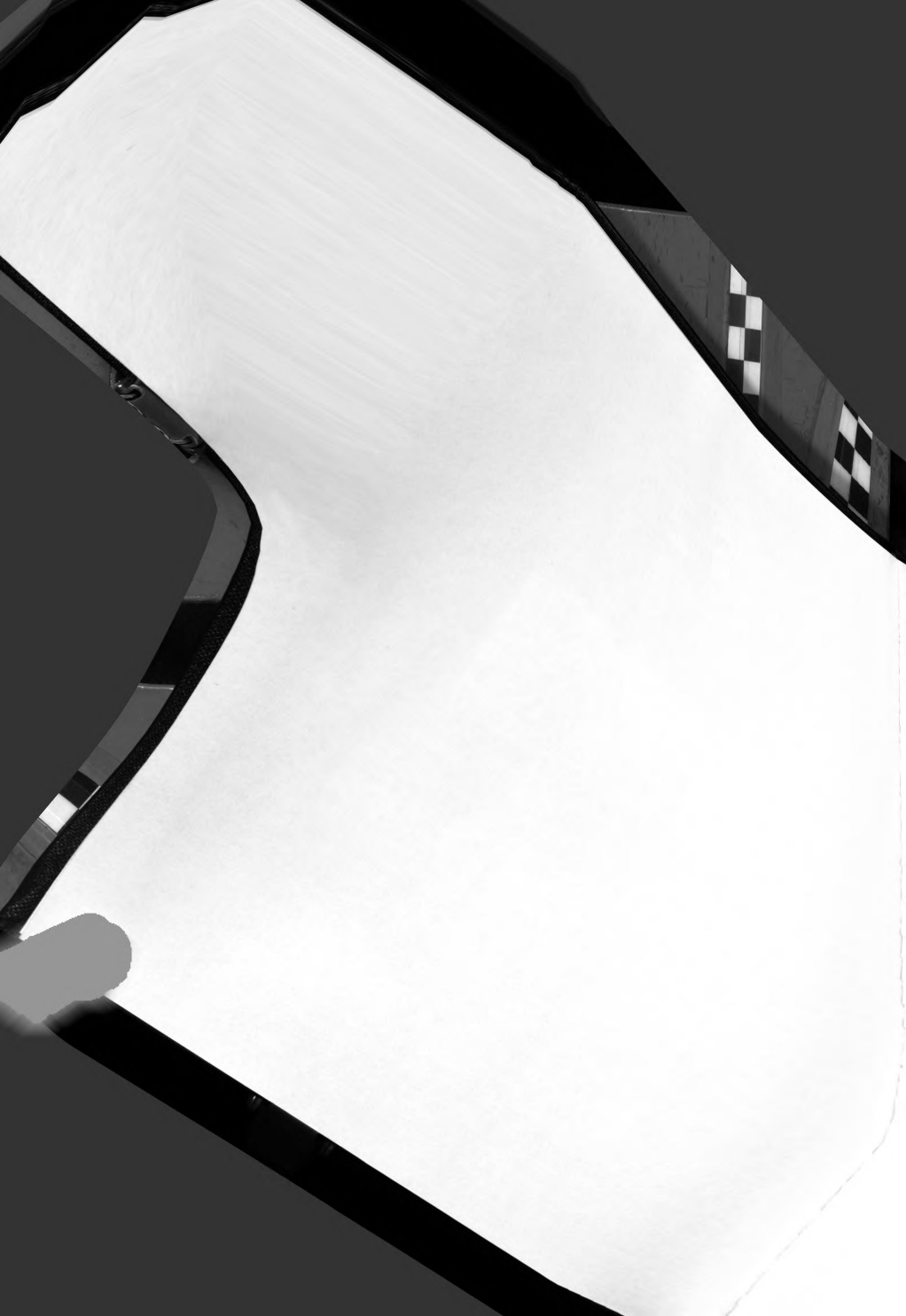




**THE 1928 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION IN THE SOUTH:
THE QUESTION OF SOUTHERN CONSERVATIVE VALUES**

By

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ABSTRACT

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The 1928 Presidential Election in the South was a struggle to define southern traditions and values. This was the first post-Reconstruction election that showcased a split in the solid Democratic South. The South was divided over whether to vote for racial supremacy or religious conservatism. These were both traditional southern values. A battle between southern Democratic forces over the issue of true conservatism ensued. There was a question between conservative values. The South was divided over which tradition to champion, Protestantism or white supremacy. This was endemically an ideological struggle that was based on geography and racial population. The southern states with the highest African-American populations were more apt to vote with the racial conservatives while those with the lower numbers aligned themselves with cultural conservatives. This southern electoral pattern has continued in more recent elections.

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To Mom and Dad: for giving me the opportunity they never received.

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Introduction: The Changing Southern Electorate

Since the Republican defeat in the 1992 U.S. Presidential Election, the conservative coalition that it represents has been looking to broaden its base. Conservative reverend and media mogul Pat Robertson has recently been courting the American Catholic Church to try and form a united political opposition to social and political liberalism.

Recently at the 1992 G.O.P. National Convention, the three main speakers were a Northern Catholic, a Northern Protestant, and a Southern Protestant. This is an example of the white conservative mix that forms part of the modern religious right. The mostly Protestant religious right and American Catholic hierarchy have found themselves in agreement about how to stop the modernization and development of American culture. They are trying to maintain the origins of a society that they deem proper and self-fulfilling. They fear both political and social change because it weakens their base of power and leads to an evolving country that does not reflect their beliefs.

This newfound political alliance would be a drastic shock to those southern Protestants of 1928, many of whose descendants now

belong to the religious right. In 1928, the political and religious groups whose issues were directly represented by the Pat Robertson types of the world, are now in today's world, seeking this political union. The Protestant religious groups of this earlier era were trying to stop a social, cultural, and political change from occurring that was similar to what the modern religious right/Catholic coalition wants to stop. Now these Protestant groups accept Catholics as good Americans. They did not do so in 1928. Catholics were suspect and retained pseudo-alien status. The question of Americanism was at the heart of the 1928 election. It has always been a question in the South. David M. Potter once described this problem as "'a somewhat compulsive preoccupation with the question of this Americanism.'"¹ C. Vann Woodward said in The Future of the Past that "'This preoccupation has found expression in innumerable, often confusing and contradictory efforts to define the national character.'"² In the 1928 election, white Southerners had to answer the question of who was the better American, or more precisely, which group of pseudo-Americans should be feared less; Catholic Northerners or African-American Southerners. This will be classified as the cultural conservatives versus the racial conservatives. This is the main conflict that will be explored in this thesis.

Cultural conservatives and racial conservatives comprise the majority of white southern feelings in this era. The association with one group or another was related to and correlated with African-

¹C. Vann Woodward, The Future of the Past(New York: Oxford University Press, 1989) p.134.

²Woodward, The Future of the Past, p. 143.

Americans' being a percentage of the population. As will be described later, the 1928 presidential election results aligned with the number of African-Americans in a southern state. The states with the higher former slave populations voted with the Democrats while all other southern states voted against Catholicism and the problems related with cultural change. This election was a question of southern conservatism. The South was and still is categorized as the most conservative area of the country. Conservatism could best be described as resistance to change or maintaining the status quo. So the 1928 election became a look at which conservative belief would win this struggle, those with the Protestant sensibilities who tried to maintain their religious and cultural way of life (cultural conservatives), or those more interested in white supremacy who wanted and tried to maintain their particular cultural and economic way of life (racial conservatives). This second group also supported economic progressivism and they aligned with Smith partly because he was more economically progressive than Hoover. But, the progressivism these people supported was for whites only.

These two groups belief systems were based on prejudices that were rooted in their culture. Race and culture were the guide markers. This does not mean that other prejudices did not exist inside the culture. There was an inherent sexism and anti-semitism that was endemic to much of the South, but they were not cutting issues or did not have a great effect in relation to this election. It should be equated in future areas of this paper that when animosity toward Wall Street and big business is discussed, anti-semitic thought was an underlying factor and issue.

Thus, there were two types of political leaders who struggled over the question of Smith's candidacy: those who felt that Smith was a general threat and those politicians who simply tried to follow popular public opinion whether they ended up either in favor of or against Smith. Two examples to note in the future were Alabama Senator J. Thomas Heflin and North Carolina Senator Furnifold M. Simmons. Both were against Smith but for different reasons. Heflin tried to further his career through his opposition to Smith and Catholics in general. He was a politician without any coherent agenda and is classified in the second group. His agenda throughout his career was not consistent and, if the political climate was right, he could have supported Smith. Simmons, on the other hand, was deeply troubled by the entire Smith agenda and is classified with the first group. He acted behind the scenes to counter the activities of North Carolina and the National Democratic Party when his personal leadership role was fully secured. Unlike Heflin, he had nothing to gain by his opposition except a clear conscience. The South was composed of these two types of political leaders who lined the Smith opposition inside the Democratic party.

The purpose of this paper is not to form a comprehensive opinion of the presidential election of 1928, but to analyze the southern Democratic political activity that year and observe the trends that continue to lead the South. This study is state driven and concentrates on each former Confederate state. The study's focus is solely on the activities of southern society. The core of activity happens both in the churches and the Democratic party because they are the center of southern culture. This is top down history based on

the opinion of religious, political, and cultural leaders. A herd mentality developed where the local population followed the activities of its appointed or inherited leaders. The local journals set or followed an agenda in their reporting and the citizenry towed the line. It is very important to prove that this election was not an anomaly and the activities of the southern states strongly corresponded with the representational wishes of the electorate. The election in each state was a reflection of the differing individuals and beliefs of that state. These activities in many ways were very different.

The purpose is not to determine whether religion or Prohibition was the more important issue of 1928. The combination of the problems Governor Alfred Smith faced led to the first substantial break up of the solid South after Reconstruction.³ His lack of depth and his inability to break from his provincial roots and his arrogance about his heritage helped to alienate the Democratic southern electoral base.

Southern Conservatism and Important Historical Literature

In many ways the South feared an evolving and changing society. It could be said that the South of the 1920's feared the arrival of the

³David Burner in The Politics of Provincialism: The Democratic Party in Transition, 1928-1932(New York: Knopf, 1968) believed that the totality of Smith's problems which included religion, prohibitionist discontent, supposed un-American status, and Republican connections damaged his candidacy. This is compared to Allan Lichtman in Prejudice and the Old Politics: The Election of 1928(Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1979) who believed that religion was by far the most important issue in the election.

twentieth century. In this era the U.S. Supreme Court was slowly beginning to change its view of the law from being in a Newtonian state (unchanging laws or in a state of inaction), to being in a Darwinian state (or the continuing evolution of the law and society). The South was facing a similar societal change.

The entire South was analyzed with puzzling conclusions in the Mind of the South by Wilbur J. Cash in 1941, that helped to form the ideological and cultural evolution that culminated in the conflict of 1928. This book pre-existed almost all books discussed in this section and is in many ways the father of modern southern cultural and historical study.⁴ The South was formed as an area of class distinction. It was rigid in its social characteristics. Both of these aspects were based on geography. The best lands, black-belt soils and coastal plains, went to the earliest immigrants who organized this type of society. Plus, this type of settling kept away new immigrants. This led to an economic and social isolation that separated the black-belt plantations from the upcountry regions.

In the post-bellum era, the separation that the South previously enjoyed came to an abrupt end. In taking many aspects of the northern way of life such as Jim Crow and others, the southern economic and educational system began to change and modernize. The twentieth century South was becoming industrialized. What was called by Henry Grady as the 'New South' was an industrial and

⁴C. Vann Woodward in Origins of the New South 1877-1913(Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1951) could be described as the father of pure Southern historical study, Howard W. Odum, Southern Regions of the United States(Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1936) in Southern sociological study, and V. O. Key, Southern Politics in State and Nation(New York: Knopf, 1950) in Southern political science.

better educated South. This increased the standard of living in all areas of the South, but the growth was uneven at best. This new economic format forced the South to embrace a new standard of education. Whether it did or not is still in question. It is true that in the era of redemption, social services such as education were drastically cut. With the help of northern investment capital, Grady and others tried to convince the North that the South was trying to change and personify the North. But, it emulated the North in only superficial ways, keeping a southern way of life still firmly in tact. The continuing struggle between change and the status quo faced the 'New South'.

After discussing the cultural developments behind 1928, the political happenings that formed the southern political universe should be discussed. The white South wanted to ensure that they would control society. The easiest way to do this was to control politics. African-Americans were perceived as being too uninformed to be given the ballot. C. Vann Woodward in The Origins of the New South, 1877-1913 and J. Morgan Kousser in The Shaping of Southern Politics: Suffrage Restriction and the Establishment of the One-Party South, 1880-1910, both described the movements that the southern leaders made to change and then maintain their particular way of life. Both described how southern disfranchisers legislated decreases in opposition party votes (Republicans and Populists opposed to the Democratic party) through gerrymandering, appointment, and money requirements for office holders. Ballot box stuffing was also used in the post-bellum South due to fears that disfranchisement laws would be overruled by radical Republicans. Once Reconstruction ended and

the era of redemption began, regressive legislation was gradually passed. Poll taxes, secret ballots, and literacy tests disqualified both African-American and poor white voters. Poor whites could only be rescued by grandfather clauses. Economics was an underlying factor because the elites who wanted to control society also controlled economics. This separation of races and domination of white economic elites, lead to the conflicts of 1928.

But, The Origins of the New South did even more. In his early chapters, Woodward discussed the confused ideology of the South, the political alliances and post-bellum relationships in the new two-party structure of the Reconstruction South.⁵ This confused ideology was a conflict between progressiveness, white supremacy, economic change, and social activity. This relationship continues and is not just a product of two-party politics, but is a product of the South itself. Paraphrasing Karl Marx who believed that ideology was false or constructed consciousness, it is important to understand that the South viewed itself and still views itself ideologically. Woodward articulated the point that the South viewed itself ideologically because it had failed or continues to fail in other more important areas.⁶ The confused ideology Woodward discussed continued to present itself in close elections even if only one-party controlled politics. This confusion was at the heart of 1928.

⁵ J. Morgan Kousser and James M. McPherson Region, Race, and Reconstruction: Essays in Honor of C. Vann Woodward(New York: Oxford University Press, 1982) p. xxiii.

⁶ The general ideas were raised in the preface of Kousser and McPherson, Region, Race, and Reconstruction.

