THE POLITICAL USE AND ABUSE OF TELEVISION

THESIS FOR THE DEGREE OF M. A.
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ABSTRACT

THE POLITICAL USE AND ABUSE OF TELEVISION

by James Robert Hartzer

This thesis studies the evolution of political broadcasting on television from its beginnings to 1968. The study was undertaken to determine how television has been used by politicians in the past, what form that utilization has taken, what the consequences of the politicians' use of television has been on both their careers and the American voter, and what significance all of this will have on future elections.

The sources of data for the study were threefold:

1) published material,
2) discussions with individuals directly involved in producing political commercials and programs,
3) firsthand experiences of the author in working on numerous political TV campaigns.

The findings indicate that television has had a considerable influence on American politics. Whereas in 1948 television was ignored by both major parties during the national elections, in 1968 political broadcasting on television has become the single most important factor in

waging a political campaign. Instead of merely being one element in an overall campaign strategy, the use of TV has become the prime consideration around which most major candidates are basing their future successes on election day.

In addition, as a result of either their use or misuse of television, some men who have spent a lifetime in politics have found their careers either suddenly catapulted upward or abruptly ended.

At the same time, because of the influence which television has come to have on the American voter, the requirements for seeking political office have changed drastically in the past ten years. No longer are such factors as intelligence, administrative ability, and general political experience major requirements for seeking political office. Instead, personal wealth and one's image as shaped by television advertising have, in too many cases, become the two most important prerequisites for achieving victory on election day.

Furthermore, the study documents how television has increasingly been manipulated falsely by candidates and their advertising agencies and supporters to secure the defeat of their respective opponents on election day.

Finally, this thesis concludes that drastic changes are urgently needed to protect the American voter from a "wholesale buyout" of his vote on election day because of the lack of intelligent guidelines for the political use of television.

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James Robert Hartzer

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PART I

THE HISTORY OF POLITICAL TELEVISION

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

In 1956 the Brookings Institution published a report by Charles A. H. Thomson entitled Television and Presidential Politics. The preface to this report stated:

> Much has been written about television, but relatively little consideration has been given to the relationship of television to the political process and still less to the issues of public policy that are presented by this use of the medium.[1]
>
> No one knows with any scientific exactitude what potentials it may hold for the future. It is certain, however, that the impact has already been considerable--on the practices of politicians, of communications industries, and of the people at large, if not on voting behavior as revealed by action on election day.[2]

Four years later, Vice-President Hubert H. Humphrey, then Senator Humphrey of Minnesota, wrote a letter to Senator John O. Pastore, Chairman of the Senate Subcommittee on Communications, in which he said:

> Political campaign techniques themselves have been revolutionized by the medium of television. Television has added new dimensions to a candidate's public image. In projecting appearance as well as

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[1]Charles A. H. Thomson, Television and Presidential Politics, a report prepared by the Brookings Institution (Menasha, Wisconsin: George Banta Company, 1956), Preface.

[2]Ibid., p. 1.

> words and voice the television medium is rapidly becoming the single most important vehicle for the conduct of political campaigns. Television allows millions of voters to get a good close look at a Presidential candidate and enables the candidate to present his views to the widest possible audience.[3]

In 1960 John F. Kennedy was elected President of the United States in one of the closest presidential races in modern American history. Out of a total of 68,832,818 popular votes cast, Mr. Kennedy defeated Richard Nixon by only 112,801 votes. Put another way, this figure represented a margin of only one tenth of one per cent of the total vote cast during this election.[4]

Shortly after the election the CBS Television Network asked Dr. Elmo Roper to conduct a survey across the country to determine, if possible, what percentage of those who voted during the 1960 election were influenced in their voting decision as a result of watching the "Great Debates" on television. Accordingly, Dr. Roper estimated that:

> . . . 57 per cent of those who voted believed that the TV debates had influenced their decisions. Another 6 per cent, or over 4,000,000 voters, ascribed their final decision on voting to the debates alone. Of these 4,000,000 voters, 26 per cent (or 1,000,000) voted for Nixon, and 72 per cent (or almost 3,000,000) voted for Kennedy.[5]

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[3]John O. Pastore, The Story of Communications, From Beacon Light to Telstar (New York: Macfadden-Bartell Corporation, 1964), p. 101.

[4]Theodore H. White, The Making of the President 1960 (New York: Atheneum House, 1961), p. 419.

[5]Ibid., p. 353.

Thus, as Theodore White has written:

> If these extrapolations are true, then 2,000,000 of the Kennedy margin came from television's impact on the American mind--and since Kennedy won by only 112,000 votes, he was entirely justified in stating on the Monday following election, November 12th: "It was TV more than anything else that turned the tide."[6]

Six years later on an interview show with Producer David Susskind, Senator Robert F. Kennedy made the following remark to his TV host:

> I think that . . . without any question, President Kennedy couldn't have been elected in 1960 without television. And I know I couldn't have won in 1964 without television.[7]

Today, vast sums of time and money are being spent by office seekers, organizations and political analysts to uncover a formula for success at the polls. Fortunately for the voter, no such formula has yet been discovered which will work for all candidates and in all situations. Each election campaign carries with it its own intrinsic characteristics which seem to somehow set it apart from all other campaigns. One pertinent commentary on this subject was voiced by Theodore White in his preface to The Making of the President 1960.

> For no man can tell it all--either now or much later. The transaction in power by which a President is Chosen is so vastly complicated that even those most intimately involved in it,

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[6] Ibid.

[7] Val Adams, "A Television Dropout," New York Times, October 2, 1966.

> even those who seek the office, can never know more than a fragment of it. For it is the nature of politics that men must always act on the basis of uncertain fact, must make their judgments in haste on the basis of today's report by instinct and experience shaped years before in other circumstances. Were it otherwise, then politics would not be what they are now--the art of government and leadership; politics would be an exact science in which our purposes and destiny could be left to great impersonal computers.[8]

At the same time, however, it has become increasingly apparent that, since the election of John Kennedy to the Presidency in 1960, the so-called science of political campaigning has taken on an entirely new dimension.

Prior to 1960, few individuals fully realized the impact which television could be made to have on the American voter. With the election of a relatively young U.S. Senator from Massachusetts to the highest office in the land, suddenly men everywhere began to take notice of this exciting new communications medium and began to speculate as to its future influence in American politics.

In 1964 Stephen Shadegg published a book entitled How to Win An Election. In his book the former campaign manager for Senator Barry Goldwater during his successful 1952 to 1962 senatorial campaigns wrote:

> Successful political programs can be created for any political candidate. With time, money and imagination the camera can qualify a candidate as a man who is competent to meet the needs of his constituency.[9]

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[8] White, The Making of the President 1960, preface.

[9] Stephen Shadegg, How to Win An Election (New York: Taplinger Publishing Company, Inc., 1964), p. 170.

Two years later in 1966, Hollywood actor Ronald Reagan decided to run for Governor of California. Despite the absence of any political experience qualifying him for this job, the 55-year-old actor, under the professional guidance and tutorage of Spencer, Roberts and Associates, a professional public relations firm specializing in getting men elected to office, managed to win the governorship of California by almost a million votes over his Democratic opponent Governor Edmund G. Brown, and in a state in which registered Democrats highly outnumbered the registered Republican voters.

Today, aspiring politicians and office seekers are spending more money and buying more television time for political advertising than ever before. At the same time, however, because of an absence of intelligent guidelines governing political advertising on television, voters across the nation are being exposed to perhaps the greatest array of political propaganda since Hitler and Goebbels used radio in 1938 and 1939 to "enslave the minds and corrupt the morals of whole populations."[10]

In place of an intelligent, rational discussion of issues, voting records, backgrounds, legislation and experience of candidates, over the past few years the American voter has been asked frequently to choose men to represent him on the basis of false, misleading and often times

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[10]Giraud Chester and Garnet R. Garrison, Television and Radio (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1965), p. 9.

irrelevant and irresponsible political advertising on television. By means of a fantastic barrage of political TV spots, cleverly produced and edited films, and meaningless half-hour programs on television, the American public, on an alarming number of occasions, has been manipulated into voting for both candidates and certain propositions on a given ballot more on the basis of emotion and instinct rather than "such conventional dynamics as party loyalties and so-called issues."[11]

Because through television a candidate can often reach more people in a single half-hour than he could by speaking on a thousand platforms, candidates and their staffs have recently begun spending more money for political advertising on television than previous candidates used to spend for their entire campaigns. This, in turn, has begun to create a situation whereby one's experience, ability, and wisdom in good government combined with devotion to public service no longer seem to be necessary or essential ingredients in gaining votes and achieving success at the polls on election day. Instead, two elements alone are beginning to emerge as potentially the most important factors in winning an elective office, they are: wealth and one's public image as shaped through television advertising.

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[11]Gladwin Hill, "Indications Are That California Voters Will Choose on Emotion and Instinct," New York Times, October 23, 1966, p. 80.

Today, with sufficient funds behind him, almost any man who so desires may now get himself placed on the voting ballot for almost any office he desires; and, with the help of a smart campaign manager and a carefully planned television advertising campaign, this man now stands a better chance of winning that office than ever before.

In 1964, shortly after John F. Kennedy's assassination, the writer of this study was released from active duty in the U.S. Army and went to work for Tele-tape Productions in New York. As television production manager for a company specializing in video taping programs and commercials on location, he quickly became involved in the production of both TV spots and political programs for several national candidates. These men included: Governor William Scranton of Pennsylvania, Senator Robert F. Kennedy of New York, Governor Nelson Rockefeller of New York, and President Lyndon B. Johnson.

The following year, while working as TV Production and Sales Manager for Tele-tape Productions in Chicago, he was asked by former Bell and Howell President, Charles H. Percy, to analyze his television effort during his unsuccessful gubernatorial campaign in 1964 and to make recommendations concerning how he could better utilize television in what later became his successful 1966 senatorial campaign.

In 1966 the writer directed an election eve television program for New York City Council President Frank O"Connor--

the Democratic candidate running for Governor of New York--from the candidate's home on Long Island.

These experiences, combined with Tele-tape's work on the 1968 presidential campaigns of Richard Nixon, Eugene McCarthy, Hubert Humphrey, and the late Robert F. Kennedy, and personal research in the field of political television, have created an awareness of how television is presently being manipulated to influence votes and of the urgent need to develop, as quickly as possible, a better set of guidelines for the political use of TV.

Obviously, it is impossible to fully understand all of the reasons which motivate people to vote or not vote for one candidate over his opponent, or to vote for only some of the candidates on a given ballot. Still, there are a number of people in this country who have gone to great lengths to understand all of the forces which cause people to vote a certain way on election day. Saddled with important political surveys, comprehensive research studies, and numerous analytical reports, these people have, over the past few years, begun to play a very decided part in determining how we, the American people, vote during an election.

In this thesis, we are primarily concerned with the use of television to win voter support for a given candidate. Television very possibly can be manipulated in such a way, and historically has been manipulated to such an extent that

people can be made to vote for a given individual even though their philosophies may be diametrically opposed to that of the candidates for whom they decide to cast their ballots.

Too many voters now cast their ballots not on the basis of intelligent and rational factors related to a candidate, such as his experience, his qualifications, his ability to hold public office, but rather, they seem to be influenced more by the candidate's appearance on television and how he runs his television campaign.

Although there are many important elements which affect how people may vote during an election, the information which a voter receives on a given candidate through television may be the most important factor affecting his decision.

This thesis describes how television has been utilized in past campaigns, some of the different techniques used, examples of false advertising, and, in general, what the response of the American voter has been to these appeals. Since a great deal has already been written concerning the networks' roles in convention coverage and election reporting, I shall limit this thesis primarily to a discussion of individual television campaigns which have had a decided impact upon election results and the development of political advertising on television as we view it today.

Recommendations for television's future participation in political campaigns and our entire election process will be made. If we do not soon attempt to develop a better set of guidelines for the political use of television, then we may find ourselves in the position where either wealth or one's image will become the sole prerequisite for running for and holding political office. Today there is too much at stake to risk such a gamble.

CHAPTER II

GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT - 1933-1952

Every year an election is held somewhere in the United States; and every year a limited number of individuals vie for the right to represent others. The reasons which cause these people to seek public office are, unfortunately, as varied as their fingerprints. To some the desire for political office is an opportunity to serve others and is therefore greatly cherished as an end in itself. For others the desirability of holding an elective position is interwoven with less ambitious purposes.

Yet, despite the different motives and ideals which separate one candidate from another, each individual is faced with the primary task of getting himself elected by a majority of the eligible registered voters. Without the support of these voters even the most honorable candidate is helpless. As U.S. Senator John O. Pastore once said,

> There is in a democracy no sovereign greater than the power of the people. . . . Call it intelligence or intuition, the judgment of the people is final, even terrifying in its majesty.[1]

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[1] Pastore, The Story of Communications, p. 78.

alike have tried various tactics to gain the support of the American voter.

The Birth of Political Broadcasting

In 1933 Franklin D. Roosevelt delivered his first inaugural address over radio to millions of people and ushered in a new era of communication between the President and the people of the United States. In the years which followed, some 62 million people at a time listened to President Roosevelt discuss his philosophy of government through a series of radio programs which became known as "Roosevelt's fireside chats."[2]

Slowly, men began to realize how this new medium could become a major political force in our society. When a Detroit priest, Father Charles E. Coughlin, denounced the World Court in a radio talk in 1935, some 200,000 telegrams tied up the wires of Western Union. Three years later Father Coughlin once again made a direct appeal via the airwaves. This time it was in opposition to a bill pending in Congress. "The immediacy of the danger insists that before tomorrow your telegram is in the hands of your senator,"[3] said Father Coughlin. The following day over 100,000 telegrams were piled up on Congressional desks, and thousands more were still pouring in when the time came for a vote.

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[2]Chester and Garrison, Television and Radio, p. 6.

[3]Ibid., p. 7.

The Origin of the Political Commercial

In 1936 the Liberty League initiated the advent of today's paid political announcement with radio spots supporting the candidacy of Alf Landon for President. The spots centered around the endorsement of Mr. Landon by local figures in different communities. Although in retrospect their impact upon the American voter seems relatively minor because their purpose was strictly supplementary, and because these spots were only concentrated in areas where the candidate's formal speeches were broadcast at low audience hours,[4] nevertheless, these announcements, cast very much in the form of regular commercials, did represent perhaps the first attempt to get a politician elected to office via the airwaves.

But, even before men had an opportunity to realize and develop the full potential of radio as a political tool or instrument for persuasion, a new and even more powerful medium appeared before the American public.

The Rise of Television

In 1939 the New York World's Fair opened with an address by President Roosevelt on a new gadget called television. Despite the fact that only a few hundred receivers

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[4]Martin Mayer, Madison Avenue, U.S.A. (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1958, p. 298.

were able to tune in this significant event, television quickly became an overnight sensation.[5]

The following year NBC and Philco decided to televise the two major conventions. Although there were only a scattering of sets in New York and Philadelphia at the time, it was estimated that some 40,000 to 100,000 people viewed some part of these conventions which showed the parades, both the keynote and nominating speeches, and various interviews with candidates and different political experts.[6]

With the start of World War II, "the production of television sets stopped completely, and telecasting settled down to a skeleton schedule for the duration, with only six commercial television stations on the air."[7] By 1948 the resumption of TV set production was back in full swing and almost one million sets were sold to household consumers. Moreover, in September of that year some 36 stations were broadcasting on the air to approximately one-third of the population of the United States in nineteen cities across the country. Television quickly became the foremost advertising medium in the country, and the first choice of the people for leisure-time activity.

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[5]Chester and Garrison, Television and Radio, p. 42.

[6]Thomson, Television and Presidential Politics, p. 3.

[7]Chester and Garrison, Television and Radio, p. 42.

Still, despite the rapid growth of this new communication tool, few men in the late nineteen forties were truly aware of either radio or television's potential as a political advertising medium.

Presidential Campaign - 1948

In 1948 E.H. Little, chairman of Colgate-Palmolive, suggested that Thomas E. Dewey, the Republican presidential nominee, should devote a substantial part of his campaign budget as well as his time to the preparation and utilization of spot announcements on radio to reach the American voter. To illustrate his proposal, Mr. Little had the Ted Bates advertising agency in New York prepare a series of sample radio spots for the New York Governor. Unbeknownst to Mr. Little, however, another agency--Batten Barton, Durstine and Osburn--had already begun planning the advertising program for the national campaign. Since BBDO had handled the New York State Republican party's advertising effort for several years, the agency felt no compelling reason to follow Mr. Little's advice. Consequently, when Mr. Dewey was informed of Mr. Little's broadcasting proposals, the BBDO agency merely counseled Mr. Dewey to reject these suggestions.[8] Since the public opinion polls indicated that Tom Dewey was definitely the preferred presidential candidate anyway, it seemed to both Mr. Dewey and BBDO that political

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[8]Mayer, Madison Avenue U.S.A., p. 298.

commercials were simply not essential to their achieving victory on election day.[9]

Likewise, because President Truman also did not feel the need to utilize television during his campaign, it remained for the off-year elections of 1950 and the Presidential election of 1952 to suggest the political potency of this new medium.

Off-Year Elections - 1950

When Harry Truman was re-elected to the White House in 1948, Republicans across the nation were stunned. Everything had pointed to a Republican victory. Now, key members of the party found themselves reassessing not only their political philosophy, but also their methods and techniques of political campaigning.

By 1950 both Thomas E. Dewey and the Republican Congressional Committee slowly began to realize that perhaps television could very well play an important role in improving the Republican image in the eyes of the American voter. Under the guidance of Robert Humphreys, the committee quickly began putting television at the disposal of campaigning Republican congressmen. Five-minute television films were prepared for use by Republican candidates running for Congress. The committee provided slide films, standard scripts, direction, printed visual aids, and other promotional materials. At the same time the committee

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[9]Eric F. Goldman, Rendezvous with Destiny (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1956), p. 326.

explained to their candidates how to get time on TV, and urged them to use this time for running multiple spots favoring their candidacy.[10]

Immediately, candidates began making all-day and all-night appearances over local television stations with great success. One prime example was Thomas E. Dewey. In New York State Mr. Dewey "found that the extended personal appearance on television in a twenty-four-hour period was one of his most successful campaign devices."[11]

In Ohio, supporters for Senator Robert Taft pointed to a similar success. In that large midwestern state the Senator's advertising agency claimed that the Senator's unprecedented margin of victory was made possible by television in that it "enabled Senator Taft to reach millions rather than thousands, by foregoing some personal appearances but multiplying audiences for those he made."[12]

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[10] Thomson, Television and Presidential Politics, p. 10.

[11] Ibid.

[12] Ibid., p. 6.

CHAPTER III

REFINEMENT OF TECHNIQUES AND STRATEGY

In 1952 political television entered a new era. Early in the year General Dwight D. Eisenhower resigned his NATO command post. Upon his return to the United States he announced that should the Republican party nominate him as its presidential candidate at its convention, he would accept the nomination.

Immediately, voters everywhere along with the three television networks began focusing their attention on the upcoming Republican convention. Instantly, men from both political parties began to realize that television was going to play a key role in shaping the outcome of the election. Quickly, both Republicans and Democrats began producing and distributing handbooks on how candidates could make the most effective use of television.

As the Republican Convention began, Democrats were urged to observe how the Republican delegates acted or behaved so as to benefit from their mistakes or on-the-air blunders. At the conclusion of the convention and after the selection of General Eisenhower, the Democrats had learned a great deal. As their own convention began, the Democratic

Convention Committee took great pains to present the most positive image to the television audience. They exhorted their delegates, in the official convention program, in posters at headquarters, and in special leaflets placed on the chairs of the delegates, to be on time and to behave. The leaflets warned each delegate that he might provide a television close-up at any time. The text of one flyer read:

> It is likely that you and most of the rest of us participating in the Chicago convention will, at that time, make our first appearance as actors in a television production. We cannot rehearse our roles. We cannot always consciously govern our actions in light of the fact that whatever we do is being viewed by a substantial part of the population of America. But there are a few important things we can guard against in advance. For example, we can be in our seats well ahead of time. . . . . We hope you will co-operate with us and see that your seat is always occupied when the Convention is officially in session.[1]

Shortly thereafter the Democratic Convention was concluded. Now the major battle for men's minds was about to begin.

The 1952 Presidential Campaign

Theodore White has written that "The campaign of 1952 must be seen as political classic . . . a classic equal to the Rooseveltian campaign of 1932 or the Kennedy campaign

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[1]Thomson, Television and Presidential Politics, p. 35.

of 1960."[2] Even the New York Times agrees. One editorial after the election stated:

> Never before has the voter had such widespread opportunity to get the "feel" of the man he may or may not vote for to sit in the White House. Never before has he been able, with his own eyes, to take measure repeatedly of the sincerity, the goodwill, and the intelligence of a candidate for high office.[3]

In 1952 General Eisenhower was elected President of the United States, and for the first time during a national election, television campaigning became a vital factor influencing the votes of millions of Americans on election day. One major reason behind this fact lay in an understanding of Mr. Eisenhower's basic personality.

At the start of the campaign Mr. Eisenhower was a political novice. As one historian has written, General Eisenhower was:

> . . . a leader whose life had been spent apart from politics and to whom the sordid, subterranean mechanics of partisan politics were distasteful. . . . a man accustomed by military training to deal with and command specialists [and who] . . . left the direction of his party machinery in the hands of specialists.[4]

Two such specialists in 1952 who were to have a profound effect upon this election and all future elections were Alfred Hollander, then a broadcasting station manager and

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[2]White, The Making of the President 1960, p. 72.

[3]Chester and Garrison, Television and Radio, p. 7.

[4]White, The Making of the President 1960, p. 73.

later head of the television department at Grey Advertising, and Rosser Reeves, Board Chairman of the Ted Bates Advertising Agency. Early in 1952 both men met for the first time as volunteer workers engaged in promoting the Eisenhower candidacy. Alfred Hollender had met General Eisenhower during World War II while supervising the U.S. propaganda radio to Germany; and, when Mr. Eisenhower announced that he would accept the Republican nomination if it was offered to him, Alfred Hollender wrote a letter to the General and offered him his services.

Rosser Reeves, on the other hand, had joined the campaign staff through some close friends in the oil business. Because they were concerned with overcoming the Democratic slogan, "You Never Had It So Good,"[5] these individuals contacted Reeves to come up with a counter slogan. When Reeves informed them that they really didn't need a slogan, but that they needed a plan instead based upon the use of spot announcements, they asked Reeves if he would handle the advertising end of the campaign in exchange for their promise to raise the necessary money to implement such a campaign. Reeves accepted their proposal and quickly began drawing up some suggested scripts and story boards to be used in the spot campaign.

A few weeks later and after a series of private dinners and meetings with his oil friends, Rosser Reeves was introduced to Alfred Hollender, who was now working on Eisenhower's

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[5]Mayer, Madison Avenue U.S.A., p. 298.

volunteer staff called the Citizens for Eisenhower. Both men agreed that spot announcements were important in achieving victory on election day. Therefore, Al Hollender set out immediately to convince both the General and his brother, Milton Eisenhower, of the importance of using television spots throughout the campaign. Since, during the primary campaign, Hollender had already been successful in persuading the Eisenhower brothers to air TV spots put together from newsreel clippings, the task he was now about to undetake did not seem to be too difficult.

Meanwhile, Reeves continued to meet with other members of the Citizens' group, notably Walter Williams, chairman, and John Jay Whitney, the chief fund raiser, to convince them of the need for utilizing TV spots. Convinced of the idea by Reeves, the two men plus Reeves himself set out to persuade Sherman Adams, General Eisenhower's chief of staff, that the General himself should appear in the spot campaign.

On August 7 the formal 1952 Republican Campaign Plan was presented to Mr. Eisenhower, Richard Nixon and their respective staffs by Robert Humphreys, the public relations director of the Republican National Committee. One of the major tenets of the plan stated that "the use of radio and TV station-break spots during the last ten days of the campaign is a must for stimulating the voters to go to the polls and vote for the candidates."[6] The Republican candidates listened and accepted the plan. Now Rosser Reeves had the

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[6]Ibid., p. 299.

responsibility to organize and write all of the scripts for the TV spots.

To carry out this function, Reeves immediately took a six-week leave of absence from the Ted Bates agency without pay and set himself up in a suite at the St. Regis Hotel. There he began researching material for the scripts by reading newspaper articles covering all of the General's speeches. When he discovered that the General had something to say on almost every subject, he decided he had to limit the number of over-all themes which he would use in the TV spots. After narrowing the themes down to a dozen or more, he then went to see pollster George Gallup to learn what issues were most important in the minds of most Americans. From this meeting Reeves learned that the American voter was most disturbed about the Korean War, possible corruption in Washington, taxes and the high cost of living, and in that order.

Reeves prepared a few scripts and had an artist draw story-boards for spots on each of these themes. He then presented these suggested spots to Walter Williams and various representatives from the Republican National Committee. At a meeting in the Hotel Plaza toward the end of August, Reeves argued before these men that only one of these issues should be chosen to be hammered home in all of the spots. The Republicans listened, but did not agree. Instead, they inforrmed Reeves that he should prepare scripts which would

hit all of the issues which George Gallup had indicated were important to the voter, and that he, Reeves, should have all of the scripts ready to be shot in New York on September 13, the one day when Eisenhower would be in New York and the only day in which the General could find time to appear before the camera.

