced was most likely Harlow himself. Harlow to Eisenhower, July 15, 1963, Folder 6, Box 6, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

²⁴ Joseph A. Loftus, “Scranton Begins Drive in Midwest,” *New York Times*, June 16, 1964, 1.

mortal threat to the Republican Party that is a part of Scranton's inheritance."²⁵ Some Republicans concurred. Mrs. Rolph Stoddard of California wrote Republican National Committee Chairman William Miller urging the convention to select Scranton. "A President of the United States has to be strong; not full of as many varied opinions as Barry Goldwater," she argued.²⁶ "We feel that [Scranton] more nearly represents the various elements of the Party and will attract more votes in November than will Goldwater," added Mrs. Robert M. Burnett of Chicago, Illinois, "Although we respect Barry Goldwater for the courage of his own convictions, we believe that HIS convictions are not those of the majority."²⁷

The eve of the convention Scranton scorched any existing shreds of party unity, convincing Goldwater that the philosophical differences could not be reconciled. In the early evening of July 12, Goldwater received a hand-delivered letter from the Pennsylvania governor. "Will the convention choose the candidate overwhelmingly favored by the Republican voters," the letter read, "or will it choose you?" The remainder of the 1,200-word treatise continued in the same tone:

You have too often casually prescribed nuclear war as a solution to a troubled world. You have too often allowed the radical extremists to use you. You have too often stood for irresponsibility in the serious question of racial holocaust. You have too often read Taft and Eisenhower and Lincoln out of the Republican Party...the Republican Party is fighting for its soul.²⁸

²⁵ Don Irwin, "Extremism Threat to Party Propelled Scranton Into Race," *Los Angeles Times*, July 12, 1964, 3.

²⁶ Mrs. Rolph Stoddard to William E. Miller, July 14, 1964, San Francisco, CA Folder, Box 57, William E. Miller Papers 1951-1964, #2391, Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York.

²⁷ Mrs. Robert M. Burnett to William E. Miller, July 11, 1964, Illinois-Chicago Folder, Box 59, Miller Papers.

²⁸ Scranton to Goldwater, July 12, 1964, Folder 21, Box 20, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

Continually linking Goldwater to extremism, the letter accused the senator of preaching “nuclear irresponsibility” and being “afraid to forthrightly condemn right-wing extremists.” In closing, the letter challenged Goldwater to a debate before the convention, taunting him with the expectation that he would never accept, and daring him to defend his ideology before the American people—as if he had not been doing exactly that for six months on the campaign trail. And while Goldwater was furious upon reading it, he also remarked to Clif White, “This doesn’t sound like Bill.” Curiously, the letter was not signed by the governor, with “William W. Scranton” simply typed out. In fact, Scranton had never even seen the letter. It had been written by an aide, William Keisling (with prompting from Nelson Rockefeller, some suspect), and approved by his campaign manager.²⁹

In response, and before Scranton’s innocence could be proven, the Goldwater campaign hastily released it to the press and the delegates, along with an addendum. Goldwater speechwriter Harry Jaffa, a political scientist from Claremont College, remarked that the letter reminded him of a fiery *New York Tribune* editorial Horace Greeley had penned against Abraham Lincoln one-hundred years earlier. Lincoln had replied, “If there be perceptible in it [the editorial] an impatient and dictatorial tone, I waive it in deference to an old friend, whose heart I have always supposed to be right.” This brief statement was attached to every delegate’s copy and distributed. “This ought to make it 1,000 for you on the first ballot,” White told the senator.³⁰

White was correct; delegates who had never considered voting for Goldwater were so

²⁹ “Newsbook the National Observer: A Report in Depth on Barry Goldwater,” p. 11, Box 67, Miller Papers; Lee Edwards, *Goldwater: The Man Who Made a Revolution* (Washington, DC: Regnery Publishing, 1995), 258.

³⁰ F. Clifton White, *Suite 3505: The Story of the Draft Goldwater Movement* (New Rochelle, NY: Arlington House, 1967), 392.

infuriated by Scranton's poor sportsmanship that they pledged their support. However, the letter also hardened ideological divisions. Goldwater had truly viewed Scranton as a friend and had seriously considered him for the vice presidential nomination, but Scranton's bitter campaign had ended all that. The *Washington Star* described the scene, writing, "The harshness of Gov. William Scranton's last-ditch fight against Senator Barry Goldwater surprised the Senator and upset his strategy for the election campaign against President Johnson."³¹ "Frankly," Goldwater told the *Associated Press*, "after the things he has said about me I don't know how either of us would be comfortable running with the other."³² The hope for party unity had been extinguished, just as Rockefeller hoped, predicted and planned.

With their enemies' desperate frustration reaching new lows, Kitchel, White and their team began to organize. The elaborate network is a testament to what White could have done had he been named campaign manager. In many respects, the Goldwater organization during the convention was the most impressive of the entire campaign, despite the inexperience of its members. Clif White wired his entire staff with a centralized walkie-talkie system, ensuring that tabs were kept on every delegate: where they went, who they spoke to and especially if Goldwater was at risk of losing their vote.³³ Days before the convention opened at the Cow Palace in San Francisco, the *Associated Press* estimated Goldwater would have 710 delegate votes on the first ballot, a comfortable margin for the 655 needed for the nomination. Kitchel told reporters that the campaign was not worried about the threat of Scranton

³¹ Doris Fleeson, "Upsetting Goldwater's Strategy," *Washington Star*, July 14, 1964, National Newspapers July 13-15, 1964, Folder 9, Box 128, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

³² Morton Mintz, "Goldwater Hedges on No. 2 Slot," *Washington Post*, July 7, 1964, 4E, National Newspapers July 1-8, 1964, Folder 7, Box 128, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

³³ F.C. White, 381-5.

or other liberal Republicans, saying his force could not “find any evidence” that Scranton was gaining ground.³⁴ But twelve years earlier, as they well knew, Robert A. Taft had arrived with 603 delegates, one short of the number required for nomination, and lost ten days later on the first ballot.³⁵ The Goldwater team was not about to relive that experience.

Their work paid off. Columnist Max Freedman reminded onlookers that Goldwater was not on the cusp of clinching the nomination “merely by default.” The events leading to this moment proved quite the opposite actually. “It has been essentially a triumph of organization carried out against great odds,” Freedman continued. Compared at the time to John F. Kennedy’s 1960 campaign for its savvy and skill, the Goldwater operation had reached its climax under White’s leadership, and Freedman observed the team clearly understood “the knowledge that a presidential campaign is never a splendid improvisation but is always a matter of supreme organization.”³⁶ “In 1960 Robert F. Kennedy and his coworkers put together a remarkably effective organization for bird-dogging delegates,” wrote the *Phoenix Gazette*, “the Goldwater structure leaves much less to chance.”³⁷

The victory was not only unexpected because of Goldwater’s political positions and style, but because of who he had chosen as his architects. Profiling the campaign structure, *U.S. News and World Report* referred to the effort as a purely grass-roots campaign. There is no doubt that without the collection of devoted

³⁴ Walter R. Mears (AP), “Goldwater’s Forces Claim Cushion of 75,” *Salisbury News* (MD), July 7, 1964, 7C.

³⁵ F.C. White, 377.

³⁶ Max Freedman, “Reasons for Goldwater’s Power,” *Washington Star*, July 11, 1964, A7, National Newspapers July 9-12, 1964, Folder 8, Box 128, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

³⁷ Charles Cleveland, “Goldwater Men in Touch With Every Delegation,” *Phoenix Gazette*, July 9, 1964, Arizona Newspapers July 1-15, 1964, Folder 7, Box 127, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

supporters, the organization could not have succeeded. “Bit by bit, precinct by precinct, the Senator solidified his pre-Convention support,” the profile read, “While others got the headlines, Goldwater got the delegates.”³⁸ It appeared that no one could stop the determination of this rag-tag group of political neophytes. “With skill and unflagging determination, [the organization] was assembled by a blueprint defying the rules of the game of politics,” observed Marquis Childs, “If the organization the Goldwaterites have put together is not in fact a new political party, it is certainly a new kind of Republican Party.”³⁹ “Barry Goldwater’s inner circle contains not a single well-known Republican politician,” wrote the *Washington Post*, “not a solitary old pro or young Turk of the type that have dominated Party planning and strategy for the last 20 years.” Describing White as “Goldwater’s principal political manager and author of strategy,” Burch as an “able Jack-of-all-trades,” and applauding Kitchel for what he accomplished despite his meager past experience, Evans and Novak saw the team’s success as nothing short of remarkable.⁴⁰ Casting the Establishment as the true amateurs for their weak counter, David Lawrence wrote in his national column, “Amateurism lost to professionalism. Inexperience was beaten by experience. Maturity triumphed over immaturity.”⁴¹ It appeared that the peasants had dethroned the kings and crowned themselves. At this point, with the nomination sealed against great odds, the infant organization seemed to have worked.

³⁸ “How Goldwater Got His Strength,” *U.S. News and World Report*, July 13, 1964, U57, National Newspapers July 13-15, 1964, Folder 9, Box 128, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

³⁹ Marquis Childs, “How Goldwater Conquered GOP,” *Washington Post*, July 13, 1964, A16, National Newspapers July 13-15, 1964, Folder 9, Box 128, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

⁴⁰ Rowland Evans and Robert Novak, “Barry’s Boys,” *Washington Post*, July 14, 1964, A15, National Newspapers July 13-15, 1964, Folder 9, Box 128, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

⁴¹ David Lawrence, “Amateurs Lost to Professionals,” *Arizona Newspapers* July 16-17, 1964, Folder 8, Box 127, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

Even more striking was the diverse group of individuals who had formed the grassroots Goldwater movement. “An intellectual with a keen rationalization of its political position finds himself bedded down with kooks” within the Goldwater tent, observed Richard Wilson. The loose coalition of supporters, ranging from party insiders to pedigreed intellectuals to rowdy grassroots activists, provided the backbone that had allowed White and Kitchel to craft a disciplined convention organization.⁴² “They’re well-to-do businessmen, new to politics,” declared the *Washington Post*, “who think moderates equal Democrats.”⁴³ As Phillips-Fein notes, these activists were “not the all-knowing, all-seeing caricatures of conspiracy theory.”⁴⁴ Disgusted with the national political trend, and tired of the “me-tooism” exhibited by the Republican establishment, these normally apolitical Americans had finally taken a stand, and had won. But while the kingmakers had been caught sleeping, due to either “unbelievable naïveté or shocking stupidity on the part of many more who failed dismally to appreciate the shift in political power,” they would not concede quietly.⁴⁵

* * *

As he left the convention, Tom Wicker wrote in his column that Republican delegates must feel much as William Allen White had recalled feeling after the nomination of Warren G. Harding in 1920: “I was torn, as I often am in politics, between the desire

⁴² Richard Wilson, “The Unknown Goldwater Troops,” *Evening Star* (DC), July 15, 1964, A23, National Newspapers July 13-15, 1964, Folder 9, Box 128, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

⁴³ William Chapman, “Tennis Shoes on Barry’s Backers,” *Washington Post*, July 14, 1964, National Newspapers July 13-15, 1964, Folder 9, Box 128, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

⁴⁴ Kim Phillips-Fein, *Invisible Hands: The Making of the Conservative Movement from the New Deal to Reagan* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2009), xii.