The southern people were fearful of changing their particular way of life, this fear was at the heart of 1928. In the post-bellum era, the white South formed the way of life that the majority of the region would have liked to continue indefinitely. But the South accepted many of its cultural and societal characteristics from the North. C. Vann Woodward's The Strange Career of Jim Crow and Eugene Genovese's Roll Jordan, Roll: The World the Slaves Made, described how the South was searching for a social and economic model for its future. Woodward described how the northern Jim Crow system, installed in the 1830's, began and was deemed useful by the Southerners in the immediate post-bellum era. Woodward believed that as late as 1885, southern African-Americans were treated better than those in the North and that northern separation and hatred of African-Americans was stronger than in the South. Genovese followed Woodward's lead and continued this North leading the South theory.

As education gradually grew in the South, the mysticism and uneducated view of the South by its inhabitants began to fade. 1928 was a struggle to retain this old tradition of social control through mysticism. The rise of the use of science and education and the decrease of religious belief led to what John Crowe Ransom stated in God Without Thunder as the growth of "the new religion of science." He believed this change was from outside forces and not endemic to the South. Ransom wrote this social dialogue in 1930 in the wake of the Scopes trial. Ransom was opposed to modernization. He believed that modernization would change the South forever. Religious belief (inherently the Protestant religion) was at the core of the South's

societal structure. Society and science were moving faster than religion, thus the need for religion was decreasing. Religion was necessary in the southern society to keep in check its underlying racial and social problems (Cash described the South as a place of unreality and permeating with violence under the surface. Ransom believed that religion kept African-Americans happy being submissive to whites while keeping violence in check.).

James Thompson's Tried as by Fire: Southern Baptists and the Religious Controversies of the 1920's explored southern religion of the 1920's and correctly believed that it was the core of southern society. It seems that along with Ransom, his view of southern conservatism was rooted in religious control. Elite control was enforced through religious mysticism and belief. Both the black-belt and the religious elite believed that society would crumble without the regulation of individual behavior. Historically, Southerners have enjoyed the freedom of minimalistic central government control. Southern society did not require central government due to its strength of religion, family, and individual accomplishment. These areas supplied the general needs that government usually fulfilled. The growing excitement in educated southern circles regarding social reform and scientific ascendancy upset many. The South had a group of conservative political and social leaders that functioned through the use of religious control to maintain economic and social status quo relationships. This continued social structure would force individuals to cling to the traditional structure of southern society that was formed by the conservative elite for their continued existence.

But the use of religion had boundaries. African-American Southerners could not be controlled by religion because they attended different churches than did white Southerners. Genovese believed that white churches did not satisfy their particular character. But, many African-Americans were cognizant of the need for whites to control society through religion. African-Americans were already removed from the political system of the early twentieth century by disfranchising laws and disfranchisement was the direct result of traditionally conservative white southern beliefs. White southern elites believed that they should maintain control of 'their' South because it had always been that way. But the conflict of 1928 remained the quest for the resolution of the question: what was 'their' South and who should they fight to try and maintain control from, African-Americans or northern Catholics?⁷

The books used to define and describe the 1928 election are mostly lacking in any detailed description of the South's role or southern culture in general. The main political history book, Prejudice and the Old Politics: The Election of 1928, offers original insights but lacks substantive analysis of the South. Edmund A. Moore's A Catholic Runs For President: The Campaign of 1928, was published in 1956. Moore was not a scholar and his view of the South was uninformed and anachronistic. New insights were not

⁷ Other books that are important in this category are V.O. Key, Southern Politics: In State and Nation, the Twelve Agrarians, I'll Take My Stand, (New York: P. Smith, 1951) and Kenneth K. Bailey in Southern White Protestantism in the Twentieth Century (Gloucester: P. Smith, 1964), and specially noted should be George Tindall's The Emergence of the New South, 1913-1945, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1967). Tindall's book was good for obtaining facts but lacked a clear or definite thesis.

forthcoming. The two analytical quantitative books, Ruth Silva's Rum, Religion, and Votes: 1928 Re-Examined and Roy V. Peel and Thomas C. Donnelly's The 1928 Campaign: An Analysis were not historical and did not characterize the election with long-term analyses.

David Burner's The Politics of Provincialism: The Democratic Party in Transition, 1916-1932, is a fine historical work that stands alone when trying to characterize this election. Burner defined the problems that Smith faced and generally categorized them in regard to the southern culture. Burner believed that Prohibition and religious prejudice were both equally damaging issues facing Smith. The South wanted to defeat Smith because they feared outside influence. But Burner did not understand the subtleties that existed inside the South and in many ways his analysis was lacking because of his failure to incorporate southern historical literature. Thus, using all these books plus many others along with all related Ph. D. dissertations, a total view of the South and the 1928 election can be presented for the first time.

The Problems of the Democrats Leading Up To 1928.

The Democratic party has always existed with a confusingly mixed ideology with differing internal beliefs. The rural party of Jefferson and later, Jackson, had been based loosely on individual sovereignty or a 'states rights' blend of liberties and freedoms that

allowed individuals to act on their own behalf.⁸ This blend was successful in its early stages because the United States was originally a Protestant, white male elitist ruled country. Those who controlled society were in total control because in many ways their society was a reflection upon themselves. This was the case in the South. The southern states had exerted an inordinate amount of political and social influence upon the U.S. until their failed secession and subsequent defeat in the Civil War. As the power of Democrats in the South and the southern region declined in general, the wave of emigrating masses from Europe filled the void inside the Democratic party. Poor, urban, Catholic immigrants, first from Ireland and then later from eastern and southern Europe, exhibited an increasingly strong position inside the national party. The Democratic party was the natural outlet for these people. As early as the 1880's, Irish began to control politics and patronage in many northern urban areas. Government activities and politics were a natural extension of their garrulous characteristics. Irish ascendance in the Democratic party helped emigrants quickly assimilate into northern society. But, there remained a natural regional, cultural, and political split with the original Democratic emigrants; the Southerners. This growing

⁸ Jefferson and Jackson had an original conflict over centralization of governmental power, individual freedom, and religious freedom plus other minor philosophical and ideological differences. With these two leaders being at the core of Democratic philosophy, it is easy to understand the evolution of philosophical differences inside the party. By the 1924 Democratic National Convention, David Burner in The Politics of Provincialism, argues that the party was splintered into three groups, urban conservative northeasterners, rural conservative southerners, and radical westerners, p. 151. This was an explosive mix of interest groups. When the elements Smith added in 1928 were included, the groups became that much more volatile.

conflict would affect the 1920's and culminate at the 1928 presidential election.

In 1920, as urban America overtook rural America in population, the struggle inside the Democratic party was becoming heated. The changing population made the Democrats question whether agrarian tradition of urban politics would control the party. The Progressive northern/southern coalition that President Woodrow Wilson formed was in disarray. Catholics began to visibly dominate many cities such as Boston and to a lesser extent New York. Many Southerners saw these intruders as a threat to their sovereignty and freedom. During this period Robert H. Wiebe in The Search For Order, described a rural America filled with 'island communities' whose separate existence was deteriorating because of the economic and political influence being exhibited by urban America. These people feared the unknown. They feared the erosion of power and control. These communities' fears were cultural and from an uneducated standpoint. They did not understand the changes around them. As Wilbur J. Cash in The Mind of The South described, Southerners had an irrational fear attached to their existence. They did not intellectually discuss or understand the happenings around them. Instead they just reacted. Leading up to 1928, many Southerners feared both a physical and spiritual invasion of their territory by these emigrating political and cultural usurpers. The anxieties and insecurities of those in society often resulted in vitriolic discussions about 'Americanism' and how these new people did not belong. This insecurity and struggle was indeed a class conflict that affected the North/South split inside the party described above as well as a

black-belt/upcountry geographical split inside the South itself.⁹ The fear resulting from a lack of self rule or regional sovereignty was at the heart of the Democratic party and the issues of 1928.

The 1924 Democratic Convention was a struggle for the future of the party. 1928 was the culmination of the battle that began in 1924.¹⁰ That year West Virginia Governor John W. Davis became the party nominee but only after 9 convention days and 103 ballots. That convention brought to the forefront the belief that Catholics had enormous influence inside the party and in the rapidly growing U.S. cities. Smith was doubly rejected by Southerners both because the Ku Klux Klan disliked his religion and because the Anti-Saloon League disliked his proposed modification of the Volstead Act, which would have permitted local option and allowed the sale of light beers and wines. Prohibition, religious liberty, and repudiation of the Klan were respectively the most important issues of the convention. These issues were not resolved as neither Smith nor the southern favorite, former Southerner William Gibbs McAdoo, were able to muster even a bare majority of ballots. The convention also deadlocked over the proposed condemnation of the Klan in the party platform. These three main issues were carried over to 1928 with McAdoo sitting on the sidelines and the Klan making a final stand with its fleeting power base.

⁹ William B. Hixson Jr., The Search for the American Right Wing: An Analysis of the Social Science Record, 1955-1987 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992) showed insight concerning conservative regional differences in a later era.

¹⁰ Burner, Politics of Provincialism, pp. 179-227.

During the 1920's, the Ku Klux Klan was a driving force inside southern politics. The K.K.K. believed that their culture was proper and everyone who was different was to be feared and eliminated. Whether one was a member of the Klan or just a political bystander, the Klan affected the perceptions of society. In 1924 there were 2,000,000 active and former members, along with their wives, who were still active. They successfully stereotyped individuals with their hatred that affected the meaning of words like "Catholic", "Pope", or "foreigner".¹¹ They instilled the improperness of the Catholic culture and intrusion many Southerners felt about Smith and his followers increasing power inside the Democratic party. Both the religious and Prohibition issues were of vast importance. They led to drastic behavior being displayed by Southerners. These issues were in many ways of equal importance. The South was the strongest area of prohibitionist feeling in the United States. A.S.L. leader Wayne Wheeler while flexing his prohibitionist muscles, said to Governor Smith after a 1924 interview at the 1924 Democratic National Convention, "Governor, you will never enter the White House."¹² This was the epitome of how both the prohibitionists and southern Protestants felt. Michael Monahan believed in his contemporary work Dry America, that Prohibition was the reason for religious bigotry, drug addiction and other problems.¹³ There was an inherent and unmistakable connection between the two issues that could not

¹¹ Burner, Politics of Provincialism, p. 90.

¹² Norman H. Clark, Deliver Us From Evil: An Interpretation of American Prohibition(New York: Norton, 1976) p. 115.

¹³ Clark, Deliver Us From Evil, p. 144.

be separated. This cohesion led leaders of both groups to efficiently work together to defeat Smith. But Smith himself did not help his own cause.

The activities of both Governor and Mrs. Alfred Smith did not help to pacify the Smith opposition. Both Al and his wife Katie failed to transcend their cultural heritage. David Burner called this the Politics of Provincialism, or the provincial activities and cultural separation of groups inside the Democratic party. Between 1924 and 1928, Mrs. Smith had an audience with Pope Pius XI, and flaunted their meeting at inappropriate instances that were well publicized throughout the sensitive and fearful South. Then, when Smith began a push for the 1928 nomination, he filled his inner circle with unfit and provincial leaders. Some, such as the industrialist John J. Raskob, were former Republicans and captains of industry. This was a double liability to southern Democrats with populist and economically progressive leanings. Origins of the New South discussed the anti-foreign nature of the progressive movement in the South. Smith failure to surround himself with both traditional Democrats and traditional Americans damaged his chances of gaining support with white southern Democratic society. This type of feeling was apparent especially in chapter 14 entitled "'Progressivism--For Whites Only'".¹⁴ Many papers throughout the South began to discuss the nomination of Smith as a good thing because he was a sure loser

¹⁴ Kousser and McPherson, Region, Race, and Reconstruction p. xxii-xxiv. It must also be noted where homage is paid to Woodward and his analysis concerning "Progressivism--For Whites Only", Kousser furthers this analysis with a minichapter from The Shaping of Southern Politics (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974) entitled "Progressivism For Middle-Class Whites Only" beginning on p. 229.

and it would rid the South and Democrats of him forever so the party could maintain its traditional roots.

The Not So New Year of 1928

The new year was not a particularly good one for Governor Smith. He continued to be damaged inside the party by the haunting regional and cultural issues that had weighed him down during 1924. Throughout the South, negative reporting was prevalent inside its papers. The local and regional journals began the year by endorsing favorite son candidates and publishing many critical stories about Smith. General Electric Chairman Owen D. Young, ex-Secretary of War Newton D. Baker, Montana Senator Thomas J. Walsh, Missouri Senator James A. Reed, Arkansas Senator Joseph Robinson, Mississippi Senator Pat Harrison, Georgia Senator Walter F. George, and Tennessee Representative Cordell Hull were popular candidates. Every southern state except South Carolina had an anti-Smith paper in operation. These papers printed numerous and well spirited attacks against Smith and even the Democratic party in general. But a type of two-party opposition structure had not formed yet in the South because of the earlier disfranchising movement of the redemption era.

There were two main groups that opposed Smith. The organizational opposition to Smith was at first a loose coalition of marginal southern Democrats and a group of right wing religious xenophobes who feared the validation of Roman zealotry. They wanted to keep cultural outsiders from becoming mainstream. Both

opposition groups were pre-formed left overs from 1924. But neither were cohesive enough to counterattack Smith's powerful organization in the pre-Houston convention period. One of the great leaders of the anti-Smith movement was Senator Heflin.

Alabama Senator J. Thomas Heflin had a history of demagoguery aimed at the Catholic Church. The one great issue that he championed was animosity towards Catholics. This was a popular issue in his home state and with Senate galleries. His activities on the Senate floor and most of his memorable diatribes were religiously related. He attacked the Catholic Church throughout 1927 and these attacks continued into the new year. He blasted the Catholic Church in early January; and when Senator Joseph Robinson, the Minority leader, came to the Church's defense. Heflin stated:

The Catholic machine threatens to break the party, to smash the Democracy, if it does not nominate Smith. Let them break it. Let them scatter it to bits as they did in 1924....The Catholic machine of the he Pope of Rome, guided in this country by the Order of Jesuits, is broadcasting political propaganda the purpose of which is to bring about the nomination of Governor Smith by the Houston convention.¹⁵

Heflin continued his attack invoking strong xenophobic terms relating to "Americanism" and a Catholic's allegiance being "first to Romanism and second to Americanism"¹⁶ Robinson stated that he was "sick and tired" of Heflin's demagoguery and moved to defend Smith. The two senators began a heated exchange during which Heflin challenged the Majority leader to "make that speech in

¹⁵ Hugh D. Reagan, "The Presidential Campaign of 1928 In Alabama"(Ph. D. dissertation, University of Texas, 1961), p. 90.