Reeves was obviously disappointed. He had hoped to have more time during which to write the spots. Still, on September 13, Reeves was ready with twenty-two spots approved by the Citizens for Eisenhower. Author Martin Mayer vividly describes the events which followed:

> Reeves and Eisenhower met, for the first time, at the Transfilm studios in midtown Manhattan, and the Bates make-up department prepared the candidate for the cameras. Reeves was particularly anxious to have Eisenhower appear in the spots without his glasses, but without his glasses the General was unable to read the prompt cards. The head of Bates' radio-TV department personally took a brush and hand-lettered huge prompt cards for Eisenhower to read without glasses.
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> The first few spots went like the wind, and Reeves realized that Eisenhower probably could go through the planned fifty in a single day. So he sat down at his typewriter and wrote twenty-eight spots in a few hours, under forced draft. As he finished each spot he would take it to Milton Eisenhower, who would either okay or reject it. Sometimes Reeves, who was pulling most of Eisenhower's lines straight out of already delivered speeches, would protest against the rejection; to which the invariable answer would be, "I don't care if he said it in Texas in June, the General isn't going to say it now." Accepted scripts would be read quickly to the candidate, then passed on to be lettered on the prompt cards.
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> . . . In all the spots [Reeves] used the same introduction, an announcer saying, with suppressed excitement, "Eisenhower Answers the Nation!" Then the voice of "an ordinary citizen" would ask a question, such as,

> "Mr. Eisenhower, what about the high cost of living?" And the General would reply, in this instance, "My wife, Mamie, worries about the same thing. I tell her it's our job to change that in November fourth." A formal disclaimer from the television station (of the "What you have just heard is a paid political announcement" variety) would end the spot and in each home the television set would then return to its usual fare.
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> [Finally, Mayer adds] . . . part of the footnote in the history books someday should be a vignette of the scene in Transfilm's studios as recalled by Reeves: Hollender working with the camera crew, Reeves himself pounding a typewriter in a back room, a high-priced executive hand lettering prompt cards, and Milton Eisenhower keeping up the spirits of the next President of the United States, who sat in a hard chair between takes, shaking his head and saying, "To think that an old soldier should come to this!"[7]

Two months later Dwight D. Eisenhower was elected President and political advertising was finally accepted as an integral part of campaign strategy.

Analysis and Evaluation

One of the major observations made by the Brookings Institution in their 1956 study of the 1952 elections was the following:

> During the campaign, the most notable development in the strategy of the use of television was the strong concentration on selective radio-television spot announcements, used most heavily by the Republicans in the closing weeks. These announcements were placed adjacent to the most popular shows and concentrated in those areas and attuned to those audiences that the Republican strategists thought were most important to securing victory. They were more interested in reaching the non-voter than the switch-voter. The Democrats used similar techniques, but far less extensively because of a smaller budget, and because they had already reserved substantial blocks of time for speeches and panels.[8]

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[7] Ibid, p. 301.

[8] Thomson, Television and Presidential Politics, p. 35.

Interestingly enough, in 1954 the Department of Marketing at Miami University published a report entitled "The Influence of Television on the 1952 Elections." One of the major findings of this study was that most television impressions were made during the convention coverage and in the ten days preceding the election, times when personality figured most prominently. Furthermore, the report stated " . . . it was at these times that the bulk of voters' decisions were made."[9] Since most of the Eisenhower spots were concentrated in the last ten days of the campaign, the report suggested that there definitely was a direct relationship between these spots and Eisenhower's victory.

Yet not everyone agrees with this report. Some men, such as CBS news commentator Eric Sevareid, have argued that during the 1952 campaign these TV spots had little bearing on the overall voting results. Mr. Sevareid has written:

> The Eisenhower candidacy for the nomination was not made in Madison Avenue in spite of the persuaders, hidden and otherwise, working for him with all the new arts of public persuasion. They refined it, they merchandised it, but they had a highly acceptable commodity to work with.[10]

Rosser Reeves disagrees. For Reeves, not only were these TV spots very definitely a key factor in Eisenhower's election in 1952, but, on several occasions Mr. Reeves has

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[9] Ibid., p. 137.

[10] Eric Sevareid, Candidates 1960 (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1959), p. 15.

expressed the opinion that had Adlai Stevenson employed a better usage of spot announcements during the campaign, he might well have upset the General on election day.[11]

Today the debate continues. Some men believe that the utilization of TV spots during a campaign is essential to victory. Others say no, while still others remain undecided. Yet few individuals would go so far as to declare that television has had little effect at all upon the political scene. Eric Sevareid, for example, clearly notes this fact in his book Candidates 1960, during a discussion of the respective careers of Senator Joseph McCarthy, Adlai Stevenson, and Senator Estes Kefauver. About television's influence upon their careers, Mr. Sevareid writes:

> Television's exposure will reveal the true nature of man only if the exposure is prolonged, coupled with conditions of high pressure, the circumstances under which the little screen finally did reveal the true character of Senator McCarthy in the Senate hearings. Otherwise it can be quite misleading. It taught millions to believe, for example, that candidate Kefauver was a warm lover of humanity of all classes, athletically eager to shake its each and every hand; and that candidate Stevenson was slow and diffident with the palm, somewhat uncomfortable in the crowd. What it could not show was the truth--that Kefauver rarely sees or hears the person whose hand he is shaking, while Stevenson scrutinizes the person, listens carefully to his remarks, and answers him with a pertinent thought. It is Kefauver who is self-absorbed, Stevenson who is not, yet millions watching them on television in the primaries of 1956 were misled into reversing their true roles and natures.[12]

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[11] Mayer, Madison Avenue U.S.A., p. 311.

[12] Sevareid, Candidates 1960, pp. 5-6.

Stephen Shadegg, author of How to Win An Election, has said:

> The candidate who can put himself across on TV enjoys a tremendous advantage.[13]
> . . . . . .
> All voters hope to find a candidate who is knowledgeable, who demonstrates an acquaintance with their problem. They don't demand genius, they don't insist that their candidate know everything about everything and they are really not interested in hearing the candidate dwell on his virtues.[14]

In 1956 Charles Thomson wrote in his report to the Brookings Institution:

> Evaluations to date suggest that television projects personalities better than it demonstrates issues. . . . [Therefore] the personable, articulate, self-possessed, but relaxed individual who can make a pleasing visit into the home of the viewer, win his attention with courtesy, and impress him with the saneness of his views and the attractiveness of his personality seems to have the current edge.[15]

Two years later Nelson Rockefeller clearly demonstrated what Shadegg and Thomson were talking about when he decided to run for Governor of New York.

New York Gubernatorial Campaign - 1958

In 1958 Nelson Rockefeller felt so strongly about the importance of utilizing TV spot announcements throughout his campaign to unseat the Democratic Governor of New York, Averell Harriman, that he, Rockefeller, allocated 40 per cent of his total expenditures to purchasing time on both

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[13] Shadegg, How to Win An Election, p. 166.

[14] Ibid., p. 170.

[15] Thomson, Television and Presidential Politics, p. 137.

radio and television. In a campaign celebrated from coast to coast as "The Battle of the Millionaires," Rockefeller had camera and sound crews following him throughout the state, filming his speeches and his numerous interviews with the voters of New York. The best filmed interviews were then edited into television spots which received complete saturation throughout the state and which were considered by a great many people to have had a far more important effect upon New York voters than his set speeches. As one commentator wrote:

> The TV spots helped convey to millions the essentially individual impact of the Rockefeller personality. It includes what one pro has called a "Gee, I like you, smile," but it also projects sincerity and sympathetic understanding. Rockefeller can talk for minutes or even seconds with a total stranger and leave that stranger with the conviction that no subject other than his problems crossed Rockefeller's mind as they spoke.[16]

When the ballots were all counted, Mr. Rockefeller had literally swamped his Democratic opponent, Governor Averell Harriman, by some 573,034 vptes even though "most voters knew little more about him than that they liked the vital, friendly image on their TV screens."[17]

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[16] Sevareid, Candidates 1960, p. 55.

[17] Ibid., p. 26.

CHAPTER IV

THE KENNEDY ERA

The Road to the Nomination

It has been said of the late John F. Kennedy that his father raised him from early boyhood to eventually become President of the United States.

In the early months of 1960, however, few voters across the nation were aware of this fact, let alone knew who John F. Kennedy was or that they would eventually be voting for him. Instead, most analysts of the political scene expected that Richard Nixon would become the next U.S. President to succeed President Eisenhower.

Theodore C. Sorensen, special counsel to the late President Kennedy, explains in his book, Kennedy, some of the reasons behind this thinking in writing about the late President's earlier senatorial years:

> John Kennedy was not one of the Senate's great leaders. Few laws of national importance bear his name. And after he graduated in November, 1958, from the traditionally inactive freshman class, his opportunities for major contributions to the Senate--except for his battle for fair labor reforms and against rackets--were increasingly eroded by the demands of his Presidential campaign.
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> During his first four years Kennedy's two committees --Labor and Government Operations--hnadled comparatively little legislation of importance. He was frustrated in efforts both to obtain major assignments (e.g., an investigation of lobbying) for the Government

Operations Committee and to exchange his seat on that committee for another on a more important one.[1]

The intellectual journals of opinion had doubts about his credentials as a liberal, about his religion and, above all, about his father. The more popular press emphasized the financial cost of his campaign, the participation of his family, his new tea-party technique of electioneering and the sympathy evoked in female hearts by his tousled hair and boyish looks.[2]

When John Kennedy decided to enter the Presidential race, first in the Democratic primaries, few individuals gave the young senator much hope for success. Even Kennedy himself, according to Sorensen, was aware of his liabilities.

Often, to the incredulity of newsmen and to the dismay of his followers, he would objectively list those liabilities in public. He knew that no Catholic had ever been elected President of the United States, where church membership was more than two to one Protestant--that no forty-three year-old had ever been elected President--and that for these reasons in particular his party was unlikely to pick him.[3]

[Furthermore,] . . . so youthful a candidate had never been elected President, nor in this century even been nominated by a Democratic Convention. He was a Roman Catholic--and no member of that faith had ever been elected President nor, after 1928, even been seriously considered. He was a United States Senator --and only one Republican and no Democrats had ever been elected President from the Senate, nor had the Democrats even nominated a Senator for a hundred years. They had not nominated a New Englander for even longer.[4]

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[1]Theodore C. Sorensen, Kennedy (New York: Harper and Row, 1965), p. 43.

[2]Ibid., pp. 11-12.

[3]Ibid., p. 97.

[4]Ibid., p. 122.

Yet, despite all of these seemingly overwhelming odds against him, John Kennedy not only entered the Presidential race but he won the election.

Early in 1960, however, victory seemed a long way off for John F. Kennedy. Not only was he an underdog statistically, but, he knew that he would face stiff opposition within his own party from such well-known Democratic leaders as Missouri Senator Stuart Symington, Senate Majority Leader Lyndon B. Johnson, and Minnesota Senator Hubert Humphrey. Thus, reasoned John Kennedy, his only hope for securing his party's nomination was to enter the Democratic primaries, face this opposition and put a stop to their respective campaigns before they gathered momentum. As Theodore Sorensen writes:

> If he swept the primaries . . . Only in this way could he demonstrate his electability, prove that a Catholic could win, scatter the favorite-son candidates, pick up a bloc of committed delegates and knock one or more competitors completely out of the race. Only then could he translate his voter strength in such states as New York, Illinois and Pennsylvania into solid delegate strength.[5]

Therefore, on January 2, 1960, immediately after publicly announcing his candidacy for the Presidency of the United States, John F. Kennedy challenged "any Democratic aspirant . . . to submit to the voters his views, record and competence in a series of primary contests."[6] His challenge was quickly answered by Minnesota Senator Hubert

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[5] Ibid., pp. 127-128.

[6] Ibid., p. 129.

Humphrey who in turn challenged Senator Kennedy to enter both the Wisconsin and West Virginia Democratic primaries.

Wisconsin Primary

In the weeks which followed, Americans everywhere watched with great interest as both men threw all their energy into the Wisconsin primary race. For Senator Kennedy the victory was a must if he was to get his campaign off to a good start. For Senator Hubert Humphrey a Wisconsin victory was important because this state bordered the stronghold of Humphrey's strength, Minnesota; and, if the Senator was to gain delegate support for his candidacy, it would have to begin here in the midwest.

As the primary date approached, the pollsters seemed to note a trend toward Senator Kennedy. Whereas, at the start of the state's primary campaign, Kennedy had been a rather unknown candidate, with both the personal and financial help of his family and numerous loyal friends, Kennedy had begun to awaken the Wisconsin voter to his candidacy.

At the same time, however, there began to appear an increasing amount of discussion concerning the Democratic candidate's religion. Despite the attempt by the entire Kennedy camp to minimize this issue, the question of a Catholic President in the White House began to loom as the key issue in the primary. Theodore Sorensen describes the situation as follows:

> Pictures of Kennedy greeting groups of nuns were quickly snapped, while other greeters went unnoticed. Frequent questions from student audiences about his religion were reported far more extensively than questions on labor or agriculture. On a TV panel interview one reporter asked the Senator if he would attend a summit meeting even if ordered not to do so by his Bishop. "Of course I would," bristled the Senator.
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> Several sermons were preached in Lutheran and other churches questioning the allegiance of a Catholic President. POAU pamphlets and far more unreasoning statements by anonymous hate sheets were distributed throughout the state. An advertisement in several Wisconsin newspapers said Catholics in both parties were "ganging up" on Kennedy's opponent and urged Protestants to give a "square deal for Humphrey." . . . Voters at Kennedy rallies were accosted by reporters outside the hall and asked their religion--not their occupation or education or philosophy or income . . . And on the Sunday before the primary, the Milwaukee Journal listed the voting strength in each county of three types of voters: Democrats, Republicans and Catholics.[7]

On Tuesday, April 5th, the voters of Wisconsin reached their decision. In a state which favors the open primary whereby registered Republicans are allowed to vote in Democratic primaries and vice versa, John F. Kennedy won the state with more votes than any candidate in the history of Wisconsin's primary.

Quickly, however, Kennedy realized that any advantage which he might have gained in his Wisconsin victory was to be short lived. Immediately after the election a number of political commentators began analyzing the results of the primary vote in an attempt to explain how Kennedy had received even more votes than the pollsters had predicted. Their conclusions or findings, they said,

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[7]Ibid., p. 137.

indicated that Kennedy's win was attributed to a large majority of Catholic Republicans who decided to take advantage of their state's open primary and vote for Mr. Kennedy. In proof of this, they cited that, whereas Kennedy's popular margin had come entirely from four heavily Catholic areas, he had lost all four predominantly Protestant districts and had carried the unclassified one by only a hair. Therefore, the Wisconsin primary results were meaningless in terms of giving any true indication of Kennedy's popularity with the people. People in Wisconsin had merely voted along religious lines and not on the basis of the qualifications of the respective candidates.

Since Kennedy knew all too well that many of the bosses in the East who controlled large blocs of delegates would read the Wisconsin primary as a Catholic-Protestant split, whether true or not, he now knew that he would have to face this religious issue head on. No longer could he attempt to skillfully dodge it. His future success depended upon how well he could convince the American voter, be he Protestant, Catholic, Jew, Negro, Asian or White, that his religious beliefs would in no way be detrimental to the office of the President of the United States.

To Hubert Humphrey it seemed that Kennedy had won in Wisconsin only because of Republican-Catholic crossovers. Since Humphrey wanted to run against Kennedy in a primary limited only to Democrats, immediately after the Wisconsin primary Humphrey renewed his challenge to John F. Kennedy

to face him in the West Virginia primary race. Abandoning his earlier announced intention to withdraw from the race if he could not carry his neighboring state, the Minnesota Senator suddenly became convinced that he could win in West Virginia. West Virginia, unlike Wisconsin, did not profess to have a single leading politician in the entire state who was publicly for John F. Kennedy. Moreover, West Virginia was a state in which roughly 95% of the population was of the Protestant faith. Therefore, reasoned Humphrey, it was definitely to his advantage to face Kennedy in the Democratic primary there. The odds all seemed to be in his favor.

West Virginia Primary

As the primary campaign in West Virginia got under way, it began to appear that Humphrey had been right. Whereas, an early Lou Harris poll taken in December, 1959 had showed Kennedy a 70-30 favorite over Humphrey before the Wisconsin primary, a later poll taken after the "full impact of Wisconsin, showed a sharply new awareness of the religious issue . . . and a 60-40 landslide for Humphrey."[8]

When members of the Kennedy staff asked their West Virginia advisors what had happened between his 70-30 margin in December and the short end of the present 40-60 split,

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[8]Ibid., p. 139.

they were told, "But no one in West Virginia knew you were a Catholic in December. Now they know."[9]

At first the Kennedy tacticians tried to circumvent the religious issue. They stressed constantly the positive assets of their candidate such as his outstanding war record, his courage under stress, his sympathy and concern for the underprivileged, the hungry and the unemployed.

Yet, as the days grew closer to the election, the religious issue still remained as the number one issue in the minds of the voters, thus reducing Kennedy to the underdog's position. Realizing this, the Massachusetts Senator decided to try a new tactic. He would debate Senator Humphrey on television in West Virginia. Despite the fact that John Kennedy believed that Democrats should only debate Republicans, and therefore had earlier declined to debate Humphrey in Wisconsin, now Kennedy realized that if he stood any chance at all in West Virginia, he needed some kind of breakthrough in terms of voter interest and support. If he debated Humphrey face to face on television, then, he reasoned, many voters might forget all talk about the religious issue and for once in West Virginia he could begin his quest for victory in the primary election on an equal footing with Senator Humphrey. He knew there was little chance of any real clash occurring between the two men since each of them would probably be fairly cautious in

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[9]White, The Making of the President 1960, p. 121.

debating the other person. Yet, he felt there was always the chance that he, Kennedy, might come out on top during the debate, causing some voters to switch their votes to his side. Furthermore, since he was the underdog anyway, he had to take the gamble since he really had nothing to lose.

In retrospect, according to Ted Sorensen, Kennedy was quite accurate in his prediction and analysis.

> As he had predicted, there was no real clash, except for one acrimonious exchange about the "stop-Kennedy gang-up." Humphrey seemed less tense and more spirited than Kennedy. But Kennedy, speaking in softer tones and shorter answers, without notes, scored with local illustrations and specifics aimed chiefly at West Virginia. He held up a skimpy surplus food package and cited real-life cases of distress. He spoke in simple, straightforward terms. Local newspapers the following few days showed votes switching to Kennedy on the strength of this debate.[10]

In Kanawha County, the most populous county of West Virginia, seat of Charleston, the capital, the polls showed the effects of the TV debate. From a 55-45 Humphrey margin two weeks before the debate, the polls showed Humphrey only a 52-48 favorite the day after the TV debate.[11]

Almost immediately Kennedy sensed that religion was still a major issue in the minds of too many voters. While his staff of advisors remained divided as to how to meet this problem, on April 25th, a little more than two weeks before the primary, John F. Kennedy made one of the most

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[10]Sorensen, Kennedy, pp. 140-141.

[11]White, The Making of the President 1960, p. 130.

important decisions in his political career. In a complete switch in tactics, he suddenly decided to meet the religious issue head on. "If he was to be downed by religious bigotry, he intended to go down fighting."[12] His approach was to be threefold.

First, he changed the subject of his address to the nation's editors in Washington from foreign aid to religion. In his first full exposition of his views on church and state Kennedy reviewed his position on education, birth control and relations to the Vatican. He emphasized that he was not a Catholic candidate for President and that no one in the Catholic Church spoke for him on issues of public policy, or would speak for him if he were elected President.

Next, Kennedy made an open and public appeal to the Protestant clergymen and leaders to publicly put an end to this religious issue once and for all. With the help of Reverend Francis B. Sayre, Jr., Dean of the Washington Episcopal Cathedral and Methodist Bishop Bromley Oxnam, an open letter calling for an end to all religious bigotry, and signed by some thirteen nationally known Protestant leaders, was sent to every Protestant minister in West Virginia one week before the primary.

Finally, John Kennedy decided he would take his candidacy and the religious issue and put them squarely before the West Virginia voters on a state-wide television

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[12]Sorensen, Kennedy, p. 142.

broadcast. The program would be thirty minutes in length and would be scheduled to air throughout the state exactly two days before the voters went to the polls. It was decided that the format of the program would revolve around a question and answer session in which Franklin D. Roosevelt, Jr., would ask the questions and John Kennedy would provide the answers. The questions themselves were to be drawn up by Ted Sorensen and were to include "the four or five questions that bothered Protestants most when they worried about Catholics."[13]

On Sunday evening, May 8th, the program went on the air as scheduled. Theodore White describes what followed:

> There remains with me now a recollection of what I think is the finest TV broadcast I have ever heard any political candidate make. . . . The religious question was planted by Roosevelt, Jr., about three or four minutes after the broadcast began, and Kennedy, as I remember it, used almost ten or twelve minutes of the half-hour show to answer. Later the same phrases were to grow sterile, but at this moment Kennedy spoke from the gut. He reviewed the long war of church on state and state on church and that greatest of all constitutional decisions: to separate church from state. Then, peering into the camera and talking directly to the people of West Virginia, he proceeded, as I remember, thus: . . . so when any man stands on the steps of the Capitol and takes the oath of office of President, he is swearing to support the separation of church and state; he puts one hand on the Bible and raises the other hand to God as he takes the oath. And if he breaks his oath, he is not only committing a crime against the Constitution, for which the Congress can impeach him--and should impeach him--but he is committing a sin against God.
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> Here Kennedy raised his hand from an imaginary Bible, as if lifting it to God, and, repeating softly, said, "A sin against God, for he has sworn on the Bible."[14]

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[13]White, The Making of the President 1960, p. 128.

[14]Ibid., pp. 128-129.

In his book entitled Kennedy, Theodore Sorensen confirmed this account of the program by White and added:

> He [Kennedy] answered fully and fervently the toughest religious questions I could devise for Frank to ask. [In answer to one question and in an appeal to a show of religious tolerance, Kennedy said] . . . In 1948 Catholic Boston overwhelmingly supported Baptist Harry Truman because of the man he is. I would like the same fairness Harry Truman was shown.[15]

Two days later the voters went to the polls; and, despite a last chance, all out appeal on a TV telethon by Hubert Humphrey on election eve, John F. Kennedy won a thunderous endorsement in West Virginia by a margin of 61-39 over Senator Humphrey. Apparently anxious to disprove any possible charges of religious bigotry along voting lines, the people of West Virginia helped Kennedy carry all but seven of its fifty-five counties. As one woman said to pollster Lou Harris the day after Kennedy's religious speech on television, "I'm going to vote for Kennedy now. We have enough trouble in West Virginia, let alone to be called bigots, too."[16]

In the months which followed, the Kennedy bandwagon began picking up steam. As a direct result of his victory in West Virginia, delegates who had hesitated to endorse John Kennedy for fear of a Humphrey victory eagerly rallied to his cause.[17] By the time the Democratic convention convened in Los Angeles that July, Kennedy had picked up enough

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[15]Sorensen, Kennedy, p. 145

[16]White, The Making of the President 1960, p. 130.

[17]Sorensen, Kennedy, p. 147.

delegate support to win easily on the first round ballot by a total of 806 votes to 409 votes for his nearest competitor, Lyndon B. Johnson.

CHAPTER V

TELEVISION ELECTS A PRESIDENT

Presidential Campaign--1960

When the national campaign began, John F. Kennedy was still a long way from achieving his goal of winning the office of the President of the United States. The Republicans at their convention had chosen the Vice-President of the United States, Richard Nixon, to be their candidate. According to the Gallup poll Mr. Nixon was the favorite to win by a margin of 53-47.[1] The pollsters explained that Richard Nixon was far better known than Senator Kennedy on the basis of his national office and his four previous nationwide campaigns. In addition, they indicated that the majority of voters polled seemed to feel that Mr. Nixon was the more experienced of the two candidates while Mr. Kennedy was perhaps better known as a wealthy, inexperienced, and youthful Catholic.[2]

As the campaign moved into the month of August, once again the religious issue seemed to dominate the thoughts of most voters. In that month George Gallup

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[1]White, The Making of the President 1960, p. 299.

[2]Sorensen, Kennedy, p. 168.

released the findings of a new poll which showed that whereas only 47 per cent of the electorate had been aware of Kennedy's religion in May, 1959, a little over a year later roughly 87 per cent of the electorate were now aware of the Senator's religious position, and this figure, according to Dr. Gallup, was rising steadily.[3]

Kennedy, originally hoping that his victory in the West Virginia primary would lay this issue to rest once and for all, realized that now "his most urgent campaign task was to become better known for something other than his religion."[4] He knew that his future speeches, press conferences and various statements would help to alleviate this problem, but he also knew that the total number of people who would hear him speak on these occasions would only total a very small fraction of the entire electorate. Therefore, he had to find some other means of reaching those voters who constituted the majority of the electorate and who would ordinarily never have the opportunity to listen to him. The answer to this problem was obvious. Through the medium of television John Kennedy could not only reach all of these voters, but he could talk to each one of them individually in their own living rooms.

In 1960 the number of families in the United States had grown to some 44,000,000, and of this total, "no less

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[3]Ibid., p. 193.

[4]Ibid., p. 195.

than 88 per cent, or 40,000,000, possessed a television set."[5] Although perhaps not knowing the exact number of people that he could reach through television, John Kennedy knew that this number had to be considerable. As he traveled through the primary states he had observed that even though some of the poorest and tiny ramshackle shacks did not have either newspapers, magazines or even plumbing facilities on their premises, they did have a television aerial perched high above their individual roof tops. In addition "he had seen surveys showing twice as many Americans citing television as their primary source of campaign information as those citing press and periodicals."[6]

Consequently, as soon as the Republican National Convention ended in Chicago, John Kennedy and his staff began turning their attention to the objective of gaining national exposure on television for the Massachusetts senator. As Sorensen writes in his book on Kennedy;

> . . . the Kennedy campaign organization sought every possible use of the medium--obtaining state-wide television for his major address in each state, taping a series of presentations by the candidate on individual issues, showing as commercials selected excerpts from his campaigning in different areas, and making a few nationwide TV addresses, always before enthusiastic audiences instead of a studio camera. The timing of his half-hour shows was carefully selected with an eye to what programs would be displaced, thus displeasing their fans, and what programs would compete for an audience. Five-minute "spot" presentations were also strategically placed at the end of popular shows.[7]

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[5]White, The Making of the President 1960, p. 335.