⁴⁵ Alan L. Otten, “What Went Wrong?” *Wall Street Journal*, July 10, 1964, 19, National Newspapers July 9-12, 1964, Folder 9, Box 128, Goldwater Papers. (ASU)

to dump into the fiery furnace as a martyr, and the instinct to save my hide and go along on the broad way that leadeth to destruction.”⁴⁶ The 1964 delegates were torn between supporting the champion who had won the nomination, but could not win the general election, and a carbon cutout of rehashed traditionalism that may have a chance. Before the delegates could return home though, they would be embroiled in four days of intense political drama. “Speeches, Speeches, Speeches,” is how the *Associated Press* summed up the days-long event. “Seconding speeches, speeches, speeches, can’t they be prosecuted for unlicensed distribution of tranquilizers?” the news wire joked.⁴⁷ Every Republican luminary, from Margaret Chase Smith to Milton Eisenhower to George Romney, took the microphone to address the delegates.

The eminent Senate Republican Leader Everett Dirksen of Illinois, who had aided Goldwater’s first campaign for the U.S. Senate in 1952, formally nominated his colleague on July 15. Dirksen described Goldwater as “the grandson of a peddler,” and added, “My appraisal or your appraisal of an individual must not be fragmented instead of thinking of the whole man impelled by conviction to do and to say at any given time what he believes must be said or done.” Dirksen compared Goldwater to the famous legends of the Senate—Webster, Calhoun, Clay, La Follette and Taft—for his “moral courage,” declaring, “Courage and conscience are a part of the whole man.” It was a noble attempt to disassociate Goldwater with his unpopular caricature as an extremist.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ Tom Wicker, “The Issues: Stress Will be on Foreign Policy and Civil Rights but Personalities May Hold Key,” *New York Times*, July 19, 1964, E3.

⁴⁷ Saul Pett (AP), “Speeches, Speeches, Speeches! Will Cavalry Never Arrive,” *Northwest Arkansas Times*, July 16, 1964, 1.

⁴⁸ “Honorable Everett McKinley Dirksen, United States Senator from the State of Illinois, Nominating Honorable Barry M. Goldwater for President,” Folder 46, Box 135, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

The Senate Leader was followed by the irascible congresswoman from New York and two-time ambassador Clare Boothe Luce, who had assailed her own husband (the publisher of *Time* and *Life*) for the press' unfair treatment of Goldwater.⁴⁹ Actively considering a primary campaign against New York's liberal Republican senator, Jacob Javits, Luce was representative of the rowdy faction embodied by Goldwater. In her seconding speech, Luce denounced the most recent polling with equal vehemence and announced that Goldwater's nomination was "the moment of truth" for the Republican Party:

What seems most conspicuous to me is that he abundantly possesses the three cardinal virtues we have traditionally expected in a responsible Republican leader: Political loyalty, political courage, and political faith.⁵⁰

The first evening of the convention, Governor Mark Hatfield, "a moderate Republican dove" and popular executive, presented the convention's keynote address.⁵¹ The Oregon orator, although sympathetic to Rockefeller's ideology, handled the issue of extremism diplomatically. With his primary criticism strongly and unquestionably directed at President Johnson and the Democratic administration, Hatfield hoped that whoever was nominated the following day would "have the support of a united Republican Party." "We cannot afford the luxury of the handsitters in the parlor," he reminded his divided peers, "We need laborers in the vineyard come November." But then Hatfield came to the subject that was so obviously on the minds of convention delegates.

⁴⁹ "Mrs. Luce Assails Press on Goldwater," *New York Times*, July 8, 1964, 21.

⁵⁰ The underlined emphasis was part of Ambassador Luce's original text. "Clare Boothe Luce Seconding Speech for Senator Goldwater," Folder 47, Box 135, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

⁵¹ Jeff Mapes, "Mark O. Hatfield, Oregon's first statesman, dies Sunday at 89," *Oregonian*, August 7, 2011.

“There are bigots in this nation who spew forth their venom of hate,” he cautioned, “They parade under hundreds of labels, including the Communist party, the Ku Klux Klan and the John Birch Society. They must be overcome.”⁵² Hatfield had not challenged the conservatives in his party, he had not denounced Goldwater, nor had he condemned the senator’s political philosophy. But he still sparked a contentious and divisive dialogue that would dominate the convention hall for the remainder of the week, indicative of the tension that hung over the proceedings. While Barry Goldwater had sent Hatfield a telegram that read, “Magnificent is the word for it. A great keynote speech,” other conservatives were less happy with the governor’s performance. Hatfield’s office was pummeled with “abusive mail and telegrams” for much of the week afterwards.⁵³ “Gov. Hatfield’s linking of the John Birch Society with the Communists and the Ku Klux Klan, both declared subversive organizations is preposterous,” wrote Joseph Romer of Colma, California to William Miller, “I’m sickened by this obvious slander before millions of viewers.”⁵⁴ E.J. Anderson of Chicago, Illinois wrote, “Will someone remind Gov. Mark Hatfield keynote speaker, that in his summary of bigots in this nation he overlooked the most dastardly of them all: The ‘Three Musketeers of Smear,’ Lodge, Scranton and Rockefeller.”⁵⁵ So distraught were conservative observers that they treated Hatfield’s speech as a funeral. “Our deepest condolences and sympathy over the very unfortunate choice of the party for the convention keynote speaker,” telegraphed

⁵² “Transcript of the Keynote Address by Gov. Hatfield at G.O.P. Convention,” *New York Times*, July 14, 1964, 20.

⁵³ “Kickbacks on the Keynote Address: Hatfield’s Speech on Extremism Brings in Some Abusive Letters,” *Los Angeles Times*, July 17, 1964, 3.

⁵⁴ Joseph Romer to William E. Miller, July 13, 1964, California A-D Folder, Box 57, Miller Papers.

⁵⁵ E.J. Anderson to William E. Miller, July 14, 1964, Illinois-Chicago Folder, Box 59, Miller Papers.

Ray Wulfe of the Collin County (Texas) Executive Committee, “it is regrettable that Governor Hatfield displayed to the nation such obvious characteristics of the ritualistic and uninformed left wing extremist...better judgment next time.”⁵⁶ There were strong contradictions even among those supportive of the nominee. While enthusiasts like Dirksen and Luce spoke in favor of the nominee-to-be and Hatfield attempted to unite a splintering party, none could cure the deep divides that persisted.

Moreover, the most famous of the early speeches overshadowed them all, contributing to the palpable split. Nelson Rockefeller took the stage on July 14 to deliver his liberal swan song, proposing an amendment denouncing “extremism.” Bitter in defeat, the New York governor made one final effort, whether to save his party from what he perceived as ideological ruin or to ensure its total destruction. Rockefeller told a booing crowd, “These extremists feed on fear, hate and terror. They have no program for America—no program for the Republican Party,” clearly referring to the majority of delegates he addressed. Handing the press and the Democrats the lines that would be repeated throughout the fall campaign, Rockefeller caricatured Goldwater conservatism: “Whether Communist, Ku Klux Klan or Birchers. There is no place in this Republican Party for those who would infiltrate its ranks, distort its aims and convert it into a cloak of apparent respectability for a dangerous extremism.”⁵⁷ With extremism now fully and completely synonymous with conservatism, and the rowdy response seemingly proving his case, Rockefeller vowed

⁵⁶ Ray Wulfe to William E. Miller, July 14, 1964, Box 56, Miller Papers.

⁵⁷ “Press Release: Text of Remarks by Governor Nelson A. Rockefeller to the Republican National Convention on Resolutions on the Subject of Extremism,” July 14, 1964, The Rockefeller Archive Center, <http://www.rockarch.org/inownwords/>

to continue to fight against it, because, he said, “It has no place in the party. It has no place in America.”⁵⁸

The ordeal encapsulated the entire conduct of the campaign from the earliest primary contests. The first concern of many of Goldwater’s handlers was not Rockefeller, but the identities of those who were berating him. Clif White immediately dispatched subordinates to stop the booing, but the staff quickly found that the hecklers were not Goldwaterites. They were strangers in the spectator galleries, not pledged delegates, and had not been given tickets by Goldwater’s campaign. While the Goldwater staffers begged them to stop, they refused. “In defying our orders,” White wrote, “they were obviously carrying out someone else’s.”⁵⁹ Whether the hecklers were hired hands of Rockefeller himself, or out-of-control zealots from the John Birch Society or Young Americans for Freedom, has never been discovered. Regardless, as historian Lee Edwards notes, “Rockefeller’s charade had little impact on the delegates, but it provided an indelible impression for TV viewers of conservatives as raving, ranting radicals and gave Democrats another part of their script for the anti-Goldwater campaign in the fall.”⁶⁰ “Anyone in charge of order,” telegraphed an anonymous Republican as the convention organization collapsed over the next few days, “Can’t you quiet that horn. Horns belong in circuses.”⁶¹

As the drama raged across town, the flaws in Goldwater’s personal approach might also have undermined unity. He took little interest in the showmanship of the

⁵⁸ “Statement of Rockefeller on ‘Extremism,’” *Los Angeles Times*, July 18, 1964, 13.

⁵⁹ F.C. White, 398.

⁶⁰ Edwards, 262.

⁶¹ Anonymous Telegram to William E. Miller, July 16, 1964, Box 56, Miller Papers.

convention and spent much of his time in his hotel suite. Removed and isolated from all of it, Goldwater cured his restlessness by tinkering with portable shortwave radios. Press secretary Edward K. Nellor described Goldwater as “slightly bored” and the senator frequently canceled appointments, preferring to take photographs of the San Francisco skyline instead.⁶² It was behavior characteristic of the reluctance that Goldwater had demonstrated throughout the campaign. It had followed him through every step of the process: in the years where he grappled with the decision, when he considered dropping his campaign after his New Hampshire defeat, and as he dealt with the magnitude of receiving his party’s nomination.

On the evening of July 15, after all the speechmaking, the delegates began the intense work of actually voting for the nominee. It was a process that lasted a little more than six minutes. Goldwater received 883 votes on the first ballot, twice as many as the other candidates combined. It was an anticlimactic end to what had been a bitter, long race. The senator, who watched the votes come in from his suite with his brother and Denison Kitchen, called White and his staff to say thank you. As he finished, Kitchel interrupted him. Rockefeller was on the other line. “Hell, I don’t want to talk to that son-of-a-bitch,” Goldwater scoffed.⁶³ With Goldwater’s nomination secured, Governor Scranton requested that the convention make it unanimous, delivering a gracious speech for party harmony. Goldwater quickly selected Congressman William Miller as his running mate, without consulting anyone outside of his inner circle, and the night ended.⁶⁴

⁶² “Goldwater Denounces Johnson as ‘Biggest Faker in U.S.’ on Issue of Civil Rights: Says President Changed Stand,” *New York Times*, July 16, 1964, 17.