¹⁶ Reagan, "The Presidential Campaign of 1928 In Alabama", p. 90.

Arkansas." Robinson stated that he would "make that speech in Arkansas, and...will in Alabama, too." Heflin responded, "If you do, they will tar and feather you."¹⁷ Though the Senate and southern newspapers almost unanimously supported Robinson in this conflict, the Heflin style of partisan and libelous activity occurred throughout the South. For example, a spurious Knights of Columbus oath emanated from anti-Smith supporters in North Carolina. It was described in and reprinted in the Congressional Record as

a blasphemous and infamous libel, a copy of which is hereto attached, pretended to be an oath of the Knights of Columbus....So revolting are the terms of this document and so nauseating its pledges that the injury it did not merely [cause] to the contestant but also to the Knights of Columbus and to Catholics in general can hardly be measured in terms.¹⁸

A House investigating committee "condemned the publication and circulation of the Knights of Columbus oath and branded it as false and libelous."¹⁹ But, nonetheless, the damage was done as this false oath was widely circulated in North Carolina and throughout many other southern areas.²⁰

¹⁷ Edmund A. Moore, A Catholic Runs for President, (New York: Ronald, 1956), p. 82.

¹⁸ Stuart Dekins, "The 1928 Presidential Election In North Carolina" (Ph. D dissertation, University of North Carolina, 1944), p. 117.

¹⁹ Dekins, "The 1928 Presidential Election In North Carolina", p. 117.

²⁰ Dekins, "The 1928 Presidential Election In North Carolina", p. 117 from The Congressional Record, 62nd Congress, 3rd Session, p. 3216, I, _____, now in the presence of Almighty God, the blessed Virgin Mary, the blessed St. John the Baptist, the Holy Apostles, St. Peter and St. Paul, and all the saints, sacred host of Heaven, and to you, my Ghostly Father, the superior general of the Society of Jesus, founded by St. Ignatius Loyola, in the pontification of Paul the III, and continued to the present, do by the womb of the Virgin, the Matrix of God, and the rod of Jesus Christ, declare and swear that his Holiness, the Pope is Christ's vice regent and is the true and only head of the Catholic or Universal Church throughout the earth: and by virtue of the keys of binding and loosing given his holiness by my Savior, Jesus Christ, he has power to depose heretical

kings, princes, States, Commonwealths, and Governments, and they may safely be destroyed. Therefore to the utmost of my power I will defend this doctrine and his Holiness's right and custom against all the usurpers of the heretical or Protestant authority whatsoever, especially the Lutheran Church of Germany, Holland, Denmark, Sweden, and Norway and the now pretended authority and churches of England and Scotland, and the branches of same now established in Ireland and on the continent of America and elsewhere, and all adherents in regard that they may be usurped and heretical, opposing the sacred Mother Church of Rome.

I do now denounce and disown any allegiance as due to any heretical king, prince, or state, named Protestant of Liberal, or obedience to any of their laws, magistrates or officers.

I do further declare that the doctrine of the Churches of England and Scotland, of the Calvinists, Huguenots, and others of the name of Protestants, or Masons to be Damnable, and they themselves to be damned who will not forsake the same.

I do further declare that I will help, assist, and advise all or any of his holiness's agents, in any place where I should be, in Switzerland, Germany, Holland, Ireland, or America, or in any other kingdom or territory I shall come to, and do my utmost to extirpate the heretical Protestant or Masonic Doctrines and to destroy all their pretended powers, legal or otherwise.

I do further promise and declare that, notwithstanding I am dispensed with to assume any heretical religion for the propagation of the Mother Church's interest, to keep sacred and private all her agents' counsels from time to time, as they instruct me, and not divulge, directly or indirectly, by word, writing, or circumstance whatever, but to execute all that should be proposed, given in charge, or discovered to me by you, my Ghostly Father, or any of This sacred Order.

I do further promise and declare that I will have no opinion or will of my own or any mental reservation whatsoever, even as a corpse or cadaver (*perinde ac cadaver*), but will unhesitatingly obey each and every command that I may receive from my superiors in the militia of the Pope and Jesus Christ.

That I will go to any part of the world whithersoever I may be sent, to the frozen regions of the North, jungles of India, to the centers of the civilizations of Europe, or to the wild hunts of the barbarous savages of America without murmuring or repining, and will be submissive in all things whatsoever communicated to me.

I do further promise and declare that I will, when opportunity presents, make and wage relentless war, secretly and openly, against all heretics, Protestants and Masons, as I am directed to, to extirpate them from the face of the whole earth; and that I will hang, burn, waste, boil, flay, strangle, and bury alive these infamous heretics, rip up the stomachs and wombs of their women, and crush their infants' heads against the walls in order to annihilate their execrable race. That when the same cannot be done openly, I will secretly use the poisonous cup, the strangulation cord, the steel poniard, or the leaden bullet, regardless of the honor, rank, dignity, or authority of the persons, whatever may be their condition in life, either public or private, as I may be directed to do, by any agent of the Pope or superior of the Brotherhood of the Holy Father of the Society of Jesus.

In confirmation of which I hereby dedicate my life, my soul, and all corporal powers, and with the dagger which I now receive I will subscribe my

Earlier in the month, on January, 12, Houston was chosen as the 1928 Democratic National Convention city. This was done by Democratic insiders because they realized that since William Gibbs McAdoo dropped out of consideration in September 1927, Smith was almost assured of the nomination. At this time the South was lacking a great regional leader. No Southerners remained to occupy the void created by McAdoo's departure from national politics. Thus, Smith and his organization were able to dominate the 1928 primary season and capture the election through behind the scenes activity. This was a political era before the primary season was the dominating aspect of the nominating process. Southerners felt that the real battle would begin at Houston and not with the primaries. But, Smith amassed so much new support that when connected with his remaining strength from 1924, his position was almost unbeatable.

name written in my blood in testimony thereof; and shall I prove false or weaken in my determination, may my brethren and fellow soldiers of the militia of the Pope cut off my hands and feet and my throat from ear to ear, my belly open and sulphur burned therein with all the punishment that can be inflicted upon me on earth and my soul shall be tortured by demons in eternal hell forever.

That I will in voting always vote for a K. of C. in preference to a Protestant, especially a Mason, and that I will leave my party to do so; that if two Catholics are on the same ticket I will satisfy myself which is the better superior of the Mother Church and vote accordingly.

That I will not deal with or employ a Protestant if in my power to deal with a Catholic. That I will place Catholic girls in Protestant families that a weekly report may be made of the inner movements of the heretics.

That I will provide myself with arms and ammunition that I may be in readiness when the word is passed, or I am commanded to defend the Church either as an individual or with the militia of the Pope.

All of which I, _____, do swear by the blessed Trinity and Blessed sacrament which I am now to receive to perform and on my part to keep this, my oath.

In testimony thereof, I take this most holy and blessed Sacrament of the Eucharist and witness the same further with my name written with the point of this dagger dipped in my blood and seal in the Face of this holy sacrament.

Smith's organization was ahead of its time in its modern efficient structure, its early organization, and its domination and participation in the nominating primaries. Then when the Smith group believed that his nomination was highly probable, they selected Houston as the convention city. It was a move to pacify the South (a southern convention being the first since 1860). They further feared southern reaction and later nominated a southern vice presidential candidate. But this failed because the concentration of the Smith group remained focused on regional and local issues. Smith continued to surround himself with unfit, provincial, and former G.O.P. members as advisors. This directly undercut his raising the corruption issue connected with Wall Street, Teapot Dome, and the G.O.P. in general, which could have been a major selling point for Smith.

The annual Jackson Day Dinner in Washington was not attended by Smith, but was attended by McAdoo and many regional candidates.²¹ This could have been a national springboard for Smith. This national dinner had not been held since 1924 because of the fear of restarting regional conflict. This could have been a forum for Smith to bring the party together but was a lost opportunity.

'Dry' forces within the Democratic party united for the St. Petersburg Conference in early March to strengthen a coalition to stop any 'wet' candidate. F. Scott McBride the General Superintendent of the A.S.L., Arthur J. Barton of the Southern Baptist Convention, Bishop Cannon of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South were the most important individuals to attend. These groups were

²¹ Reagan, "The Presidential Campaign of 1928 In Alabama", p. 78, 79.

trying to unify themselves under a 'dry' Democratic banner, but were quickly becoming anti-Smith groups. Their general language of prohibitionist discontent was quickly becoming completely aimed at Governor Smith. The A.S.L., W.C.T.U., and the many religious groups were slow in their unification against Smith. They probably relied too much on veto power through the Democratic party's 2/3rds rule to nominate a presidential candidate. They did not realize that the Smith forces were much farther ahead in their development. The Smith forces already had the Northeast and Midwest in their pocket; plus his victory in the California primary in May ended the candidacies of Senators Reed and Walsh, and in the South (as you will later see) Arkansas and Louisiana were already in Smith's column. Smith's organization, despite all its provincial and regional problems, was a modern efficient political machine without any similar opposition at this stage. The Smith nomination was almost assured before the major opposition groups began to mobilize.

The three major meetings of the religious and temperance opposition to Smith, the St. Petersburg Conference in March, the Southern Baptist Convention in Chattanooga, Tennessee in mid-May, and the Asheville Conference in mid-July, were too late to stop his nomination but were effective in stopping his election. For instance the Southern Baptist Convention had 4,000 delegates representing 18 states and 3,700,000 members that stood to support prohibitionist candidates only.²² A small group such as the "Southland Committee of Safety" headed by H.H. DuBose of Nashville claimed that they could

²² Reagan, "The Presidential Campaign of 1928 In Alabama", p. 142.

get 500,000 votes to stop the election of any 'wet' candidate.²³ But, it was important that these leaders were talking about the election of and not the nomination of a 'wet' candidate. These were mostly Democratic groups that had been shut out of the undemocratic nominating process that was controlled by state leaders. By nominating Smith, the Democrats had not understood the animosity levelled against Smith inside his own party. The animosity was not held by the rank and file political leaders, but by the religious and prohibitionist fringe.

The Houston Convention

The 1928 Democratic National Convention opened on June, 26 with a mad rush to stop Smith. This of course was unsuccessful. Even though Religion and prohibitionist groups held prayer vigils to stop Smith and favorite son meetings were held just prior to the convention to find a unity candidate, the opposition was too late to form. Many of the southern political leaders refused to participate in any 'Stop Smith' campaign though especially those in Louisiana and Arkansas.²⁴ Even a bone 'dry' leader like Texas Governor Dan Moody fought for his platform requirements but refused to join the 'Stop Smith' group, composed not of major figures but often of fringe politicians.

The convention was anti-climactic with Smith receiving 849 2/3 first ballots after several states switched. 734 1/3 was needed and

²³ Reagan, "The Presidential Campaign of 1928 In Alabama", p. 141.

²⁴ Reagan, "The Presidential Campaign of 1928 In Alabama", p. 146.

he originally received 724 $\frac{1}{3}$. Smith received only 48 $\frac{2}{3}$ nomination votes from the South. He received 1 of 24 from Alabama, 17 of 18 from Arkansas, Louisiana's 20, 4 $\frac{2}{3}$ of 24 from North Carolina, and 6 of 24 from Virginia. When, after Smith's nomination, a parade erupted inside Sam Houston Hall, Mississippi, Virginia, Tennessee, Alabama, Georgia, and Florida (but only 3 non-southern states did not join this celebration) refused to join the celebration. The southern animosity towards him did not decline with Smith's quick and relatively painless victory.

Senator Joseph Robinson, the future vice presidential candidate, also was given a difficult response from the militant South. He delivered a moving religious tolerance speech on the second day of the convention that invoked the party's Jeffersonian origins. A spontaneous parade followed with the playing of the song "Old-Time Religion."²⁵ Alabama, Georgia, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia did not join this earlier celebration. The Southerners felt unhappy because of a perceived alliance between Robinson and Smith that many correctly believed had been in the works since Robinson's defense of Smith against Heflin's attacks. Many from the South formed a drive against Robinson's nomination led by K.K.K. Imperial Wizard Hiram Evans. One would expect that the South was happy to receive national recognition again with the first national convention and vice presidential candidate since 1860, but the anti-Smith feelings were too strong.

²⁵ Melvin Edward Hughes, "The 1928 Presidential Election in Florida" (Ph. D. dissertation, Florida State University, 1976), p. 57.

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The reasons that many in the South remained opposed to and strengthened their opposition to Smith were becoming more numerous daily. The Democratic Platform Committee crafted a 'dry' plank that Smith believed he could not support. He was not changing his personal positions for political gains. The means the Smith supporters were using to pacify the South were surface procedures only. Smith was not representing their true beliefs. This continued to damage his chances in November. They had problems with Smith's animosity towards Prohibition, his unfamiliarity with the party's agrarian roots, his connection with big business and Wall Street, and his weakness on racial hostility. These were against important traditional southern Democratic values. Because Smith was backing away from the traditional Democratic platform and beliefs, it became easier in each state to refuse to support Smith and actually to bolt the party. The only devices that kept Democrats in line were the belief in white supremacy, the power of the local machine, the activity of the daily newspapers, and the power of local religious leaders.

1

The Southern Democratic Core

The southern Democratic Core was classified as; all southern states connected and motivated by racial conservatism and Democratic loyalty. They were: Alabama, Mississippi, South Carolina, and Georgia. These states were connected by long term political trends. They remained loyal to the Democrats in almost every presidential election between 1880-1960. The only dissensions that occurred were Mississippi, Georgia, and South Carolina supporting the Dixiecrats in 1948 and Mississippi voting third party in 1960. In 1928, by all indications the states with the highest percentage of African-American inhabitants, voted with the Democrats because of traditional white conservative values and beliefs. White supremacy remained the rule in this area until disfranchisement occurred. This was also the reason why these states bolted the Democratic party in the 1964 presidential election to support the new conservative party of white supremacy, the Republicans. The G.O.P.'s nominee was Senator Barry Goldwater of Arizona who carried South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, and also Louisiana because of the racial issue. Interestingly, Alabama was the only state from this contingent that struggled to give Smith a 1928 majority.