[6]Sorensen, Kennedy, p. 195

[7]Ibid.

The Kennedy organization ~~also~~ purchased a considerable amount of television time all across the country in order to air a short documentary film of the life of John F. Kennedy. The purpose of the film was to portray John Kennedy to the American voter as a man of many talents and a man with whom they could also identify themselves. The film opened with a shot of a PT boat spraying a white wake through the black night. Its meaning was clear. During the Second World War John F. Kennedy had been a naval war hero. Next the film showed the quiet young man standing in his library holding in his hand the book which won for him the Pulitzer Prize in literature. Again the implication was clear. The young senator was also a brilliant scholar. In the next sequence of shots Kennedy was observed reading to his two-year-old daughter while she sat on his lap. Finally, the film concluded with a direct statement by the Massachusetts Senator on the subject of his devotion to the freedom of America's faith and the virtues and rationale behind the idea and concept of separating church and state.[8]

In the months which followed, over one million dollars were spent by the Kennedy forces for network time alone. In addition every possible offer of free time was utilized. "Invitations to appear on news panel shows,

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[8]White, The Making of the President 1960, p. 129.

at-home-with-the-candidate shows, campaign documentaries and candidate profiles were all promptly accepted."[9]

The Great Debates

Then suddenly on August 24, 1960, President Eisenhower signed a law passed by Congress shortly after the two national conventions had concluded their respective sessions, that suspended Section 315 of the Communications Act (requiring equal time for all fringe party candidates) for the 1960 campaign alone.

Immediately, all three networks approached the two major presidential candidates and their staffs and offered them free time of television for a series of debates. Realizing that he would have everything to gain from a simultaneous exposure with his better known opponent, Kennedy accepted the offer.

For Richard Nixon, however, the decision to debate was not an easy one to reach. Nixon was far better known nationally than his Democratic opponent. He was generally regarded as being more mature and experienced. President Eisenhower and other leading Republicans felt that it would not be to Richard Nixon's advantage to debate John Kennedy and urged him to decline the networks' offer. According to Ted Rogers, one of Nixon's television advisers, Nixon knew that these men were correct. He had once said to Ted, "In

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[9]Sorenson, Kennedy, pp. 195-196.

my case the television debates will hurt me in every case along the way because they will put us on a par together and make us equal in the eyes of the viewers."[10]

Still, as Sorensen points out, Nixon also had reason for self-confidence in debating Kennedy. He had begun his political career in 1946 by outdebating a very able Congressman. In 1952, while running as the Republican vice-presidential candidate with General Eisenhower, he had come under a severe personal attack concerning a certain private political fund which he allegedly maintained. In what became known as the "Checkers" speech, named after Nixon's dog, Richard Nixon answered his critics with one of the most skillful uses of television in the entire campaign. Speaking from his home with both his family and hid dog, "Checkers" at his side, Nixon discussed his financial situation on television with a candor that "transformed Richard M. Nixon from a negative Vice-Presidential candidate, under attack, into a martyr and an asset to Dwight D. Eisenhower's Presidential campaign."[11] This, combined with his impromptu "kitchen debate" with Chairman Khrushchev in Moscow had helped Nixon to receive

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[10]Ted Rogers, quoted from a speech he made at a forum of the Natioanl Academy of Television Arts and Sciences on January 6, 1964, entitled "Television--Political Image Maker."

[11]White, The Making of the President 1960, p. 338.

nationwide attention and "had measurably improved his ratings in the polls."[12]

> With this reputation to defend, with confidence in his ability to best Kennedy, with a desire to reach through the debates the millions of Democrats and independents whose votes he would need, reportedly with an eye to the financial advantages of free television, and mindful that the two National Chairmen had implicitly committed both candidates to accept in the public interest, Nixon felt unable to back away gracefully.[13]

With these events behind him, four days after Kennedy accepted the networks' offer, Nixon also accepted. Quickly there followed a series of meetings between representatives of the two candidates and the spokesmen for the networks at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in New York. At first the networks offered eight hours of free time to the candidates which would take the form of four straight one-hour debates followed by four evenings of joint panel interviews. The Nixon negotiators were opposed to the idea. They felt that Nixon "was the master of the form and one 'sudden-death' debate could eliminate Kennedy with a roundhouse swing."[14] Because they believed Nixon to be the superior debater, They preferred that the two men debate each other without any prepared texts.

The Kennedy negotiators, on the other hand, felt that any increased TV exposure which their candidate could

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[12]Sorensen, Kennedy, p. 196.

[13]Ibid.

[14]White, The Making of the President 1960, p. 339.

get would only be to his advantage. Therefore, they began insisting on at least five televised confrontations. As Kennedy's TV maestro put it, "Every time we get those two fellows on the screen side by side, . . . we're going to gain, and he's going to lose."[15]

Slowly, through numerous discussions, the shape and form of the debates began to emerge. Since both men were anxious to avoid the role of prosecutor but wanted some sort of a sharp division present during the debates, it was decided and agreed upon that there would be a controlled panel of four press interlocutors. Because the Kennedy forces kept insisting upon at least five debates while the Nixon negotiators only wanted three confrontations at most, it was decided through compromise that there would be a series of four one-hour appearances involving all of the television and radio networks. The four debates would take place as follows:

1st debate--CBS, Chicago
2nd debate--NBC, Washington, D.C.
3rd debate--Coast-to-coast, New York-Kennedy, Hollywood-Nixon on ABC
4th debate--ABC, New York

The dates and formats were set as follows:

September 26--subject: domestic policy
format: 8 minute opening statements by each man, questions from a panel of correspondents, and 3-5 minute closing statements.

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[15]Ibid., pp. 339-340.

October 7 and 13 --subject & format: question periods only-- 2-1/2 minutes answers, 1-1/2 minute comments.

October 21 --subject: foreign policy
format: same as September 26.

On September 26, the first of the four "Great Debates" took place at WBBM-TV in Chicago. Since that time countless words, publications and volumes have been written describing and analyzing the events which followed. Yet from out of all of this material, one important conclusion was drawn from almost everyone who had covered this subject in detail. When the TV Debates first began, Richard Nixon "was generally viewed as being the probable winner of the election contest and Kennedy as fighting an uphill battle; when they were over, the positions of the two contestants were reversed."[16] Kennedy's exposure on television opposite his Republican opponent had proved to be the key element in his narrow margin of victory.

> The four debates, and the first in particular played a decisive role in the election results. Nixon knew it. Kennedy knew it. Their advisers and party leaders knew it. Their crowds reflected it. Their polls showed it. The on-the-spot surveys, the post election surveys and the surveys of surveys all showed it. Some seventy million adults, nearly two-thirds of the nation's adult population, watched or listened to the first debate, clearly the largest campaign audience in history. More than four out of five voters saw or heard at least one of the four debates, the average adult saw three, and more than half of all adults watched all four. Those who did not see or hear them soon read or heard about them. They were a primary molder in the public mind of campaign issues and candidate images. They were a primary reason for the increasing interest in the campaign and the record turnout at the polls.

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[16] Ibid., p. 349.

> And they were a primary factor in Kennedy's ultimate electoral victory. . . . Kennedy's sincerity and vitality, in the most televised campaign in history, and in the televised debates in particular, appealed to millions of voters who would otherwise have dismissed him as too young or known nothing about him but his religion.[17]

In 1960 John F. Kennedy clearly established that not only was television an important instrument to reckon with during campaign periods, but, that the use of television during a political campaign could be made to have a very direct bearing upon who wins the election. With his election to the White House, he proved that no longer could men ignore or be indifferent to the utilization of TV during a national campaign. Instead, his narrow margin of victory over Richard Nixon made it quite obvious that in all future elections candidates running for major offices would have to definitely give serious consideration to what effect television might be made to have on their future successes at the polls.

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[17]Sorensen, Kennedy, pp. 197, 213.

PART II

THE MANIPULATION OF THE MEDIUM

CHAPTER VI

PERSUASIVE PRIMARIES

David Ogilvy, well-known advertising pioneer, once wrote, "The use of advertising to sell statesmen is the ultimate vulgarity."[1]

In 1964 most political candidates and their staffs were apparently not the least bit concerned with Mr. Ogilvy's statement. In that year political advertising on television began to assume a new dimension with regard to political campaigning that even David Ogilvy never dreamed possible.

For more than a decade both the American public and political candidates alike had watched as political advertising on television increased with each succeeding campaign. Whereas in 1948 both of the major presidential candidates had declined to utilize television during their respective campaigns, by the conclusion of the 1960 Presidential election, it became obvious to almost every candidate running for a major office that political advertising on television was an absolutely essential part of political campaigning. With the advent of TV spot announcements on behalf of General Eisenhower in 1952, the American voter had, by 1964,

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[1] David Ogilvy, Confessions of An Advertising Man, (New York: Atheneum Press, 1963), p. 160.

reached a point where political commercials had actually become one of the most important factors influencing his vote on election day.

Consequently, when the 1964 Presidential campaign got underway through a series of primary races, voters in the respective state primaries found themselves being bombarded with a barrage of political ads on television that have since become unique in American political history.

Three primary races in particular are worth mentioning because in all three races political advertising on television held the key to victory for three different candidates running for the office of the President of the United States.

In addition, the first of these three primary races is very important, because perhaps for the first time on television, a deliberate attempt was made to distort the truth about one of the candidates in order to assure his victory on election day.

Theodore White has written:

> Presidential primaries are always savage. But the Presidential primaries of 1964 were to exceed in savagery and significance any other in modern politics.
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> . . . The primaries of 1964 were a Republican duel . . . and when the duel was over, the Republican Party was so desperately wounded that its leaders were fitter candidates for political hospitalization than for governmental responsibility.[2]

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[2]Theodore H. White, The Making of the President 1964 (New York: Atheneum Publishers, 1965), p. 98.

At the start of the campaign, two men, Senator Barry Goldwater of Arizona and New York Governor Nelson A. Rockefeller, were vying for the leadership of the Republican party. Each individual had a highly professional organization along with sufficient funds behind him. Each man also knew that the road to his party's presidential nomination was a road which led through a series of presidential primary races. Sixteen states from coast to coast, plus the District of Columbia, had invited these candidates to participate against each other. Yet, of this total, only three states, New Hampshire, Oregon and California were to be selected for a direct confrontation by the candidates themselves. New Hampshire, with its voting date set at March 10th, was to start the campaign rolling.

New Hampshire Republican Primary - 1964

As the New Hampshire Republican primary campaign began in late December and early January, the polls showed that Barry Goldwater was a 3-2 favorite of the approximately 100,000 registered Republicans in that state.[3] A month and a half later, however, the polls showed that Nelson Rockefeller, on the basis of a vigorous personal New Hampshire campaign, was now running neck and neck with the Arizona Senator. Moreover, by mid-February the polls began to indicate an alarming drop in Mr. Goldwater's popularity."[4]

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[3] Ibid., p. 102.

[4] Stephen Shadegg, What Happened to Goldwater (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1965), p. 97.

Meanwhile, a small group of individuals who favored neither man were quietly working to bring about one of the most surprising and interesting political upsets since Harry Truman defeated Thomas Dewey in the 1948 Presidential election. Their chosen candidate to bring about this upset was the U. S. Ambassador to Vietnam, Henry Cabot Lodge, who, incidentally, was not only not interested in becoming his party's nominee, but who was presently residing in Saigon, Vietnam, and was totally unaware of their activities in his behalf.

At the head of this group was Paul D. Grindle, a New England businessman. Working closely with him was David Goldberg, a young Boston lawyer and two twenty-three year old secretaries.

In late December, 1963, the Draft Lodge Committee got underway. Their first move was to open a Lodge-for-President headquarters on State Street in Boston with $300 that they were able to scrape together. Soon afterwards, however, their headquarters was shut down by a Massachusetts law which forbids such self-winding headquarters without a candidate's prior approval.

Not to be discouraged, on January 10th they drove to Concord, New Hampshire, where they rented an empty store for roughly $400, put a deposit down for a telephone, borrowed some furniture and folding chairs from the New Hampshire Republican State Headquarters and once again opened up a Lodge-for-President headquarters.

Returning to Boston, they hired a truck into which they loaded their dismantled plywood partitions from the banned State Street headquarters, their literature, petitions and stationery and then headed back to Concord. Next they hired a signpainter for $162 to paint a huge sign over their headquarters saying Lodge-For-President. Finally, from these offices which were located across from the State Capitol, they began sending out the first of six different mailings urging support for the unsuspecting Henry Cabot Lodge. Their first mailing invited the recipients to write to Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge, Saigon, c/o Concord Headquarters, pledging him their support. Their second mailing effort urged these supporters to try and pick up two additional votes for Mr. Lodge, while their third mailing included a clear sample ballot with fine red markings showing exactly how to write in the name of a candidate on the ballot.

About the same time, Paul Grindle decided to go to New York in hopes of gathering up some old film clips of Lodge together with former President Eisenhower, left over from the 1960 campaign. His trip was an immediate success. For only $750 Paul Grindle "was able to produce a television show that refreshed every memory of Lodge's career, from Lodge as a Lieutenant Colonel in the U. S. Tank Corps, to Lodge of the UN shouting down Russians.[5] Unlike most

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[5]White, The Making of the President 1964, p. 110.

political films, however, this one contained a new element in it: deceit.

In 1960 Dwight Eisenhower had introduced Ambassador Lodge to the Republican National Convention as the Republican candidate for Vice-President. This event had been recorded on film. Grindle, however, decided to use this film clip in a slightly different way. By superimposing a blast of trumpets at just the right moment over the word "Vice" in Eisenhower's introduction, the unsuspecting television viewer was led to believe in this five minute program that the former President was actually advocating the nomination and election of Henry Cabot Lodge for the U. S. Presidency in 1964.[6]

In the last few days before the election, the Lodge people saturated the New Hampshire television market with this five minute program.[7] On Tuesday, March 10th, approximately 89,000 voters made their choice. In one of the most surprising upsets in political history, Henry Cabot Lodge defeated both Barry Goldwater and Nelson Rockefeller with a write-in vote total of some 33,000 votes. With all the votes totaled, the tabulations looked approximately as follows:

HENRY CABOT LODGE	33,000	(write-in votes)
BARRY GOLDWATER	20,700	
NELSON A. ROCKEFELLER	19,500	
RICHARD NIXON	15,600	(write-in votes)

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[6]Shadegg, What Happened to Goldwater, p. 99.

[7]Ibid.

Suddenly, as a direct result of his surprising write-in vote victory in New Hampshire, Henry Cabot Lodge was the number one Republican contender across the nation.

> Lodge's picture was now on the magazine covers across the country; Lodge led every poll from coast to coast. From 19 percent in the polls in January he had become the leading choice of the Republican rank and file in April.[8]

At the same time the Ambassador had captured this distinction without even having to make a single speech in his behalf.

Oregon Republican Primary - 1964

Theodore White has written:

> The purpose of political campaigns is to gain attention first; then, with attention caught, win voters to identify with the candidate's personality or goals.[9]

In the aftermath of the New Hampshire primary victory, Henry Cabot Lodge suddenly found that Republicans all across the country were beginning to shift their support to his bandwagon. He had indeed captured their attention; and, as the pollster Louis Harris discovered when he conducted his first poll in the following and upcoming Oregon primary race, this support was quite substantial:

LODGE	46%
NIXON	17%
GOLDWATER	14%
ROCKEFELLER	13%

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[8] White, The Making of the President 1964, p. 112.

[9] Ibid., p. 121.

It appeared as though Lodge would be an easy victor in Oregon.

Consequently, when the Oregon primary first began to get underway, it was the intention of the Draft-Lodge-supporters to merely duplicate in the Oregon race the same techniques used to win votes for their candidate in New Hampshire. They would combine a direct mailing approach with a thorough saturation of all of the television stations in the state with their five-minute TV film showing former President Eisenhower falsely endorsing Ambassador Lodge for the Presidency.

Shortly before this program was to be aired in Oregon, however, Stephen Shadegg, one of Goldwater's campaign directors, got wind of their plans. Immediately, he sent a telegram to former President Dwight Eisenhower in Palm Springs asking him "either to authorize or condemn the use of that particular five-minute film."[10]

Within twenty-four hours Mr. Shadegg received the following reply from the former President which Shadegg in turn quickly released to newspaper reporters.

> Repeatedly I have expressed publicly my high esteem for each of the individuals prominently mentioned as possible nominees for the presidency in 1964. I respect each and oppose none. The film in question I have never seen, nor have I been contacted in any fashion in respect to its use prior to your communication. If it expressed my high respect for Cabot Lodge, it is accurate and I do not object to that esteen being reaf-firmed in any place in America. If it suggests

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[10] Shadegg, What Happened to Goldwater, p. 114.

> that I have given any public indication of a preference for any person over any other in the current contest, then it is a definite misrepresentation.
>
> (Signed) Dwight D. Eisenhower[11]

Immediately, the Lodge people proceeded to cancel all scheduled showings of the film. Quickly, they tried to re-edit the film so that they could meet new air dates and still keep the momentum for their candidate rolling along. But, as the newspaper stories concerning Shadegg's press release began reaching the eyes of the Oregon voters, suddenly the pollsters began noticing a shift in Republican support away from the U. S. Ambassador to Vietnam. Shadegg's release had exposed the Draft-Lodge-Movement for what it really was, "a shabby attempt to make Oregon voters think that Eisenhower was supporting Lodge in 1964,"[12] and to try and transfer the Republicans' fondness for the late President to their candidate. From the professional, doctor, lawyer, and junior-executive level on down, the Lodge vote began to crumble. "From a 46 percent lead in early April the Lodge margin began to fade . . . to a final 35 percent a few days before the primary."[13]

At the same time, however, the pollsters began to note a trend in support of New York Governor Nelson Rockefeller. Underlying this shift in Republican support were

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[11] Ibid., pp. 114-15.

[12] Ibid.

[13] White, The Making of the President 1964, p. 115.

several factors. On April 20th, approximately three and one half weeks before the Oregon Republicans went to the polls, Barry Goldwater decided to cancel the remainder of his Oregon schedule and to concentrate his efforts on winning the California primary race.

When Governor Rockefeller heard of Goldwater's decision to withdraw from any further personal campaigning in Oregon, his reaction was immediate. Almost overnight he began doubling his schedule of personal appearances throughout the state. At the same time he arranged for one of New York's best political technicians, Robert Price, the permanent campaign manager of then New York Congressman John Lindsay and later New York City Mayor, to set up and develop with unlimited funds and all the personnel he needed, a direct mailing campaign in Oregon that would be of statewide proportions and which eventually far exceeded Paul Grindle's effort in New Hampshire.

In addition, he began undertaking a series of appearances on television, both paid and unpaid, which reached such proportions that they "totally dominated the Oregon home screens for the forty-eight hours before voting."[14] His approach was single and direct. The candidate merely confronted the TV camera and spoke to the voters directly on the issues and subjects that he felt were important to them. At the end of each appearance the New York governor

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[14] Ibid., p. 114.

would conclude by stating with all the sincerity at his command that the reason the Oregon voters should support him at the polls was because, "I'm the only man who cares enough about your votes to come to Oregon."[15]

On May 15th the Oregon voters rewarded "the man who cared enough to come" and the results once again startled the nation:

NELSON A. ROCKEFELLER	94,000
HENRY CABOT LODGE	79,000
BARRY GOLDWATER	50,000
RICHARD NIXON	48,000

By virtue of his victory in Oregon, the entire nation now turned their attention from Henry Cabot Lodge to Nelson A. Rockefeller. "With his Oregon victory he overnight scored through on an audience that his unlimited resources had hitherto been unable to reach."[16] As one woman expressed this idea to Mr. White at an airport rally, "Oh, I guess I made up my mind after the Oregon election. I started to listen to him on television and then I read what he said."[17]

California Republican Primary - 1964

In 1964 when Nelson A. Rockefeller entered the California primary race immediately on the heels of his Oregon victory, it seemed as though he was well on his way to victory again. Intensive polling by Louis Harris

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[15] Shadegg, What Happened to Goldwater, p. 113.

[16] White, The Making of the President 1964, p. 121.

[17] Ibid.

samplers had recorded a tremendous upswing in support for the New York governor. Whereas, before his victory in Oregon, Mr. Rockefeller was shown to have the support of only 39 percent of the Republican voters in California, within the first five days after the Oregon election, the governor had increased this percentage to roughly 47 percent. On the other hand, during the same period of time Senator Goldwater's support had fallen from approximately 48 percent down to 36 percent.[18]

Yet despite all early indications of a Rockefeller victory, on Tuesday, June 2, California Republicans elected Arizona Senator Barry Goldwater to be their choice as the Republican party's presidential candidate.

Although it is impossible to fully understand all of the factors which brought about this apparent upset, nevertheless, a brief study of the television campaign strategy and tactics of each candidate is rather enlightening.

Ostensibly, it had been the intention of the Rockefeller forces to utilize television in the same manner as they had successfully done during the Oregon campaign. Thus, as the primary campaign opened in California, viewers all across the state were bombarded with political spots on TV supporting the New York governor.

Meanwhile, over at the Goldwater camp, the Senator's California organization was still trying to put together a

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[18] Ibid., p. 122.

meaningful strategy. Earlier in the year, former U. S. Senator William Knowland, then Chairman of the California Committee for Goldwater, had named Bernard Brennan, a Los Angeles attorney, to direct the southern California Goldwater effort. At the same time he also hired the firm of Baus and Ross to handle the public relations and advertising effort of the campaign. At first it appeared that Knowland had made a wise decision in employing these men to work for Goldwater's election in California. Herb Baus had successfully directed more than 70 political campaigns while Bernard Brennan had been the manager of the Nixon effort which carried California in 1960.

However, as election day approached, it became apparent to some observers, in particular Dick Kleindienst, director of field operations for the Goldwater for President Committee, that all was not going well in California. On a fact finding trip through this most Western state, Kleindienst discovered that, unfortunately, a smoldering feud had developed between Baus and Brennan preventing them from working well together, and, as a result of this, the entire California organization was unable to function efficiently.

In a report made to the Arizona Senator approximately 18 days before the California primary, Dick Kleindienst said:

> I told Goldwater and Burch that if the election were being held that day, we would lose California by at least two hundred thousand votes. . . . Our

billboards, radio, TV, newspaper advertising just didn't match the smooth professional job the Rockefeller people were doing.[19]

At the same time Kleindienst proposed that in order to avert a sure Goldwater defeat at the hands of Governor Rockefeller, Goldwater should send his political team from Washington to California and put Dean Burch in charge of this last chance effort. Quickly, the Senator decided in favor of this proposal. On Monday morning, May 18th, the group from Washington held their first meeting with Herb Baus, Henry Salvatori, the California finance chairman, Bernard Brennan and Dudley Thompson, Brennan's administrative assistant.

Stephen Shadegg reports the events of that meeting.

> Our first concern was radio and TV spots. Thompson and Baus assured us that adequate time had been purchased, but when we asked what messages they intended to use, their response was shocking. First Thompson said they had made some. Then he said they were in the process of making them. Then he said they were having the scripts prepared. Baus maintained he had submitted a number of concepts to Brennan for final approval and had been told that Neal Reagan of the McCann, Erickson agency was handling production.
>
> It all added up to exactly nothing. We were two weeks and one day away from the primary which would spell success or failure. The local TV was saturated with arguments on behalf of the New York governor--and we had nothing.
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> . . . Baus and Ross had purchased three half-hours on the best stations in California to be used the final week of the campaign. But no thought had been given to program content.[20]

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[19] Shadegg, What Happened to Goldwater, pp. 119-20.

[20] Ibid., pp. 121-22.

Immediately the group from Washington began laying plans. First, newspaper ads were laid out. Next, teams of writers were brought in to prepare more effective TV spots for the senator. Although the Arizona Senator's TV spots prepared by Fuller, Smith and Ross were sufficient in number and length, they consisted "almost entirely of excerpts from Goldwater campaign speeches in New Hampshire."[21] As a result it was decided to send camera crews into the southern California streets to interview citizens and record the questions they would like to have the senator answer. The best filmed questions were then edited together with the senator's answers to form the nucleus of his final TV presentation to the Republican voters in California.

Yet, despite all this activity, on Friday before election day, it still appeared as though Rockefeller was to be the eventual winner in California. According to pollster Lou Harris, Rockefeller had 49 percent of the vote to 40 percent for Barry Goldwater with the remaining 18 percent undecided.

Then came the turning point of the campaign, the final weekend. Throughout the primary campaign in California the Rockefeller forces had continued to saturate the TV viewer with paid political spots favoring the New York Governor and attacking the Arizona Senator. Suddenly, on the weekend prior to June 2, primary day, Rockefeller's

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[21] Ibid.

campaign managers "grew gun-shy of any last-minute drenching of press, radio and television with a planned, paid, terminal barrage such as Price has orchestrated in Oregon."[22] Since their campaign was being tagged as the millionaire's campaign by the Goldwater leaders, the Rockefeller campaign managers felt that any such intensive TV coverage during these last few days would only serve to harm their candidate. This was just the break the Goldwater forces needed.