⁶³ Edwards, 266.

⁶⁴ F.C. White, 405.

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The morning of Barry Goldwater's acceptance speech, the *Arizona Republic* ran a Biblical excerpt from Romans 12:21 under the paper's header: "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."⁶⁵ It was an omen of what the Arizonan had planned for that evening. Finally engaged, Goldwater devoted more attention and care to his acceptance speech for the Republican nomination than to any speech of his political career. In consultation with speechwriters Karl Hess, Bill Baroody and Harry Jaffa, Goldwater hoped to clearly articulate his conservative philosophy to a wider audience than he had ever addressed.

Preparations for the speech began on July 11, only days before the convention opened, but the events of July 12 changed the close-knit staff's thinking. Instead of the traditional theme of party unity, the timing of Scranton's letter denouncing Goldwater convinced the senator and his advisors that this speech needed to be a declaration of a conservative takeover. It was a theme Hess had been working on throughout the campaign. Before the California primary, he had scribbled notes on his pad that would be reminiscent of the acceptance speech language: "Where is the Republican mainstream? Not with the spoilers—the rule or ruiners. They [are] a tiny fraction."⁶⁶ Goldwater later reflected that it appeared "politically illogical and personally contradictory" to "offer olive branches" to the Rockefeller faction of the

⁶⁵ *Arizona Republic*, July 16, 1964, 6, Arizona Newspapers July 16-17, 1964, Folder 8, Box 127, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

⁶⁶ The underlined emphasis was part of Hess's original text. Hess Notes on Republican Mainstream, Folder 12, Box 134, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

party. Rather, he preferred the greatest speech of his career to reflect the “historic break” as conservatives charted “a new course in GOP national politics.”⁶⁷

In the final working draft, Baroody noted, “The convention speeches thus far get off the ground like a fuseless rocket—we must have them jumping in the first page.” Everyone agreed that the acceptance speech needed to be laced with intense passion and emotion. In the final draft, Baroody scrawled across the top, “More punch at beginning.” Despite that call for emotion, the staff was concerned about the intensity of a particular line and debated its potential impact on the convention: “I believe, however, that we must look beyond the defense of freedom today to its extension tomorrow. I believe that the Communism which boasts it will bury us will instead be buried by us.” Scribbled beside the paragraph were the words, “Too strong?” Hardly a controversial statement, the amateur team remained too preoccupied with lines like this to recognize the true shortcomings of the speech. The infamous line of the speech, “Extremism in defense of liberty is no vice. Moderation in the pursuit of justice is no virtue,” was left untouched in the final revision. Baroody ended his note with an almost ironic phrase, “*Pax vobiscum*,” the Latin for “peace with you.”⁶⁸ The fact that none of the speechwriters recognized that the word “extremism” had come to have a special meaning in the campaign is almost unbelievable.

While the speechwriters ignored the buzzword “extremism,” they concluded that the speech as a whole “could be a bit more ‘gutsy.’”⁶⁹ Their desire for the speech

⁶⁷ Barry M. Goldwater with Jack Casserly, *Goldwater* (New York: Doubleday, 1988), 186-7.

⁶⁸ The underlined emphasis was part of the original text. Final Notes on Final Draft of Goldwater Acceptance Speech, Folder 48, Box 135, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

to be more “gusty” might have been one reason for overlooking “extremism.” Another was that, articulated in the proper context, “extremism” could be fully explained, potentially dispelling the issue for the remainder of the campaign. Lee Edwards contends that Harry Jaffa, who penned the infamous phrase, had a clear rationale for doing so. Thomas Paine had written in 1791, “Moderation in temper is always virtue; but moderation in principle is always vice” and Martin Luther King, Jr. had written only one year earlier, “Nonviolent efforts as those of an extremist... Was not Jesus an extremist for love?... Was not Paul an extremist for the Christian Gospel?... So the question is not whether we will be extremists, but what kind of extremists we will be.”⁷⁰ Historian Robert Alan Goldberg believes that Jaffa was inspired by Aristotle’s work, but adds that the statement “lacked either explanation or example.”⁷¹ Goldwater wrote that Jaffa had told him that similar words were first used by Cicero in defense of Catalina in the Roman Republic: “I must remind you—Lords, Senators—that extreme patriotism in defense of freedom is no crime, and let me respectfully remind you that pusillanimity in the pursuit of justice is no virtue in a Roman.”⁷²

While this understanding of the term “extremism” is reasonable, the speechwriters never provided that context, therefore forcing listeners to define the word using the context readily provided by Rockefeller and his associates. Shadegg later claimed that while Jaffa had written the phrase for a Platform Committee plank, where a context would have been provided, he never intended it to be used in the acceptance speech. Despite being one of Goldwater’s chief speechwriters, it is not

⁷⁰ Edwards, 268.

⁷¹ Robert Alan Goldberg, *Barry Goldwater* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 206.

⁷² Goldwater with Casserly, 186.

farfetched to suggest that Jaffa was not part of a conversation about the line's inclusion because he was not part of the campaign's inner circle.⁷³ All of that explanation though fails to elucidate what the Goldwater staff anticipated the reaction to the line might be. Goldwater himself did not believe the media or his critics would pay any attention to the phrase, which is why it was left intact while less obviously derisive phrases were underlined, edited and cut in the final draft of the speech. After a months-long debate circling the very word "extremism," Goldwater and his team should have realized that the phrase would be poorly received, that it would confirm the negative portrayal of the nominee, and that it would further handicap an already disadvantaged campaign.

"There's an old saying you can win a battle and still lose a war," Raymond L. Baker wrote to Bill Miller after the fallout from the speech.⁷⁴ As Goldwater accepted his nomination with those infamous words, "Extremism in defense of liberty is no vice," the issue immediately became a central theme of the general election. "My God, he's going to run as Barry Goldwater," one reporter is said to have gasped.⁷⁵ Clif White later recalled, "I was as stunned as anyone that night by the abrasive quality of his words."⁷⁶ "These words are almost certainly destined to become a major issue in the campaign," wrote Mohr after the convention.

Moreover, Goldwater's choice of words simply drew more questions. In June, Goldwater had "defined extremism as Fascism and Communism," so was he now endorsing these ideologies? In addition, the convention had just previously taken up

⁷³ Stephen Shadegg, *What Happened to Goldwater?* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1965), 165; F.C. White, 407-8.

⁷⁴ "Raymond L. Baker to William E. Miller, July 15, 1964," Box 56, Miller Papers.

⁷⁵ Theodore White, *Making of the President 1964* (New York: Atheneum Publishers, 1965), 228.

⁷⁶ F.C. White, 407.

debate to condemn “extremist groups,” such as the John Birch Society and the Ku Klux Klan, forcing many to wonder if these were the extremists Goldwater was defending.⁷⁷ “You said that you would not repudiate the support of the Ku Klux Klan. I do not understand this,” wrote Solomon Rosengarten of Brooklyn, New York a few weeks later, “How can you support an organization which is dedicated to the subversion of our constitutional government.”⁷⁸ Adding to the criticism that Goldwater was sympathetic towards the Ku Klux Klan, he had mentioned the words “free,” “freedom,” and “liberty” forty times, but had not once mentioned “civil rights.” Emmet John Hughes of *Newsweek* even went so far as to refer to the Klan and Birchers as “lesser menaces” compared to the “enraged delegates” that supported Goldwater.⁷⁹ The newly minted nominee provided few insights.

Both Republicans and Democrats were critical in their post-convention reactions. Pat Brown, the Democratic governor of California, railed that “[the speech] was an open invitation to the John Birch Society and the Ku Klux Klan,” declaring that the only thing missing was a “Heil Hitler” for the Jewish nominee.⁸⁰ Dwight Eisenhower offered a lukewarm endorsement, saying, “I will do my best to support [the ticket]—although as I say it was not my personal choice.”⁸¹ The *Washington Post* implored that “Candidate Goldwater start over again and tell the people in carefully chosen words precisely what he does believe ‘extremism’ is and how it affects the

⁷⁷ Charles Mohr, “The Extremism Issue,” *New York Times*, July 23, 1964, 16.

⁷⁸ Solomon Rosengarten to William E. Miller, August 6, 1964, Box 56, Miller Papers.

⁷⁹ Emmet John Hughes, “Goldwaterism,” *Newsweek*, July 27, 1964, 17.

⁸⁰ “Senator’s ‘Open Invitation’ to Extremists,” *New York Times*, July 17, 1964, G8, National Newspapers July 16-17, 1964, Folder 10, Box 128, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

⁸¹ Felix Belair, Jr., “Eisenhower Hints Doubts on Ticket,” *New York Times*, July 17, 1964, 12.

country's constant search for freedom and justice."⁸² The *New Republic* called Goldwater a "deviate Republican," writing, "The Republican nominee for President is not the captive of the crackpots, but he is their candidate."⁸³ Senator Dirksen, a devoted Goldwater supporter, also suggested that clarification was needed, while Governor Rockefeller, who had since pledged to work on Goldwater's behalf for party unity, "led off today with a sharp attack" against the nominee.⁸⁴

In response to the mounting criticism, Goldwater simply became angry. "Would the Governor fight for his life?" he railed, "That would be extreme action. Is it extreme action for our boys to give their lives in Viet-Nam?"⁸⁵ On a separate occasion, the senator tried to laugh it off. "Some members of my own party seem to have their own version of that quote, like: 'Extremism in defense of moderation is no vice, moderation in pursuit of Goldwater is no virtue,'" he joked.⁸⁶ These types of responses were hardly the well-reasoned clarification many expected. Not only had the Goldwater staff failed to anticipate the impact of the line, but they had also failed to effectively handle the sudden fallout. The mismanagement went beyond poor political skills and seemed a failure of basic political common sense.

Bill Miller, the vice-presidential nominee selected only days before, attempted to control the uproar as Goldwater "backstroked through waves of applause and disappeared," a testament to his overall reluctance and his desire to simply escape the

⁸² "Furor Over Extremism," *Washington Post*, July 20, 1964, A14, National Newspapers July 18-22, 1964, Folder 11, Box 128, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

⁸³ "The New Men," *New Republic*, July 25, 1964, 3.