Alabama: The Fight to Remain Democratic

Social Characteristics

Alabama was a traditional Deep South state defined by its large former plantation economy, vast area of black-belt soils, immense former slave population, and strong conservative Democratic party. In 1930, the state maintained the fifth largest African-American population in the South.¹ Alabama was in the middle of the pack in both urban population and income.² However, when classifying this election and southern political trends, race is the defining aspect. The racial factor split the states geographically with the central area of the state having a higher number of African-American residents because of Alabama's black-belt soils and the remnants of the plantation system. The predominantly white areas in the northern and southern sections however, had only marginal soils and a legacy of small farms.

Political Characteristics

Governor Smith had many opponents in Alabama. Many of Smith's political contemporaries, including Senator Robinson, felt that the attacks levelled against Smith in Alabama by Senator J. Thomas Heflin and the Ku Klux Klan, had little effect on the outcome of the election.³ However, this assumption is misleading. Alabama did not conform to the major trend of the 1928 election in the South; that Smith would win on white supremacy and its connection to the

¹ Howard W. Odum, Southern Regions of the United States, p. 482.

² Odum, Southern Regions of the United States, pp. 18, 46.

³ Edmund A. Moore, A Catholic Runs for President, he continually repeats this assertion throughout. This is a basis of his theory.

Democratic party. Heflin was an extremely important figure in making Alabama an anomaly. His personal attacks on Smith helped bolster the credibility of the bolters and placed loyal Democrats on the defensive. The reasons for Smith's close victory in Alabama will be explored.

The state's political leadership was relatively united until shortly after the 1924 election. Heflin as senior Senator was the main figure in Alabama's political universe. He was a longtime Washington insider having been elected to the Senate in 1920 at the age of 51 after previously serving in the U.S. House of Representatives. He lived for the support and adulation of the Senate galleries and held many in awe with his spirited diatribes articulated in front of an often empty chamber. He was a career politician who continued to vie for public office long after his subsequent defeat and removal from the Democratic party in 1930. The junior Senator Hugo Black was a little known lawyer whose claim to fame having been elected in 1926 at 41, was that he had been the Klan candidate in the election. He ran on the issues of protecting southern culture and also from fear of outsiders influencing the South.⁴ Black had hidden his true feelings and his apostasy later ended as he became arguably the greatest civil libertarian ever to sit on the U.S. Supreme Court. Compared to these other two politicians, Governor Bibb Graves left a remarkably small history. A Yale-educated lawyer and a Klan candidate, he was elected because of the Klan's support at the 1926 ballot box.

⁴ Virginia Van der Veer Hamilton, Hugo Black: The Alabama Years(Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1972), p. 133.

From the examples of Black and Graves it is clear that one of the key participants in the Alabama political scene of the 1920's was the Ku Klux Klan. Representing the rural whites in Alabama, the Klan had a political and cultural stranglehold on the state and determined who would hold most high offices. If one had Klan support, his chances of election were greatly increased. The state Democratic organization was controlled by popular opinion. When the Klan was strong and popular, the Democratic organization gave them unanimous support. When its press became negative in the mid to late 1920's due to lynchings and scandal, the Democratic party began to take another look at its relationship with the Klan. The Klan realized a class split emphasized in Alabama of the elite versus the ordinary citizen.⁵ Klan members were often the poor who felt a need to grasp power or express their dislike about society. Klan supporters rivaled the non-Klan members of the state organization throughout the 1920's.

Alabama Democrats had a long history of hostility in their relations with Governor Smith. Alabama's known political split was related to geography. The black-belt was a staunch conservative area that wanted the continuance of the status quo while the outlying northern and southern areas were more concerned with economic progress and the need to advance. They had a need for what C. Vann Woodward entitled chapter 14 of his Origins of the New South: "Progressivism-For Whites Only". This natural split between these two regions, which would help define the 1928 election in Alabama, became what V.O. Key called a "progressive-conservative

⁵ Hamilton, Hugo Black: The Alabama Years, p. 149.

cleavage" within the dominant Democratic party.⁶ Because only one party existed, it did not eliminate a second set of ideologies that were natural to the formation of a second party.⁷ However, that second party could not exist under the Democratic party system in the South because, in this era, tradition forced the South to elect only Democrats. Not until the national Democratic party's abandonment of white supremacy would a true second party form in the South. During this earlier era, a second party did not exist because African-Americans could not vote and the political elite legally excluded any other group from being the white supremacy party due to suffrage restriction and other voting laws. A politician like Hugo Black had to carry the banner of white supremacy to become elected, even though he would later prove to have had covert motives. This split within the party allowed leaders like Black and later Governor James Folsom and Senator Lister Hill to oppose Heflin type leaders. Black preceded both Folsom and Hill. They were all progressives who were continuously challenged by arch conservatives like Heflin. This was a product of the two factions that were formed inside one party in Alabama. They would split regarding Smith. The early coalition that formed against Smith would later dissolve, but its impact was obvious. This effect will later be explained.

The election of 1924

Alabama was almost unanimously opposed to Smith's two national nomination campaigns. With the help of the Klan, Alabama

⁶ V.O. Key Jr, Southern Politics: In State and Nation, p. 37.

⁷ Key, Southern Politics: In State and Nation, this is a basis of his general theory.

often led brutal attacks against Smith at the 1924 convention. Alabama however, was also one of the weakest supporters of William Gibbs McAdoo's candidacy. The delegation split its support with favorite son candidate, Representative Oscar W. Underwood.⁸ Underwood led a fight against the Klan that led to this split. But Smith's candidacy damaged those of both Underwood and McAdoo. Alabama remembered the struggle with Smith and used it as ammunition against him in 1928. The struggle of 1924 led to the formation of deep scars inside that state.

Transition: The Elections of 1926

The early fear and hostility displayed toward Smith was showcased in the 1926 Senate race won by Black. Two students of the election, Ralph M. Tanner and Linda Hamilton, are unanimous in this analysis.⁹ In 1926 Black openly attacked Smith by using xenophobic fear and religious hostility to win the election. His attacks were more mild than the rhetoric Heflin displayed in the Senate. The campaigns of 1924 and 1926 harmed Smith in Alabama because people recognized the universal dislike most state Democratic leaders had for him. This was important because Alabama had a visible split in its Democratic organization, meaning that there were two ideological groups arguing about Smith. This was a product of the "progressive conservative cleavage" formulated by V.O. Key.

⁸ David Burner, The Politics of Provincialism, pp.111, 124-125.

⁹ Ralph M. Tanner, "The Wonderful World of Tom Heflin." Alabama Review, 36,(1983), 163-174, and Hamilton, Hugo Black: The Alabama Years, are unanimous in this conclusion.

Although the Klan's strength peaked in 1926, its power in Alabama would remain prominent until the 1930's.¹⁰ The Klan was the major backer of the victorious Black and Graves campaigns in 1926. In 1928, with the help of the Anti-Saloon League, the Klan would select the complete Alabama slate of delegates to the Houston convention. The universal opposition of Smith prior to the convention would take different paths after Houston.

The Election of 1928

The year began ominously for the Smith campaign in Alabama. Heflin began to attack both Smith and Robinson again. On January 18, Heflin began a two hour diatribe against the Catholic Church and Catholics in general that would become too much for the Senate Minority Leader to withstand. Heflin stated to a crowded Senate gallery that

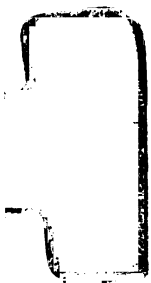
The Catholic machine threatens to break the party, to smash the Democracy, if it does not nominate Smith. Let them break it. Let them scatter it to bits as they did in 1924....The Catholic machine of the Pope of Rome, guided in this country by the Order of Jesuits, is broadcasting political propaganda the purpose of which is to bring about the nomination of Governor Smith by the Houston convention.¹¹

Heflin continued his assault and finished his remarks by vowing his allegiance to the Ku Klux Klan. Robinson rebutted Heflin by stating the he was "'sick and tired' of Heflin's anti-Catholic speeches" and that no person "'who is a Democrat in the finest sense of the word would ever proscribe another man because of the man's religion.'"¹²

¹⁰ Hugh D. Reagan, "The Presidential Campaign of 1928 in Alabama"; he discusses this in chapter 2.

¹¹ Reagan, "The Presidential Campaign of 1928 in Alabama", p. 90.

¹² Reagan, "The Presidential Campaign of 1928 in Alabama", p. 90.



Heflin returned in like fashion when he stated that Robinson would be threatened with "tar and feathers" if he repeated his remarks in Alabama.¹³ The level of animosity felt between the two could not be overstated. This led to public discussions of allegiance throughout the party and the South.

Heflin's famous conflict with Robinson was portrayed as an embarrassment by the major leaders and journals of the state. The Birmingham Age-Herald editorial board was very harsh in its criticism of Heflin, and later called the problem "Heflin's Folly". They stated that Heflin was not speaking for or reflecting the opinions of Alabamians, but was speaking only in "defense of himself." Heflin embarrassed the entire state with his "astounding exhibition of rabid intolerance, shockingly wretched taste and naked disdain for the most precious of American principles." They conveyed the belief that he was solely playing personal power tactics for his own gains.¹⁴ Heflin nonetheless, believed that his personal support was stronger than that of the party. He was soon defeated in a Senate vote of support for Robinson 34 to 1 (Black abstained), and was widely criticized throughout the South. Throughout these troubles, Heflin's hill country supporters remained faithful, as did the Klan. Both groups continued to listen to his criticisms of Smith. Heflin set the agenda with his virulent attacks, claiming that Smith was unreliable on both African-Americans and the continuance of the southern status quo. His largest fears were for continued white supremacy and rule by the white Protestant majority. He stated that the

¹³ Reagan, "The Presidential Campaign of 1928 in Alabama", p. 90.

¹⁴ Birmingham Age-Herald, 1-19-28 p. 6, 1-22-28 p. 6.



Democratic ticket "would be strong in Rome but weak in the United States."¹⁵ His racial attacks were striking because they were supported by the Klan. Since it was the top white supremacy group in the state, the racial fear that the Democrats would use to gain votes was greatly weakened in the predominantly white hill country by Heflin and the Klan. At the same time, Alabamians did not have to fear that social change would be initiated by the Republicans. Therefore, it was an effective tactic that their political and spiritual leaders used when stating, as Heflin did, that the upcoming election was a question between "the God of white supremacy or the false god of Roman social equality".¹⁶ People often chose the Republicans and white supremacy if they felt Heflin was credible. Because the election was a conflict of race versus culture, if one felt that the Republicans' stance, as supported by the Klan and Heflin, aligned with one's racial and cultural prejudices, why shouldn't one defect/bolt? Party affiliation did not matter to many Alabamians if the party did not stand for the issue one felt was pre-eminent.

At the Houston convention the Alabama delegation realized quickly that they had been defeated and Smith clubs began to appear throughout the state.¹⁷ The 23 to 1 nominating vote the delegates cast against both Smith and Robinson was not completely indicative of the Klan militancy alone but of a more pervasive Deep South hostility because the only other Deep South state to give Smith any delegates was Louisiana. But Alabama was especially hostile

¹⁵ Reagan, "The Presidential Campaign of 1928 in Alabama", p. 194.

¹⁶ Hamilton, Hugo Black: The Alabama Years, p. 151.

¹⁷ Reagan, "The Presidential Campaign of 1928 in Alabama", p. 177.

toward Robinson because of the perceived deal arranged with the Smith forces. The evidence of this arrangement was not complete, but the Alabamians jumped to the worst conclusion. For example, the delegation did not join the spontaneous parades to celebrate Smith's nomination or to celebrate Robinson's earlier "Old Time Religion" speech.¹⁸ They refused to support their fellow Southerner and vice presidential candidate because they believed that he was disloyal to the cause. After the convention, as mainstream Alabama aligned with the rest of the Deep South in its support of Smith, the Klan-A.S.L.-Heflin stronghold in the hill country remained militant in resisting the Democratic candidates. The state political leadership continued to fortify its position. Even though Senator Black and Governor Graves both quietly acquiesced, the Democratic organization mobilized every major political figure except Heflin behind Smith and the major journals quickly called for loyalty and victory. Nonetheless the Smith campaign was still in trouble.

July began as the Alabama W.C.T.U. and most small Christian journals endorsed Hoover. The Klan continued its covert work with a newly initiated 'lily white' Republican party, which purged its organization of any African-Americans and placed only lifelong Democrats, Houston delegates, W.C.T.U. and A.S.L. members, and former Democratic nominees and officeholders as G.O.P. electors on the November ballot.¹⁹ The false Knights of Columbus oath was distributed throughout Alabama along with damaging accusations

¹⁸ Melvin E. Hughes, "The 1928 Presidential Election in Florida(Ph. D. dissertation, The University of Florida, 1976), pp. 54-58.

¹⁹ Reagan, "The Presidential Campaign of 1928 in Alabama", p. 230.

regarding Smith's daily consumption of alcohol and Mrs. Smith's fitness as a national figure. The Klan also attacked Smith's appointment of African-American Ferdinand Morton to the post of Civil Service Commissioner in New York City, to a general weakness on the racial issue. They continued to argue that the Republicans were the true white supremacy party in 1928.

Hill country ministers were particularly influential in their support of Heflin. Religious sermons throughout the state continued with renewed strength to attack Smith.²⁰ By all indications, through the support of ministers, Heflin and the Klan's religious attacks were at the forefront of their thoughts and actions. Heflin realized that religion was the most important issue with his people in the rural hills. People had questioned his motivation as an anti-Catholic.²¹ Whatever they were, he realized he could exploit the problems his constituents had with the Catholic nominee. Heflin found an issue to mobilize his electorate and further his political interests. His activities as well as that of his allies made the election in Alabama much closer than it should have been.

After a late start, the Democratic party mobilized its forces and spread its message. The party organization was located solely in the black-belt. Heflin's main group of supporters were small white farmers in the hill country. This was also where the Klan's power source resided. But, the black-belt was where the election was won. A small minority of party members actually split ranks to join the

²⁰ Reagan, "The Presidential Campaign of 1928 in Alabama", p. 241.

²¹ J. Mills Thornton, "Alabama Politics, J. Thomas Heflin, and the Expulsion Movement of 1929." Alabama Review, April(1968), pp.96-97.