On Saturday afternoon, May 30, Nelson A. Rockefeller, Jr. was born, thus throwing attention onto the governor's marital situation. In 1961 Rockefeller's first wife had divorced him. Two years later the New York Governor had remarried Margaretta Fitler Murphy, better known as "Happy." The new Mrs. Rockefeller had also in turn just divorced her first husband. At the time Rockefeller's advisors had warned the governor prior to his marriage that he would be "putting his chances of nomination at an extreme risk"[23] by remarrying this woman. But Nelson A. Rockefeller was not to be daunted; and, on May 4, 1963, they were married.

Although it is impossible to know for sure just what effect this remarriage had on the voters in California, Lou Harris reported that on the Sunday after the birth of the Rockefeller baby, his pollsters recorded a seven point decrease in support for the governor and an increase of equal

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[22] White, The Making of the President, p. 124.

[23] Ibid., p. 80.

proportions in the undecided vote. Apparently, some of the voters were not so sure any more that Rockefeller was the man of the hour.

At the same time, while the Rockefeller forces were withdrawing their mass media barrage, and California Republicans were beginning to re-examine their political views with regard to the two major candidates, the Goldwater strategists suddenly laid down one of the most lavishly financed efforts ever seen.

> On Sunday, in the Los Angeles Times alone, one of the most expensive advertising media in the nation, [the Goldwater supporters] laid down four and a half full pages of display, exhortation and message in the weekend edition--with parallel efforts on TV and radio. (The Rockefellers bought only one page in the Times.)[24]

Utilizing the same principle of TV saturation during the last few days of the campaign as Paul Grindle had done in New Hampshire and Nelson Rockefeller had done in Oregon, the Goldwater forces ignited the spark that was to eventually carry their leader to the leadership of the Republican party in 1964. With what seemed to be a limitless treasury, the Goldwater Republicans literally saturated the state's television stations with multiple spots favoring the Arizona Senator. Pollster Lou Harris reported the effect of this effort as follows:

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[24] Ibid., p. 126.

FRIDAY (before voting)		MONDAY (after the TV barrage)	
Rockefeller	49%	Rockefeller	44%
Goldwater	40%	Goldwater	44%
Undecided	11%	Undecided	12%

On June 2nd, a majority of Republican voters in California clinched the primary race for the Western Senator by a margin of approximately 68,000 votes out of a total of slightly over two million votes cast. But even more important was the fact that this victory, Goldwater's only victory in a contested primary, was to be the springboard from which he was to secure the Republican presidential nomination in 1964.

CHAPTER VII

MADISON AVENUE TAKES OVER

On November 8, 1960, John F. Kennedy was elected the 35th President of the United States. Historians record that the Massachusetts Senator received 303 electoral votes as opposed to 219 electoral votes for Richard Nixon. At the same time, it is recorded that Mr. Kennedy received only 112,881 more votes than Mr. Nixon out of a total of almost 69 million popular votes cast.

In retrospect there is little doubt that John F. Kennedy would not have been elected had it not been for television. In his book, With Kennedy, Pierre Salinger writes:

> Without television John F. Kennedy could not have won the election. [Even JFK agreed on this point.]
> . . . "We wouldn't have had a prayer without that gadget," the candidate told me one night after watching a replay of one of the TV debates.[1]

Yet, few people realize that if only 4,500 voters in Illinois and 28,000 voters in Texas had changed their minds, the sum of their 32,500 votes would have elected Richard Nixon president by causing the combined fifty-one electoral

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[1]Pierre Salinger, With Kennedy (New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1966), p. 54.

votes from these two states to shift over to Mr. Nixon, thus giving him an electoral majority of two votes over Senator Kennedy.[2]

Presidential Campaign - 1964

In 1964 Lyndon B. Johnson was not about to take any chances on losing either Illinois or Texas, let alone the Presidential election. Despite the fact that the Gallup Poll showed him well ahead of his Republican opponent, Arizona Senator Barry Goldwater, from the very start of the campaign,[3] Lyndon Johnson let it be known that he intended to spare no expense in order to secure his victory and the victory of his party in November. Working through the organization of the Democratic National Committee under the leadership of Lloyd Wright as its media coordinator or, in corporate terms, advertising manager, Lyndon Johnson placed the weight of his office behind what was to become the most controversial political television campaign ever prepared for any candidate running for elective office.

Background

Prior to his most untimely death in the fall of 1963, John F. Kennedy had long been an admirer of the Volkswagen ads "Think small" prepared by the New York advertising

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[2]White, The Making of the President 1960, p. 420.

[3]George Gallup, "It's Johnson, 61-32, On Eve of Election," New York Herald Tribune, November 2, 1964.

agency of Doyle, Dane, Bernbach.[4] Recognizing the importance of good advertising during a political campaign, approximately six weeks before his death President Kennedy had instructed the Democratic National Committee to contact this agency for the purpose of preparing and handling for the Democratic party, all media advertising relating to the 1964 Presidential campaign.

Consequently, when President Kennedy's successor, Vice-President Johnson, was finally able to turn his attention to the forthcoming campaign, he discovered that contracts had been signed and that preparations had already begun.

Doyle, Dane, Bernbach had, at the start of their preparations, hired Jim Graham, a 41-year-old account executive from Benton and Bowles to head up this, their first political account. Although likewise possessing no prior political advertising experience but merely a willingness to learn, Jim Graham and his group immediately plunged themselves "into extensive, retroactive, in-depth research to familiarize themselves, not only with client needs, but also with the historical past and political present."[5] The results of their research and study were perhaps best summed up by Mr. Graham when he said, "I learned more in two months

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[4] "Road to the Presidency," Sponsor, January 18, 1965, p. 27.

[5] Ibid.

about American history, political institutions and government than I had in the previous 40 years."[6]

Shortly after their starting date of April 15, it was decided after consultation with the Democratic National Committee that the main spearhead of the entire campaign would be the agency's use of television. Television, the agency group felt, was "the most impressive way to reach the greatest number of people."[7] Thus, in the following months, almost the entire national advertising budget of approximately $12,000,000 was poured into radio and television. For perhaps the first time during any political campaign, "no print advertising was included in the budget of the Democratic National Committee."[8] Although an advertising kit was prepared by the agency for use by local groups supporting the Democratic ticket in local newspapers and magazines, the local groups themselves had to pay for all such advertising costs. The public and private reaction to this unusual campaign strategy was not long in coming.

In 1964, as a direct result of the 1960 Great Debates, it was generally assumed by the American public that television would finally realize its full potential as the outstanding communications medium for an honest discussion and debate of the key issues facing the voter in that year's

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[6] Ibid.

[7] Ibid.

[8] Ibid.

election. However, by October of 1964, it became quite obvious to most political observers and analysists that television's millennium was nowhere in sight. As feature writer Mike Mosettig wrote in an article in Variety magazine shortly before election day:

> For broadcasters and particularly the networks, the Presidential campaign has been marked by a continuing struggle to avoid being dragged into the gutter with the politicians. If the 1960 campaign, with its Great Debates and opportunities for public service broadcasting, brought the industry up from its lowest point of public esteem, this year's exercise in vote pursuit could drop it right back down again.[9]

Lyndon Johnson's Strategy

Early in the campaign, President Johnson and his entire group of advisors decided that it would not be to his benefit to debate the Republican candidate before a nationwide TV audience. Mr. Johnson was the President and Mr. Goldwater was merely a U. S. Senator. To appear with the Senator on any kind of a debating platform would obviously be to the Senator's advantage, since it would appear to put the two men on an equal footing with each other despite their respective offices. In addition, because the President was already well ahead of his opponent according to the pollsters, he therefore had everything to lose and nothing to gain by debating his opponent. As a result, it

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[9]Mike Mosettig, "Networks Fear Viewers' Backlash Via Eye-Gouging Political Campaign," Variety, October 28, 1964, p. 25.

was decided that the bulk of the television time purchased would be devoted to television commercials "mainly of a duration of one minute, with a good number of special five-minute spots."[10] Since "this President was not at his best in a half-hour face-the-nation address,"[11] the agency booked only five half-hour programs featuring speeches by President Johnson and eventually cut their Election Eve telecast from one hour to thirty minutes.

Immediately, "from Washington, via Moyers, came one clear directive: Attack, jolt Goldwater, put him on the defensive from the beginning."[12] At a top level meeting it was decided that the Democratic television effort would concentrate its emphasis on three major points, Nuclear Warfare, Social Security, and Anti-Goldwater Republicanism.[13] Quickly a series of television commercials were prepared dealing with all three subjects.

The Daisy Commercial

On September 7, 1964, television viewers across the country who were watching the movie David and Bathsheba saw "history being made as they watched probably the most

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[10] Pete Hamill, "When the Client Is a Candidate," New York Times Magazine, October 25, 1964, p. 31.

[11] White, The Making of the President 1964, p. 356.

[12] Ibid., p. 322.

[13] "Road to the Presidency," Sponsor, January 18, 1965, p. 27.

controversial TV commercial of all time."[14] It was the first of the campaign commercials which Doyle, Dane, Bernbach had prepared for the Democratic National Committee.

As the commercial faded up from black, viewers watched as a little girl with wind-tossed hair was shown in a sunny field picking daisies. As she plucked each petal off of one of the daisies, she would count to herself. At the same time in the background on the sound track, coming in stronger and stronger, a male voice could be heard counting backwards, "Ten, nine, eight, seven . . . down to zero." Suddenly, there was a dissolve through from the little girl to an atomic testing site where the entire scene was just as swiftly emerged in a gigantic atomic explosion. As the deadly atomic mushroom cloud slowly began rising, the voice of Lyndon Baines Johnson was heard saying, "These are the stakes. To make a world in which all of God's children can live or go into the dark. We must either love each other, or we must die."[15] As the screen dissolved to black with a white title card reading, "Vote for President Johnson on November 3," the count-down voice returned saying, "The stakes are too high for you to stay home."[16]

Although the filmed commercial did not mention either Goldwater or the Republicans specifically, still, "the

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[14] Hamill, "When the Client Is a Candidate," p. 31.

[15] Ibid., p. 32.

[16] Ibid.

shriek of Republican indignation fastened the bomb message on them more tightly than any calculation could have expected."[17]

Overnight, newspapers were bombarded with letters from angry Republicans and a few from some dismayed Democrats and numerous calls were made to television stations in protest. Just as quickly, mail began piling up in the offices of the Democratic National Committee in Washington.[18]

The Ice Cream Cone Commercial

But even before all of these letters of protest could be opened, ten days later another startling commercial suddenly appeared over the airwaves. This time the camera revealed a beautiful little girl innocently licking an ice cream cone, "with a gentle, motherly voice in the background explaining about Strontium-90 and pointing out that Barry Goldwater was against the Test Ban Treaty."[19] The voice said, "Children shouldn't have strontium 90. . . . But there's a man who wants to be President and if he's elected they might start testing all over again."[20]

From all over the country voices of protest and outrage could be heard from both Republicans and Democrats

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[17]White, The Making of the President 1964, p. 322.

[18]Hamill, "When the Client Is a Candidate," p. 33.

[19]White, The Making of the President 1964, p. 322.

[20]Hamill, "When the Client Is a Candidate," p. 33.

alike demanding that this kind of political advertising cease at once. Even Democratic Vice-Presidential candidate Hubert Humphrey was moved to say that he thought the commercial was "unfortunate."[21] The little girl suddenly became part of a TIME magazine cover on "The Nuclear Issue," and nearly three weeks after its first showing, Republican candidate Barry Goldwater could contain himself no longer. He said:

> The homes of America are horified and the intelligence of Americans is insulted by weird television advertising by which this Administration threatens the end of the world unless all-wise Lyndon is given the nation for his very own.[22]

Over on Madison Avenue, however, Bill Bernbach, president of Doyle, Dane, Bernbach did not agree:

> The little girl commercials were deplored on absolutely erroneous grounds. The central theme of this campaign--whether you like it or not--is nuclear responsibility. Perhaps that theme is not a tasteful one; there is no way to make death pleasant. But I am satisfied that our presentation of the issue was done dramatically, truthfully, and with taste. We build an agency on taste.[23]

The Social Security Commercial

At the same time, however, the agency decided not to rerun either of these two commercials. Instead, they began airing a new commercial which "probably had greater penetration than any other paid political use of television except

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[21] Ibid.

[22] Ibid.

[23] Ibid.

for Richard M. Nixon's Checkers broadcast in 1952."[24] The commercial focused on a closeup of a Social Security card as the fingers of two hands tore it in half and a voice was heard saying, "Goldwater has said he would change the system. Even his running mate admits that the voluntary plan would wreck your Social Security."[25]

The Poverty Commercial

As Republican furor and indignation began mounting once again, four more commercials appeared on television. The first commercial showed the face of a sad little boy as the voice in the background said, "Millions of families are caught in circumstances beyond their control. Their children will live lives of poverty unless the cycle is broken."[26] The implication was clear. President Johnson not only had experience in dealing with problems related to poverty, but he had already voiced his concern and determination to end poverty in this country through his War on Poverty programs. Therefore, the President should be returned to office to see these programs through to their completion.

The Eastern Seaboard Commercial

A second commercial showed a view of the United States in which the country had been cut in two near the

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[24] White, The Making of the President 1964, p. 323.

[25] Hamill, "When the Client Is a Candidate," p. 36.

[26] Ibid.

Eastern seaboard and was floating out to sea. The sound track stated; "Goldwater said: 'Sometimes I think this country would be better off if we could just saw off the Eastern seaboard and let it float out to sea.'"[27] Here the suggestion was that Goldwater had little use or respect for the Republican leadership in the East such as Rockefeller, Scranton, Javits, etc. Consequently, he, Goldwater, wasn't even the unanimous choice of his own party.

The San Francisco Poster Commercial

The third commercial attempted to divide the Republican party by playing on anti-Republican elements within the party itself. The commercial displayed a shot of a Rockefeller poster lying on the convention floor in San Francisco next to the word President and covered by the usual convention confetti. The voice on the sound track stated, "Remember him? Governor Rockefeller. He said Barry Goldwater's positions can 'spell disaster for the party and for the country.'"[28]

The Tennessee Valley Authority Commercial

A fourth commercial quoted "Goldwater's repeated opposition to public power projects like T.V.A. and his advocacy of a huge Federal irrigation project in his home state of Arizona."[29]

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[27] Ibid.

[28] Ibid.

[29] Ibid.

In the weeks which followed it became quite apparent that Doyle, Dane's advertising campaign was placing a heavy toll on the Republican candidate's effectiveness with the voters. "Over and over again, as Goldwater traveled, he would be brought up short by local Republican chieftains insisting that he must explain himself again to their people on the bomb issue and Social Security."[30]

At first, the Arizona Senator tried to ignore these Democratic charges as being irresponsible and ridiculous. The more he traveled, however, the more it became apparent that the charges and labels were not to be ignored. The Johnson television spots were exploiting the fears and the ignorance of the voters and quite successfully, too. They had succeeded in fastening onto Barry Goldwater a series of cartoon images that the voters had come to accept as representing the true image and personality of the Republican candidate. Despite the efforts of some of the best brains throughout the Republican party to negate these cartoons, no one had a solution. As Denison Kitchel, Goldwater's campaign manager stated:

> When I went to bed, if ever I could have just a few hours sleep, I would lie awake asking myself at night, how do you get at the bomb issue? My candidate had been branded a bomb-dropper--and I couldn't figure out how to lick it. And the advertising people, people who could sell anything, toothpaste or soap or automobiles--when it came

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[30] White, The Making of the President 1964, p. 323.

to a political question like this, they couldn't offer anything either.[31]

Conversation at Gettysburg

Suddenly, it was hastily decided that the best way in which the bomb issue could be put to rest once and for all was for Barry Goldwater to journey to Eisenhower's farm in Gettysburg and on a nationwide television broadcast receive the personal endorsement of the former President who many at that time considered to be one of the most popular figures alive. "There was no script prepared; it was to be an ad-lib, off-the-cuff serious discussion of the great issues of the campaign."[32]

Unfortunately, the program never quite left the ground. To begin with, the most important figure in the program, President Eisenhower, was entirely negative to the idea and therefore was very reluctant to become involved in any such broadcast. Although the elder statesman did finally consent to appear with the Arizona Senator, there never appeared throughout the entire half-hour video taped program any crisp, direct, unequivocal declaration by Eisenhower in support of the Goldwater candidacy. Instead, "there emerged a dreary half-hour, carved out of their conversation, which spoke only to those Republicans whose loyalty caused them to tune in."[33]

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[31] Ibid., p. 330.

[32] Shadegg, What Happened to Goldwater, p. 248.

[33] White, The Making of the President 1964, p. 330.

As the program opened, the television camera revealed the two Republicans casually walking across the farm, chatting with each other. It began with Eisenhower saying, "Well, Barry, you've been campaigning now for two or three weeks, how do you like it? And how does it seem to be going for you?"[34]

By the end of the program Ike had spoken sixteen times, while Goldwater had spoken some fifteen times. Four times the President began his speeches with a qualifying "well," while Goldwater started six of his speeches in that fashion. At one point in the program Eisenhower was even heard to remark to the Senator that any talk concerning Goldwater's desire to use atomic bombs was pure "tommyrot."[35]

Still, the blame for the failure of the program to achieve its stated objective did not entirely rest with the Arizona Senator. Frequently, during the taping session, Barry Goldwater was aware that all was not going well and tried to remedy the situation. Goldwater's campaign photographer at the scene described one such event in particular.

> The Senator was very distressed and at one point he got up and was trying to get across to the crew, Chuck Lichenstein [one of his chief campaign writers] in particular, that the General was missing the point, that he didn't like the take. All he got back from them was the typical Madison Avenue "It's okay, don't worry about it"--the soft-soap business, and they kept pushing him back, giving the impression that he was wrong, that they were right, and yet he knew he was right.

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[34]Shadegg, What Happened to Goldwater, p. 248.

[35]White, The Making of the President 1964, p. 330.

> The professional director took his orders from Baroody's men, and no one had the courage to say to Eisenhower, "Mr. President, we are not getting the point across, this is a political film, let's try again and make the dialogue more to the point and more positive."[36]

The following evening, September 23, "Conversation At Gettysburg" was released to the nation. For those who viewed it, the program was meaningless.

> . . . when Goldwater finished this broadcast, the nation still did not know how he felt about atomic bombs--except that Eisenhower thought well of him.
> . . . It was the kind of program that was totally meaningless because it merely editorialized rather than exposed.[37]

There were no hard questions and likewise there were no solid answers.

Furthermore, it was put together so quickly that it received little advanced publicity either on TV or in the press. Consequently, few Americans tuned it in because they didn't even know it was on the air. The Nielsen audience measurement showed the following results:

1)	Petticoat Junction	27.4
2)	Peyton Place	25.0
3)	Conversation at Gettysburg	8.6 [38]

Meanwhile, as the Presidential campaign entered its final stages, reports began reaching the Democratic strategy group to the effect that "generally, people were afraid of Goldwater not only because of the bomb but for all sorts of

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[36] Shadegg, What Happened to Goldwater, p. 248.

[37] White, The Making of the President 1964, p. 330.

[38] Ibid.

reasons--that he was kind of radical."[39] It did not take the Doyle Dane people long to realize that if they could make this label stick on their Republican opponent, victory in November would be assured. Still the question remained: how could they deliver the final crushing blow?

The White House Attacks

After a series of strategy meetings, it was decided that the President himself would lead the final assault by taping a series of commercials attacking certain ideas attributed to Senator Goldwater relating to the use of atomic bombs in Vietnam, his so-called desire to end Social Security and his proposal to sell the Tennessee Valley Authority. It was further agreed to throw the full weight of the office of the Presidency behind these speeches by taping them at the White House.

In late September the Doyle Dane group contacted Tele-tape Productions in New York and arranged for them to travel one of their mobile units to Washington, D. C. to prepare for a series of taping sessions with the President at the White House. On Friday, September 25, 1964, several members of Tele-tape's technical and production staff, including this writer, flew to Washington to meet with members of the Democratic National Committee and the Doyle Dane production group in order to conduct a pre-production survey

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[39] Ibid.

of the White House. There at the White House discussions were held on the appropriate setting in which to tape the President.

One suggestion was to set up the TV cameras in the Cabinet Room in the attempt to dramatize the improtance of electing to office a man whose leadership over such Cabinet meetings would be equal to the many historically important and crucial decisions which the men who met in the room are continually called upon to make.

A second idea was to seat the President on a couch in the informal setting suggested near the fireplace in the Presidential office. However, after careful consideration it was decided to tape the President seated behind his desk in order to re-emphasize the importance of this office and to visually suggest to the viewer that this was the logical habitat of Lyndon Baines Johnson.

On Saturday morning, October 3, 1964, Tele-tape began setting up its cameras in the White House office for what was to become the first in a series of taping sessions with the President. At precisely one o'clock in the afternoon the President entered his office, sat down behind his desk, and began taping a series of three to five minute speeches previously written and typed onto a teleprompter. One of these speeches is best remembered, according to Theodore White, because "it was the best summation by the staff planners of what their Democratic Party had to say

about the candidate of the opposition: that he was a radical."[40] It tried to answer the question that the Senator had raised: Was this quarter century of American experience really so bad? Had America failed?

Accordingly, Mr. Johnson replied to the nation:

> We must decide whether we will move ahead by building on the solid structure created by forward-looking men of both parties over the past thirty years.
>
> Our prosperity is not just good luck . . . it rests on the basic belief that the work of free individuals makes a nation--and it is the job of government to help them do the best they can . . .
>
> Today our whole approach to these problems is under attack.
>
> We are now told that we, the people, acting through government, should withdraw from education, from public power, from agriculture, from urban renewal and from a host of other vital programs. We are now told that we should end Social Security as we know it, sell TVA, strip labor unions of many of their gains, and terminate all farm subsidies.
>
> . . . This is a radical departure from the historic and basic currents of American thought and action. It would shatter the foundation on which our hopes for the future rest. Too many have worked too hard and too long to let this happen now.
>
> . . . The choice is yours.[41]

Republicans Fight Back

In the closing weeks of October the Republicans tried desperately to counteract this charge. In a nationwide TV program entitled "America Asks Senator Barry Goldwater," the Arizona Senator was taped sitting in a studio set in front of a rear screen upon which was projected a series of film clips of so-called typical Americans asking Mr. Goldwater

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[40] Ibid., p. 356.

[41] Ibid., p. 357.

questions to which the candidate would respond in an ad-lib fashion. So poorly produced was this program that it "almost brought the campaign to a grinding halt."[42] The questions had not been scripted, some of the Senator's answers were far too lengthy and in general all of the questions raised had already been adequately covered in his previous speeches. As a result the entire program was disastrously dull and boring from start to finish.

Still, the Republicans continued to fight back. On October 9, 20, 21, 22, and 23, they purchased network time for their candidate to express his views on the subjects of the job of the Presidency, morality in government, the changes going on in the leadership in the Soviet Union, the problem of civil rights and the Senator's position with regard to Social Security. By now it was too late. In addition to being poorly organized, the programs were again poorly publicized and consequently, most Americans never even saw the broadcasts. The reason for this was a simple one.

Early in the campaign Ralph Cordiner, once Chairman of the Board of General Electric, but then Goldwater's finance chairman, agreed with Senator Goldwater that the '64 campaign was going to be run on a balanced budget and that by the end of the campaign they would end up in the black financially. Thus, Mr. Cordiner insisted that money

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[42] Shadegg, What Happened to Goldwater, p. 249.

for campaigning should not be spent until it was raised. Unfortunately, however, Mr. Cordiner was not aware that major campaigns cannot be run under this system. This is because political contributions almost always are never received by the respective headquarters in September when the money is most needed. Instead, it is generally not until late October and early November that money comes pouring in as "emotions heat the common people and the arms of big contributors are twisted to breaking."[43]

When, at the beginning of the campaign, Mr. Cordiner discovered that network time had been booked well into October, he immediately insisted that these advanced time spots be cancelled, since at that time the headquarters did not have sufficient funds to pay for these time slots. The effect of this decision, however, he did not realize until it was too late. When finally, in late October, money came pouring into Republican national headquarters like confetti and a desperate effort was made to reinstate these time spots, he discovered that it was impossible. In short, the Republicans had now been pre-empted, and in many cases by the Democrats. Not only could they not buy time for their programs, but, they couldn't even buy any time on the air to publicize the few programs that they had already purchased with their limited funds.

When they did manage to purchase time for an election eve telecast, again the program was so poorly thought and

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[43] White, The Making of the President 1964, p. 318.

planned out that as Stephen Shadegg has written, "It could not have persuaded anyone, anywhere to switch from Johnson to Goldwater."[44]

Although Ralph Cordiner did manage to finish the campaign with the most historic record for a financial chairman: the largest surplus in dollars ever shown by any financial chairman, he did manage to also set the record for "the largest deficit in votes and offices lost too."[45]

On November 3rd, 1964, Lyndon Baines Johnson was elected the 36th President of the United States by the greatest margin and the greatest percentage (61 percent) that any President had ever drawn from the American people.

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[44]Shadegg, What Happened to Goldwater, p. 252.

[45]White, The Making of the President 1964, p. 319.

CHAPTER VIII

APATHY SPELLS DEFEAT

Murray B. Levin, nationally known opinion researcher and political analyst, has written:

> The rational Candidate, like the rational businessman, will attempt to utilize his scarce resources--time, money, and manpower--as efficiently as possible. He wants to receive the maximum number of votes for a given amount of time, a given amount of money, a given number of man-hours. He must make every minute, every bit of paid and volunteer work count. If his only goal during a campaign is to increase the size of his vote, he will weigh every strategic gambit solely in terms of which is most likely to gain the largest number of votes or lose the fewest--moral considerations notwithstanding.[1]

Today many candidates have failed to come to terms with the relationship of television to politics. This point was dramatically illustrated by Dean Burch, former Chairman of the Republican National Committee in 1964, in an article he wrote for the Saturday Evening Post entitled, "Presidential Campaigns Are a Sham."[2]

In 1964 Lyndon B. Johnson defeated Republican candidate Barry Goldwater by "the largest percentage of the total popular vote of any candidate in United States

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[1]Murray B. Levin, Kennedy Campaigning (Boston: Beacon Press, 1966), p. 114.