⁸⁴ Carroll Kilpatrick, "Dirksen Suggests That Clarification May Be Needed," *Washington Post*, July 17, 1964, National Newspapers July 16-17, 1964, Folder 10, Box 128, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

⁸⁵ "New Intraparty Fight Erupts After Speech by Goldwater," *Washington Post*, July 18, 1964, 1, National Newspapers July 18-22, 1964, Folder 11, Box 128, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

⁸⁶ Goldwater Remarks, July 24, 1964, Folder 49, Box 135, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

national pressures. Miller, who served simultaneously as a New York congressman and chairman of the Republican National Committee, was both a respected establishment insider and an unabashed conservative in the Goldwater mold. “Heartiest congratulations,” William Loeb of the *Manchester-Union Leader* wrote to Miller, “this should be a winning team.”⁸⁷ Supporters told Miller he handled the press “like a Master, which you no doubt are” and expressed a great relief that a trusted professional would be part of the Goldwater team.⁸⁸ “Having observed over a period of time your voting record, your skillful leadership as Chairman of the Republican National Committee, and your public performance,” wrote Sam. V. Claiborne, state chairman of the Tennessee Republican Party, “I have come to have an extremely high regard for your leadership qualities.”⁸⁹

The *Wall Street Journal* described him as “a rapier-tongued ex-district attorney with a reputation for getting his man,” capable of heating up the dormant race.⁹⁰ Ironically, Miller had also been a Nuremberg prosecutor of the very Nazis his running mate was now compared to. “I know something about the rise of Hitler to power in Germany,” the vice presidential nominee would remind audiences who charged Goldwater with fascism.⁹¹ But even Miller struggled to contextualize Goldwater’s remarks. “Well...you first have to understand what the senator means by extremism,” Miller calmly explained, “extremism is significant and praiseworthy in things for which we feel deeply. I, uh, hope my wife loves me...I hope my wife loves

⁸⁷ William Loeb to William E. Miller, July 16, 1964, Box 56, Miller Papers.

⁸⁸ Arthur Markman to William E. Miller, July 20, 1964, Box 56, Miller Papers.

⁸⁹ Sam Claiborne to William E. Miller, June 23, 1964, Box 66, Miller Papers.

⁹⁰ Joseph W. Sullivan, “Goldwaterites Hope Miller Will Gain City Votes, Heat Up Race,” *Wall Street Journal*, July 16, 1964. 1.

⁹¹ “Address of Hon. William E. Miller,” Bushnell Park, Hartford, Connecticut, September 11, 1964, Box 68, Miller Papers.

me extremely.”⁹² It would not be until August that Goldwater finally rejected the fringe groups he had become associated with, stating, “We repudiate character assassins, vigilantes, Communists, and any other group, such as the Ku Klux Klan that seeks to impose its views through terror.”⁹³

It was not the conservative message that was too extreme, but the messenger that was too untamed. By the time Goldwater had repudiated “extremists,” the damage had been done, ruining the nominee’s already fragile reputation. The ill-advised acceptance speech, fueled by momentary passion and ignorant of rational considerations, marked the end of any realistic hope for a Truman-style comeback. “The reason why so many Republicans now tell pollsters they prefer President Johnson to Goldwater is not the Senator’s conservatism,” wrote Evans and Novak, “the vague fear that he will provoke nuclear holocaust is what really frightens” voters.⁹⁴ Polls conducted for the Goldwater campaign by Thomas W. Benham, vice president of the Opinion Research Corporation, showed that post-election, 47 percent of voters believed Goldwater’s dominant quality was that he would “act without thinking.” Additionally, 29 percent viewed his political philosophy not as “conservative,” but as “radical” and 44 percent believed the threat of nuclear war was greater under Goldwater than Johnson.⁹⁵

⁹² Roger Kahn, “Bill Miller: The G.O.P.’s Tough, Shrewd Pro,” *Saturday Evening Post*, August 8, 1964, 81-3.

⁹³ Don Irwin, “Goldwater Rejects Extremism,” *Los Angeles Times*, August 13, 1964, 1.

⁹⁴ Rowland Evans and Robert Novak, “Inside Report: Goldwater and Militarism,” *New York Herald Tribune*, July 17, 1964, National Newspapers July 16-17, 1964, Folder 10, Box 128, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

⁹⁵ Thomas W. Benham, “Polling for a Presidential Candidate: Some Observations on the 1964 Campaign,” *The Public Opinion Quarterly* 29, no. 2 (Summer 1965): 189-91.

As Benham notes, these were all issues Goldwater and his staff failed to deal with, plaguing his campaign. Stephen Shadegg argued that the acceptance speech shed light on the inability of Goldwater's managers, "The manner in which the acceptance speech was written became the pattern of the Goldwater statements during the campaign—ideas and phrases gathered together...until all unity and style was completely destroyed."⁹⁶ There was no thinking, no planning and no rationality. Political science professor Bernard K. Johnpoll of Hartwick College in Oneonta, New York, told local reporters the best Republicans could hope for was a quick and silent loss, adding "We certainly have more sanity in an Ostego county cow pasture than I saw in the San Francisco Cow Palace."⁹⁷ "The 1964 Republican Convention climaxes a century of fascism and stupidity," argued Gerald M. Capers, chairman of the History Department at Tulane University, "it is sad to witness the disintegration of a great party."⁹⁸

⁹⁶ Shadegg, 165-6.

⁹⁷ Art Reagan, "Only Hope for GOP is to Lose, Hartwick prof says," *Oneonta Star* (NY), July 23, 1964, 5.

⁹⁸ Gerald M. Capers to William E. Miller, July 15, 1964, Box 56, Miller Papers.

V. SPIRALING TOWARDS THE FINISH

The damaging events of the convention followed the campaign as it barreled through the summer, and Goldwater's team continued to demonstrate panache for poor planning and questionable staffing decisions. Continuing to ignore the grassroots activists and White's well-run convention organization, Goldwater chose to run his campaign through the Republican National Committee, an unusual step in and of itself. Moreover, Goldwater began to fill the central body with his loyalists.¹ Passing over the more experienced Clif White as chairman of the RNC, who believed he had earned the job, Goldwater selected the 36-year old novice, Dean Burch.² Goldwater's selection was more to purge Republican defectors than strengthen the party. "Goldwater men came to monopolize key spots in the national organization" and seemed "more interested in ousting moderates from the GOP hierarchy than in ousting LBJ from the White House."³ "The old organization is scarcely recognizable except for its name," reported the *New York Times*.⁴ Among the casualties were party veterans like William B. Prendergast, who had authored party platforms in four presidential elections, and other skilled operatives of the Eastern Establishment. Powerful New York was unrepresented in the RNC for the first time in history.⁵ Writing to Chairman Burch on the removal of many long-time committeemen, Mrs.

¹ Charles Mohr, "Chairman Chosen: Dean Burch, an Aide of Senator, to Take Over," *New York Times*, July 17, 1964, 1.

² Lee Edwards, *Goldwater: The Man Who Made a Revolution* (Washington, DC: Regnery Publishing, 1995), 329.

³ David W. Reinhard, *The Republican Right Since 1945* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 1983), 198.

⁴ Joseph Loftus, "G.O.P. Committee Gets a New Look: Goldwater's Forces Rebuild Structure of Organization," *New York Times*, September 3, 1964, 15.

⁵ Reinhard, 198; Henry C. Kenski, "William B. Pendergast," *Public Opinion Quarterly* 64, no. 3 (Autumn 2000): 356.

Elbert Stellmon, an Idaho delegate, remarked, “It makes many voters wonder if the news media is not correct in stating that your organization is more dedicated to obtaining control of the Republican Party than it is in electing Senator Goldwater as President of these United States in 1964.”⁶

Exiled once again by the Arizona Mafia, White was appointed director of the second-tier campaign arm, Citizens for Goldwater-Miller, obviously a more minor role than he deserved.⁷ “Well, I guess my job is done,” White said as he departed the campaign he had dedicated his life to for three years.⁸ Vice presidential nominee Bill Miller, although considered a “startling vice-presidential choice” because of his geographic location and poor name recognition, was largely seen as someone who could handle the “trouble” Goldwater would inevitably cause. “Miller talks well and hits hard,” Roger Kahn reported.⁹ But, like White, Miller was pushed out by the nominee’s inner circle. The would-be vice president quickly came to the conclusion that “the most sensible thing he could do was to enjoy himself,” and while he maintained a busy campaign schedule, his personal plane soon became an oasis of booze and gambling.¹⁰

Without the triumph of the nomination to shield its inefficiencies, the organization’s true form became obvious. The Goldwater team remained fractured throughout the general election. The *Saturday Evening Post* wrote that the image of

⁶ Zola Stellmon to Dean Burch, September 25, 1964, Idaho Folder, Box 59, William E. Miller Papers 1951-1964, #2391, Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York.

⁷ Edwards, 283.

⁸ F. Clifton White, *Suite 3505: The Story of the Draft Goldwater Movement* (New Rochelle, NY: Arlington House, 1967), 408.

⁹ Roger Kahn, “Bill Miller: The G.O.P.’s Tough, Shrewd Pro,” *Saturday Evening Post*, August 8, 1964, 81-3.

¹⁰ Edwards, 331.

the Goldwater campaign as a “superorganized and rigidly disciplined army of dedicated conservatives” that had been praised only months before was nothing more than a myth. It continued, “Goldwater’s political apparatus is perhaps the *least* disciplined and *least* monolithic put together by any presidential nominee in this century.”¹¹ In October, *Time* added that there had been no effort over the past month that seemed “calculated to win to his cause any sizeable new segments of voters.”¹² Goldwater’s organization was far from the terror envisioned by liberals at the start of the campaign. Congressman John Ashbrook, one of the original members of White’s Chicago meeting, joked, “I get a kick out of all this praise heaped on us. The only reason we came out all right is the people at the grass roots.” In other words, the impressive organization applauded by the media, while skillful at the convention, was an overall fantasy.

Those enthusiastic efforts had been largely exhausted by the fall. Benham notes that many Goldwater workers were “infected with ‘defeatism.’” In October, 46 percent of Goldwater supporters believed Johnson would win the election, compared with only 37 percent who believed their candidate would win. Although the most devout loyalists were still active, their efforts were in vain. While Republican campaign workers contacted 7.1 million households compared to only 3.8 million by Democrats, a reverse from numbers in 1960, there was little direction or focus to this campaign outreach.¹³ This was simply the “Goldwater myth,” Novak contended, “The

¹¹ Rowland Evans and Robert Novak, “The Men Around Goldwater,” *Saturday Evening Post*, October 24, 1964, 32-4.

¹² “The Campaign: The Wrong Approach,” *Time*, October 9, 1964, 1.