Heflin/Klan forces in this area, but their numbers were small. It should be noted that at a post-Houston convention meeting of bolters, not one single leader of note attended the meeting.²² The effectiveness of the Heflin/Klan campaign was marginal with black-belt Democrats. This was a key to Smith's victory. The Democratic party remained strong in the face of adversity. The Democrats tried to spread their message. Congressman W.B. Oliver, the new state campaign chairman and small time career politician, spun Heflin's message into a counterattack when he said that "a vote for Smith would be a vote for 'white supremacy' and a vote against 'social equality.'"²³ Oliver then reminded Democrats of Tammany's support to stop the 1890 Force or Federal Elections Bill which would have negatively affected the South's one-party political system. The Democrats finally realized that those were the important issues to consider. Thus they spread an effective message. By making Smith seem like a traditional Democrat, they could counter the opposing argument and spread their message of status quo rule. Their surge of activity, plus the newfound hostility Heflin encountered, was barely enough for a Smith victory.

Heflin's attacks remained strong throughout the early and middle stages of 1928, but his rhetoric received diminished results as the November election neared. His last hurrah was on September, 21 when he unequivocally stated, "'So help me God, I will vote against Al Smith if they read me out of the Democratic party and drive me

²² Reagan, "The Presidential Campaign of 1928 in Alabama", p. 214.

²³ Reagan, "The Presidential Campaign of 1928 in Alabama", p. 419.

from every Senate committee!"²⁴ At a November 2nd Birmingham rally, Heflin was effectively heckled throughout his address with insults and shouts of "'Hurray for Smith'".²⁵ Heflin had finally reached the precipice. As the election momentum shifted in favor of Smith, Heflin realized that his political future was in question. Alabama swiftly moved to ban bolters and Heflin was left without a party.²⁶ More intelligent politicians like Black and Graves quietly supported Smith and remained in power. They allowed the mainstream Democratic machine to dictate policy, undermine the power of bolters, the Klan, the A.S.L., and ministers to give Smith a victory in Alabama.

Alabama gave every Democratic nominee for president, except Smith, large majorities from 1872-1944, 1952 and 1956. Smith squeaked by with a victorious majority of 7,071 votes from a total number of 248,521 being cast or a margin of 51.4% to 48.6%. The hill country/black-belt split was evident in every county with a 50% African-American population going for Smith while those with only 40% split 50/50.²⁷ Heflin and Klan activity helped the Republicans gain respectability in this election. The poor white farmer in the hill country who had a previous post-bellum fascination with the Republican party, again found it mildly acceptable. Hoover and the Republican party played almost no role in the election except for aphoristic comparisons made between Smith and Hoover on the

²⁴ Hamilton, Hugo Black: The Alabama Years, p. 154.

²⁵ Reagan, "The Presidential Campaign of 1928 in Alabama", p. 344.

²⁶ Thornton, "Alabama Politics, J. Thomas Heflin"; this article must be read to understand this complex happening.

²⁷ Reagan, "The Presidential Campaign of 1928 in Alabama," p. 469.

issues of Americanism and race. The traditions of Democratic social control and white supremacy were more important than that of Roman dominance and a loss of social control. The electorate sided with the party that they felt would maintain social white supremacy traditions and religious sovereignty even though both groups stated that those issues were most important to them. Traditional allegiance and the strength of the Democratic party were too difficult for the anti-Smith forces to overcome.

Mississippi: Statewide Smith Support

Social Characteristics

By many accounts Mississippi and South Carolina were the two strongest Democratic states of this era. They consistently supported Democrats on the national level, they crushed all two-party opposition, and they had dominant Democratic organizations. This assertion was never more clear than in 1928. Every aspect of Mississippi society was affected because of its rural agricultural nature. In 1930 Mississippi was the most rural, the second poorest, and the one with the highest percentage of African-Americans in the South.²⁸

Mississippi's statewide character was closely connected to its geography. Mississippi is divided by two different regions. Mississippi has a natural geographic division between a delta and an upcountry region. The delta contains rich soils, some of the best soils

²⁸ Odum, Southern Regions of the United States, pp. 18, 46, 482.

in the South, that were utilized under the plantation system.. The upcountry provided only marginal agriculture for later arriving and less fortunate white settlers. Race, religion, politics, economics, and general ideology were also five connected issues in the understanding of Mississippi. Here, the physical delta/upcountry divide formed the split in the five issues described above. This reflected itself in cultural terms. In the delta region, people generally were consumed by race, against Prohibition, economically conservative, and politically reactionary. In the upcountry they generally opposed these issues or were indifferent. This indifference was a product of white disfranchisement. Whites were disfranchised usually only in the upcountry because this was where high levels of poverty existed. They could not afford to pay poll taxes. Because of this, the level of political activity among whites was lower. But the one issue that kept both white geographic regions together was race. The white fear of African-American ascendancy united this state. The African-American population density alone would indicate a Smith victory, but Mississippi was Democratic for other reasons as well.

Political Characteristics

Mississippi had a strong Democratic organization. During most of his twenty two year reign as senator, beginning in 1919, Byron Patton (Pat) Harrison was the nominal head of the state organization. Harrison was a former District Attorney when elected to the Senate. He was wildly popular with the public. His true ideological stance was in question because his views often evolved with that of public opinion. Harrison was a good organizer and figure head when

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compared to Governor and future Mississippi Senator, Theodore Bilbo. Bilbo was re-elected Governor in 1928 after being elected 12 years earlier. Bilbo's style was more emotional and vitriolic than Harrison's, and he did not have good organizational skills. He was an emotional speaker who did his best on the campaign stump caucusing white populism and support for "'the people'".²⁹ He grabbed important racial and progressive economic issues and used them to his advantage because they were important to the electorate. Being a emotional leader and not a rational organizer forced Bilbo to acquiesce to Harrison's ascension to the top of the state political ladder.

Mississippi politics generally revolved around a strongly united white population that was not openly divided by class. Mississippi was fanatical about race and this quieted the outward differences in class. Class conflict was only important in national elections if the racial issue was completely secured.³⁰ Because of this there were not deep divisions inside the Democratic organization. The race question led to white political unity. Few other issues were raised in Mississippi and, after the Houston convention, Smith had an easy road to victory.

²⁹ Chester A. Morgan, Theodore Bilbo and the New Deal (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1985), p. 33.

³⁰ This assertion was more important in national politics. State politics in the disfranchising era (I classify this era as roughly 1890-1960) often grappled with class differences. The conflict between wealth and poverty was an issue throughout Bilbo's and former U.S. Senator and Mississippi Governor James Vardaman's careers. Theory of William F. Holmes in James K. Vardaman: The White Chief (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1970), especially formative years pp. 25-30 and Chester A. Morgan in Theodore Bilbo and the New Deal, especially pp. 33-35, 46, 48, 51-59.

The Election of 1928

Not unlike other southern states (except Louisiana and Arkansas) Mississippi entered 1928 as a state strongly united against the candidacy of Al Smith. During the 1924 campaign Mississippi had been one of the strongest supporters of William Gibbs McAdoo. State papers, such as the black-belt delta stronghold Jackson Daily News, reveled in reporting stories about eastern scandals with implied connections to Smith. As soon as Smith's nomination seemed imminent, the papers quickly aligned with the dominating party machinery. Daily News editor Frederick Sullens, an influential Mississippian, wrote a strong endorsement of Democratic tradition on April 15th. Concerning Smith's nomination chances, he stated that the Daily News "is a Democratic newspaper at all times, and under all circumstances."³¹ This was very early and strong support for Smith. This was an example of delta strength inside the Democratic party. Even though Smith was not the nominee, party insiders like Sullens understood that he was the clear leader and the strongest candidate even though they were personally against him. Editors such as Sullens, who tried to set the agenda in favor of Smith and the Democratic party, were successful. They forced local Democratic and religious leaders to follow their lead. This strengthened the national Democratic stance in Mississippi. These types of local leaders set the tone for the fall campaign. Prominent citizens and politicians throughout the year carried the party line comparing their Democrats with the hated Republicans. They stated their beliefs

³¹ Jackson Daily News, 4-15-28, p. 8.

comparing the two party's, saying that some Democrats "may drink liquor occasionally, and some others may have been known to cuss when adequately provoked, but they do not plunder the public treasury."³² These types of statements indicated a quick reversal from stories earlier in the year concerning Smith. During the pre-Houston convention period, the state's papers maintained a strong Democratic allegiance even though only two papers endorsed Smith by name, the Natchez Democrat and the Greenville Daily Democrat.³³

At the Houston convention Mississippi sent an uninstructed, but nevertheless, anti-Smith delegation. Even though Prohibition played only a minor role in this election, a measure to oppose any 'wet' candidate at Houston failed to receive majority support.³⁴ The Mississippi responsibility in Houston was the assurance of status quo white supremacy rule. Mississippi cast all 20 of their nominating votes for Senator Harrison but then changed their votes after the Smith nomination. The final count was 9 1/2 for Smith, 8 1/2 for Harrison, and 1 for Bilbo.³⁵ The acquiescence to Smith showed Mississippi's allegiance to the Democratic party and closely resembled the actions of South Carolina.

Every major state paper strongly aligned itself with Smith after the Houston convention, except those in the Southeastern area of the state. This was significant because the only counties that did not

³² Jackson Daily News, 4-15-28, p. 8.

³³ Donald B. Kelley, "Mississippi Public Opinion in the Presidential Elections of 1928 and 1960: A Study in the Continuity of Ideas" (Ph. D. dissertation, Tulane University, 1965), p. 30.

³⁴ Kelley, "Mississippi Public Opinion in the Presidential Elections of 1928 and 1960", pp. 14-16.

³⁵ Kelley, "Mississippi Public Opinion in the Presidential Elections of 1928 and 1960", p. 17.

support Smith in November were in this same area. The state papers were regionally representational because they aligned with the real feelings of their region.

Mississippi's leading politicians made it easier for Smith to sweep the state in November. Senior Senator Pat Harrison was the political pragmatist who often allowed ideology to be seconded by reality. Harrison quickly realized the national power Smith amassed. Harrison used this to his advantage in Mississippi and in other southern states. He and Arkansas' Senator Joseph Robinson quietly aligned themselves with Smith in hope of being rewarded with the vice presidency. Harrison was instead named a top advisor to the campaign after the Houston convention.³⁶ But, Harrison did much more. He campaigned throughout the South and often defended the ticket in hostile areas. At a county fair that August, he said that in regard to the future of Smith and the Democratic party, he had a "sword drawn in its defense."³⁷ This was a powerful image for a Southerner to use. When a Southerner waved the 'bloody shirt' for such a southern pariah as Smith, strong feelings were conveyed. Harrison put his personal reputation on the line for this ticket in radio addresses and on the stump.

Junior Senator Hubert D. Stephens, as well as Governor Theodore G. Bilbo, were strong opponents of Smith until after the Houston convention. Stephens gave his full endorsement in early July, while Bilbo followed a little more reluctantly later that month. Bilbo then wholeheartedly race baited on behalf of Smith. This was something

³⁶ Birmingham Age Herald, 7-21-28, p. 1.

³⁷ Arkansas Gazette, 6-27-28, p. 1.

he did not need to be forced to do. For example, he charged that Hoover once danced with a African-American woman on a train. It did not matter how preposterous the charge, the local and regional papers reprinted the claim with alacrity. Bilbo's activities were generally very successful. More positive activities followed for example on July 19, when Mississippi's most important figure from the past, former Senator John Sharp Williams, formally endorsed the ticket because he was "a Democrat and a white man."³⁸ This epitomized the reasons why Mississippians voted for Smith; traditional allegiance to party and white supremacy. These were the two reasons why Smith was assured victory.

Conclusion

The leading issue of the post-Houston convention campaign was the regional cohesion and unity of the South. During the stretch for November, the main issues were white supremacy and Democratic loyalty. Mississippi, as much as any other state, backed Smith with blind allegiance. Most journals, religious organizations, and Democratic groups followed the mores of the populace and state leaders. There were a few Baptist groups and newspapers opposed to Smith, but his religion and the Prohibition factor were non-existent after the Houston Convention.³⁹ Smith carried 79 of 82 counties with a 82.2% to 17.8% or 124,538 to 27,030. With the exception of three rebellious southeastern counties, the campaign was quiet and successful.

³⁸ Jackson Daily News, 7-20-28, p. 8.

³⁹ Kelley, "Mississippi Public Opinion in the Presidential Elections of 1928 and 1960", p. 28.

South Carolina: Maintenance of the Status Quo

Social Characteristics

In 1928, South Carolina provided a rather uncomplicated view of the election because all 45 counties were carried by Smith. In fact, from 1920 to 1944, every county was carried by the official Democratic presidential candidate. This was a product of South Carolina's political system which was the key to understanding its political activities. There were two reasons South Carolina was going to be carried by Smith. First, 45.6% of the population was African-American. This supports the theory that the highest African-American populated states would vote for the Democrats. Secondly, it was the poorest southern state with a per capita income of \$261.00 in 1930.⁴⁰ Thus, there was a level of economic dissatisfaction among the voters. But this point probably was unimportant because of the complete Democratic one-party dominance displayed inside the state. South Carolina's recent history suggests that from 1884 through 1944, almost unanimous vote totals were cast for the national Democratic presidential candidates. There were other reasons for this happening.

Political Characteristics

South Carolina had a long history of repressing the mass of society to maintain status quo rule.⁴¹ This state was founded by a group of strong elites who were originally given the largest tracts of land to

⁴⁰ Odum, Southern Regions of the United States, pp. 482, 46.

⁴¹ Kousser, The Shaping of Southern Politics, p. 85.

start plantations. Because of the number of large plantations, African-Americans outnumbered whites by 3 to 2 throughout the state, often 10 to 1 in the black-belt. Racism was an issue that political leaders used to direct attention from the true economic plight of society.⁴² This racial split was based on geographic conditions. The eastern half of the state's soil was a fertile coastal plain where plantations were created. The western half was part of the Appalachian mountain range with only marginal lands. These later lands were occupied by less successful, small white farmers. This geographic split did not lead to a racial split at this time. Racially obsessive voting was maintained throughout the state even where African-American populations were non-existent. This was invariably connected to the Democratic party's successful disfranchisement of African-Americans and poor whites during the late nineteenth century.⁴³ Those people who felt racial supremacy was a non-issue had been effectively removed from the active electorate. Racism had been successfully used as a visible tool to maintain white rule and keep white class divisions from developing. The almost unanimous vote total helped as an indicator. The success of disfranchisement was only a temporary panacea for South Carolinians. They were fearful of African-American control. Throughout the era of slavery, white South Carolinians felt that a slave revolt was a real possibility. There was a known economic disparity inside the state. V.O. Key in The Shaping of Southern Politics, used his South Carolina chapter to thoroughly discuss this

⁴² Key, Southern Politics: In State and Nation, pp. 129-131.