[2]Dean Burch, "Presidential Campaigns Are A Sham," Saturday Evening Post, March 27, 1965, p. 12.

history."[3] Although many Republicans were not surprised by Mr. Johnson's victory, some men such as Dean Burch were highly critical of the way in which the campaign was run.

> The presidential campaign of 1964 was a mockery of the democratic process. At best, it was a waste of time, money and energy. At worst, it was an absolute sham. The blame for this must be shared by the two great political parties, the candidates and the managers for both sides--though I am convinced that none of us on either side wanted it that way. All of us were only doing what comes naturally--following outmoded, ineffective, irrational but traditional patterns. These made of the presidential contest a nine-week marathod bicycle derby, driving the candidates to the point of physical exhaustion while they whizzed past the real issues.
>
> . . . In early October we managed to reschedule an entire Monday of the [Vice-presidential candidate on Republican ticket] Miller itinerary so that he could calmly tape some important television shows--but he was so exhausted he couldn't get out of bed.
>
> . . . We ask the candidates to travel constantly, sleep when they can find time, live out of suitcases endure unbelievable fatigue--and then we expect these worn and harried men to communicate to us their deepest thoughts on issues of great complexity.
>
> . . . At one point both Goldwater and Miller reached the conclusion, independently, that the campaign grind was senseless and ineffective. [Yet] At a strategy meeting their protests were hooted down by those who cried that this was "the way it has always been done."[4]

According to Mr. Burch, one of the major reasons why Mr. Johnson's plurality was so great was the failure of the Republican leaders and managers to make more effective use of television during the campaign. As one writer put it, "They've (Republicans) spent thousands and thousands on damn fool ads in the papers,--A full page of fine print that

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[3]"Unofficial Tally Gives Johnson 61%," New York Times, December 12, 1964.

[4]Burch, "Presidential Campaigns Are A Sham," pp. 12-14.

no one's going to read."[5] They should have used television, ". . . for it is the greatest medium ever devised for transmitting the essence and the substance of politics."[6]

Stephen Shadegg, author of What Happened To Goldwater or The Inside Story of the 1964 Republican Campaign, has written:

> The Republican National Committee raised and spent more than twelve million dollars in its effort to elect Barry Goldwater President of the United States. [Of this sum] Almost five million dollars went to pay for television time and related production costs. The results were disappointing.[7]

According to Mr. Shadegg, originally it had been the intention of the Republican directors to have the Arizona Senator "appear at least twice each week on nationwide television, [in order to] . . . carry the Senator into the homes of America and focus public attention on the real issues of foreign policy, domestic economy, federal spending, and federal interference."[8]

In retrospect it is clear that part of the blame for this situation rested with the Republican finance chairman, Ralph Cordiner. Because of his condition that no money be spent until it had been raised, the advertising agency responsible for booking prime television time seen found it

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[5]"Inside Report: Closing the GOP Dollar Gap," New York Herald Tribune, October 29, 1964.

[6]Burch, "Presidential Campaigns Are A Sham," p. 14.

[7]Shadegg, What Happened To Goldwater, p. 247.

[8]Ibid., p. 196.

difficult not only to book good time when the Republicans wanted time, but the agency also discovered that no time was to be had just for publicizing any of the programs for which they could get time. "Consequently some of the programs went on the air without the proper publicity necessary to attract an audience."[9]

Yet perhaps an even more important factor contributing to the inability of the Goldwater organization to make better and more effective use of television was the failure of the Republican candidate himself to take a more active part in the planning of his over-all television effort.

Theodore White has written that a Presidential campaign is run by only one person, the candidate himself, and not his organization. In his book, The Making of the President, 1964, he has said:

> . . . it is the candidate, not the organization, who must make a national election campaign.
>
> This is an iron rule of politics: the higher the office, the more important the candidate is, and the less important the organization. At a ward level in big cities like Chicago, a good organization can run a baboon on its ticket and carry him to victory by muscle alone; at state level a governor must score through on how he projects his proposals, on who he is and how he conducts himself; and at the supreme level of Presidential politics, the candidate and his behavior outweigh all other elements of his campaign. Organization and money are indispensable, but it is the candidate's words, his travels, his statements, his behavior, that the nation watches. His top team must be his personal team. He is the individual bayonet point of a mighty movement; the national press corps follows him from dawn to dusk; the television networks invest the greatest part of their news resources and energies in trailing him. One unguarded remark of a candidate, or

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[9]Ibid., p. 270.

> one felicitous thrust, will reach more people than any accumulation of position papers or pamphlets. For it is not what gets written down in conditioned and qualified prose in platforms or pamphlets that counts; it is what gets into people's heads to move their emotions. And only one man can do this--the candidate.[10]

In 1964, Barry Goldwater was the avowed leader of the Republican party. At the start of the national campaign the Arizona Senator had by hard work put together what has been called by some the most streamlined organization ever to run a national campaign. In the area of television alone the Goldwater forces had retained the Interpublic Group of New York--the largest marketing-communications group of companies in the world--to direct their television effort. Computers were used for purposes of analyzing the three previous national campaigns by party, state, and ethnic factors so that media specialist could then prepare numerous charts, and maps showing which of the states were swing states. In addition other maps were prepared designating the two hundred major TV markets and how the largest audience in these markets could be reached for the least amount of money. In all, "one billion seven hundred million bits of information were fed through the computers."[11] Yet all of this effort was to prove meaningless on election day.

According to both Theodore White and Stephen Shadegg, this was principally because there was little personal

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[10]White, The Making of the President 1954, p. 319.

[11]Ibid., p. 322.

contact between the candidate and his so-called streamlined organization. Whereas originally Mr. Goldwater had promised that he, himself, would attend the various strategy meetings in order to personally direct his campaign and take his message to the American people, in reality, " . . . neither he nor Vice-Presidential candidate William Miller ever attended any of them."[12] Thus, when all of the TV writers, media specialists, and political strategists attempted to formulate the major theme or message of their candidate into specified programs, or commercials, more often than not, they did not really know what message their chosen leader wanted them to bring before the American voter. They could never reach him.

In 1964 Stephen C. Shadegg wrote a book entitled How To Win An Election. One of Mr. Shadegg's contentions was that "Elections are more often lost than won . . . by the errors or mistakes committed by the loser."[13]

Two years later another political analyst, Murray B. Levin, published a book in which he attempted to analyze "the Kennedy campaign system"[14] of running for political office. Among his many observations was the following statement:

> The image of the political campaign as a highly efficient operation, directed by an expert general

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[12] Ibid.

[13] Shadegg, How To Win An Election, p. 8.

[14] Levin, Kennedy Campaigning, p. 1.

> staff, is rarely true-to-life. Most campaigns resemble a comedy of errors in which the victor prospers primarily because he has committed fewer strategic blunders than his opponent.[15]

In 1964 Barry Goldwater made a great many mistakes in his quest for the Presidency. Chief among them was his inability to profit from the mistakes of others before him, specifically Richard Nixon.

Four years earlier Richard Nixon was not only the Republican candidate for the U.S. Presidency, but he was also the incumbent Vice-President of the United States. His opponent, on the other hand, was merely a relatively unknown Senator from the state of Massachusetts. Everything alluded to a Republican victory in November. Mr. Nixon was better known. He could point to his eight years of experience in the White House, and also to the fact that under the Eisenhower administration the country had been enjoying the most prosperous period in its history.[16] Yet, on election day the obvious failed to materialize.

To most people it is obvious that the Great Debates had a great deal to do with swinging the undecided vote into the Kennedy camp. The Debates gave the American voter an opportunity to see both men on equal footing with each other, a situation which could not have taken place had not Mr. Nixon agreed to such a confrontation. Consequently, almost everyone would agree that Mr. Nixon probably made a

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[15] Ibid., p. 115.

[16] White, The Making of the President 1960, p. 248.

political error in agreeing to debate the New England Senator; and it may well be true that this error in judgment cost him the election.

By the same token it is also true that one of Richard Nixon's biggest mistakes lay in his simple inability to mount an effective television effort throughout his campaign despite the presence on his staff of some of the most talented brains in the advertising community.

At the start of the 1960 presidential campaign, it was Richard Nixon's theory that he would "carry his message to the American people by the most imaginative use of television ever displayed in a national campaign."[17] Thus, when Nixon's television advisers began to carefully organize and plan his national TV campaign, they began to prepare a format of TV programs for the Vice-President which they felt would be exceptionally creative and would in turn cause the American voter to cast his ballot for Mr. Nixon.

Since all of his advisers were generally in agreement that the Vice-President "should not, in the old style, face the camera directly and talk in his ad-lib, wide-roving manner of hard political matters,"[18] they suggested an alternative idea. They felt that a series of five TV programs should be produced which would present Mr. Nixon to the American voter in a more concise and biographical

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[17] Ibid., p. 374.

[18] Ibid., p. 317.

fashion. Each program would attempt to depict the Republican candidate in a different role, as a statesman, a loyal American, a family man and a campaigner. These programs would show film clips and visualizations of the candidate abroad, his heated argument with Soviet Premier Khrushchev, film highlights throughout the campaign--both at the opening and closing of the campaign, and also a glimpse of the Vice-President at home with his family.

Furthermore, Nixon's television advisers suggested the idea of a well-planned telethon to conclude the entire television effort. Coming on the heels of a series of regional telecasts that would hammer home the Vice-President's deep concern for the various localized problems in the key electoral areas, Nixon's advisers felt that such a telethon would provide the final emphasis needed to convince the American voter of the importance of electing Richard Nixon the 35th President of the United States.

However, in the months following Nixon's acceptance speech in Chicago, there quickly developed a complete breakdown in communication between the Vice-President and his very able and skilled staff of advisers. For reasons known only to Mr. Nixon, the Republican candidate suddenly became inaccessible to his entire staff of television planners, and, at the same time suspended all judgment on their plans. In his overwhelming desire to keep his entire campaign schedule as flexible as possible, Mr. Nixon refused to listen to the advice of his top TV strategists

who strongly advocated a very deliberate, well thoughtout and well organized utilization of television.

Slowly, but surely, his television staff grew more and more discontented with their candidate. As one important member of Nixon's staff said:

> You could have taken the key to the Republican National Committee, locked the door, thrown the key into the Potomac, shipped all hundred and seventy-five employees off to the Virgin Islands and saved money--for all that he ever listened to us.[19]

When he appeared on television, Mr. Nixon merely resorted to his old-fashioned manner of facing the camera directly and "trying to cram his all-purpose speech into a little talk."[20]

When his advisers pleaded with him to appear on nationwide television and attack the Democrats for their record in the summer session of Congress, Richard Nixon merely ignored their request. Yet, when at the end of the campaign the candidate suddenly realized that he had lost considerable ground to Mr. Kennedy, Nixon suddenly reversed himself.

At one o'clock in the afternoon on the Saturday before the election, Mr. Nixon suddenly notified his TV staff to prepare for a complete telethon set-up which would go on the air within the following forty-nine hours. Instead of having already been prepared for a well-planned

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[19] Ibid., p. 375.

[20] Ibid.

October telethon which they had originally suggested to chief, Nixon's TV advisers now found themselves working frantically over the weekend to arouse the people at both the broadcasting networks and the American Telephone and Telegraph Company to set up the long lines and make all necessary preparations for their leader's performance.

On Monday afternoon, November 7th, Richard Nixon appeared from Detroit on the ABC Television Network in a four-hour telethon estimated by the Republicans to have cost roughly $200,000 and insisted by the Democrats to have cost an easy $400,000, and which, according to Theodore White, "mixed schmaltz and substance in equal proportions, showing the Republican candidate at his best (talking of Peace) and at his worst (discussing the high cost of living with Ginger Rogers, wo said she too had to live on a salary)."[21]

The following day Richard Nixon lost the Presidency by a mere one tenth of one per cent of the total vote cast. Theodore White has written in summation of Mr. Nixon's campaign:

> Nixon's skills in politics were enormous, his courage unquestioned, his endurance substantial. But they were the skills, courage and endurance of the sailer who knows the winds and can brave the storm and recognize the tide. There was missing in him always the direction of the navigator, the man who knows the stars and who, when blown from course by storm, waits

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[21] Ibid., p. 373.

for the stars and sun to come out again and returns to course observing them.[22]

Other analysts of the election results have not been quite as diplomatic in their appraisal of Mr. Nixon's skills. As one member of Nixon's staff who worked with him for more than two years said, "Dick didn't lose this election, Dick blew this election."[23]

It is written:

> For . . . all those matters in which organization is important, the direction of television in a political campaign in modern America is incomparably the most important. Here is where the audience is; here is where the greatest part of all money is spent; here is where creative artistry and practical commercialism must join to support the candidate's thrust.[24]

To ignore these facts is to invite disaster, and with it defeat.

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[22] Ibid., pp. 376-377.

[23] Ibid., p. 380.

[24] White, The Making of the President 1964, pp. 321-322.

CHAPTER IX

A SENSE OF TIMING

Ever since man became interested in politics, much has been written after each election in speculation as to the whys of political victory and defeat. In recent years a great deal of carefully written and documented material has appeared which has tended to support certain basic principles of campaigning regardless of the office being sought. One of the most frequently mentioned principles usually relates to a sense of timing.

In 1948, James A. Farley, campaign manager for President Franklin D. Roosevelt during his years in the White House, touched on this subject when he wrote:

> The capturing of a presidential nomination is one of the most formidable enterprises the political animal can tackle. The race is not always to the swift, the wise, the able, or the prominent, or there would be no dark horses.
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> In politics, you can speak too often or not often enough; you can speak too loud or too soft; you can start too soon or too late; you can be too too friendly or not friendly enough. Any of these extremes at any given time may be fatal. . . . And, unfortunately, what may look good now may turn out disastrously six months from now.[1]

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[1]James A. Farley, Jim Farley's Story (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1948), p. 8.

Abraham Lincoln

In 1955, James D. Horan, author of the book Matthew Brady, Historian With a Camera, substantiated the importance of timing while describing the events related to Matthew Brady's first meeting with Abraham Lincoln. It seems that in 1860 Lincoln was on a speaking tour through the New England states in hopes of igniting interest in himself as a Presidential prospect. Being virtually unknown in the East, Mr. Lincoln accepted an invitation to speak at a church in Brooklyn in order to raise money to finance his speaking trip through the Eastern seaboard. Upon his arrival in New York, however, his hosts decided to switch his appearance from the Brooklyn church to Cooper Union. At the same time, because their guest speaker was a political unknown, they decided they would need a photograph of Mr. Lincoln for publicity purposes. Consequently, as soon as Mr. Lincoln arrived in the Empire State he was immediately hurried from his hotel to the studios of the then popular and famous photographer Matthew Brady.

In the weeks which followed, the results of these two seemingly inconsequential decisions proved to be historic. According to Senator John Pastore of Rhode Island, "The beardless picture of the Illinoisan became a campaign weapon, for his Cooper Union speech touched off the spark that led Abraham Lincoln to the Presidency."[2] The speech

[2]Pastore, The Story of Communications, p. 39.

showed Lincoln to be a man of wit and knowledgeability, and the photograph, which was later circulated in newspapers and in Currier and Ives lithographs, showed the lanky lawyer as "truly a man of dignity and presence."[3] Even Lincoln agreed; for he is said to have remarked to Mr. Brady upon his return four years later for a new campaign photograph, "Your picture and Cooper elected me President."[4]

John F. Kennedy

One hundred years later, another President, John F. Kennedy, was also to attribute his presidential victory to a timely speech and his appearance in front of a camera. This time, however, his speech was heard by millions of voters and the camera was a television camera. The event was the first Great TV Debate, and, it likewise provided the spark that ignited Mr. Kennedy's successful victory over his Republican opponent.

It is written that "in politics as in war the propitious time to storm the citadel of the enemy is that moment when leadership is confused or absorbed with some internal conflict."[5]

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[3]"Lincoln Learned a Lesson," TV Guide, October 24, 1964, p. 4.

[4]Pastore, The Story of Communications, p. 39.

[5]Shadegg, What Happened to Goldwater, p. 37.

William Scranton

In 1962 during the Pennsylvania gubernatorial race, Republican candidate Bill Scranton demonstrated just how important a sense of timing is with relation to the political utilization of television during a campaign period. The site for this historical demonstration was Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. In that year William Scranton had decided to challenge Mr. Richardson Dilworth, the former Mayor of Philadelphia, for the Governor's chair. Shortly before election day and at the height of the campaign, Mr. Dilworth made arrangements to appear one Saturday evening on a paid political television program in Harrisburg and suggested that Mr. Scranton should appear on the same program with Mr. Dilworth and debate the issues with him. When Mr. Scranton politely rejected Mr. Dilworth's proposal, the Democratic candidate threatened to debate an empty chair if his Republican opponent failed to appear. Bill Scranton again flatly rejected the idea.

Then on the evening in question, just as the program was about to begin, suddenly the studio door flew open and in charged Bill Scranton with brush and a bucket in hand declaring that he was going to clean up corruption. The effect of this totally unexpected and well timed tactic so unnerved the unsuspecting Democratic candidate that he was never able to overcome the sudden surge in Mr. Scranton's popularity. For Bill Scranton had not only captured the

voters' imagination that evening, but he had also captured their votes.[6]

Stephen Shadegg has written:

> Politicians speak reverently of organization, issues, a pleasant image, the ability to arouse enthusiasm as essential to victory. Yet the most important ingredient for success at the polls is a sense of timing. The hopeful who announces too early is frequently exhausted before the contest actually begins. The cautious one who waits until it is too late has trouble catching up.[7]

Today there is no question that the Kennedys not only possess a tremendous sense of timing when campaigning, but have also mastered the art of political campaigning. As of the writing of this thesis, they have won three congressional campaigns, five senatorial campaigns, one presidential campaign, and numerous convention and primary fights. Moreover, they have defeated such political leaders as Lyndon B. Johnson, Richard Nixon, Hubert Humphrey, Adlai Stevenson, Stuart Symington, Edward McCormack, Kenneth Keating, and both Henry Cabot Lodge and George Cabot Lodge. Some political researchers such as Murray B. Levin have even suggested that the Kennedys have literally transformed the art of campaigning into a science of political campaigning. One prime example of this is Robert F. Kennedy's surprising victory over incumbent New York Senator, Kenneth Keating.

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[6]John C. Rogers, "That Debate--Wrangles, Wry Results," New York Herald Tribune, November 1, 1964, p. 1.

[7]Shadegg, What Happened to Goldwater, p. 62.

Robert F. Kennedy

On August 25, 1964, Look Magazine published a feature article entitled, "The Ambitions of Bobby Kennedy." In essence the article said:

> . . . when the Democratic National Convention opens in Atlantic City in late August, Robert F. Kennedy would like to be the Vice-President or else he would prefer to hold a top level post of the national security establishment--preferably as Secretary of State. . . . He has cast aside the diversionary suggestion that he seek office as senator from New York.[8]

Yet, just 69 days later Robert F. Kennedy was elected U.S. Senator from New York, defeating a man who had given 18 years of Congressional service to his country. Furthermore, Mr. Kennedy defeated his Republican opponent by a plurality of over 700,000 votes.[9]

According to Gerald Gardner, one of Kennedy's speech writers, Bobby Kennedy won because "he organized his campaign with the same thoroughness that had characterized his older brother's campaign in 1960."[10] He succeeded merely because he made fewer mistakes than his opponent and because he was able to exploit those mistakes which his opponent made to his advantage.

In 1964, there is little doubt that Robert F. Kennedy ran one of the most brilliant, timely, and picture book

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[8]Joseph Kraft, "The Ambitions of Bobby Kennedy," Look, August 24, 1964, p. 22.

[9]Gerald Gardner, Robert Kennedy in New York (New York: Random House, 1965), p. 200.

[10]Ibid., p. 201.

campaigns ever waged for any political office. As New York Herald Tribune journalist Terry Smith wrote in Esquire in April 1965, "It was the best race in the country, far more exciting than the lopsided affair for the Presidency, and from an advertising point of view it was a classic."[11] Gardner elaborated as follows:

> During the eight week campaign there were about a hundred TV commercials varying in length from twenty-second spots to thirty-minute films, plus a score of newspaper ads, radio commercials and flyers. Altogether they cost a staggering $1,000,000.00 which has got to be a record for advertising in a Senate campaign. Viewed in one sitting, the commercials made up a Bride Book; the record of an almost perfect wedding of politics and advertising.[12]

To appreciate the thoroughness of Mr. Kennedy's campaign, especially as it relates to his utilization of television, it is first necessary to understand the reasons and motives which caused Robert Kennedy to suddenly seek an office in which he was originally disinterested.

When John F. Kennedy was assassinated in late November, 1963, Robert F. Kennedy suddenly discovered his own political career to be in doubt. Vice-President Lyndon B. Johnson had been elevated to the number one position. At the Democratic Convention the following summer Mr. Johnson made it quite clear that he wasn't interested in Mr. Kennedy for the number two position or any of the various cabinet positions in the Johnson administration.

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[11]Terry Smith, "Bobby's Image," Esquire, April, 1965, p. 62.

[12]Ibid.

Quickly, Bob Kennedy realized that his only means of remaining active in American politics and preserving his image as a national leader was to seek a seat in Congress. Since he did not wish to challenge his brother's Senatorial seat in Massachusetts, and since the New York Senatorial seat in was about to be voted upon, Robert Kennedy decided that New York State would be his new battleground.

As the campaign got under way, however, it soon became apparent that despite certain obvious advantages accruing to his name and his special relationship to the late President Kennedy, Robert F. Kennedy had a number of definite liabilities against him in his attempt to unseat the popular Republican Senator from New York.

Terry Smith outlined these liabilities as follows:

> . . . working against him, was the public image of the pushy, ambitious younger brother, and the vague, unexplained sense of distrust many people had. He also had to cope with his Massachusetts heritage and the inevitable cries of "carpetbagger." He was accused of using New York as a steppingstone to the Presidency. He was called the "candidate of the bosses" because crusty, old-line political bosses were among the first to support his candidacy. [Moreover] Before the campaign was over he encountered substantial resentment among Italian-Americans who had been offended by the Valachi hearings and blamed them on the Attorney General. He found even more resistance among Jewish voters who considered him more his father's son than his elder brother had ever been. Their suspicion of the father dated back to just before World War II, when Joseph P. Kennedy, [as Ambassador to Great Britain] . . . was accused of closing his eyes to the persecution of Jews in Nazi Germany.
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> [In addition] He had other problems. There were politicians in New York with toes still smarting from 1960, when Bobby directed his brother's campaign in the state. There was talk of the "Kennedy dynasty" and the entente that would be formed in the Senate if he

> represented New York, his brother Teddy was the man from Massachusetts, and Pierre Salinger won in California.
>
> [Furthermore] He was a dreadful public speaker, inclined to repetition on extemperaneous remarks, and a sporific monotone when the text is prepared.[13]

To overcome these liabilities, Bob Kennedy, through his brother-in-law, Stephen Smith, hired the advertising firm of Papert, Koenig and Lois to handle his total advertising effort. In 1962 PKL had managed Republican Senator Jacob Javits' successful New York campaign and therefore were perhaps more in tune with New York voters than most advertising agencies. In addition, one of the three partners, Julian Koenig, had originally been copy supervisor at Doyle, Dane Bernback back in 1960, when he had great success urging prospective Volkswagen owners to "Think Small." This advertising campaign in turn had caught President Kennedy's attention and caused him to begin, in 1963, the negotiations that led to the hiring of DDB to handle the Democratic National Committee's advertising effort in 1964.

Swiftly, Papert, Koenig and Lois began drawing up specific proposals for softening up Mr. Kennedy's image. The main emphasis of their strategy was to be concentrated in multiple television commercials. As Fred Papert told Bob Kennedy during one of their strategy meetings,

> The basic aim of all our commercials, Bob, will be to present you as a warm, sincere individual. . . .

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[13] Ibid.

> we're going to shoot you on actual locations--in rallies, at colleges, in supermarkets--surrounded by small crowds. People will ask you questions. You'll answer them. One-minute spots, three-minute spots, five-minute spots. Real excitement, real issues.[14]

To carry out these objectives, an agency within the agency was created. Some sixteen people were assembled from various departments to work under the direction of Frederic Papert, the chairman of the board. "For six and sometimes seven days a week this nucleus did nothing but work on the Kennedy account, periodically drawing on virtually all of the agency's staff of more than two hundred."[15]

Next, both creative Television and Videotape Center of New York were engaged to produce on videotape a series of commercials showing Mr. Kennedy on location responding to important questions from the voters of New York. Since neither possessed any mobile videotape facilities of their own, they in turn contracted with Tele-tape Productions of New York to send its various mobile units to the designated locations to complete the assignment of recording Mr. Kennedy on location.

One of the first locations selected was a middle income housing project in Manhattan called Lincoln Towers. The outline or taping schedule was as follows: Shortly after one of Tele-tape's mobile units arrived at the assigned location the TV crew quickly began setting up

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[14]Gardner, Robert Kennedy in New York, p. 9.

[15]Smith, "Bobby's Image," p. 62.

their television cameras in a semi-circle. The presence of the TV camera crew quickly began drawing interested spectators to inquire as to what was about to take place in the Lincoln Towers' courtyard. As soon as the word spread that Robert Kennedy was going to make an appearance suddenly people began appearing from everywhere. At the same time, as the crowd began to swell in anticipation of seeing the former Attorney General, a few select Kennedy advance men began quietly circulating through the crowds. Their function was to plant or suggest certain questions to interested spectators in order that the cameras would be able to record the Senator's comments to these questions in a seemingly candid or spontaneous fashion, and secondly, so that they could be sure that all of the questions which they felt were important would be asked the candidate.