¹³ Thomas W. Benham, “Polling for a Presidential Candidate: Some Observations on the 1964 Campaign,” *The Public Opinion Quarterly* 29, no. 2 (Summer 1965): 192-3.

confusion, the indecision, and the blunders that are inherent in political-campaign organizations were to be found in abundance within the Goldwater organization.”¹⁴

Moreover, the Republican regulars had all but abandoned their nominee. While Goldwater and Miller maintained bruising schedules, making two dozen trips to California alone in a single month, other Republican notables barely campaigned. Richard Nixon, ever the party loyalist and most likely already plotting his own 1968 campaign, made the greatest effort of the party leaders. But Nixon did not begin actively campaigning nationwide until mid-October. William Scranton made several appearances on behalf of the campaign throughout September, but suspended his efforts in early October, a full month before Election Day. Perhaps even more revealing, Scranton did not make a single campaign speech in his home state of Pennsylvania, a battleground crucial for victory. Finally, despite being listed on the official campaign schedule, President Eisenhower made zero appearances on behalf of Goldwater, the most potent evidence of his dislike for the nominee.¹⁵

While the poor organization was deserving of criticism, the nominee himself received most of the blame due to his personal style, which observers related to his conservative ideology. The *New York Times* forever wedded personality to beliefs in its harsh article focused on Goldwater being both “uniquely individualistic” and “contradictory.” “Mr. Goldwater is not the spokesman of a broadly understood general philosophy,” wrote Mohr, “as much as he is the prophet of a uniquely individualistic structure of his own gospel.”¹⁶ Criticized for lacking an “orderly mind”

¹⁴ Robert D. Novak, *The Agony of the GOP 1964* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1965), 465-7.

¹⁵ Sept-Nov Campaign Schedules, Folder 16, Box 121, The Personal and Political Papers of Senator Barry M. Goldwater, Arizona Historical Society, Hayden Library, Arizona State University.

¹⁶ Charles Mohr, “Goldwater—His Personality and His Beliefs,” *New York Times*, July 19, 1964, E4.

and displaying “mercurial changes in his behavior,” as evidenced by his changing attitudes towards actively campaign, the senator often confused the press and the public with mood swings that appeared as changes in ideological views. An additional problem caused by Goldwater’s personality was his refusal to seek outside advice from long-time strategists, many of whom had been purged by Dean Burch. The *New York Times* observed, “Mr. Goldwater is not a man who can work easily with men he does not know intimately, who do not completely subscribe to his conservative views, and whose personal loyalties, because of past service on behalf of the moderate wing of the party, may be less than single-minded and whole-hearted.”¹⁷ Of course, that insulated campaign staff was also to blame for these shifting stances. “Beneath a façade of monolithic unity,” wrote the *Los Angeles Times*, “Barry Goldwater’s camp is bitterly split over basic tactics.”¹⁸ As late as October, the campaign staff was still unable to unite. Some believed that the candidate should change his style and content, while others viewed such action as denouncing principle, believing only an “unforeseeable break” could lead to victory. Facing a widening poll difference, the *New York Times* reported, “Mr. Goldwater’s advisers are not in agreement as to how to close the gap.”¹⁹

In the wake of mounting negative coverage, the campaign staff remained divided. The issue most devastating to Goldwater was his statements on the use of nuclear weapons; here the tightly controlled message from the spring was quickly lost. In September, Senator Goldwater was said to believe that “military field

¹⁷ E.W. Kenworthy, “Campaign: Goldwater’s Strategy,” *New York Times*, August 2, 1964, 131.

¹⁸ Rowland Evans and Robert Novak, “Goldwater Advisers Badly Divided Over His Military, Nuclear Views,” *Los Angeles Times*, September 6, 1964, B7.

¹⁹ Charles Mohr, “Goldwater Hunts a Winning Tactic,” *New York Times*, October 6, 1964, 29.

commanders already have the power, without specific Presidential order, to use nuclear weapons,” a resurrection of his gaffe from months earlier.²⁰ The staff response simply prolonged the issue. “The most notable divergence of opinion in the Goldwater camp is over the nuclear issue,” wrote the *New York Times*. Some advisors believed the senator should “continue to hammer out a hard line of nuclear preparedness,” while others urged a return to a program of “domestic conservatism.”²¹ As the story broke, Novak wrote, “Far worse than the danger of confusing voters is the disaster of frightening them.”²² Further, pressed in October on whether or not he actually believed military commanders had nuclear authority, “no direct answer was forthcoming.”²³ The poor handling of the situation was never corrected. On October 23, only ten days before the election, the image of Goldwater as literally a loose canon was evocative. “Mr. Goldwater’s efforts to alter his reputation for irresponsibility with nuclear weapons has had limited success,” noted Donald Janson.²⁴

Instead, Goldwater tried to resort to his earlier strategy of generalities. From the very beginning of his presidential campaign, the mixture of blunt statements backed by vague policy prescriptions had confused and unnerved onlookers. Charles Mohr called it “a fetish of frankness,” noting that the senator’s “frankness often

²⁰ Fendall W. Yerxa, “Goldwater Says Generals Have a Nuclear Authority,” *New York Times*, September 23, 1964, 1.

²¹ Mohr, “Goldwater Hunts a Winning Tactic,” *New York Times*.

²² Evans and Novak, “Goldwater Advisers Badly Divided Over His Military, Nuclear Views,” *Los Angeles Times*.

²³ Charles Mohr, “Goldwater Asserts Johnson’s Integrity is the Main Issue,” *New York Times*, October 9, 1964, 1.

²⁴ Donald Janson, “Campaign for Goldwater is Found Lagging Throughout the Plains States,” *New York Times*, October 23, 1964, 29.

leaves uncertainty.”²⁵ In being frank, Goldwater believed he was being honest, but on a national stage frankness was synonymous with ambiguity, uncertainty and hesitation. The honesty was simply lost in the bluntness and the combination of the two made him appear reckless. Equally detrimental was Goldwater’s tone-deaf messaging. Campaign correspondence show that the staff was well aware of the problem, but could not correct it. A memorandum in September on Goldwater’s trip through the South noted, “he talks foreign aid to farmers, and agriculture to bankers.” One Southerner warned the campaign, “The Senator isn’t grouping his shots.” The *St. Petersburg Times* appropriately summed up the situation with the headline, “Right City, Wrong Speech.” “The St. Petersburg-Tampa area has the largest Social Security population in the Nation. What better place to clarify the Senator’s views on this subject?” wrote a Southern campaign hand, “instead, the subject was law and order—and in a city where racial harmony does exist, and where there is little crime.”²⁶ Additionally, Benham reported in 1965 that, according to his polling data, the public never noticed Goldwater’s grand ideological debate. “If this election was a test of the liberal versus conservative political philosophies,” Benham observed, “many voters did not know it.”²⁷ “With the exception of one speech on defense and some proposals on taxes,” wrote the *Wall Street Journal*, “[Goldwater] hasn’t dealt with the specific questions with answers making clear the choices as he sees them.”²⁸

²⁵ Charles Mohr, “Goldwater and the Voter: Senator’s Frankness Often Leaves Uncertainty Even Among Followers,” *New York Times*, January 27, 1964, 14.

²⁶ Campaign Memorandum on Goldwater Southern Schedule, September 1964, Folder 31, Box 119, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

²⁷ Benham 190.

²⁸ “Review and Outlook: The Deadly Calm,” *Wall Street Journal*, September 25, 1964, Box 58, Miller Papers.

Goldwater had always hoped that his campaign would “amount to a broad debate of liberalism versus conservatism, a clear clash of philosophies,” like the one he had envisioned against Kennedy. With this grander hope in mind, he refused to wallow in the “pet issues” of local constituencies.²⁹ Mrs. Edgar L. Morris, national committeewoman for South Carolina, noted in 1965 that this was among the campaign’s chief failings. “Since we are seeking votes,” she wrote to Goldwater, “the individual voter, his city, his section and his State must feel an identity with the candidate and his views.”³⁰

The weak strategy Goldwater adopted had failed largely due to his organization. Attempting to focus the campaign on the larger philosophical narrative of “moral decay” in America, Goldwater’s staff began production of a half-hour film titled “Choice.”³¹ With Clif White as the film’s technician, many within the campaign assumed it would be a strong presentation of the senator’s philosophical views. With production held entirely within the Citizens for Goldwater-Miller Committee, none of Goldwater’s policy advisers from his campaign or the RNC were involved in the project, demonstrating another instance of weak communication that could have potentially softened the film’s message. Whether due to White’s isolation or exhaustion with the internal campaign barriers, the film was an outlier in his otherwise flawless strategizing. While it was set to broadcast on October 22, networks refused to air it “objecting to the shots of seminudity and topless women,” and

²⁹ Reinhard, 200.

³⁰ Mrs. Edgar L. Morris to Goldwater, January 11, 1965, Reel 1, Barry Goldwater Papers, #2616, Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York.

³¹ 1964 Goldwater Campaign, *Choice*, B&W, 1964.

Goldwater himself ordered that it be suspended.³² Referring to his own political commercial, Goldwater told the press, “It is not salacious. It is racist.”³³ The campaign had even failed in laying out Goldwater’s philosophical values, an aspect of the campaign he had truly hoped to articulate. When Goldwater had announced his candidacy back in January 1964, he said, “I have been spelling out my positions now for 10 years in the Senate and for years before that here in my own state. I will spell it out even further in the months to come.”³⁴ But that did not happen. While few other politicians had made more speeches, written more books or newspaper columns, or been more direct, few were as misunderstood as Barry Goldwater.

Part of the blame for that misunderstanding is clearly and unquestionably due to the press coverage. “Fear of a Goldwater presidency among the media elite was a potent and growing force in the summer and fall of 1964,” wrote historian Robert Mann.³⁵ As early as the New Hampshire primary, Goldwater and his staff had been unprepared for the national press and had poorly managed that important relationship. “I’ve often said that if I hadn’t known Barry Goldwater in 1964,” Goldwater himself reflected, “and I had to depend on the press and the cartoons, I’d have voted against the son of a bitch.”³⁶ On July 8, Clare Boothe Luce accused the press of being “brutally unfair” to Senator Goldwater, and while she acknowledged victory could be

³² Kim Phillips-Fein, *Invisible Hands: The Making of the Conservative Movement from the New Deal to Reagan* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2009), 145.

³³ Karl A. Lamb and Paul A. Smith, *Campaign Decision-Making: The Presidential Election of 1964* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company, Inc., 1968), 131-2.

³⁴ Statement by Senator Barry Goldwater on his Plans for 1964, January 3, 1964, Folder 5, Box 121, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

³⁵ Robert Mann, *Daisy Petals and Mushroom Clouds: LBJ, Barry Goldwater, and the Ad That Changed American Politics* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 2011), 91.

³⁶ Robert Alan Goldberg, *Barry Goldwater* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1995), 210.

achieved, she noted that the coverage clearly ensured the odds favor Mr. Johnson.³⁷

Max Freedman agreed:

The exact nature of Senator Goldwater's objection [over unfair press treatment]...is not indulging in the usual political complaint that he has been misquoted or misrepresented. He is saying that he has suffered sustained personal attack that has sought to humiliate and discredit him as totally unfit for presidential consideration, a relic in his own party and a menace to the country.