⁴³ Kousser, The Shaping of Southern Politics, pp. 85-87, 145-152.

phenomena. He described the geographic split as one of the better man vs. the poor man. This was both a cultural and class division which was a product of the overt racism displayed by the state's politicians.⁴⁴ With this harsh difference in class wealth and racial disparity, the elite's fears of losing control to the majority of society were real.⁴⁵ Thus, they tried to eliminate class conflict through the means of racial control. Thus, they chose a political system and filled it with politicians who would resist both social and economic change because they gained power through that system.

Status quo rule allowed South Carolina's politicians to remain in office. This new era of status quo rule began in 1880 with the induction of a literary test and fee for replacement of election cards. This eliminated any formation of a second party.⁴⁶ This condition was challenged at the turn of the century with the agrarian rebel Senator 'pitchfork' Benjamin Tillman. Tillman began his political career as a man of the people but soon aligned with the elite. V.O. Key in Southern Politics, in fact described Tillman in a similar manner. Status quo rule continues today with traditional southern conservative J. Strom Thurmond. South Carolina has a history of continuing to re-elect its politicians with blind obedience as long as they maintain their type of society.

⁴⁴ Key, Southern Politics: In State and Nation, pp. 136.

⁴⁵ This topic is more fully developed in Chandler Davidson's, Race and Class in Texas Politics (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990).

⁴⁶ Kousser, The Shaping of Southern Politics, pp. 87-88.

Background: The Election of 1924

During the convention and presidential election of 1924, South Carolina supported the candidacy of William Gibbs McAdoo. The state was hostile to Smith because he was not viewed as the best candidate. His views on Prohibition, immigration, and religion were not seen as being in South Carolina's interests. But the state was not overly angry with his positions because they were not discussed nor were clearly obvious to South Carolina's delegation. The state had a history of remaining uninformed about politics in this era because state politicians felt that they would surely vote for a Democrat anyway. Smith's views really did not matter as long as racial supremacy was assured. South Carolina was taught to support Democrats solely because of party loyalty. Thus, it did not matter about the outcome of the 1924 convention, every county in the state supported the Democratic nominee.

Transition

Between 1924 and 1928, few important events occurred. John Richards was elected Governor and his beliefs closely aligned with his predecessors. Then, the state did not openly prepare for the 1928 election because of its unthinking obedience to the party. This was again because they cared about the key issues of white supremacy, state freedom, and the conservative status quo. As the 1928 campaign began, race was the main issue when any issue was discussed.

The Election of 1928

Entering the election year, Governor Al Smith was the front runner in the race for the Democratic nomination. Every major

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political leader in the South, sooner or later, took a public stand regarding the Smith issue. South Carolina's three top political leaders, Governor John J. Richards, and Senators Coleman L. Blease and Ellison D. 'Cotton Ed' Smith remained conspicuously silent on the Smith issue. Richards was a recently elected businessman who was installed at age 63 by political regulars to serve their purpose. Blease was a former governor who yearned for higher office. Thus, the party gave him the 1924 nomination to the U.S. Senate at age 56. He was perceived as a Tillmanesque man of the people, but he passed few pieces of legislation and discussed issues only during election campaigns. "Cotton Ed" Smith was a longtime senator elected in 1909 at 46 and served until 1941. He was known as "Cotton Ed" because throughout his political career he was one of the leaders of the northern Cotton Association and by 1928, he was a senior Senate voice from the South. For instance, comprehending "Cotton Ed's" idiosyncrasies allows us to understand South Carolina's political leaders of this era. Senator Smith was a politician of many words but few actions. He often stood on issues that were safe, often leaving the electorate unaware of his political stance. This perspective allows one to realize the taciturn way he would later react to Governor Al Smith's candidacy. When he became the senior Southerner in the Senate, he advised new freshmen Southerners that their only requirements to remain in power were that constant support of states rights, tariffs for revenue only, and white supremacy. On all other issues one could remain silent.⁴⁷

⁴⁷ Harold B. Hinton, Cordell Hull: A Biography(Garden City: Doubleday, 1942), p. 94.

The religious leaders of the state were silently aligned with the wishes of the Democratic party. South Carolina's unchanging philosophy was enhanced by local community ministers who did not participate in anti-Smith activity inside South Carolina or in neighboring states. Inactivity was prevalent at all levels of society because of the race issues. There was not an active Republican party that countered the Democrats to give an opposing voice to champion white supremacy. South Carolina's ministers mimicked the three main political leaders lack of activity. But, endorsements were given by these political leaders during the campaign. Blease did not have any quarrels with Smith and publicly vowed to support him on April 4th if nominated.⁴⁸ Later in April, Blease gave a speech attacking Hoover on the issue of race, calling it the only important issue in the state.⁴⁹ He often stated that Hoover personally ordered desegregation at the Treasury Department and the Office of the Interior specifically for African-American votes.⁵⁰ This was widely reported in the South and was continuously effective in the black-belt areas. But, until the Houston convention commenced, Blease was not cognizant with the issues and ideas championed by Governor Smith and Democratic Chairman John J. Raskob. This was part of the reason why South Carolina was so stoical towards and accepting of Smith. They were ignorant of his personal platform. After their years of blind party support, they began to take Democratic issues for granted. Even South Carolina's major journals reacted in this

⁴⁸ Charleston Evening Post, 4-5-28, p. 4.

⁴⁹ Charleston Evening Post, 4-26-28, p. 1.

⁵⁰ Reagan, "The Presidential Campaign of 1928 in Alabama", p. 122.

manner. The state's two major newspapers, the Charleston Evening Post and the Columbia Star were true Democratic journals. They were partisan in their coverage to Democrats and printed favorable articles about Smith as early as April to prepare readers for his possible nomination. They quietly carried the party line.

At the Houston convention, the state's delegation followed the lead of their three top leaders and happily united under the Smith banner. Even though they did not give Smith any votes to nominate, they joined both celebratory parades that started after Smith's nomination and Robinson's earlier religious toleration speech. The state delegation understood that Democratic loyalty was the most important aspect to maintain as long as this aligned with white supremacy and continued status quo rule. The Charleston Evening Post believed that the acceptance of Smith was done fully in the name of white supremacy.⁵¹

Governor Richards waited until after the Democratic Convention to publicly endorse Smith. Richards was an avid prohibitionist and church member.⁵² He wanted to view a united party before fully endorsing the candidate. His endorsement was reported in many papers throughout the South to help galvanize Smith's faltering campaign. Senator Smith endorsed the candidate but received little print because he was in poor health. More likely, "Cotton Ed" played safe politics by remaining quiet on all controversial issues. None of South Carolina's politicians left much of a legislative record. They

⁵¹ Charleston Evening Post, 7-4-28, p. 1.

⁵² Arkansas Gazette, 7-5-28, p. 6.

left mainly fiery election year speeches about the "Negro problem" and other race baitings.

The issues in the November campaign were few. White supremacy, elite rule, and state sovereignty were South Carolina's main concerns.⁵³ Smith's victory in the state was already assured by his ascendance in Houston. The party bureaucracy, top party leaders, local ministers, and journals aligned together for the post-convention push to November. They believed that inactivity would show support and thus remained quiet in their united support for the Democratic candidate. After the convention, Blease stated that if he and other southern Democrats would have understood Smith and Raskob's views, "few, if any, of the southern states would have participated in the Houston Convention."⁵⁴ Nonetheless, Blease remained relatively silent in his public support for and private animosity toward Smith. Many of the southern politicians were familiar with one type of Democratic party; one that generally aligned on most major issues. This cultural split was new to them and many did not prepare by doing their political homework.

There was no evident division against Smith inside South Carolina. Due to its united front against African-American's, a religious, racial, or political opposition force did not materialize. The state's major papers reportedly did not have any problems with the three main issues because they stated that Smith accepted states rights. Their definition of states rights was somewhat Jeffersonian, meaning free practice of religion and non-intrusion into race relations. They made

⁵³ Charleston Evening Post, 7-4-28, p. 4

⁵⁴ M.E. Hughes, "The 1928 Presidential Election in Florida", p. 86.

little mention of Hoover before or after the election. It seemed he was a nonentity. They chose not to explore the issues concerning the election. The lack of consciousness concerning the election was a phoneme of South Carolina. From its main politicians, to its ministers, its journals, and its electorate, South Carolina remained relatively uninformed because of its blind allegiance to their party's cause.

South Carolina had relatively inactive support for Smith. Its major political leaders and local electorate lined up in the Smith column because of race and tradition. There was not any noticeable split in upcountry and coastal plain votes due to disfranchisement and because as stated earlier, separate cultural or class identity did not exist. This was because race was used as a diversionary force by South Carolina leadership. Nonetheless Smith received 62,700 votes to Hoover's 5,858 or a 91.5% to 8.5% margin. The overall voter turnout was lower than in 1920 or 1932, but South Carolina's one party dominance and tradition was too powerful to fight.

Georgia: The Fight for Tradition

Social Characteristics

Georgia was possibly the epitome of a southern state. Georgia had both Upper and Lower South characteristics. It had a medium size black-belt, both cotton and tobacco lands, as well as a hilly region and coast.⁵⁵ The usual geographic divide between the more and less

⁵⁵ Odum, Southern Regions of the United States, p. 18.

successful citizens and farmers occurred. The central black-belt region was filled with wealthy conservative Democratic farmers and former plantation owners. They maintained society, controlled economics, and operated the Democratic party machinery. The less fortunate farmers in the northern and southern regions of Georgia struggled economically and socially to survive. The Democratic party was not as strong as in other Deep South states and was not able to quell class conflicts. Minor discrepancies existed between whites in Georgia that were not evident in Mississippi or South Carolina. Georgia's African-American population was the fourth largest in the South, which would indicate Georgia's natural white supremacy Democratic leanings.⁵⁶ Most African-Americans resided in the central black-belt region.

Political Characteristics

Unlike other southern states, Georgia did not have an ironclad Democratic organization. Personality politics was probably its most important factor.⁵⁷ Without a strong organization, its political leadership was almost always in a transitional phase. But, in the Reconstruction or Redemption periods, Georgia did not have a history of G.O.P. or Populist party problems. State politicians found race baiting successful and because racial animosity was strongly evident, a natural Democratic white majority developed.⁵⁸

Georgia's junior Senator Walter F. George was an important figure in southern politics and the nominal leader of his state's political

⁵⁶ Odum, Southern Regions of the United States, p. 482.

⁵⁷ Key, Southern Politics: In State and Nation, pp. 106-109.

⁵⁸ Kousser, The Shaping of Southern Politics, pp. 209-217.

activities. George was a young man of 42 when elected in 1922, but quickly became well known regionally. He was a lawyer and former state Supreme Court Justice before serving 35 years in the U.S. Senate. Senior Senator William J. Harris was a less important figure. He was a lifelong bureaucrat before being elected to the U.S. Senate in 1918. He was a product of party patronage. Beyond George and the state's fragmented leadership, the key to understanding its politics is like taking a southern opinion poll. Georgia usually followed the tide of Deep South feelings.

Background

The 1924 campaign and election were similar to the happenings in the remainder of the South. A strong animosity for Smith existed but the state Democratic party's actions were not overly hostile. The years between 1924 and 1928 were not particularly harsh for Governor Smith in Georgia. He was universally opposed in 1924, but the hostility he experience was endemic to the entire South. Georgia did not lead or initiate any known activities against Smith and remained loyal to southern tradition in its opposition to Smith. Ultimately it delivered a strong majority for the nominee Governor Davis in the 1924 presidential election.

The Election of 1928

There was no strong transitional period in Georgia. The election year began with the same dilemma facing Alabama, meaning that both state's would soon become political battleground's because they were targeted by the national A.S.L. and Bishop Cannon.⁵⁹ Georgia's

⁵⁹ Memphis Commercial Appeal, 9-15-28, p. 1.

struggle was mild when compared to Alabama's, primarily because Georgia did not have a Heflin type opposition leader. Georgia's main political leaders would remain loyal to the Democrats.

1928 began in Georgia with the favorite son candidacy of Senator George. George was a longtime popular middle of the road pragmatist. He received almost total support throughout the state as well as early endorsements from the two major papers, the Atlanta Journal and Atlanta Constitution. These journals also strongly criticized Heflin's conflicts with Robinson, Smith, and the Catholic Church. They backed the good people of Alabama and spoke of tolerance.⁶⁰ The Journal and the Constitution both supplied their readers with a good selection of relatively unbiased two-party reporting. Inside the papers, the anybody but Smith sentiment was strong as the realization that George would not receive the nomination became evident. Anti-Smith sentiment remained strong until the Houston convention and it was not evident that Georgia would support him after his nomination. This was unlike Mississippi and South Carolina which openly and eagerly vowed in their major journals to support Smith. The ordinary animosity that the South felt for Smith was displayed in Georgia and inside these two major journals.

As the Houston Convention approached, Smith seemed to gain momentum in Georgia.⁶¹ Inside the state, Georgians began to realize that Smith would be impossible to defeat. This view was

⁶⁰ Atlanta Journal, 1-19-28, p. 6.

⁶¹ Robert S. O'Dell, "The 1928 Presidential Election in Georgia" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Georgia, 1972), p. 39.

championed publicly by the editor of the Constitution Clark Howell, who in several May editorials, realized that Smith's nomination was almost assured. Howell and other editors did not like Smith and felt that he was probably their last choice.⁶² But they still fought hard against him because of both their loyalty toward George and their belief that they wanted to "'save the Democracy' in Georgia."⁶³

Georgia's state nominating convention unanimously supported Senator George. Thus they were sent to Houston to support the state candidate. Georgia still showed a strong animosity to Smith at the Houston convention. The delegation refused to change its votes to unanimously support both Smith and later Robinson after they were nominated. They also did not join either of the pro-Smith spontaneous parades that erupted. This type of negative reaction left Smith in a precarious position in the next months. Without a strong party organization and the known targeting of the state by the A.S.L. and the Cannon disciples, it would be a close election. A key to this election would be leadership.