Shortly thereafter the young Attorney General arrived at the location and the taping session began. The format could not have been simpler. Kennedy would listen to the questioner and then direct his answer to him while the camera peered over his shoulder. One by one housewives and miscellaneous bystanders would line up in order to put their questions to the Democratic candidate. At times their questions would sound silly, ridiculous, embarrassingly personal, loaded or as Terry Smith has written, "hopelessly vapid."[16]

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[16] Ibid.

In the weeks which followed, this scene was to be repeated over and over again on locations across the state. Each time the recorded material was immediately taken back to Videotape Center where it was carefully screened and then edited into a series of question and answer type commercials varying in length from twenty seconds to a minute. Each of these commercials were then in turn screened by the candidate himself for his final approval or rejection. So effective was this procedure that more often than not the agency was able to tape, edit, and distribute these TV commercials to stations throughout the state within forty-eight hours from the first recorded shot. At the same time, by producing the commercials on videotape, the agency was able to constantly revise their TV campaign by merely reshooting new commercials whenever a change in campaign strategy or tactics was needed.

Slowly, but surely, all of the major objections to Robert Kennedy's candidacy were being challenged by the candidate himself on television. In answer to the carpet-bagger issue, one TV commercial showed a young man asking Bobby about this carpetbagger charge, and Kennedy answered by describing his roots in the state and telling his questioner how he had gone to school there and how he had spent some twenty years of his life in New York.

In answer to the steppingstone charge, another twenty-second commercial showed the late President's brother

slightly exasperated, shaking his head and telling his audience, "Strange as it may seem I just want to be a good United States Senator."[17]

Another TV spot seemed to be an effort to cool the resentment of the Italian Americans. During a shooting session early one misty morning in Auburn, New York, a short, bald man with a heavy accent stepped up to Kennedy and described the plight of his cousin in Italy who wanted to come to America. This provided a perfect cue for Kennedy, who launched into his ideas on the liberalization of the immigration laws.

Meanwhile, as the campaign moved into late September, Kennedy's advertising people were not quite satisfied with Fred Papert's original idea of sticking strictly with short commercials revolving around Kennedy responding to questions from various New York voters. According to Gerald Gardner:

> In the framework of one-minute television commercials, the candidate's answers sounded glib, hurried, curiously unconvincing. In attempting to compress his views on a given problem to forty-five seconds, the Kennedy qualities of grace and spontaneity seemed to be lost.[18]

Consequently, it was decided to dramatically change both the mood and the setting of the commercials. Earlier in the campaign it had been noted that frequently the most

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[17] Ibid.

[18] Gardner, Robert Kennedy in New York, p. 91.

difficult questions thrown at the young Democratic candidate were the ones that brought out his combative spirit and the ones which he answered well, while the easy questions only caused him to stumble in his answer out of sheer boredom for the question. Therefore, and at Kennedy's request, it was decided to throw the young Attorney General into as challenging a situation as possible, a group of politically minded college students. An auditorium at Columbia University was selected as the site for this confrontation. Tele-Tape's television cameras were set up in an arc surrounding the audience and their guest so as to provide total coverage of this event, whose only political purpose was to be the stage for a half-hour political television taping session. In the words of writer Terry Smith, "The result was an advertising bonanza."[19]

The Columbia University students merely proceeded to ask all the questions Kennedy most needed to answer: Why are you running? Why in New York State and not in Massachusetts or Virginia? What about the bosses who support you? Kennedy answered each of these questions very simply, very precisely and very well. Slowly but surely the not especially partisan crowd of about five hundred students began to warm up to Robert F. Kennedy. By the end of the evening the TV session had a natural build and drama that even John Huston couldn't have improved on.

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[19]Smith, Bobby's Image, p. 62.

At present there are some people who feel that the process of campaigning is a meaningless exercise. Most voters, they declare, vote according to certain preconditioned responses or attitudes and therefore they have already made up their minds prior to the campaign as to how they will vote come election day.

In 1964, however, both candidates for the New York Senate seat did not hold to this view. Instead, both men believed that the final outcome of the election would definitely be decided upon primarily on the basis of how well both men conducted their individual campaigns.

Consequently, when in September a number of polls were released which showed a steep slide away from the younger Kennedy and toward his Republican opponent, a genuine concern began to develop in the Kennedy camp as to what could be done to alter this trend. Even Kennedy himself expressed this concern. "I've been campaigning for four weeks now and the only thing that's come across is that I'm a Beatle."[20] Some claimed that this was due to Kennedy's unwillingness to attack Keating directly. Others said it was due merely to the real impact of the carpetbagger issue on t he voters and the gradual evaporation of the intial Kennedy glamour. But, whatever the reason, there was little doubt among the Kennedy strategists that something would have to be done, and very quickly, too.

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[20]Gardner, Robert Kennedy in New York, p.137.

The big problem, however, was that no one was certain as to what that something was to be.

Fortunately for Kennedy, over on the Republican side of the fence there was also an equal amount of concern as to how the election was faring. Although both the Republicans and Senator Keating were aware of the result of the September polls which showed the incumbent leading in his race for re-election, nevertheless, many among the Senator's staff, including the candidate himself, were particularly worried that somehow the magnetism of the Kennedy name might somehow override the Senator's own outstanding record in New York. Throughout the campaign it was observed how tremendous crowds of people always seemed to congregate wherever Robert Kennedy made an appearance; while, on the otherhand, few people ever showed up by comparison to hear the Republican Senator speak. It was felt that apparently Mr. Kennedy had become something of a charismatic folk here, while Mr. Keating, white-haired and mild-mannered, merely tended to project a sort of dignified but rather unexciting image which it was presumed most U.S. Senators possessed.

Therefore, it was decided that somehow this magical spell would have to be broken. The Senator would have to find something in the Kennedy record which could be attacked and which would have a strong impact on the minds of the voters of New York. It did not take Keating very long to come up with just such an issue.

For years Jewish voters in New York have played an important part in New York elections. In 1964, Ken Keating realized because of the closeness of the race the Jewish vote might well hold the key to his successful re-election. Throughout the campaign he had attempted to capture this vote by speaking and appearing at numerous Jewish functions whenever the opportunity presented itself. Now he decided to make a dramatic appeal for both the hearts and the minds of this vote. In a sudden reversal of all tactics and strategy Keating launched an all out attack upon his Democratic opponent.

First, he declared that should the election be held that day, he would be victorious. Then on September 20, Senator Keating charged that Mr. Kennedy, as Attorney General, had agreed to a settlement that turned over more than $60,000,000.00 to a Swiss firm allegedly fronting for a giant German chemical firm whose stockholders were former Nazis. According to Mr. Keating, Robert Kennedy made this deal with the Nazi cartel when he approved the sale of the assets of the General Aniline and Film Corporation of Binghamton, New York, to the Swiss firm despite the knowledge that the New York Company had been seized by the government during the Second World War as enemy property.

Immediately, Kennedy responded by denying the charge and pointing out that the Justice Department was assured that none of the G.A.F. money would land in the hands of

the hands of former Nazis. Moreover, Kennedy asserted, "As a result of the settlement, more than $100,000,000.00 was made available to pay war claims of American citizens who suffered at Nazi hands."[21]

Still, Ken Keating wasn't finished. Next he decided to influence the Negro to desert his Democratic opponent. Early in October he charged that Robert Kennedy had deserted the civil rights movement. In an advanced text released to the newspapers but not delivered before the N.A.A.C.P. state convention in Buffalo, Senator Keating stated that Bob Kennedy had "abandoned his post at the Department of Justice with the unfinished task before him --the task of putting teeth into the new law and defending it against attack on its constitutionality."[22]

Once again Robert Kennedy found himself on the defensive. This time, however, Kennedy decided to meet fire with fire. Keating's personal attacks on Kennedy, along with public announcement that he, Keating, was ahead in the polls suddenly had given to the young Democrat the one thing he desperately needed, "the appealing image of the underdog rather than the unattractive look of the young dynamo overpowering everything in his path."[23]

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[21] Ibid., p. 120.

[22] Ibid., p. 134.

[23] Ibid., p. 142.

In 1960, Robert Kennedy had watched as another Kennedy had found himself in a similar situation. In that year John F. Kennedy was the decided underdog. His answer to this situation was to challenge his opponent to a series of debates on nationwide television. As campaign manager for his brother, Bob Kennedy had long since learned the value of the televised debate. At the same time because of his close association with former Presidential Press Secretary Pierre Salinger, Bob Kennedy was also well aware of the hazards of debating.

In 1964, former Hollywood actor George Murphy had challenged Pierre Salinger to a statewide television debate in the California Senatorial race. Salinger had gone into the debate the favorite. During the course of the debate Pierre "had tossed back knowing answers to all the questions, and observers agreed he had shown Murphy up as inadequately informed."[24] However, as columnist Walter Winchell reported in his nationwide column, "Murphy's stage presence and poise came through like a pro. Salinger's snapping didn't."[25] Thus, while "Salinger had won the debates, [he] delivered countless votes to Murphy, 'the good guy!'"[26]

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[24]Ibid., p. 138.

[25]Walter Winchell, New York Journal American, November 9, 1964.

[26]Gardner, Robert Kennedy in New York, p. 62.

Although Robert Kennedy knew that he was probably a much better extemporaneous debater than Senator Keating, he also realized that he too would have to be very careful not to appear as a brash young prosecutor in hurling questions and rebutting answers, should he decide to debate.

Yet, early in October Robert Kennedy realized that he had no other alternate left. He was behind, he was considered the underdog, and in his own words, "I have to do something to stop this trend."[27] Therefore, in a speech before the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Bob Kennedy announced that he would challenge Senator Keating to a televised debate in order to answer once and for all the charges made by the Republican candidate against him.

Overnight the press and the public became excited about the possibility of another series of TV debates like the Great Debates of 1960. Suddenly, Ken Keating found himself in a rather compromising position. At the start of the campaign the Republican candidate had originally been the first candidate to issue a general challenge to his opponent to debate the issues with him on TV. In reality, however, the Senator from New York had no desire whatsoever to debate his Democratic challenger.

> Though Keating would present a most impressive Senatorial figure and his opponent might look boyish by contrast, there was the chance that Kennedy might once

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[27] Ibid., p. 139.

> and for all shatter the illusion of himself as a ruthless, power-hungry young man. And maintaining this image, along with the carpetbagger issue, was about the strongest thing Keating had going for him.
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> This is where the peril lay for Keating--that Kennedy would present a picture of selfless youth and vigor. And an inevitable reminder of another Kennedy in another debate.[28]

Now, however, the public pressures for such a debate seemed to Mr. Keating almost impossible to avoid. Seeing no apparent way out of this situation, Senator Keating quickly informed the press that he had no objections to such a debate.

Then almost as quickly as it was decided there would be a debate, a stalemate developed. The Kennedy strategists had suggested the Kennedy-Nixon format. The Keating strategists rejected the idea. Instead, they proposed that only two TV debates be held. In the first debate the candidates would be seated in separate studios at different times, and would in turn be questioned by a group of young people rather than newsmen. During the second debate it was proposed that the candidates would be in the same studio, but instead of debating each other, each man would merely make a series of alternating speeches "in the classical manner of Cicero and Demosthenes."[29]

When Kennedy was informed of these proposals he totally rejected the idea. Immediately, negotiations

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[28] Ibid., pp. 142-143.

[29] Ibid., p. 144.

between the two groups came to a halt. For approximately two weeks the stalemate continued with Kennedy making every effort to discredit the Keating proposals. "Does he call that a debate? . . . In one of them we're in separate studios. In the other we're making speeches at one another."[30] Slowly the polls began to indicate a turn toward Mr. Kennedy.

Then with only two weeks remaining in the campaign CBS suddenly offered to provide an hour of prime evening time for a TV debate between the two Senatorial candidates. Both sides accepted, and once again negotiations were resumed. A deadline was set for a reply by both candidates. However, as the day of the debate approached, it became increasingly apparent to both sides that they were still as far apart as ever. Neither side would agree to the other's ground rules.

On Tuesday afternoon, October 27, the day of the scheduled debate, suddenly a whole series of events transpired which were to have a profound effect upon the voters of New York. Realizing that the debate as discussed was not to become a reality, Senator Keating proceeded to purchase the first half hour which CBS had set aside for the two candidates. Assuming that the Kennedy strategists were unaware of their plans and hoping to gain political advantage, next, Keating informed the press that

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[30] Ibid.

not only was he going to appear on CBS, but that he would debate an empty chair that evening should Mr. Kennedy refuse to appear with him on the program.

Meanwhile, unbeknownst to outside observers, the Kennedy forces had already learned of Mr. Keating's plans and were hastily trying to prepare their own program strategy. By coincidence, one of Kennedy's advertising time buyers happened to be at CBS when the Keating call came in to purchase the first half-hour of the scheduled debate. Quickly, he informed the Kennedy strategists of what had happened and was advised to purchase the following half hour. When his request was turned down, immediately, Robert Kennedy put in a long distance telephone call to CBS President William Paley in California. Shortly thereafter his equal time request was granted; and the Kennedy machine went into action. Now Kennedy faced the problem of how to deal with Keating's empty chair threat.

After a few thoughtful moments and multiple suggestions Robert Kennedy made his decision. He would go down to the studio and sit in the empty chair. However, he would make sure that he arrived there just as the program was about to begin, so that his Republican opponent would not have time to prepare for the events to follow. The result of this decision has since become historic.

It has been said, "in politics as in war the most propitious time to storm the citadel of the enemy is that

moment when leadership is confused or absorbed with some internal conflict."[31]

On the evening of October 27 the Republican forces were in just such a position. All during the day the Keating supporters had been working frantically to put together a meaningful half-hour broadcast. Scriptwriters were busily organizing material for the program while teleprompter typists were feverishly trying to ready the prompters for the TV cameras. As the hour of the telecast approached, however, it became obvious that all was not proceeding smoothly. Only a portion of the script was completed; and moreover, only a smaller portion of this script had been transferred onto Keating's teleprompter. Finding himself without sufficient preplanned material to sustain the entire half-hour, Keating quickly asked his fellow Senator, Republican Jacob Javits to join him on the program.

All of a sudden it was time to go on the air. Too late, Keating's TV Director realized that the teleprompter had not been mounted onto Keating's camera. Informing the teleprompter operator to hold the prompter next to the Senator's main camera, the Director raced into the control room just in time to fade up on the obviously nervous and ill-prepared candidate. What followed was chaos.

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[31]Shadegg, What Happened to Goldwater, p. 37.

Not being prepared for these unexpected events, shortly after his opening remarks Ken Keating suddenly turned toward the empty chair in the studio, which had supposedly been set up for Mr. Kennedy, and began hurling insults at it. The more Senator Keating spoke, the more ridiculous the Republican candidate appeared. The pressures of both the day's events along with those of the entire campaign had finally begun to take their toll on the Republican incumbent. His words seemed childish and his actions even more so.

Meanwhile in the corridor outside Keating's studio another series of dramatic events was also taking place. Just as Mr. Keating had gone on the air, Robert F. Kennedy arrived at CBS. At approximately 7:29pm he demanded to be led to Mr. Keating's studio. Leland Hayward, one of Kennedy's television advisers led the way to the incumbent's studio. As they arrived outside studio 44, Mr. Kennedy suddenly found the entrance barred by a CBS official. Mr. Kennedy asked to be let into the studio. The official said this was not possible because Mr. Keating had purchased the time and had left specific instructions that no one enter the studio while he was on the air. As newsreel cameramen photographed the action and newsmen pressed in closer to record the exchange of dialogue, Mr. Kennedy again asked to be admitted to the studio. Once again the CBS official refused his request. Now Kennedy asked the official to inform Senator Keating that his

opponent was outside his studio. The man hesitated a moment and then disappeared into the studio.

About the same time, Gerald Gardner, one of Kennedy's speechwriters, decided to check the goings on inside Keating's studio on one of the monitors inside the control room. He described the scene as follows:

> On the multiple screens were various shots of the white mane and purple prose. There was Senator Javits looking righteously indignant. And there was the empty chair, with the nameplate of Robert F. Kennedy before it.
>
> The program had just begun and an announcer was saying, "Senator Keating has invited his opponent to debate him tonight, but Mr. Kennedy has not appeared."
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> That was what I had expected to hear. I darted out of the control room and down the corridor, elbowing my way through layers of newsmen. The CBS man had reappeared, looking even paler than before, and was insisting that Mr. Kennedy could not enter the studio. I whispered to Kennedy what I had just heard.
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> "They have just announced on the air that I am not here," said the candidate. "This is very unfair and I insist on being admitted."
>
> The CBS man stood his ground."[32]

> "Then kindly remove the empty seat from the stage and ask Senator Keating to withdraw his remark about my not showing up. I cannot," the CBS official replied.[33]

At this point Mr. Kennedy retreated to his own studio and began to prepare for his own broadcast which was to follow. Nothing else needed to be done. During the entire sequence of events the newsreel cameraman had faithfully recorded Mr. Kennedy standing outside Keating's

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[32]Gardner, Robert Kennedy in New York, p. 149.

[33]James F. Clarity and Fred Ferretti, "Never Before a Debate Like This," New York Herald Tribune, October 28, 1964.

studio trying to gain entrance while signs over the door read "Please Keep Out--No Visitors--Keating."[34]

> When the Keating half-hour ended, reporters besieged his studio to question him on his unwillingness to admit his opponent. Keating came dashing out the studio door behind a phalanx of aides and rushed headlong down the hallway, followed by a battalion of reporters and photographers. In order to hinder their escape, Keating's aides began hurling furniture and props in their path.
>
> It was this moment that Mrs. Robert Kennedy chose to descend a stairway overlooking the scene and found herself observing the frantic aides and elder statesman fleeing in disarray, the charging correspondents, photographers, and film cameramen.
>
> "Is anything wrong," said Ethel Kennedy in the nicest display of understatement of the campaign.[35]

Later that evening after Mr. Kennedy appeared on his own paid political program and was questioned by radio announcer Barry Gray about the above events, New York voters got a chance to see the newreel film footage shot outside Keating's studio door. Combined with headline photographs in New York newspapers the following day showing Keating debating an empty chair along with shots of Kennedy trying to get into the studio to debate the incumbent Senator, New Yorkers suddenly began questioning in their own minds Keating's integrity. Did Senator Keating know Mr. Kennedy was outside the studio that evening? If he did know Mr. Kennedy was there, why then did he not allow him to enter the studio and engage him in the already proposed debate? Was he afraid to discuss the issues

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[34]Ibid.

[35]Gardner, Robert Kennedy in New York, p. 150.

honestly? No one knew the answers to all these questions, but at this point the damage was already done.

> The picture of Kennedy before a sealed door and that of Keating scurrying down a corridor carried their own inevitable implications.[36]

In the final week of the campaign pollsters across the state suddenly reported a definite trend favoring Mr. Kennedy. The non-debate on TV, coming in the closing days of the campaign had given Mr. Kennedy just the opening he needed to launch his final all out assault on the New York Senate seat held by Republican Kenneth Keating. Speaking of the non-debate and Mr. Keating's challenge, Robert Kennedy could say:

> Senator Keating really kicked that empty chair all over the studio. No question about it. He beat that chair. And there I was, outside the studio door with three of his guards.[37]

At the same time, the Kennedy strategists launched one of the most intensive TV spot campaigns ever viewed in any state. From their pool of some 150 commercials the Kennedy supporters were able to repeatedly pound their message home to New York voters. On the day before the election, once again Tele-tape's TV cameras were dispatched to the Kennedy home in Glen Cove, Long Island, for purposes of capturing the candidate and his family in the closing minutes of the campaign. That very evening, through the magic of videotape, every voter in the state of New York was in a position to relive with the Democratic

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[37] Ibid., p. 153.

candidate many of the memorable events during his campaign trek across their state.

Seven days after the famous non-debate, Robert F. Kennedy carried New York by a plurality of some 700,000 votes, while Democrat Pierre Salinger was being defeated by Republican, Hollywood actor, George Murphy in a state where Democratic registration outnumbered Republican registration by over 1,500,000 votes, and in a state which elected a Democratic President by a plurality of over 1,290,000 votes.

Once again the Kennedy sense of timing had paid off.

CHAPTER X

THE HIGH COST OF CAMPAIGNING

One of the most serious problems facing the United States is the problem of the rising cost of political campaigning. In 1860 when Abraham Lincoln won the Presidency, his entire national campaign is said to have cost a mere $100,000. One hundred years later, however, John F. Kennedy is reported to have spent over $11 million in his attempt to win this office.[1]

Today it has been estimated that a Senate seat or a closely contested campaign for the governorship of a large industrial and competitive two-party state like Pennsylvania or Illinois could run anywhere from $1,200,000 on up to $2,000,000. At the same time some have suggested that a candidate running for the office of mayor in a city the size of New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, or Los Angeles, and who faced formidable and well-financed opposition, could not expect to mount a serious effort for less than $1,000,000.[2]

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[1] "Now Is The Time For All Good Men. . . ," Time, January 5, 1968, p. 44.

[2] Levin, Kennedy Campaigning, p. 234.

One major reason behind this phenomenon is the relentless advance of technology, specifically, television. In 1960 John F. Kennedy was elected President as a direct result of being able to utilize television during his campaign. At that moment in history, the face of political campaigning underwent a dramatic change. With candidates now more aware of the power of this medium to communicate with voters in the confines of their living rooms, suddenly political parties found themselves having to spend enormous amounts of money just to give their own candidates an equal hearing before the American public. As a Time editorial stated:

> An important force in winning political office in the U.S. is green power: the money required to publicize a candidate's views and persuade the voters that he is worthy of governing by their consent.
>
> . . . As the nation grows, candidates must spend more and more to reach more and more people; while TV now puts office seekers in every living room, the enormous cost drains party budgets.[3]

At the same time, however, along with this tremendous increase in campaign spending for both radio and television time, there has suddenly emerged a whole new set of problems equally important to the political future of our country. One such problem was pointed out by Roscoe Drummond in an article he wrote which appeared in the Christian Science Monitor.

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[3] "Now Is The Time For All Good Men. . . ," Time, p. 44.

> It is now, in fact, nearly impossible in most states for men of modest means to seek high elective office--unless they are willing wards of the wealthy.
>
> The price of campaigning has risen so high that it actually imperils the integrity of our political institutions. Big contributors more and more hold the keys to the gates of public service. This is choking off the wellsprings of fresh, new thought and severely limiting the field of choice available to the public.[4]

Time has concurred:

> How to finance political campaigns--honestly, adequately and from a far broader base--is surely one of U.S. democracy's biggest unsolved problems as it enters another presidential election year.
>
> . . . Those who give the cash exercise a vital form of political expression: they provide a basic nourishment of democracy.
>
> [Yet] . . . Given most voters' financial apathy the net result is a qualification for office unspecified in the Constitution: a candidate must now be rich or have rich friends or run the risk of making himself beholden to big contributors by accepting their big contributions.[5]

One prime example of this situation is the entrance into U. S. politics by both Edward M. Kennedy and his older brother Robert F. Kennedy. In 1962 it was estimated that John F. Kennedy's younger brother Edward, known as Teddy, paid out almost $1,000,000 to secure the U. S. Senate seat in Massachusetts.[6] Likewise, in 1964, observers close to the Kennedy clan pegged Bob Kennedy's outlay for his own New York Senate seat at around $1,200,000.[7]

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[4]Roscoe Drummond, "Campaign costs," The Christian Science Monitor, April 25, 1967, p. 18.

[5]"Now Is The Time For All Good Men. . . ," Time, p. 44.

[6]Levin, Kennedy Campaigning, p. 244.

[7]"Now Is The Time For All Good Men. . . ," Time, p. 44.

Commenting on this fact, Richard B. Stolley wrote in Life magazine:

> Elections have always been "bought" in the sense that it takes big money to run a major campaign, and the side with the most money usually wins. The organization raises funds by squeezing contractors and merchants who hope to do business with its officeholders. Until recent years, however, rarely has the wherewithal for a campaign come mostly from one source. The Kennedys are the best example of the contemporary trend toward very rich men spending vast sums of their own money, not in order to manipulate governments behind the scenes, as in the past, but to seek power in public office.[8]

The main problem with this situation, however, is not that wealthy men do not make good politicians or great leaders, but rather, with tremendous resources at their fingertips, these men could begin to project themselves into the American scene whether they are qualified or not.

For example, it has been said that in the TV world we learn the truth through the eye of the camera, aided by lights, editing, script, music and various subliminal suggestions.[9] If this is true, then it is also true that for the right amount of money experts could be hired to create programs, TV commercials, etc. which would present before the viewer the illusion of truth. As Murray Levin has said:

> What is too frequently forgotten in a world which equates honesty with a failure to steal money is that candidates with unlimited financial resources

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[8]Richard B. Stolley, "Hopeless Case of Milton Shapp," Life, May 27, 1966, p. 70.

[9]Gus Tyler, "Topics: Hollywood, Mother of Presidents?" New York Times, December 17, 1966, p. 32.

> may spend their money to create the kinds of events which appear spontaneous, but are in fact contrived--pseudo events as it were.[10]

One of the most dramatic illustrations of how this could happen occurred in 1966 when a 53 year-old millionaire electronics manufacturer from Philadelphia decided to seek the Pennsylvania governorship despite the total absence of any previous political experience.