The columnist added that the "bitterness and venom" even surpassed "the personal abuse heaped on Richard Nixon over the years."³⁸ The *Arizona Republic* decried the blatant political agenda of the *Saturday Evening Post*, which had once lauded Goldwater during his 1958 reelection campaign. In October, the *Post* wrote that Goldwater was "manifestly unqualified to be president," calling the senator "a grotesque burlesque of the conservative he pretends to be." "He is a wild man, a stray, an unprincipled and ruthless political jujitsu artist," the scathing column continued.³⁹ *Christian Century* charged that the Goldwater campaign was "indicative of the Nazi rise to power in 1933."⁴⁰

The most egregious abuse of press coverage though was surely *Fact Magazine's* "The Unconscious of a Conservative: A Special Issue on the Mind of Barry Goldwater." Surveying psychiatrists from across the country in an unscientific poll, the magazine concluded that Goldwater was mentally unfit to be president. "B.G. is in my opinion emotionally unstable, immature, volatile, unpredictable, hostile, and mentally unbalanced," read the outside back cover, supposedly quoting a

³⁷ "Mrs. Luce Assails Press on Goldwater," *New York Times*, July 8, 1964, 21.

³⁸ Max Freedman, "Goldwater Deserves Fair Play," *Washington Star*, July 4, 1964, A5, National Newspapers, July 1-8, 1964, Folder 7, Box 128, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

³⁹ "Too Much to Expect?" *Arizona Republic*, October 15, 1964, 6, Arizona Newspapers, October 1-16, 1964, Folder 13, Box 127, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

⁴⁰ "The 1964 Religious Issue," *Christian Century*, October 7, 1964, 1228.

respondent. Other “medical” opinions from within the article included, “Goldwater is a man of low character, a coward, weak, insecure, confused, with no constructive social program and no understanding of the needs of mankind,” and “He consciously wants to destroy the world with atomic bombs.” Dr. Walter E. Barton, Medical Director of the American Psychiatric Association, implored *Fact* to abandon the article. “A physician renders an opinion on the psychological fitness or mental condition of anyone...based upon a thorough clinical examination,” Dr. Barton wrote, “Being aware of this, should you decide to publish the results of a purported ‘survey’ of psychiatric opinion on the question you have posed, this Association will take all possible measures to disavow its validity.”⁴¹ The magazine published the survey anyway and Goldwater won a defamation lawsuit against it in 1968—long after the election was over.

* * *

On the other side of the political spectrum, Lyndon Baines Johnson held all the advantages a candidate could hope to have. “There was no way in the world that any Republican could have defeated Lyndon Johnson in 1964,” Goldwater wrote to Mitchell Altschuler, a Bronx admirer, in 1971.⁴² Campaigning on the Kennedy legacy, presiding over the height of post-war prosperity, and rehashing charges invented by Nelson Rockefeller, the Johnson campaign had every asset it needed. In fact, the old charges against Goldwater appeared with such frequency that one has to wonder if it was Rockefeller, not Hubert Humphrey, who was Johnson’s most valuable running mate. Asked by *U.S. News and World Report* after the election if he

⁴¹ Papers on Ginzberg Lawsuit, 1965, Folder 1, Box 53, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

⁴² Goldwater to Mitchell Altschuler, November 19, 1971, Folder 7, Box 120, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

thought Governors Rockefeller and Scranton were partly responsible for his defeat, Goldwater responded, “Frankly, I think I was beaten on July 15 [1964],” the day following Rockefeller’s convention performance and the day of his own poorly received speech.⁴³

The most recycled issue of the general election was, unsurprisingly, Goldwater’s stance on nuclear weapons. In a Johnson-Humphrey campaign pamphlet, “100 Million Lives in One Hour,” the campaign asked, “Which candidate do you trust to secure peace?” It continued to describe Goldwater as an advocate of nuclear weapons who “speaks often of war, rarely of peace. He has indicated he would recklessly risk war in Cuba, in Viet Nam, in China, in Eastern Europe.”⁴⁴ As early as July 1964, Johnson had decided to center the fall campaign on the issue of nuclear weapons, as well as Goldwater’s self-destructive personality. “What we need to get in on is [Goldwater’s] impetuosity and his impulsiveness,” the president told his closest advisers.⁴⁵ The president referred to Goldwater as “the new and frightening voice of the Republican Party,” arguing that some of Goldwater’s positions were “the product of some third-string speech writer.”⁴⁶

Johnson’s most blunt attempt to connect his opponent to nuclear war was his campaign’s infamous “Daisy” commercial. Airing only once, on Labor Day 1964, the ad depicting a little girl in a field of flowers annihilated by a mushroom cloud explosion has become one of the most iconic political ads of the twentieth century.

⁴³ “...My opponents built a caricature of Goldwater,” *U.S. News and World Report*, December 21, 1964, 47, Karl Hess Files, Folder 3, Box 121, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

⁴⁴ “100 Million Lives in One Hour” Campaign Literature, Folder 40, Box 122, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

⁴⁵ Mann, 50.

⁴⁶ “LBJ Calls Barry a Frightening Voice,” (AP), *South Bend Tribune* (IN), October 4, 1964, 1, Box 58, Miller Papers.

Dean Burch filed a formal complaint with the Fair Campaign Practices Committee less than a week later, arguing, “This horror-type commercial is designed to arouse basic emotions and has no place in this campaign.”⁴⁷ In his memoirs, Goldwater noted, “The commercials completely misrepresented my positions,” calling the Daisy ad, and its sequel commercial that aired on September 12, “the start of dirty political ads on television.”⁴⁸

The dirty politicking of the Johnson campaign was enormous. Pat Axtell, a high-school student living in Colorado, wrote a school paper, “Why I’m for Goldwater,” largely on the basis that, unlike Johnson, Goldwater was honest, a worthy characteristic that had often led to misunderstanding during the campaign. Speaking on Johnson, she wrote:

In Washington he was for more power in the central government while in Texas he was pushing states rights. In Washington he was for desegregation but in Texas he promised to protect schools from this. In Washington he was for Medicare, in Texas he was against it. This is an example of saying things just to get elected. Goldwater doesn’t do this.⁴⁹

Pat received an “A” on her paper, but the facts concerned neither President Johnson nor the electorate. As Johnson biographer Doris Kearns Goodwin noted, haunted by the paltry margin of 87 votes from his first campaign for the U.S. Senate and the feeling of illegitimacy constantly cast on him by the Kennedys, Johnson did not simply want to win, he wanted “the largest landslide in history.”⁵⁰ And he was going to exploit every Goldwater weakness to achieve that. Moreover, despite the lack of a principled debate of political philosophies in the election, the differences between the

⁴⁷ Ibid., 66.

⁴⁸ Barry M. Goldwater with Jack Casserly, *Goldwater* (New York: Doubleday, 1988), 199.

⁴⁹ “Why I’m for Goldwater” Essay by Pat Axtell, Folder 7, Box 120, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

⁵⁰ Doris Kearns, *Lyndon Johnson and the American Dream* (New York: Harper & Row, 1976), 206.

candidates were stark, even in the most personal and ideological senses. As Edwards noted, Goldwater's favorite president was Jefferson and Johnson's was FDR, distinguishing the great divides in their political ideologies. Goldwater revered the philosophy of Hayek, while Johnson preferred that of Machiavelli. And while Goldwater was content to enjoy the company of close friends, Johnson yearned to be loved by the masses.⁵¹ Despite his efforts and convictions, Goldwater simply did not want the presidency as Johnson did, and clearly did not need it as badly.

Despite these insurmountable odds, and with a divided staff, Barry Goldwater campaigned throughout the general election with great energy and optimism. Even in the face of an August 9 Gallup poll showing Johnson with 64 percent to Goldwater's 36 percent, the senator showed no signs of defeatism.⁵² As early as the writing of his acceptance, when the polls were much the same, Goldwater had told his group, "I shouldn't be writing an acceptance speech, I should be writing a speech telling them to look for someone else."⁵³ But many rank-and-file Republicans did not want someone else and many of his supporters still eagerly held out hope for an upset.

* * *

Historian Richard Hofstadter commented in October, "If the polls are approximately right, as I believe they are, Goldwater starts his campaign far behind, and stands in danger of being remembered as the Republican who lost Vermont."⁵⁴ Despite the odds, Goldwater supporters, while dwindling in number, were growing in

⁵¹ Edwards, 281.

⁵² Memorandum: Summary of "trend" reports for week of Sept.13-19, 1964, Folder 6, Box 121, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

⁵³ Goldwater to Mitchell Altschuler, November 19, 1971, Folder 7, Box 120, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

⁵⁴ Richard Hofstadter, "A Long View: Goldwater in History," *The New York Review of Books*, October 8, 1964, 6.

intensity. *U.S. News & World Report* wrote on August 3, “At the grassroots, politicians are not taking Johnson’s election for granted. They think Goldwater is behind but could catch up.”⁵⁵ The campaign itself was buoyed with optimism almost to the point of fantasy. Goldwater’s strategists had predicted in June that their candidate would carry 27 states with 278 electoral votes, including California, Pennsylvania, Ohio and Florida.⁵⁶ Despite the wholly unrealistic prediction, campaign aides repeated it often, as if that would make it a reality. RNC Chairman Dean Burch told a Phoenix crowd in late October that Goldwater would carry 20 states with 261 electoral votes, with three toss-up states casting the deciding ballots. “They have the polls, the columnists, and some businessmen,” Burch assured the party, “but we have the people and that’s what counts in an election.”⁵⁷ During an interview in Reno, Nevada on October 1, Bill Miller told reporters that while “we, of course, started as underdogs...I think now we are getting our message over.” “I simply say that in the first place the polls were wrong,” the vice presidential nominee continued, referring to primary polling in New Hampshire, Oregon and California, “There is something in the wind in the United States that [pollsters] just can’t put their finger on.”⁵⁸ On October 31, Goldwater was willing to concede only five states: Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Alaska and Hawaii.⁵⁹

⁵⁵ “Goldwater’s Chances Now,” *U.S. News & World Report*, August 3, 1964, 27.

⁵⁶ “Where Goldwater Expects to Beat Johnson,” *U.S. News & World Report*, June 22, 1964, 32.

⁵⁷ Don Bolles, “Burch Contends Survey Indicates Barry Leading President Johnson,” *Arizona Republic*, October 23, 1964, Arizona Newspapers October 17-31, 1964, Folder 14, Box 127, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

⁵⁸ RNC Press Release: KCRL Reports, Reno, Nevada, October 1, 1964, Box 68, Miller Papers.

⁵⁹ John D. Pomfret, “Goldwater Sees Victory; Concedes Only 5 States,” *New York Times*, November 1, 1964, 1.