The state leaders, Senators William J. Harris and George, Governor Lamartine G. Hardman, and former politicians like Hoke Smith, began to unite in favor of a November victory. They decided to actively campaign for a Smith victory. The general feeling of most politicians and newspapers was that they were "not pleased with the selection of Smith and Robinson but they enjoined all Democrats in Georgia to support the nominees of the party."⁶⁴ Their continued hostility was

⁶² O'Dell, "The 1928 Presidential Election in Georgia", pp. 41-44.

⁶³ O'Dell, "The 1928 Presidential Election in Georgia", p. 43.

⁶⁴ O'Dell, "The 1928 Presidential Election in Georgia", p. 49.

evident, but their devotion to the Democratic party was great. Following Georgia's unanimous support of George at their state convention, the top politicians publicly endorsed Smith. Senators Harris, George, and Hoke Smith travelled throughout the state and the South campaigning. Harris and George constantly waved the 'bloody shirt'. Senator Harris' favorite traveling speech included strong references regarding Hoover's 'personal' order to "revoke the segregation law" while he was the Secretary of the Department of Commerce.⁶⁵ Senator George used a traditional approach, and told his audiences to battle Republicanism and those Democrats who "have joined with the ancient enemy."⁶⁶ The Atlanta Constitution in June, and then later immediately before the election, made an effort to refresh the voters memories and disseminated the story that Tammany Hall secretly paid to defend Jefferson Davis against prosecution and was the lone remaining northern friend of the South.⁶⁷ Without any major political defections or political rallies in favor of Hoover, the opposition was not part of the Democratic organizations. The opposition would come solely from religious groups.

The conflict in Georgia was again between white supremacy, religion, and Prohibition. Prohibition was a main factor only in the pre-convention period. Many urban journals tried to "unite anti-Smith elements in Georgia by using the prohibition issue, something

⁶⁵ Arkansas Gazette, 8-31-28, p. 1.

⁶⁶ Memphis Commercial Appeal, 7-27-28, p. 1.

⁶⁷ O'Dell, "The 1928 Presidential Election in Georgia", p. 151.

with which most Georgians could agree."⁶⁸ Religious groups carried the torch of Prohibition to cover their hatred of Catholicism and immigration. Both major religious publications in Georgia, the Wesleyan Christian Advocate and the Baptist Christian Index vehemently opposed Smith throughout the year.⁶⁹ The anti-Smith groups that did form were religious Prohibition groups based on church membership. Baptist groups told parishioners to oppose any candidates who were against Prohibition. These groups conveyed the message that Smith's allegiance was to the Papacy and not the U.S. Constitution, thus their freedom was in question. The Atlanta Constitution criticized ministers and religious groups in general for using "their pulpits to preach politically-oriented sermons."⁷⁰ If one connects this approach to other social factors like the social status quo, xenophobia, immigration, and belief that white supremacy was assured, the church was effective.

The Georgia Republican Party worked quietly in the background of politics. The major state Democratic papers did not cover its activities.⁷¹ What hurt Georgia was that only two Republican journals in the state covered the G.O.P. and both were African-American papers. There was not a strongly successful 'lily white' movement to remove African-Americans from the party.⁷² But the strength of the Democratic organization had to be questioned. Without any major politicians except former congressman William D.

⁶⁸ O'Dell, "The 1928 Presidential Election in Georgia", p. 43.

⁶⁹ O'Dell, "The 1928 Presidential Election in Georgia", p.40.

⁷⁰ O'Dell, "The 1928 Presidential Election in Georgia", p. 88.

⁷¹ O'Dell, "The 1928 Presidential Election in Georgia", p. 43.

⁷² O'Dell, "The 1928 Presidential Election in Georgia", pp. 44, 45.

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Upshaw, the marginal victory by the Smith forces had to be related to organizational weakness or the inordinate amount of strength that religious groups displayed in Georgia. But, one has to remember that Georgia was the only truly Deep South state not to follow the Dixiecrat bolt in 1948. This activity could correlate to a progressiveness, especially regarding white supremacy, that is more evident in the Upper South. Georgia's relatively high African-American population was either more benign or more densely packed with the outlying regions of the state being unaffected, thus being allowed to vote for the G.O.P. But, if one believes the assertions that Georgia did not have a strong post-reconstruction Progressive or Republican party, the only reason for the natural Democratic majority to widely abandon its party would be the strength of religious leaders. Nonetheless, religion and white supremacy marked the dividing line in loyalty. It depended which party or candidate an individual or town believed which led those people to vote in that certain direction. The election was issue oriented; white supremacy or Catholic animosity were the two driving issues. Persuasion led Georgians to make their proper ideological decision.

The final vote total was 56% to 44% or 129,604 to 101,800 in favor of Smith. The natural split between the central black-belt and the hills and cotton region was emphasized. The quick activity following the Houston convention led to the Smith victory. The major politicians and journals actively supported Smith and their cause of remaining in power. If more politicians or if major newspapers would have abandoned Smith, his victory would have been in question. But, Georgia's major leaders were quick to respond to

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Smith's candidacy. The relative progressive nature of Georgia mainly led to the closeness of the election. Georgians outside of the black-belt felt that religion was more important than white supremacy and this led to the tight race.

The Early Smith Support

Governor Smith was not universally opposed in the South during the pre-Houston convention period. Louisiana and Arkansas were and still are connected in both cultural and political terms. Both exhibited a mildness in race relations and a need to explore progressive economic agendas. Also, in modern times, these two states maintained a local and national allegiance to the Democratic party. This was connected to both states being areas of extreme poverty which was their closest similarity. Plus, they both showed early support for the Smith campaign.

Louisiana: The Movement of Machine Inclusion

Social characteristics

Louisiana did not have the staunch one-party tradition exhibited in other Deep South states. Over the last century and a half, Louisiana's white majority has had serious flirtations with both the Populist party and the G.O.P.. White Louisianians have never been fully united in their political or social views. This was because Louisiana was the only southern state with a large percentage of

Catholics.¹ This was important because Louisiana's Catholic region was both geographically and politically separated from the remainder of the state. It was also the area of Smith's strongest intrastate support. The 1928 election was a continuation of Democratic majorities because every parish in the state returned a majority for Al Smith. But there was a noticeable electoral power shift in this election that was related to a geographic and religious split. The results of the election will prove that any real political unity was a misnomer.

Certain social characteristics are important to understand. In 1930, Louisiana had the third highest southern African-American population with 36.9%.² In addition, Louisiana has a history of extreme poverty.³ This alone again would seem to indicate a Smith victory because of the white supremacy vote and relatively greater support of a progressive economic agenda. But Louisiana was not as fanatical as other Deep South states regarding race and one must discuss the limitations of Smith's progressive agenda. This agenda could be described better as being less conservative than Hoover's agenda. What helped Smith in this area was that the G.O.P was battling corruption and it opposed the McNary-Haugen Bill which

¹ Kousser, The Shaping of Southern Politics, p. 12. William Forbes Adams, discusses Catholic emigration to Louisiana and migratory effects on the original French Catholic population in Ireland and Irish Emigration to the New World: From 1815 to the Famine(New York: Russell & Russell, 1932) p. 379-380.

² Odum, Southern Regions of the United States, p. 482.

³ This was a key point in understanding the political and social motivations of Louisianians, T. Harry Williams, Huey Long(New York, 1969) and Alan Brinkley, Voices of Protest: Huey Long, Father Coughlin & the Great Depression(Vintage Books: New York, 1982) understand this while Key, Southern Politics: In State and Nation, passed over this important point.

would liberalize a few aspects of farm policy primarily by helping raise prices and by subsidizing farmers' incomes. The G.O.P. would lose many progressive votes in the South based on this issue.

Louisiana was concerned with progress because of its economic situation. Also as stated earlier, Louisiana had an abnormally high percentage of non-Protestant church members. 31.66% of white church members were Catholic.⁴ This showed a diversity in the population that helped Smith gain new voters and will be explained later.

Political Characteristics

The Catholic population resided in the southern Louisiana delta parishes. These counties traditionally opposed conservative Democratic candidates on the state and national level. Because Smith's political and social beliefs matched those of this area, a new ephemeral Democratic alliance would be created if traditionally conservative Protestant Democrats remained loyal to the party. The overall geography of the state was important. The delta parishes were the strongest areas of Catholic residence, but were the weakest traditional Democratic supporters. The Catholics were despised because of their religious traditions, alcoholic overindulgence, Mardi Gras celebrations, and French ancestry but would be the base of Democratic national support in the future.

The Protestants of the northern and Florida parishes (connected to Florida) were traditionally conservative Democrats with a learned difference with the Catholics. Some called the Northerners

⁴ Odum, Southern Regions of the United States, p. 142.

Louisiana's 'cotton' Democrats, meaning that their agricultural existence was similar to that of the remainder of the southern black-belt. This was an insult because Louisianians prided themselves on a separation from the other southern states; they were different! But racially both Catholics and Protestants had areas with large African-American populations. The key would be if the Smith forces could find a middle ground of assimilation and understanding between the two distinctly different Louisianas.

The key to the future victory of Smith was the nomination of 35-year old Huey Long as the Democratic gubernatorial candidate early in 1928. His political ascendancy was rapid. Long was born to a Populist politician in Winn Parish, Louisiana in 1893. He never received a high school diploma or a law degree but still became an intelligent and successful lawyer. He soon entered politics and was elected Louisiana Railroad Commissioner at age 25. He had a natural flair for politics and was flamboyant in almost all his activities. When he entered the U.S. Senate in 1932, he wore outrageous clothes and refused to follow the conservative party line or act in the subservient manner traditionally reserved for freshmen Senators.⁵

Long was in almost total control of the state after his election as Governor was assured. He had a previously formed political machine, but its domination was not assured until his ascendance was complete. His election was a step to dominate most state functions. Local and national newspapers quickly began calling him

⁵ Brinkley, Voices of Protest: Huey Long, Father Coughlin & the Great Depression, p. 42.

"the dictator of Louisiana," or his personal favorite, "the Kingfish."⁶ In early 1928, the pro-Long Democratic faction quickly assumed power, created a dominant and efficient political organization, and aligned themselves with the Smith political organization. Louisiana's two Senators, Joseph D. Ransdell and Edwin S. Broussard were above intrastate squabbles and were solely interested in national government affairs in Washington. They were not factors in state and local government because inside the state they did not have any real power. Louisiana was controlled by the Kingfish. They could stay out of his way in Washington; but that was until Long decided to relocate to the Senate. The important factor to remember in Louisiana was who controlled politics or could form a strong machine. Long's machine became the real arm of Government.

The regional and religious split inside Louisiana was shaped by liberal and conservative leanings. The Populist party and the G.O.P.'s previous strongholds were in the Catholic region of Louisiana, while the Protestants generally exhibited traditional southern conservative leanings and most Democratic organizations in the pre-Long era were in alliance with the Protestant majority.⁷ But Long's support was class based: his voters were poor whites of both Protestant and Catholic backgrounds. At the same time he was able to control the elite through the use of patronage.⁸ He provided enough jobs to former opponents and the powerful to secure his future activity.

⁶ Brinkley, Voices of Protest: Huey Long, Father Coughlin & the Great Depression, p. 9.

⁷ Kousser, The Shaping of Southern Politics, pp. 74-75, 153-164..

⁸ Brinkley, Voices of Protest: Huey Long, Father Coughlin & the Great Depression, pp. 22-25.

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Electoral Background

The Long organization was already fighting for power during the gubernatorial campaign of 1924. He was defeated by a Protestant elite/Ku Klux Klan coalition. That same year the Louisiana delegation to the Democratic convention was an anti-Long group that aligned with the Protestant South and was chosen to strongly oppose Smith.⁹ In 1928 however, the new voters being the Catholics of the delta parishes, would elect Long and thus help him establish a group of electors which was sent to Houston.¹⁰ Long would not let an anti-Long group of presidential electors to again be chosen in 1928.

Transition

On the surface, state political activities were uneventful until Long's nomination as Governor. Between 1924 and 1928 Long slowly fortified his control of Louisiana. Then in 1928, the "recently nominated Democratic gubernatorial candidate" assumed almost complete control of the entire state through the systematic use of patronage, political intimidation, force of personal conviction, organizational speed, and sheer numbers of people in his organization.¹¹ Long frenetically united his forces and fortified the state for the proposition of supporting Smith in the upcoming months. Machine control became the key to Smith's future victory in Louisiana as it was connected to Long's ascendancy.

The Election of 1928

⁹ Barbara Wingo, "The 1928 Presidential Election in Louisiana." Louisiana History, 18, (1977), p. 408.

¹⁰ Wingo, "The 1928 Presidential Election in Louisiana", pp. 405, 406, 408.

¹¹ Wingo. "The 1928 Presidential Election in Louisiana", pp. 408.

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Long believed that his future control of the state was connected to an alliance with the perceived national party nominee Al Smith. The Smith/Long connection would validate his rule. Smith's slow rise to national power loosely coincided with that of Long's. They both used the 1924-1928 period to build a strong organization to meet their political purposes. The alliance that they built reflected the general feelings of Louisiana. This was because Smith's viewpoints aligned more closely with Louisiana's than with any other southern state. Louisiana's Catholic population was a driving factor for this event. Protestants were also affected because of their close geographic proximity to Catholics. Protestants and Catholics had their differences, but unlike most other southern voters, the Protestant majority realized that Catholics were not chimeras. They continued to support the Democratic party.

Upon entering the convention phase, the Louisiana delegation had to grapple with the question of Prohibition. The Houston delegation had many anti-prohibitionists including the Louisiana National Committeeman, Colonial Robert Ewing. But, Ewing was closely aligned with Long and thus became a Smith supporter. What also helped Smith was that Ewing was also the publisher of the New Orleans States and the Shreveport Times.¹² Along with the New Orleans Times-Picayune, Louisiana's three major newspapers were pro-Smith in the pre-Houston convention period. These three papers gave early and strong support for the Smith campaign. Coincidentally, there was also a June meeting of southern newspaper

¹² Wingo, "The 1928 Presidential Election in Louisiana", p. 408.