Milton Shapp Runs for Governor

Early in 1966, Milton Shapp, a highly successful CATV (Community Antenna Television) equipment manufacturer and systems owner of the Jerrold Corporation, decided "he would give political life a whirl."[11] In January he announced he would seek the Democratic nomination for Governor of Pennsylvania. Almost immediately, however, he discovered that the Democratic party in his home state had already selected a candidate to represent them in the November election. Although the Democratic primary had not been held yet, still Mr. Shapp learned that the party organization was totally united behind State Senator Robert P. Casey for the governor's position. And despite numerous meetings with party officials, it was made perfectly clear to Milton Shapp that in spite of his own enthusiasm and interest in running for this office, the Democratic party

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[10] Levin, Kennedy Campaigning, p. XVII.

[11] "Radio-TV Blitz," Broadcasting, editorial, May 30, 1966, p. 94.

simply wasn't interested in his candidacy. The reasons were simple. Milton Jerrold Shapp was a total unknown in Pennsylvania. Even his own personal polls bore out this fact. He was a Jew running in a state which had never elected a Jew to a major office. He had no political experience which would qualify him to run for such a high office. Finally, many simply considered him to be merely too "physically unimpressive" for the office he was seeking.

However, Milton Shapp was not about to take no for an answer. He had already decided in his own mind that he wanted to be the next Governor of Pennsylvania. Since the party organization was definitely not behind him, Milton Shapp decided that he would wage his own personal fight to secure the Democratic nomination on the November ballot. This he would accomplish by challenging and defeating the party's choice in the Democratic primary.

With an amateur's optimism and his own willingness "to spend staggering amounts of his own money to sell himself and his ideas,"[12] Milton Shapp began his campaign. First, he turned his booming electronics business over to Robert Beisswenger, who became its president, and then Shapp immersed himself solely in his campaign struggle.

To handle his campaign, Shapp hired a young political campaign manager and polltaker named Joseph Napolitan, a man who worked as a confidential contact for John F. Kennedy

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[12]Stolley, "Hopeless Case of Milton Shapp," p. 68A.

during his 1960 Presidential campaign. Immediately, Mr. Napolitan conducted a polling experiment in Pennsylvania in order to determine just what kind of odds he and his client were up against. The results were startling. In two cities at the far ends of Pennsylvania, Erie and Johnstown, Joe Napolitan asked some 200 people how many names on a list of state politicians they had heard of. In Erie, only one person had ever heard of Milton Shapp. In Johnstown, no one had ever heard of his client's name.

But Joe Napolitan was not discouraged. To him political careers could be secured through money, and a massive political advertising effort through the mass media, notably television. Since Milton Shapp had informed him at the start of their relationship that his personal net worth was in excess of $12 million and that he would be willing to spend any portion of that sum to win the Governor's chair, Joe Napolitan felt that the odds against his client could be overcome. As he said in a confidential memorandum to his client, ". . . with skillful TV and still photography and a minimum of personal appearances we can compensate for the fact that you don't look like Clark Gable."[13]

As the campaign began, it appeared to almost everyone, except perhaps Joe Napolitan and Milton Shapp, that the Democratic neophyte did not stand a chance of winning his party's nomination. Everywhere Shapp went he was

[13] Ibid., p. 68B.

promptly accused of opening up his checkbook and trying to buy his way into the statehouse. Still Joe Napolitan remained essentially unconcerned. "Nuts," he said, "I never knew a candidate yet who lost because he had too much money."[14]

Even up to the final two weeks of the campaign the odds seemed to be running 4 to 1 against Milton Shapp. Then the World Series was over and suddenly Milton Shapp's vast financial empire began to take its toll on the voters of Pennsylvania. In the final two weeks of the campaign, Joe Napolitan unleashed the most intensive media campaign ever recorded in that state's political history. At a cost of roughly $225,000, voters across the state found themselves constantly bombarded with television commercials on behalf of Milton Shapp.

> Even the most casual TV watcher could not escape Shapp. When he flicked on the set, there was Milt either in a slick half-hour biographical film or in one-minute, 20 and 10 second spots. The Late Late Show was taken over and the movie chopped up by Shapp political messages instead of soap commercials.[15]

One of the most impressive uses of TV was a thirty minute documentary "depicting the life of Mr. Shapp, from humble beginnings to his present position."[16] This program has not only shown at least once on every TV station in the

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[14] Ibid., p. 70.

[15] Ibid.

[16] "Shapp's use of radio-TV biggest election aid," Broadcasting, May 23, 1966, p. 58.

state, but during the final two weeks of the primary campaign it was shown on 16 TV stations in Pennsylvania a total of 45 times.

At the conclusion of the campaign it was estimated that approximately 550 TV spots of varying lengths were shown on 16 different TV stations across the state in the final fourteen days. Together with some 7,500 radio spots broadcast during the same time period, the presence of Milton Shapp was felt everywhere.[17]

On May 17, the primary contest was over. The results startled the nation. At a cost of somewhere between $800,000 to $1,200,000 of his own money, Milton Shapp, the "Hopeless" candidate, defeated State Senator Robert P. Casey by almost 50,000 votes, and secured the right to represent the Democratic party in Pennsylvania on the gubenatorial ballot in November. Through one of the all time classic uses of money, television and the entire mass media, Milton Shapp was able to buck an entire political organization and impose his own will on its leadership.

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[17] Ibid.

CHAPTER XI

THE VISUAL TAKEOVER

Along with the problems related to the increasing utilization of television and the subsequent rising costs of political campaigning, there has gradually emerged a new set of problems equally upsetting to many voters in this country.

One such problem concerns what many have referred to as the "visual takeover" of our society.[1] As one reporter wrote in an article appearing in the New York Times on the eve of the 1966 gubernatorial elections in California:

> Television has created a new reality, or at least a new way of looking at reality, for millions of viewers. . . . How a man looks and projects himself is more persuasive than the facts about his experience, competence or depth of understanding.[2]

Ronald Reagan Runs for Governor

In 1966, Hollywood actor Ronald Reagan decided to seek the Governorship of California despite the absence of

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[1]Michael S. Clark, "Dr. Strangewin," Television Quarterly, Vol. VI, Number 4, Fall 1967, p. 52.

[2]Richard K. Dean, "Can Television Elect the Next President of the U.S.?" TV Guide, February 10, 1968, p. 11.

any political experience to qualify him to hold such a position. To manage his campaign he hired the public relations firm of Spencer-Roberts and Associates at a cost of roughly $150,000.[3] In an election campaign waged primarily via the air waves, Ronald Reagan swamped his Democratic opponent by almost a million votes, approximately the same number of votes his fellow Republican Barry Goldwater lost by in that state during the 1964 Presidential election.

Shortly after the election Gus Tyler wrote an article entitled, "Topics! Hollywood, Mother of Presidents?" Part of the article was the attempt to explain how a Hollywood actor could win the Governorship so easily.

> The voter, moreover, who has been raised to learn more about affairs of state through TV than by neighborly conversation, feels at ease when introduced to his candidate by the air-waves. He also, unconsciously, tends to judge the candidate by the standards of the medium; well stacked and well packaged.
>
> The voter also prefers an "instant candidate," somebody about whom he can reach a decision in a hurry.
>
> Why not? In the age of instant foods, instant books, and instant love . . . , why not an instant Governor or Senator?"[4]

In retrospect Ronald Reagan was the television good guy come alive! He was handsome, articulate, and even more important, he knew how to utilize television effectively. The visual image was his method of communication, his business, his profession. Although his views on major issues

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[3]John C. Waugh, "Professionalism in Politics," The Christian Science Monitor, March 23, 1967.

[4]Gus Tyler, "Topics: Hollywood, Mother of Presidents?", New York Times, December 17, 1966, p. 2.

such as Social Security, Medicare, antipoverty programs, farm subsidies, TVA, Civil Rights legislation, public housing, federal aid to education, and the Voting Rights Act, were the same as Barry Goldwater's views on these subjects, nevertheless, the realities of these two campaigns were that whereas Ronald Reagan knew how to win support for his causes, Barry Goldwater did no. Goldwater simply did not understand the visual realities of politicking.[5]

The victories of other men such as Mayor John Lindsay of New York, Senator Charles Percy of Illinois, former Hollywood actor and now U.S. Senator George Murphy of California, the late President John F. Kennedy and Senator Robert F. Kennedy of New York, and their brother Senator Edward Kennedy of Massachusetts, likewise, illustrate just how complete this visual takeover has become in our society. In each of their respective campaigns their television image was perhaps the deciding factor which eventually led to their success at the polls.

Today this visual takeover has reached such proportions that some experts have already publicly stated that "television could go a long way toward electing our next *chief* executive" if any one of the candidates possed the *following*:

1. He has a convincing, sincere, forceful personality that projects agreeably on TV.

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[5]Clark, "Dr. Strangewin," p. 53.

2. He has plenty of money to buy air time.
3. He has smart packagers of 60-second spots.[6]

Yet, along with the emphasis being placed on a candidate's image on television, there also remains another problem area with regard to the visual takeover by television.

In 1952 Rosser Reeves introduced the paid political announcement into the national elections. Since that time political commercials have undergone a tremendous transformation both in turns of form as well as content. No longer are men simply content to sit a candidate in front of a TV camera and let him speak. Today, some men want to create their own visual image.

elson Rockefeller Runs for Governor

In 1966 Governor Nelson Rockefeller of New York decided to run for re-election. To aid him in his campaign, . Rockefeller hired the Madison Avenue advertising agency Jack Tinker & Partners and assigned to them the task of eparing Rockefeller's entire Television campaign. Early July, New York voters got the idea of what was in store r them when the agency began running TV spots which were imaginative as their prevailing Alka-Seltzer commercials.

One of the first spots showed a talking fish who rgled about the Governor's wonderful billion-dollar

[6]Dean, "Can Television Elect the Next President?" 10.

water pollution program" and explained to New York voters how the fish in New York were delighted by the Governor's efforts to halt water pollution.[7] Another TV spot told of how the Republican Governor had paved enough roads in his state to extend to Hawaii and back.[8]

As the campaign moved into October, the TV spots began to change from a soft-sell to a hard-sell approach with "more guts" in them.[9] One such commercial, hurriedly made at campaign headquarters, showed the Governor standing in front of a group of New York citizens supposedly speaking out against the narcotics problem in that city. The voice on the sound track said: "O'Connor opposes the law to get narcotics off the street. If you want to keep the crime rate high vote for O'Connor."[10]

By the end of the campaign approximately 4,000 TV commercials had been broadcast to New York voters at an estimated expense of roughly $2 million. And as the New York Times commented, "Poor O'Connor. The likable president of the New York City Council never knew what hit him."[11]

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[7]Richard Reeves, "Rocky Is, Is Not, May Be, Running," New York Times, Magazine Section, November 26, 1967, p. 145.

[8]Jack Gould, "TV: Questions on Campaign-Aid Tax," New York Times, October 24, 1966, p. 79.

[9]"Rockefeller Doesn't Project on Television?" Sponsor, December 12, 1966, p. 3.

[10]Ibid.

[11]Reeves, "Rocky Is, Is Not, May Be, Running," p. 145.

> The books of New York's three largest television stations tell the story. WNBC ran 208 Rockefeller commercials and 23 for O'Connor. Rockefeller spent $231,105. on WCBS to $35,920. for O'Connor. At WABC it was $137,000. to $25,100.[12]

The Documentary Film--"Choice"

In 1964 a group of individuals who professed their backing for Arizona Senator Barry Goldwater produced a 28 minute documentary film called "Choice." This film, which cost about $65,000, had as its purpose to attack and destroy all sentiment for President Lyndon B. Johnson while at the same time laying the blame for all of the country's ills directly at the feet of the tall Texan in the White House.

It began with a shot of a black Lincoln careening along an anonymous highway and a beer can being thrown from its window. Its implication was that this was a scene out of Lyndon Johnson's past, an episode well publicized by the newspapers. Next the camera focused on several scantily-dressed couples performing a frenzied twist while the voice of narrator Raymond Massey could be heard "asking incredulously whether this is America."[13] As the film continued with "glimpses of girls in topless bathing suits, stripteasers, delinquents, and close-ups of the lurid

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[12] Ibid.

[13] Laurence Stern, "Democrats Put on a Show: It's a Republican Movie," New York Journal American, October 20, 1964.

jackets of pornographic books,"[14] over and over again the film's main point was punctuated with repeated shots of the careening Lincoln sedan.

Laurence Stern, writing in the New York Journal American, described the film as follows:

> The theme of the film is that there are two Americas --one embodied in the Declaration of Independence, the Bill of Rights and Senator Barry Goldwater, while the other is manifest in racial riots, burlesque houses, topless bathing suits and beer can spewing, speeding sedans.
>
> Photographs of covered wagons and oiling factory workers are juxtaposed with still photographs of Bobby Baker, his townhouse tenant Carole Tyler and also Billie Sol Estes.
>
> As Mr. Baker's photograph flashes on the screen Mr. Massey's voice says, "They rob you."
>
> John F. Kennedy is portrayed in the film calling upon Americans to ask not what their country can do for them but what they can do for their country.
>
> But since President Kennedy's assassination, Mr. Massey proclaims, American leaders have adopted the principle: "Ask not what you can give but what you can take."
>
> . . . In another sequence the Supreme Court is shown as Mr. Massey asserts that "justice is now a sick joke."
>
> In the final scene the viewer is offered the choice between two Americas: On the one hand Senator Goldwater speaking to the Republican convention to the strains of the Battle Hymn of the Republic and on the other hand Estes, Baker and the speeding automobile."[15]

Upon reception, two local stations, one in California and one in Wisconsin, ran the film. Shortly thereafter, the NBC television Network accepted the film and said they would run it if eleven cuts of "unduly suggestive"[16]

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[14]"The Morality Issue," Newsweek, November 2, 1965, p. 25.

[15]Stern, "Democrats Put on a Show: It's a Republican Movie," October 20, 1964.

[16]"The Morality Issue," November 2, 1965, p. 25.

scenes were edited out of the film. The film was edited.

Then just before it was to be aired, a stenographer's transcript of one of the planning sessions of the film was released to the press. It revealed frank directions from Russell Walton, publicity director for Citizens for Goldwater-Miller to the three obscure movie makers in charge of the production of the film. Some of the quotations in the transcript read as follows:

> People who were brought up in the small towns and on the farms, especially in the Midwest, have a built-in prejudice against the city. . . . This film will obviously and frankly just play on their prejudices. . . .
>
> We want to just make them mad, make their stomachs turn . . . take this latent anger and concern . . . build it up, and subtly turn and focus it on the man who drives 90 miles an hour with a beer can in his hands.[17]

Immediately the press demanded to know if Senator Goldwater had seen the film and had approved its use for television. The answers to both questions were no. The Senator had not seen the film and therefore he had not given it his stamp of approval. Quickly a private screening was set up for the candidate. The press waited, but not for long. No sooner was the viewing over than the Republican candidate informed the press that as far as he was concerned the picture was "nothing but a racist film."[18] Thus,

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[17] Ibid.

[18] Mike Mosettig, "Networks Fear Viewers' Backlash Via Eye-Gouging Political Campaign," Variety, October 28, 1964, p. 25.

not only would he repudiate it, but he would also "not allow it to be shown."[19] The Citizens group objected strongly and insisted that the film would go on. Goldwater was adamant. The film was not aired, and the issue died.

Yet for millions of Americans today, the use of emotional appeals, oversimplification and the deliberate distortion of reality in political advertising on television is a way of campaigning which appears to be rapidly becoming the accepted standard by which Americans are being asked to decide who shall represent them. Instead of confronting each other on the issues, offering positive suggestions and alternatives in dealing with various legislative, social and economic problems, candidates, with the help of special interest groups, seem to be turning their attention more toward developing positive images for themselves on television which would allow them to appeal to voters everywhere regardless of their respective personal and political convictions.

The results of such continued and unchecked activity, moreover, could well make it possible for intelligent and clever image makers to elect charlatans to office by being able to simply "substitute and sell sham for reality, non-being for being, shadow for substance."[20] Thus, if the visual images on television are in actuality the real

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[19] Ibid.

[20] Levin, Kennedy Campaigning, p. 289.

motivating factors behind the voter's decision on election day, than very careful consideration must immediately be given to the merchandising techniques themselves, and to what extent they should be allowed to become an integral part of our entire campaign process.

PART III

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

CHAPTER XII

THE TIME IS NOW

On the eve of the 1968 Presidential elections some Americans appear concerned with the role of television in the forthcoming elections. In illustration of this, on the evening of May 28, 1968, the CBS Television Network aired a special CBS Reports program titled "Campaign American Style." The purpose of the program was an examination of:

> . . . how the great game of politics has become the big business of politics; how it uses all the techniques of advertising, public relations and image-making to sell its product to the voter; and what appears to have happened to political campaigning in America in the process.[1]

The program centered around the attempt in 1967 by a small group of influential and wealthy citizens in New York to unseat the Democratic Executive in Nassau County, Long Island, by merchandising their own chosen candidate through an enormous barrage of radio and television spot commercials at an estimated cost of approximately $227,000. The incumbent Democratic candidate was Eugene Nickerson. Their chosen opponent was "handsome, earnest"[2] Sol Wachtler.

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[1]"You Sell Your Candidates the Way Business Sells Its Products," advertisement, New York Times, May 28, 1968, p. 94.

[2]Bob Williams, "On the Air," New York Post, May 29, 1968, p. 86.

> As producer-writer Jay McMullen traced the campaign, the political merchants told Wachtler and wife what to say, what to wear, when to gesture and you-name-it in a $700,000 campaign for a $30,000-a-year-office, with unestimated party patronage powers.[3]

While inquiring into the interest of the various contributors such as contractors and architects, Mr. McMullen received various suggestions that these individuals "were hardly playing around with their money,"[4] but that they expected certain public contracts and favors to be directed their way should their chosen candidate win this elected seat.

In his analysis and critique of this campaign, CBS commentator Eric Sevareid declared that although the Madison Avenue merchandising techniques used on behalf of Sol Wachtler were not necessarily evil in themselves, he suggested that "evil men could make them that."[5] As a result he felt it was important that the public be aware of these various techniques and understand how they are presently being employed by professional image makers for purposes of swaying public opinion on candidates and issues.

Throughout this thesis the attempt has been made to recount other examples of how various candidates and, or, special interest groups have likewise endeavored to exploit the American voter through the careful but premeditated manipulation of political advertising on television. In the

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[3] Ibid.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Ibid.

candidacy of Milton Shapp, the 1964 New Hampshire primary victory of Henry Cabot Lodge, the 1964 Presidential advertising effort of Doyle, Dane, Bernbach, the political commercials of Jack Tinker and Partners, and the controversial film "Choice," a number of the individual techniques used were studied and analyzed along with their effects on the voters on election day.

In the 1960 campaigns of John F. Kennedy it was related how television was used very successfully by the candidate himself to overcome what some experts had predicted was almost certain defeat. Four years later it was pointed out how television was actually used by another Presidential candidate to prevent his opponent from getting a fair hearing before the American public. Certain implications were drawn as to what the probable future effects would be regarding political campaigning should the present state of political advertising on television continue.

Yet from these examples it would seem that the study as a whole raises a number of very basic questions with regard to the whole subject of the political use of television.

In recent years many have advanced the theory that a heavy vote is a good sign in a democracy. To this end they have tried with all in their means to arouse people about political issues and to get them to the polls. In Southern as well as Northern states massive voting registration drives have been undertaken to get both Negroes and Whites to the

polls on election day. Even people who can't read and write have been prodded into going down to their local voting registry and voicing an opinion about their government.

At the same time some political observers have noted that since the entrance of television into politics, American political campaigns have very quickly become more personality- and less issue-oriented, suggesting that "less meaningful and relevant criteria of selection may be superseding more relevant and meaningful criteria of selection."[6] The specific campaigns of William Scranton, George Murphy, Ronald Reagan, Teddy Kennedy, and Robert Kennedy described earlier may well be particularly relevant to this observation. In each case how the candidate came across on television appears to have been the most important factor of the campaign.

Yet here in the twentieth century the problems of our modern world demand the kind of knowledge, "intellectual sophistication, and familiarity with the complexities of bureaucratic-technological civilization"[7] that can only be mastered by a highly educated and well-trained mind. Likewise it is important that the voters be sufficiently enlightened in order to be able to choose from among the various candidates the most outstanding leadership available.

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[6]Levin, Kennedy Campaigning, p. 288.

[7]Ibid., p. 303.

Thus, the question which this study seems to raise is: Given the present state of political advertising on television and the reliance of most people upon this medium as their primary source of news, does democracy really benefit when the political apathy of millions of Americans is disturbed by emotional slogans presenting simplified and one-sided views of complicated affairs of state, nation and the world? Author Martin Mayer has said no. He has put it this way:

> The most common objection to the use of advertising to magnify political issues is that advertising oversimplifies. A good part of the technique of advertising has the single purpose of simplification, of finding from the welter of causes which make people buy a product the one or two or three which can be refined down to a "reason" and then blown up to a slogan.
>
> Applied to branded products, the technique at its worst can do little harm to society as a whole, because people do not buy even the most heavily advertised product a second time unless it has given satisfaction.
>
> Applied to political issues, however, the technique must partially misinform, create undesirable emotions, and distort the realities which in theory, underlie the decision of the electorate.[8]

While it is certainly true that a candidate can probably define his position on certain issues within the limited time requirements of most political spot announcements, nevertheless, the complexities of most issues would seem to dictate that a thorough examination of these issues by the candidates is much more desirable. With solutions to the multitude of problems becoming more complicated, the importance of understanding the reasons behind a specific

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[8]Mayer, Madison Avenue U.S.A., pp. 304-05.

recommendation, approach, or point of view is perhaps even more essential in helping the voter to arrive at his decision. Therefore, the elimination of all political commercials under perhaps five minutes in length might be one way of bringing about a more meaningful discussion of the issues. Such a step would probably make it more difficult for many candidates to avow a particular position merely for reasons of political expediency. With candidates being forced into lengthier explanations of their positions, a noticeable decline would probably take place in the number of candidates who only seek to mirror the constantly changing opinions of the electorate. In addition such drastic action might spur the development within the political community at large of men whose approach to the problems of modern society would spring from their inward desire to improve existing conditions, and their manifest ability to posit new and meaningful solutions to these problems.

Since political spots presently account for an estimated two-thirds of all costs related to political television,[9] the exclusion of political commercials could also have a very beneficial effect upon the spiraling costs of political campaigns in general. This in turn would allow the nation the opportunity of having the services of many first-rate leaders who otherwise simply could not afford the burden of a costly television campaign.

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[9]"Now Is The Time For All Good Men. . . ," Time, January 5, 1968, p. 44.

An alternate to the political TV commercial might then be the development between broadcasters and the political community of a series of television programs in the last two, three, or even four weeks of a campaign in which each major candidate seeking office on either the Presidential, Senatorial, or Gubernatorial level, would discuss with his opponent or opponents the major issues of the campaign and his positions relative to them. Each program in the series, however, would only cover one topic or issue at a time. In this way candidates would be forced to relate to specific issues and therefore would not be permitted the luxury of dealing in their usual vague generalities. While not guaranteed to be foolproof, this approach might help to enlighten the average voter to a greater degree than has been done in the past.

The cost of such a series should, it seems, be born by the individual stations who in turn would receive certain tax benefits for performing a necessary public service. This benefit might take the form of a tax credit to the broadcaster in proportion to the amount of free time provided. Stations are licensed in the public interest, convenience and necessity. Still, they should not have to pay the total bill involved in turning their operation into a political platform. Here the taxpayer must equally share the expense of this public service.

Such a series would also, it appears, suggest the need

for Congress to redefine section 315 of the Communications Act. The reasons are several.

For a number of years now, broadcasters and private citizens alike have been urging the abolishment of the FCC's equal time ruling. In an address before the 26th annual meeting of the Institute of Life Insurance, CBS president Frank Stanton stated:

> The time has come for us to . . . bring our political processes into line with the scientific realities of our time. . . . So far as the public interest goes, the people of this country are the prisoners of a discredited and unworkable legal relic of a generation ago. . . . failure to repeal section 315 has made confrontations between the major candidates impossible.[10]

Likewise, Newton N. Minow, former Chairman of the FCC, declared in an interview with writer Lawrence Laurent:

> . . . in fairness to the seven members of the Communications Commission, they--like the politicians, the broadcasters and the public are victims of antiquated legislation, muddled legal precedents and a wavering, quavering public policy.
>
> What is needed is a complete overhaul of the law and some common sense about modern political campaigning. The law--Section 315 of the Communications Act and the 1959 amendments--is hopelessly out of date. It says, in essence, to the Federally licensed broadcaster: If you give or sell broadcasting time to one candidate for a political office, each of his rivals must be given or sold "equal time." (The rules also require that the same rates, same discounts, and other terms apply to all.)
>
> This law made good sense when it was written into the Radio Act of 1927. There were only a few hundred radio stations, and congressmen were concerned that time would not be made available to all persons who sought an office. The same language was carried over into the Communications Act of 1934 and, with minor refurbishing, it stands in a time when the United

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[10]"Stanton: Scientific Realities Demand a Political Revamping," Sponsor, December 1964, p. 47.