Had the campaign been more focused, and the organization more disciplined, Goldwater should have been competitive in the traditionally Republican Midwest, as well as the West Coast and Florida. In 1960, Richard Nixon had carried Colorado, Indiana, Kansas, Oklahoma, Ohio, North Dakota, South Dakota and Wyoming by at least 53 percent. In 1964, Goldwater did not break 45 percent in any of these states. Furthermore, the states Nixon carried, where Republicans were traditionally strong, represented 177 electoral votes. Had Goldwater been able to carry them, as he should have been, he still would not have won the presidency, but he would have received 229 electoral votes, as compared to the 52 he ultimately won.⁶⁰

A true case study of Goldwater's weakness in traditionally Republican strongholds was his performance in Idaho. In 1960, Nixon carried Idaho with 54 percent (the same percent Republican Robert Smylie received for the governorship in 1962), but Goldwater received only 49 percent four years later. In a profile of the election in the state, Herbert Syndey Duncombe, a political scientist at the University of Idaho, wrote that despite Goldwater being supported by a majority of state newspapers, Idaho voters were not satisfied with Goldwater as a candidate. The *Eastern Idaho Farmer*, a member of the Idaho Press Association, had written that Goldwater represented "a political revolution in the United States" symbolizing "the only personality who could appeal to that great block of American citizens who have been so long—and are today more than ever—concerned with centralization of government in Washington." That great block of Americans never materialized

⁶⁰ Based on data provided by David Leip, *Atlas of U.S. Presidential Elections*.
<http://uselectionatlas.org/RESULTS/national.php?year=1964>

though and even Idaho voters did not agree with the paper's endorsement.⁶¹ Idaho seemed to follow the national trend.

A poll conducted of previous Nixon voters who switched affiliations and voted for Johnson showed the defectors to be “younger, less wealthy, and more likely to consider nuclear policy and civil rights as the most important election issues.”⁶² Goldwater also failed among socio-economic groups that traditionally voted Republican, capturing only 40 percent among men, 41 percent among whites, 46 percent of those whose careers were defined as “professional and business,” and 41 percent among voters over 60 (43 percent of whom believed Goldwater was opposed to Social Security).⁶³ Clearly, the caricature of Goldwater's positions, and his campaign's inability to clarify his stances, cost him even within traditionally conservative voting blocks that would have otherwise been responsive to his message of limited government. In fact, John O. McMurray, chairman of the Idaho Republican Party, called that caricature “the great tragedy” of the election. “The public image which was deliberately made by the enemy,” McMurray told Goldwater, “was just the opposite of the kind of person that I, and thousands of others, know you to be.”⁶⁴

In later years, Goldwater confessed that he never truly thought he could win the presidency, but during the campaign he was never infected by the defeatism that plagued some of his fellow Republicans. Goldwater remained dedicated to using his

⁶¹ “A Revolution is Born,” *Eastern Idaho Farmer*, July 16, 1964, 1, Idaho Folder, Box 59, Miller Papers.

⁶² Herbert Sydney Duncombe, “The 1964 Election in Idaho,” *The Western Political Quarterly* 18, no. 2 (June 1965): 488.

⁶³ Gallup Historical Election Polls, Vote by Groups 1960-64, Gallup, Inc.; Benham, 192.

⁶⁴ John. O. McMurray to Goldwater, January 9, 1965, Reel 1, Goldwater Papers (Cornell).

platform to espouse the values of conservatism, and his great enthusiasm was well received by supporters. An October 5 campaign survey noted that while 83 percent of those planning to vote for Johnson described themselves as “strongly committed,” an astounding 91 percent of Goldwater voters said the same for their candidate.⁶⁵ The nominee continued to laugh and joke, using such one-liners as, “Johnson is the only one who’d ever ask Krushchev for the name of his tailor” and “If this keeps up, the Democrats can put on their own TV show: *Two Face the Nation*.”⁶⁶ His crowds were equally jovial.

In September, a crowd in Columbia, South Carolina was estimated to reach 50,000 and in Atlanta, Georgia the campaign bragged that nearly 200,000 had come to see Goldwater.⁶⁷ Even in arch-liberal New York City, 18,000 people attended Goldwater’s speech at Madison Square Garden on October 26, and the candidate was given a 28-minute ovation. Goldwater told the cheering crowd that the election would be “the major political upset of the century.”⁶⁸

While he would go down in tremendous defeat a week later, carrying only six states, there is no doubt that Goldwater still inspired conservative adherents. “I’m not old enough to vote,” eleven-year-old Judy Becker of Albany, New York wrote to the senator in a handmade scrapbook she compiled for him, “but three people in my family are. You have 2 of these votes and two out of three isn’t bad.”⁶⁹ “Because of

⁶⁵ Memorandum: October 5 Campaign Survey, Folder 6, Box 121, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

⁶⁶ Goldwater Remarks #14, August 10, 1964, Folder 49, Box 135, Goldwater Papers; Goldwater Remarks #26, August 21, 1964, Folder 49, Box 135, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

⁶⁷ Pomfret, “Goldwater Sees Victory,” *New York Times*; Campaign Memorandum on Goldwater Southern Schedule, September 1964, Folder 31, Box 119, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

⁶⁸ Peter Kihss, “Goldwater Exhorts 18,000 in Garden ‘Victory’ Rally; Hits Johnson ‘Daddyism,’” *New York Times*, October 27, 1964, 1.

⁶⁹ Judy Becker Scrapbook, Folder 1, Box 119, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

your role in re-shaping the political climate in America,” wrote Samuel Ryder of Massachusetts, “I have great admiration for you and what you stand for.”⁷⁰ Alex Weeder, junior class president at Caldwell High in Kansas, invited Goldwater to speak at the Junior-Senior Prom, writing, “I feel our class would enjoy listening to you and what you say.”⁷¹ Drake Edens, state chairman of the South Carolina Republican Party, urged Goldwater to move to his state to run for governor in 1966. “Steam is really beginning to build for you,” Edens assured him.⁷² In the midst of his own gubernatorial campaign in 1966, Ronald Reagan thanked Goldwater for paving the way. “You set the pattern and perhaps it was your fate to just be a little too soon,” Reagan said, “Or maybe it required someone with the courage to do what you did with regard to campaigning on principles.”⁷³

Writing to his supporters after the election, Goldwater reflected on his campaign. “I am convinced that the hard-rock core of 27,000,000 Americans will command a world of respect by the opposition,” he said, “To me, that’s a good start.”⁷⁴ Loyal supporters and conservative activists had toiled beside him, and his defeat was theirs as well. “I suffered morally, mentally, and even financially,” wrote Mrs. Bernard Coley of Butler, New Jersey after the election loss, “my four year old daughter leaned over to me and whispered in my ear, ‘Mother, did Goldwater die.’”⁷⁵ Still, others were energized for the next election, including Evans R. Dick of Beverly Farms, Massachusetts. “Yes—we are extremists,” Dick wrote Goldwater, “and proud

⁷⁰ Samuel Ryder to Goldwater, January 11, 1965, Reel 1, Goldwater Papers (Cornell).

⁷¹ Alex Weeder to Goldwater, February 7, 1965, Reel 3, Goldwater Papers (Cornell).

⁷² Drake Edens, Jr., to Goldwater, January 11, 1965, Reel 1, Goldwater Papers (Cornell).

⁷³ Ronald Reagan to Goldwater, June 11, 1966, Folder 5, Box 18, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

⁷⁴ Goldwater to Supporters, December 30, 1964, Reel 1, Goldwater Papers (Cornell).

⁷⁵ Mrs. Bernard N. Coley to Goldwater, February 8, 1965, Reel 3, Goldwater Papers (Cornell).

of it.”⁷⁶ Asked a decade later if he would have changed any part of his campaign, Goldwater said no, but would he ever want the chance? “I will not try for the Presidency ever again,” he wrote to a Mesa resident in 1972, “I am too happy where I am.”⁷⁷

⁷⁶ Evans Rogers Dick to Goldwater, February 16, 1965, Reel 3, Goldwater Papers (Cornell).

⁷⁷ Goldwater to Mitchell Altschuler, November 19, 1971, Folder 7, Box 120, Goldwater Papers (ASU); Goldwater to Chris Mathews, October 15, 1972, Folder 7, Box 120, Goldwater Papers (ASU).

CONCLUSION

The story of the 1964 Goldwater campaign is one of the greatest stories of twentieth century political history. It is a narrative of the sudden rise of a popular, independent warrior coupled with an equally sudden and tragic fall from grace. Surrounded by a cast described by historians as Machiavellian, it was also Shakespearean.¹ With larger-than-life personalities dominating the political stage, the Goldwater candidacy provides a tremendous contrast in appearance versus reality, seen most clearly in the philosophy the candidate championed versus its extremist portrayal. Equally thematic is the Goldwater campaign apparatus, portrayed early in the campaign as an efficient machine capable of great triumph when in reality it was nothing more than a loose collaboration of political amateurs. Half a century after the campaign though, it remains one of the most fascinating in American history and continues to provide important insights into the roles of ideology and organization in modern politics.

In the immediate aftermath of the 1964 defeat, the organization and the inexperience of its staff was rarely blamed, despite it bearing the bulk of responsibility. In December 1964, Goldwater wrote to every member of the Republican National Committee to ask what each believed went wrong a month earlier, and loyalists curtly condemned their bitter intraparty rivals. Joseph L. Budd, member for Wyoming, blamed Republican liberals, writing, “The elements of fear, which wouldn’t have been there if they hadn’t arisen in the Primary and at

¹ Rick Perlstein, *Before the Storm: Barry Goldwater and the Unmaking of the American Consensus* (New York: Nation Books, 2001), 255.

Convention, were the ones that did you the most damage.”² Charles Chapman, member for Alabama, agreed. “The issues your opponents in the primary raised concerning the nuclear issue and social security were extremely damaging as far as the general election was concerned,” he reflected, “All Johnson-Humphrey had to do was quote your opponents.” Chapman further argued that Nelson Rockefeller had ruined Richard Nixon’s chances in 1960 and was determined to do the same to Goldwater once Rockefeller’s own chances at the nomination were squandered.³ Ohio committeewoman Katharine Kennedy Brown told the *Dayton Daily News*, “Leading Republican ‘kingmakers’...went out to destroy the man their party had chosen.”⁴ And it was not only party insiders who felt that way. Louise Hartman, a resident of Arizona, wrote a “belated letter of thanks” to Goldwater for his “valiant effort...to give America back to the people.” “If Rockefeller, Romney or Scranton ever had the audacity to win the Republican nomination,” she blasted, “none of us would vote for President.”⁵

The lack of party unity had played an important role in the 1964 Republican defeat, but it was hardly the only factor. Moreover, the ideological differences that led to that strife was not solely to blame either. It is unlikely that any Republican could have defeated Lyndon Johnson in 1964, a year representative of the apex of liberalism. For decades the legacy of the New Deal had defined postwar America, affecting the dynamics of both political parties and exposing the merits of activist

² Joseph L. Budd to Goldwater, December 28, 1965, Reel 1, Barry Goldwater Papers, #2616, Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York.

³ Charles Chapman to Goldwater, December 29, 1964, Reel 1, Goldwater Papers (Cornell).

⁴ Doug Walker, “‘Big Lie Beat Barry,’ Mrs. Brown Claims,” *Daily News* (Dayton, OH), Reel 1, Goldwater Papers (Cornell).

⁵ Louise B. Hartman to Goldwater, January 12, 1965, Reel 1, Goldwater Papers (Cornell).

government. With the Kennedy legacy an ever-present reminder of both the triumphs of liberalism and the dangers of the era, it would have been difficult for any Republican to challenge Johnson in 1964. Ironically, though, it is this period of liberalism that gave birth to the conservative tide, which was responsible for the nomination of Barry Goldwater. Like a volcano, which broods for decades, the conservative movement had been dormant, slowly building a coalition until suddenly erupting onto the national scene. That wellspring of conviction should have made a Republican candidate more competitive in 1964—unless that candidate was Barry Goldwater.

For all his past campaign successes, Goldwater was ill-prepared for the national undertaking. Especially in the context of the slowly shifting political environment in which he operated, Goldwater was certainly more conservative than any other national figure. His ideology harshly challenged the reality that many Americans had grown accustomed to and seemed to threaten the system that granted those Americans greater security. Goldwater's attempt to modernize the Social Security system, while necessary in retrospect, was premature, as was his hard-line on the growing threats of Communist China and the Soviet Union. The policies he espoused in 1964 were not seriously considered until the 1980s, and we continue to deal with many of the same issues Goldwater attempted to discuss fifty years ago. Goldwater was largely a figure before his time, arguing for rapid solutions to problems that were still being slowly digested.

Even still, there would have been a groundswell of support for a well-articulated opposition to perpetual liberalism, especially from a figure with the

national standing of Goldwater. That carefully crafted message was never developed though, and Goldwater's philosophical overtures were neither recognized nor accepted. Steadfastly independent, Goldwater despised the constraints that were put on presidential candidates and refused to be controlled or suffocated. "We're not going to have that kind of crap in this campaign," Goldwater snapped when Lee Edwards suggested showcasing the senator's personal life and hobbies.⁶ There is a certain appeal that accompanies that desire to break the mold, but Goldwater ignored traditional strategy and refused to replace it with an effective alternative. Dragging his feet through every step of the process, Goldwater remained reluctant throughout the yearlong effort and when he was finally driven to actively campaign he only damaged his standing. Goldwater's shoot-from-the-hip verbiage was so poorly controlled that he often repeated gaffes he knew were destructive. Goldwater had neither the patience nor the desire to spend the time softening and perfecting his message. To do so would have been to acquiesce, in his view, to the pressures of a campaign based on personalities. Ironically, despite his insistence of a campaign based on principles, Goldwater's failure was indelibly linked to personality.

In 1952 and 1958 though, the same Goldwater had been corralled. Stephen Shadegg, the campaign manager in both of those difficult Senate campaigns, had carefully crafted Goldwater's message and compelled the candidate to remain focused. In 1952, Goldwater rarely strayed from his message linking Ernest McFarland to the unpopular incumbent president and, six years later, Goldwater employed the same meticulous attack as the narrative switched to the danger of labor

⁶ Perlstein, 316.

unions. The campaign team of 1964 was unable to replicate Shadegg's mastery. Inexperienced, unskilled and unqualified, the "Arizona Mafia" failed to provide the background campaign apparatus that had always made Goldwater stronger. Moreover, while Kitchel, Baroody, Burch and Kleindheist clearly could not organize a national effort, they refused help from those who could. In the name of purity, they purged the intellectuals, the experts and the party elders from the campaign. The result was ensured destruction and, coupled with Goldwater's irate personality, was the ultimate failure.

This complex of variables more completely explains the Goldwater defeat than simply ideology. To relegate the landslide loss to conservatism simply fails to account for the more nuanced issues within the campaign. Regardless of what Goldwater may have hoped, the 1964 presidential election became very literally a campaign of personalities, not principles, which can be attributed to the poor choices made by Goldwater and his organization. As the conservative ideology grows, matures and evolves over generations it can learn from the missteps of the Goldwater candidacy.

On January 21, 2014, Rob Astorino entered a room of New York State Republican county chairmen and local notables. The 47-year-old Republican County Executive had been flirting with a run for governor for months, fresh off a double-digit reelection victory in deep-blue Westchester. "In all my life," he told the anxious crowd, "I have never seen a finer group of extremists in one room."⁷ The remark was in response to comments made days earlier by Astorino's would-be opponent,

⁷ Jon Campbell, "Rob Astorino greets 'extremists' at GOP fundraiser," *Democrat & Chronicle*, January 21, 2014.

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo. During an interview on public radio's "The Capitol Pressroom," Cuomo stated, "If they are extreme conservatives, they have no place in the state of New York."⁸ While the "extremists" of 2014 are far different from those of 1964, the similarities to Goldwater should be obvious.

Conservatives of today bear little resemblance to the Goldwater activists, the original and true conservatives. In 1964, social issues never entered the political arena, and Goldwater himself refused to take a stance on abortion or homosexuality until much later in his career. Even then, Goldwater remained steadfastly devoted to the basic elements of his conservative philosophy, which stressed the freedom of the individual to live without the intrusion of government instruction. Under those guidelines, freedom of choice to either have an abortion or marry a person of the same-sex seemed natural conclusions. By the 1980s, with the rise of the "Religious Right," Goldwater became isolated from the movement he helped to establish as modern conservatives adopted rigid social standards under the banner of "family values" and injected them into the hearts of Republican Party politics.

Goldwater was so disgusted with this new brand of "conservatives" taking direction from a new authority, namely religious leaders like Jerry Falwell, that he remarked, "All good Christian ought to kick Jerry Falwell right in the ass."⁹ Asked in a follow-up interview if he would stand by his remarks, Goldwater clarified that upon further reflection he may aim a little higher.¹⁰ Like Falwell, Goldwater had stressed morality in 1964, but in a different sense, purporting the importance of government

⁸ Tom Precious, "Cuomo: No place in New York for 'extremist' conservative politicians," *Buffalo News*, January 17, 2014.

⁹ Michael Murphy, "Conservative pioneer became an outcast," *Arizona Republic*, May 31, 1998.

¹⁰ Julie Anderson, *Mr. Conservative: Goldwater on Goldwater* (2006; Sweet Pea Films, 2007), Film.

free from self-serving corruption as opposed to sin-free personal lives. Conservatism under Goldwater emphasized a simple ideology that stressed the power of the individual, but the modern conservatism blended with religious fervor stressed doctrine that seemed to eliminate the fundamental importance of individual decision-making and violate the right of personal freedom. While some believe that Goldwater became a liberal as he grew older, others believe he never changed, rather the political environment changed around him. Of these, the latter is most plausible. Goldwater was a simple, devoted ideologue, which he painfully proved during his presidential campaign.

Equally important to modern conservatism is that the lessons of his candidacy are alive and well in our own time. The Republican Party remains divided between the “establishment” and the “grass-roots,” as well as between libertarian and social conservatives, and the deep divisions often lead to embarrassing defeats in friendly political territory. In 2010 and 2012, Republicans lost U.S. Senate elections in relatively conservative states because of flawed candidates who had emerged from a primary process buoyed by the grassroots. These candidates simply did not have the organizational resources or the well-articulated messaging to compete with their careful Democratic opponents. Losing races such as Delaware and Colorado in 2010 and Missouri and Indiana in 2012 cost Republicans control of the United States Senate, stalling the chance to press a Republican legislative agenda. Intraparty feuding remains an important strategic problem for Republicans and will require serious cooperation to strengthen and unite the divergent wings of the party, a continuation of a problem that plagued Goldwater. As Astorino and other

conservatives chart their courses for future campaigns, the 1964 Goldwater campaign provides important lessons and considerable inspiration. The conservative ideology must not be portrayed as radical, out-of-touch or extremist. Instead, conservatives must soften and articulate the ideology, drawing lessons from Goldwater's mistakes, as Ronald Reagan did in 1980.

In 1970, Goldwater wrote to Alf Landon, the 1936 Republican presidential nominee. "Last night the thought came to me that there are three of us in this world in a rather unique position," he said to his predecessor, "namely, we are the only ones around who have run for the Presidency and didn't make it." The third was Thomas Dewey, Republican nominee in 1944 and 1948. Goldwater requested an autographed photo of Landon, so that "I might have the three of us properly mounted for the purpose of bragging to my grandchildren."¹¹ While Barry Goldwater had never truly wanted to be president of the United States, he was particularly proud of leading the conservative movement. The faith of twenty-seven million Americans sustained him personally, and was enough to keep conservatism alive as a legitimate political philosophy. Only four years later, Richard Nixon would employ many Goldwater themes in his winning election, including a focus on moral government, law and order issues and converting southern votes.

Among the most interesting aspects of Barry Goldwater's presidential campaign, and his larger career, is the power of personality. Goldwater was a disciple of his own philosophy and saw the world in stark realities, describing those realities in equally stark terms. While that behavior often led to his most serious political

¹¹ Goldwater to Alf Landon, August 7, 1970, Folder 13, Box 12, The Personal and Political Papers of Senator Barry M. Goldwater, Arizona Historical Society, Hayden Library, Arizona State University.

quandaries, Goldwater's style is nonetheless endearing. With distrust of Washington rising to new levels (In February 2014, Congress' approval rating stood at 8 percent), the straightforward honesty of Barry Goldwater seems an *auld lang syne* novelty, representative of a bygone era.¹² Goldwater never viewed his political career as anything different than service to his nation. In fact, he only agreed to run for president in 1964 because of his deep belief in personal duty and responsibility. Again, these are traits that appear to be largely absent in modern politics.

Even as he railed against members of his own party, endorsing a Democrat for Congress against an evangelist Republican in 1994 and defending Bill Clinton during the Whitewater scandal, Goldwater remained widely respected. "I am often asked by people inside Arizona, and outside of Arizona, about Barry," John McCain, Goldwater's successor in the Senate, told the *Washington Post*. "I always say that Barry Goldwater has the right to say whatever he wants to," McCain continued, "He has made his contribution, which transformed the Republican Party from an Eastern elitist organization to the breeding ground for the election of Ronald Reagan."¹³ Above all, Goldwater's legacy is evidence that an individual can make a difference and that the power of an individual should never be underestimated. Inspired by the independent spirit of his mother, Barry Goldwater worked throughout his professional life to inspire that fiery independence in the American people. It was a belief central to his political doctrine, evident throughout his own personal life and one which sparked a national movement.

¹² "Congressional Performance: 8% Think Congress Is Doing A Good Or Excellent Job," *Rasmussen Reports*, February 18, 2014.

¹³ Lloyd Grove, "Barry Goldwater's Left Turn," *Washington Post*, July 28, 1994, C01.

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