> States has nearly 6000 radio stations and 600 television stations.
>
> [Obviously] the statute reflects a deep congressional conviction that in our free democratic system all qualified candidates should be given equally free access to broadcasting facilities regardless of office and regardless of financial means if any candidate is granted free time.
>
> [Yet, as Mr. Minow elaborates, the rulings of the FCC have been wholly inconsistent with the express language of the Act. Therefore, declares Mr. Minow] . . . the politician must decide to trust the broadcaster. He must decide that his safety lies in the number and variety of stations and that the best interests of the people will be safeguarded by this diversity. This faith calls for complete repeal of Section 315 of the Communications Act, abolishing every segment of the "equal-time" law. This leaves political broadcasting to the broadcaster, although he must still answer to the FCC on questions of balance, fairness and public interest when his three-year license comes up for renewal.
>
> The first step, then, is to give the broadcaster the same kind of political freedom that the press enjoys. We would say to him, "We believe that your own civic interests and the desire to appear fair to your listeners will make you work for the public interest.[11]

At the same time, however, a great many others have expressed the opinion that although Section 315 is definitely in need of improvement, the equal-time ruling is basically a sound idea and should not be repealed. One such person is former FCC Chairman E. William Henry. According to Mr. Henry, it would be unwise to grant any group of men the kind of awesome power he believes would flow from repeal of the equal-time law. While it is probably more true that the advocates of repeal were merely seeking the same basic freedoms for TV which the press enjoys, a kind of "journalism

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[11] Newton N. Minow with Lawrence Laurent, "Is There No Way Out of This Madness," TV Guide, January 30, 1965.

in the classic sense,"[12] nevertheless, Mr. Henry feels that broadcasters should not be given that kind of power.

> My doubts about the wisdom of the repeal of Section 315 do not stem from a low estimate of the fairness and objectivity of broadcasters. They arise much more out of questions concerning the wisdom of placing that power in the hands of any single group of men. . . . [For example] three quarters of all television homes are located in 50 markets that are served by 171 stations owned by 75 separate owners. And nine companies . . . own three quarters of the stations reaching 40% of America's television homes. . . . let these nine agree to support one presidential candidate, and that candidate is half-way home.[13]

Moreover, Mr. Henry offers a different solution to this problem. First he proposes that splinter party candidates be eliminated from the protection of the equal-time law as it applies to free time. Although these minor candidates would be able to purchase time under the equal-time ruling, where free time is involved the equal opportunities section would apply only to those candidates whose parties polled more than a specified minimum percentage of the vote--for instance, 5% in the preceeding election--or else to those candidates who could qualify through a standard petition procedure.

The former Chairman also suggests that broadcasters be required to "grant free time to major candidates--in an amount equal to the time sold--for use as the candidates see fit."[14] His rationale is as follows:

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[12] "Henry Against Section 315 Repeal," Broadcasting, January 18, 1965.

[13] Ibid.

[14] Ibid.

> I believe . . . that this nation should reduce the cost of political broadcasting--the cost to candidates in terms of money, and the cost to the public in terms of prostituted patronage.
>
> . . . To the broadcasters, political programming is journalism--the irreverent but legitimate daughter of the newspaper. To the candidate, however, the broadcasting medium is simply the extension of a platform, a town hall, a city park. . . . From this point of view the biggest fact on the horizon has nothing to do with journalism, it has to do with money. . . . Television time is a luxury item with a luxury price tag.[15]

To offset the decline in stations' earnings under this proposal, Mr. Henry counsels that broadcasters be given some tax concession for making free time available. Just what this concession would be, however, he does not spell out.

In retrospect it seems reasonable to conclude that the equal-time provision in the Communications Act is basically a sound principle and that it should not be abolished merely because its interpretation causes certain problems in the administration of this principle. Instead, it seems that the solution to this problem lies in redefining the principle and setting forth new guidelines for its operation, taking into account the complexities of our modern democratic society.

The elimination of splinter party candidates from the protection of the equal-time law, unless they qualify under certain clearly defined requirements such as Mr. Henry suggests, appears to be a relatively good idea. While it is

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[15]Editorial, "In The Candidates' Interest," Broadcasting, January 25, 1965, p. 94.

obviously important that the expression and discussion of opposing and minority ideas is essential in furthering the growth of a democratic society, nevertheless, a minority group which does not have the clear and unmistakenable support and loyalty of more than perhaps 5% of the total voting populace, should not be granted an equal proportion of air time for the dissemination of its views. The public interest, convenience and necessity is certainly not served when broadcasters are afraid to grant air time, either free or paid for, to majority candidates and parties for fear of having to grant an equal amount of time to their minority counterparts. While the United States Constitution clearly provides for certain basic rights for all of its citizens regardless of race, creed or color, still, nowhere in this historical document does it suggest that minority groups be given the right or opportunity to govern the majority. The U. S. is a society based upon majority rule. Therefore, while the minority does have a right to the expression of an opinion, not until it becomes a significant percentage of a total opinion does it have the right to demand an equal hearing before the American voter.

The view that broadcasters be required to grant free time to major candidates in an amount equal to the time sold to these candidates also does not seem to be a sound idea. This approach might only result in another type of "buy out." Whereas some candidates obviously have the funds to purchase expensive air time, many candidates do not have such funds.

Therefore, any such ruling would only tend to perpetuate the importance of wealth in seeking political office; and likewise, it would not solve the basic problem related to the rising costs of purchasing air time. It would still take enormous sums of money just to get one's views on the air. Furthermore, those with the money would enjoy a distinct advantage since their opponents could not possibly match them in total air time before the voters.

In the revision of Section 315, therefore, it would seem advisable that broadcasters be required to provide free time sometime during the four weeks preceeding election day to those major candidates, and likewise minority candidates qualifying under the requirements proposed, running for the U. S. Presidency, the United States Senate and the Governorship of one of the 50 states. The amount of time provided and the format selected would be left to the broadcasters and the candidates to determine.

There also appear to be a number of other steps which might help to improve our utilization of television during the election process. For example, campaign costs have skyrocketed with the coming of television; and, as pointed out in previous chapters, the rising costs of television have tended to favor the wealthy candidate over his poorer opponent, since only the wealthy can afford to buy the TV time necessary to advance their views. Yet, if millions of Americans could be encouraged to invest even a small contribution in support of their candidates, the total amount of money

which might be collected would certainly provide an equal opportunity for all candidates to be heard. This could be accomplished very simply if Congress would enact legislation to provide for either a tax deduction up to perhaps $100 or a tax credit of perhaps half of any campaign gift up to $50 so as to encourage campaign contributions by persons of modest means.

At the same time, if broadcasters were required to furnish complete financial reports on all paid political time purchased on their respective stations, the electorate not only might become aware of the high cost of campaigning, but they might also learn the true sources of campaign contributions and the extent to which some candidates are willing to go to influence voters on election day.

Broadcasters should continue to expand their news efforts and should be encouraged to schedule such programs as Meet the Press, Face the Nation, and Issues and Answers in prime time during the week. Only if viewers are exposed to programs of a serious nature seven days a week can we ever hope to develop a mature and enlightened constituency.

Finally, broadcasters should be encouraged to develop in more detail a code for political broadcasting aimed at upgrading the present state of TV politicking. This code might include such factors as a limitation on the number of TV spots which could be purchased for a given candidate, restricting to a specified period prior to an election the amount of time during which the spots could be aired, and a

general evaluation of the spots as to their truthfulness and good taste.

Today, television is focusing the attention of a greater number of people on what is happening all over the world. At the same time it has provided the leadership of this country with an excellent facility for the public discussion of the problems facing this nation. Now only one question remains. Will the leaders of this country recognize the need and importance of developing this medium to its fullest potential? Or will television merely become another pawn in the continuing struggle between the politician and the broadcaster?

As John F. White, President of National Educational Television has said:

> The point is clear enough, I think. Television is going to be exactly what we make of it, no more and no less. And herein lies our opportunity. Shall we sit back idly and let this magical device be taken over almost wholly by strident voices and shallow images? Or do we learn to use this magical device? Do we learn to use it to waken minds, to spread knowledge, to communicate ideas, to quicken and enrich lives, and to alert people to their responsibilities as citizens of a free nation and as members of a race of men struggling with grave and urgent problems?[16]

The decision is obviously ours to make. I think the time to make that decision is now!

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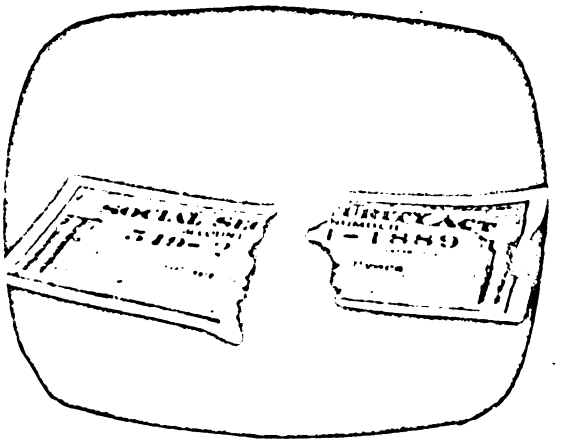
[16]John F. White, "Playback," Television Magazine, August 1964, p. 37A.

ILLUSTRATIONS

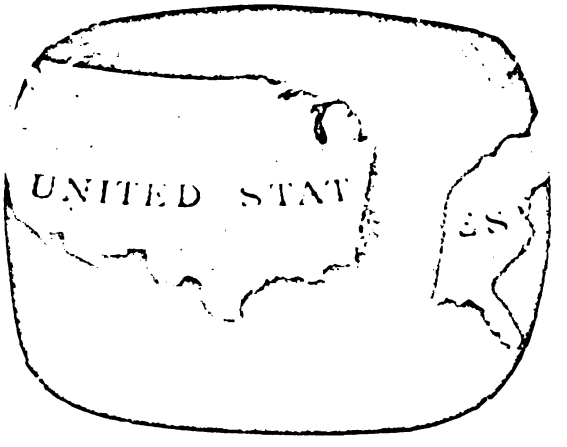
FIVE TV COMMERCIALS FOR THE DEMOCRATS

TEST BAN - "Children shouldn't have strontium 90 ....But there's a man who wants to be President and if he's elected they might start testing all over again."

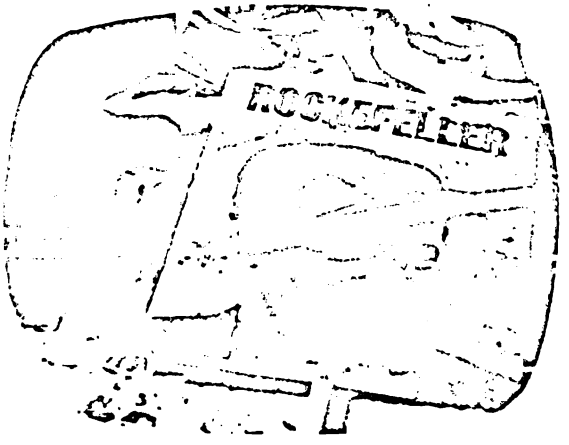


SOCIAL SECURITY - "Goldwater has said he would change the system. Even his running mate admits that the voluntary plan would wreck your Social Security."

POVERTY - "Millions of families are caught in circumstances beyond their control. Their children will live lives of poverty unless the cycle is broken."

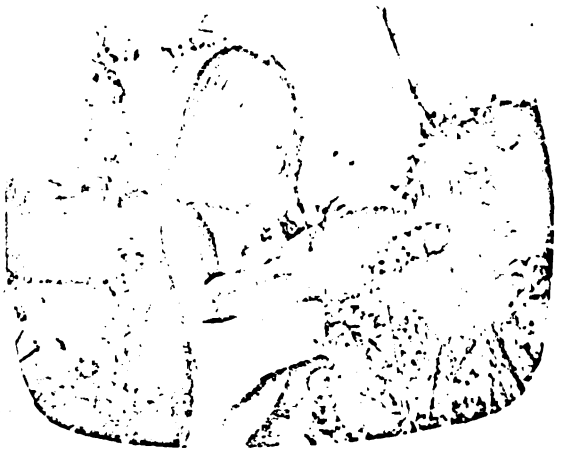


ONE NATION - "Goldwater said: 'Sometimes I think this country would be better off if we could just saw off the Eastern seaboard and let it float out to sea.'"



SAN FRANCISCO - "Remember him? Governor Rockefeller. He said Barry Goldwater's positions can 'spell disaster for the (Republican) party and for the country.'"

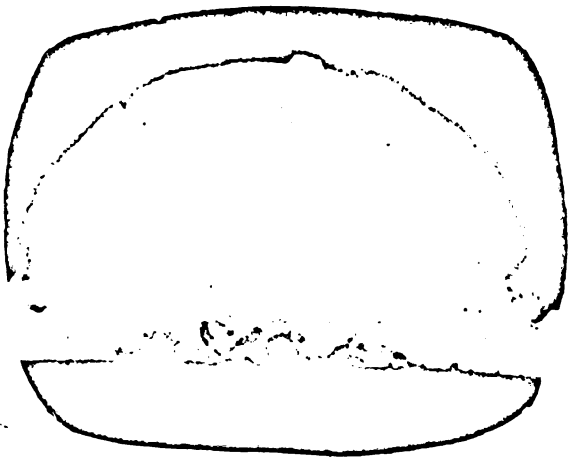
THE MOST CONTROVERSIAL TV COMMERCIAL OF ALL TIME



"Ten, nine, eight, seven...

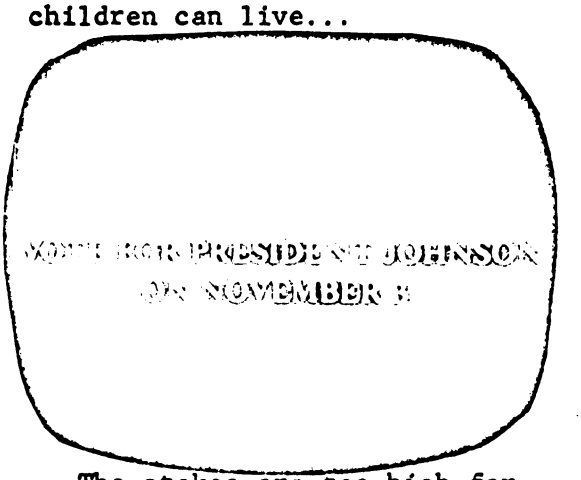
...six, five, four, three...

...two, one...



...These are the stakes. To make a world in which all of God's children can live...

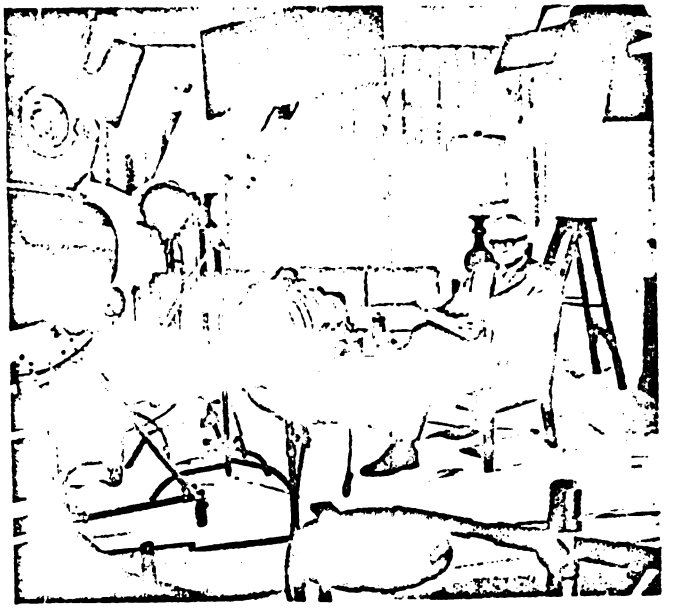
...or go into the dark. We must either love each other, or we must die...

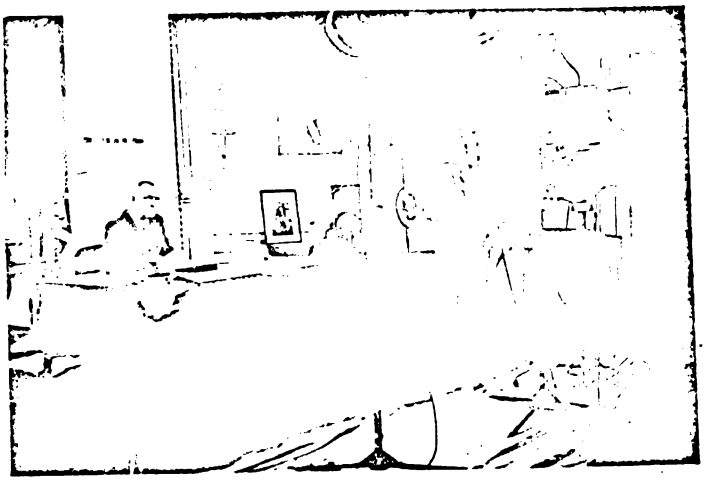


...The stakes are too high for you to stay home."

THE CANDIDATES ADDRESS THE NATION

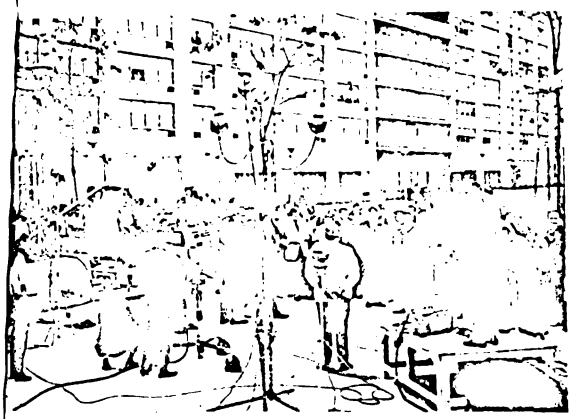
While Goldwater rehearses in the studio...



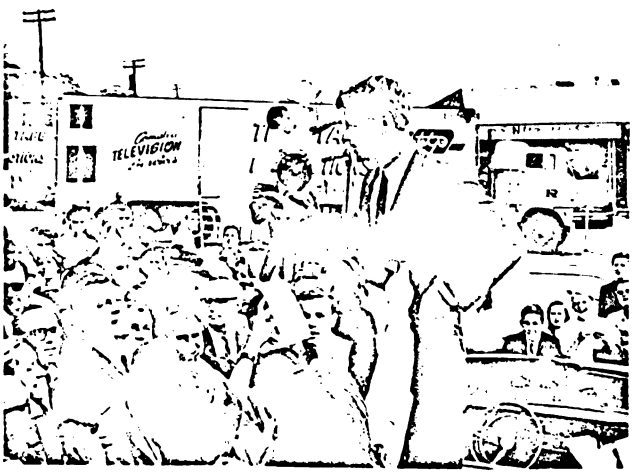


Johnson speaks from the White House...

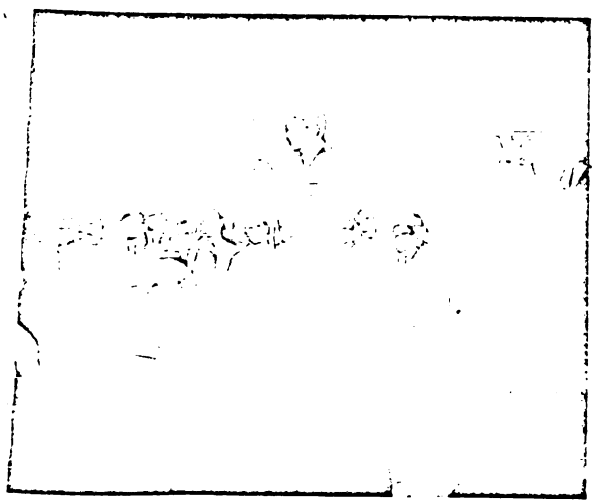
ROBERT KENNEDY TAKES TELEVISION ON LOCATION



To Lincoln Towers - A Middle Income Housing Project...



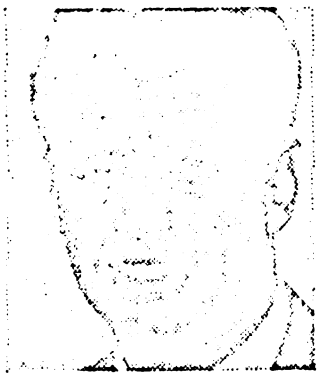
To a Supermarket Parking Lot In New Rochelle...



To Columbia University and a Political Meeting with students...

NEWSPAPERS ADS PROMOTING TELEVISION PROGRAMS

3 thinking men discuss what Robert Kennedy has done to protect our civil liberties.



Averell Harriman
Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.
Richard Neustadt
Moderator: Barry Gray

9:30 tonight
channel 11

If you missed the film biography of Robert Kennedy, you can see it tonight at 8:30pm on channel 11

NEWSPAPERS ADS PROMOTING TELEVISION PROGRAMS

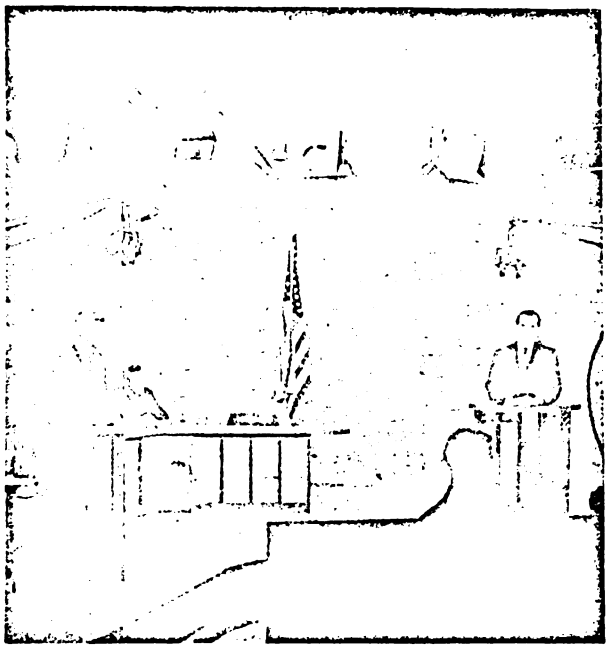
Robert Kennedy answers the tough ones.

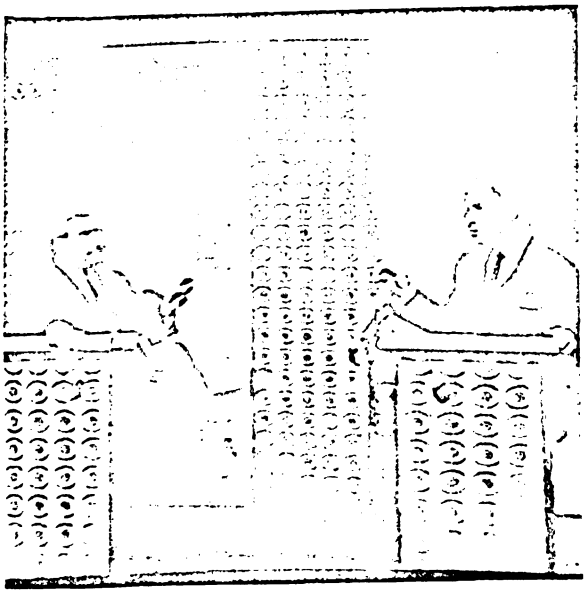
6:15 tonight, channel 4

Look in on
Robert Kennedy,
Ethel, and the children,
at home in Glen Cove.
Tonight at
5:55 pm on channel 7
6:15 pm on channel 2
11:10 pm on channel 5

TO DEBATE OR NOT TO DEBATE?...THAT IS THE QUESTION!

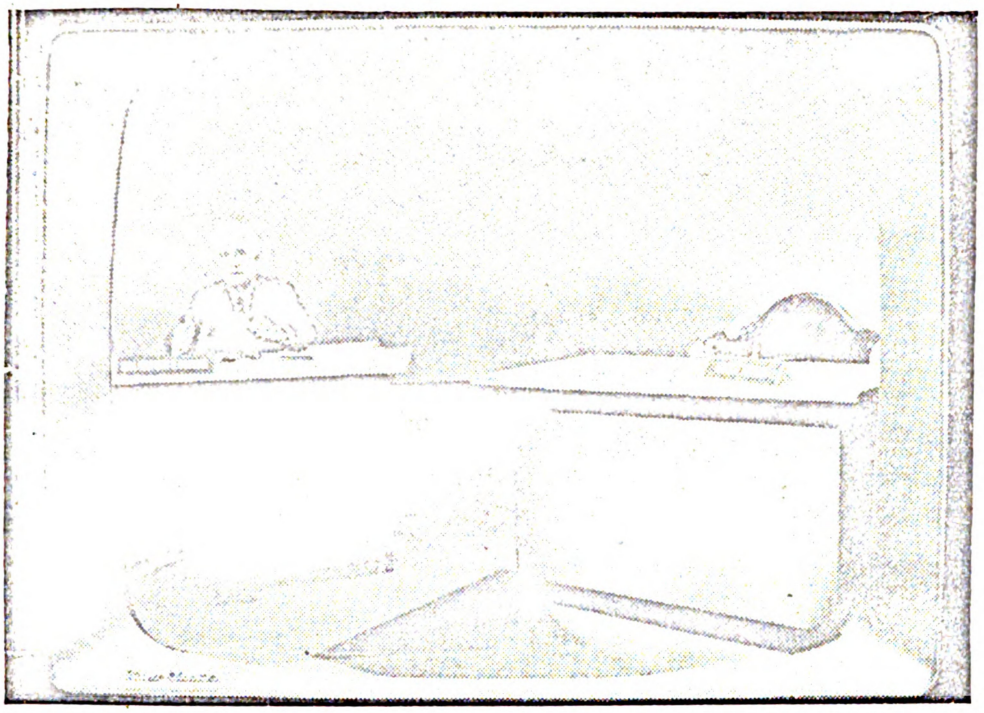
John F. Kennedy challenges Richard Nixon to a series of Great TV Debates - 1960 and wins!





Pierre Salinger challenges George Murphy to a televised Debate in California - 1964 and loses!

THE TELEVISION DEBATE THAT NEVER WAS



While Senator Keating gestures toward the empty chair ...

A CBS official bars Robert F. Kennedy's effort to enter the studio.

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