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publishers at New Orleans in which they pledged their total support for the Smith Campaign.¹³

With Long's power and control, it was clearly evident that if he supported Smith, the Louisiana delegation would follow his rule. Because Long believed that the future nominee was Smith and power followed a Smith alliance, he lined his forces up prior to the Houston convention. It was said that Louisiana pledged its convention to Smith so that Long knew that his political followers could then be seated. Long did this to increase his power base. Plus, he despised the use of religion in politics to defeat opponents.¹⁴ Long unhappily viewed the bigoted attacks levelled against Smith in 1924 and again in 1928. In many ways, the Longites were political pragmatists who realized that Smith was assured the Democratic nomination. They were much more practical, racially sensitive, and politically perceptive than the remainder of the South.

At the Houston convention, every Louisiana delegate was pro-Long and pledged to Smith. Smith received all 20 of Louisiana's ballots. Louisiana was the only southern state to unanimously support Smith at Houston. Louisiana did not protest Smith's positions nor oppose his choice for the vice presidency. Long was able to limit the effectiveness of the election issues inside his state. The old 1924 Protestant faction pushed religion, Prohibition, and white supremacy in that order.¹⁵ Because that faction was out of power and, as described earlier, Long's systematic effectiveness in formulating his

¹³ New Orleans Times-Picayune, 6-24-28, p. 1.

¹⁴ Williams, Huey Long, p. 326.

¹⁵ Wingo, "The 1928 Presidential Election in Louisiana", p. 411.

political machine was superb, the 1924 coalition's pronouncements against Smith were ineffective. Generally, the arguments against Smith regarding Prohibition and religious belief only had effect in the northern and Florida parishes. These areas were traditionally the strongest Democratic counties, primarily because of their Anglo-Saxon origins and cotton growing practices.¹⁶ These areas exhibited a noted decline in their Democratic majority totals for Smith. The southern Baptist newspaper the Baptist Message did the most damage to Smith in these Protestant regions of the state.¹⁷ The Message used the usual prejudicial religious arguments to influence its readers.

It must be discussed that Louisiana had a strong G.O.P. organization in place to fight Smith. But this organization had a minimal effect on the election because of the strength of the Long organization. Nonetheless, the G.O.P. delegation to the Republican National Convention was purged of "'negro patronage elements'" and was the first southern group to fully endorse Hoover's candidacy.¹⁸

In Louisiana, Smith received the strongest support from rural counties. There was a connection to Long's support and the quest for economic progressivism. These rural parishes strongly supported Populists and Republicans in the past, but during this election there was much discussion regarding the need for flood relief work on the Mississippi River. This issue of economic progress and new federal government intervention was championed by the Longites. Smith's

¹⁶ Wingo, "The 1928 Presidential Election in Louisiana", pp. 423-425.

¹⁷ Wingo, "The 1928 Presidential Election in Louisiana". p. 415.

¹⁸ Wingo, "The 1928 Presidential Election in Louisiana", pp. 406, 407.

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supporters praised his position that the "federal government should assume full responsibility for flood control."¹⁹ This position was popular with the rural voter. If Smith could have continued this 'people's candidate' approach formulated by Long, he could have generated even more rural community support. Throughout the South, economic progressivism was needed and wanted by the electorate. This relationship was mentioned in the Alabama chapter regarding C. Vann Woodward and white progressivism. This was important in understanding Louisiana and the South. Long made his living saying things such as, "about sixty-five or seventy percent of the entire wealth of the United States is owned by two percent of the people...wealth is fast concentrating in the hands of the few."²⁰ Ideas vocalized in this way were successful with poor white audiences. Progressive radicalism had a voice in the South. If Smith could have harnessed it with the continued belief that people could maintain their social and religious sovereignty, he could have set a positive agenda and been a much more successful, if not a nationally victorious candidate.

Conclusion

Louisiana had a high voter turnout for the election and returned a Smith victory of 76.3% to 23.7% or 164,655 to 51,160. This majority was similar to that of 1924 in number, but Smith's support differed in its geographic strength. He had higher vote totals in the Catholic delta but lower totals than Davis in the traditional Democratic areas

¹⁹ Wingo, "The 1928 Presidential Election in Louisiana", p. 422, *New Orleans States*, 8-30-28, p. 1.

²⁰ Brinkley, Voices of Protest: Huey Long, Father Coughlin & the Great Depression, p. 8.

of the northern and Florida parishes. White supremacy and religious animosity only played a minor role in the traditional Democratic counties because of the lack of an outlet for displeasure. The areas where southern states would support Hoover, were those areas with a past connection to the Progressive party of the Reconstructionist era. Since this tradition existed in the Catholic areas that supported Smith, the voice of opposition did not really materialize in the northern and Florida parishes. The natural split in the state was quelled by its own Democratic traditions. Louisiana was the only southern state whose former Reconstruction era second-party opposition supported Smith in strong numbers. The Long support was a major factor that led to Smith's victory. Smith's non-traditional voter support did not hinder Louisiana's long term trend of Democratic support, but it did not unite the state in the long term either.

Arkansas: Support For The Local Candidate

Social Characteristics

Arkansas is a tricky state to understand and classify for both the 1928 election and inside the South itself. It was unlike other southern areas. Like Louisiana, it did not have a history of race baiting. But Arkansas was not a Deep South state because it lacked a former plantation economy and large former slave population. It is easier to classify it as an Upper South state even though Arkansas could be geographically connected to the Middle West. Its

Democratic allegiance was related to its combination of extreme poverty and inherent progressive nature. Society was not extreme in its class divisions as economic subsistence was more common than citizens with opulent lifestyles. The entire state was fighting for economic success because Arkansas was composed of poor people living in rural areas. In 1930 Arkansas had the third lowest African American population in the South, 25.6%, was the third poorest southern state, and second most rural.²¹ Arkansas was also one of the last southern states to develop and become populated. Except for a few counties in the southeast, Arkansas mostly consisted of marginal lands.

Political Characteristics

Arkansas political leadership was made up of a relatively fluid group of individuals in a loosely structured party organization based in the southeastern delta region. Joseph T. Robinson was the nominal state leader and coordinator of state political activities. He was a well connected lawyer, educated at the University of Virginia. His education validated his good southern roots. He ascended to the Democratic leadership in the U.S. Senate after being elected at age 41 in 1913. The junior Senator was Thaddeus H. Caraway who was elected at age 49 in 1920. Caraway was known as a progressive, especially regarding agricultural issues. He was the quieter colleague, but both were deeply loyal to their party and state.

Arkansas was a geographically and politically divided area with an upcountry and a delta region. The delta region had a high

²¹ Odum, Southern Regions of the United States, pp. 18, 46, 482.

African-American population and also maintained the strongest traditional white Democratic allegiance in the state. The Ozark upcountry had traditionally flirted with the G.O.P. and the Progressive party in the post-bellum era. Arkansas political independence in this earlier era was stronger than in most southern states.²² The state's geographic split caused a political division which was evident in most elections. The upcountry region had traditionally abandoned the Democratic fold and helped Arkansas build one of the stronger Republican organizations.²³ At the turn of the century, Governor Jeff Davis era, the state was surprisingly united through a populist style of Democratic agrarian radicalism. It is interesting to note that during this era, the state was ideologically but not racially divisive; a type of non-racial conformity coalesced. Economics and not race was the focal point even though race preoccupied most of the remainder of the South. Since class division was not and never became a cutting issue, race was not used as a political dividing point by the elite to control economics. Plus, the number of elite leaders was small as was the African-American population. These characteristics made Arkansas unlike any other southern state. In this earlier era, state unity under the banner of progressivism remained a key issue. Arkansas' Democratic party has a history of progressive behavior. From Jeff Davis, both Senator Thaddeus Caraway and his wife Senator Hattie Caraway, to Senator Dale Bumpers and President Bill Clinton, Arkansas has carried the progressive banner. Unlike other southern states, its agrarian and

²² Kousser, The Shaping of Southern Politics, p. 123.

²³ Kousser, The Shaping of Southern Politics, pp. 122-123.

political leaders did act on behalf of its citizens. This played a role in forming the 1928 Smith coalition.

Background and Transition from 1924

Arkansas did not show any support for Smith in 1924 but limited its animosity to only marginal complaints. There was not a major transition between 1924 and 1928. The major state leaders remained in power. But, the party generally realized that victory over the Republicans was more important than continued infighting. This helped shape its 1928 agenda.

The Election of 1928

Either by fluke or by cognitive action, Arkansas' political organization unknowingly joined the Smith juggernaut early in 1928. Senator J. Thomas Heflin continued his history of anti-Catholic demagoguery and began specifically attacking Governor Smith from the Senate floor. Smith was immediately defended by Senate Minority Leader Robinson. Robinson's rebuttals and counterattacks against Heflin received the unanimous support of the Senate.²⁴ As discussed earlier, the Heflin-Robinson conflict was a focal point of the election. This was a rallying point for Arkansas which proudly supported its Senator.²⁵ Because of Robinson's defense of Smith, he gained the attention of the Smith backers in New York. Realizing that he could have problems in the South in November, Smith secretly chose Robinson to be his southern vice presidential candidate in

²⁴ Birmingham Age-Herald, 1-20-28, p. 1.

²⁵ Arkansas Gazette, 1-21-28, p.1, 1-24-28, pp. 1, 6.

January.²⁶ Arkansas and the remainder of the South were largely unaware of this event even though many anti-Smith/pro-Robinson Democrats discussed the possibility of this alliance. They used this as a rallying point to oppose the Smith/Robinson ticket at Houston. Smith hoped this would mollify southern animosity.²⁷

The early national backing that Robinson received by the Smith forces made many Southerners question Robinson's true political intentions. This forced many southern political leaders to criticize his later activity at the Houston convention. The local reaction to the Robinson/Heflin conflict received more print and discussion in Alabama than in Arkansas. Both the Arkansas Gazette and the Arkansas Democrat, based in Little Rock, underreported the ensuing Robinson-Heflin conflict. The Gazette was more reserved in its positive reporting because it was a strong prohibitionist paper. The Gazette's reporting overshadowed journalistic objectivity. One must remember that in this era newspapers were ideologically based. Most papers tried to force their own agenda on their readership. Plus, many readers subscribed to newspapers to get a certain point of view. The Gazette was unsettled by Smith's 'wet' leanings. They did their best to report events early in the campaign regarding anti-Smith activities throughout the South.²⁸

²⁶ Reagan, "The Presidential Campaign of 1928 in Alabama", p. 186.

²⁷ Reagan, "The Presidential Campaign of 1928 in Alabama", p. 186.

²⁸ Good examples of anti-Smith reporting was Arkansas Gazette, 1-22-28, p. 3, 2-20-28, p. 1, which discussed anti-Smith fervor and discussed Hoover, Coolidge and G.O.P. positives. 3-24-28, p. 1, showed negative headlines about Smith being on the defensive regarding corruption and other issues.

Arkansas was a G.O.P. and A.S.L. target state in 1928.²⁹ But it did not land in the Republican column for many reasons. One has to examine Robinson's effectiveness in his home state to realize why Arkansas voted for Smith. As early as the middle of March, the Arkansas delegation to the Democratic National Convention assured Smith of at least 90% support.³⁰ The final actual delegate count was 17 to 1 in favor of Smith. This infuriated the Gazette which claimed in an editorial the next day that 90% of Arkansas' Democrats were not in favor of Smith.³¹ A charge of political chicanery and undemocratic representation swept the state. It was likely that because of the enormous support Robinson had inside the state, along with the loyal activities of junior Senator Thaddeus Caraway, Arkansas remained Democratic. Robinson was admired and well liked. In Arkansas, people respected his defense of the Democratic party and Smith. His speeches were reported throughout the state. A memorable speech about religious freedom was delivered in Philadelphia on March, 18 and was partly transcribed by the Gazette for its readership. Robinson stated that a citizen had an "inalienable and supreme right to exercise his religious faith in his own manner."³² This was effective speech making and helped to shape the early opinions of the Arkansas electorate. Senator Caraway often travelled and delivered speeches defending both Smith and Robinson. He had strong name recognition and Arkansas voters felt a

²⁹ Memphis Commercial Appeal, 7-23-28, p. 1, Arkansas Gazette, 3-6-28, p.1.

³⁰ Arkansas Gazette, 3-23-28, p. 1.

³¹ Arkansas Gazette, 3-24-28, p. 6.

³² Arkansas Gazette, 3-19-28, p. 1.

loyalty to him. After his death in 1931, this recognition partly allowed Arkansas voters to elect his wife to his Senate seat. Caraway regularly was united in defense of the ticket throughout the South with Senators Duncan U. Fletcher of Florida and Walter F. George of Georgia.³³ These Senators sacrificed themselves for the Democratic ticket. This meant that if things went badly, they could have harmed their future political viability.

The pre-convention activity of the local electorate and local journals were slanted in favor of the anti-Smith forces. The Smith/Robinson ticket remained a well kept secret. Often Hoover received more coverage in headlines and articles. A.S.L. activity was widely promoted and Anti-Smith rallies were openly held without public retribution. This type of activity soon ended. A rally in Pine Bluff sponsored by the Reverend E.E. Tull was the last hurrah for the anti-Smith movement in Arkansas. The June, 18 rally saw many loyal Democrats cheer for Hoover as Tull wildly endorsed him and charged that the corrupting influence of Tammany was not wanted by Southerners. Inside Arkansas the agrarian economic issue was important, Tull reminded his audience, many of whom were farmers, "'what would Smith know about flood relief, immigration and labor problems, and the tariff issue?"³⁴ This was effective because the Gazette earlier chastised Smith for his organizations questionable methods of operating campaign finances.³⁵ This opened Smith

³³ Birmingham Age-Herald, 5-31-28, p. 1, Memphis Commercial Appeal, 8-2-28, p. 13, 8-23-28, p. 1.

³⁴ Arkansas Gazette, 6-19-28, p.8.

³⁵ Arkansas Gazette, 5-28-28, p. 1, 3.

problems in two areas. It was a highly effective technique to attack a candidate with issues that were fresh in the public's mind. For one, the smell of corruption and big business cronyism inside Tammany was widely known. Tull compared the Americanism of the candidates with Hoover being a world-wide spokesman for America, a trained engineer, and the son of a farm family. Secondly, Tull compared this to Smith's 'wet', immigrant, and Tammany connections. Tull was feverishly cheered.³⁶ His speech was symptomatic of Smith's southern problems and was in many ways repeating what other ministers were preaching. The difference in Arkansas was that after the Houston convention, these activities halted.

Houston was a relatively pleasant experience for the Arkansas delegation. Most learned in the weeks leading up to the convention that their senior Senator was to become their vice presidential candidate. He was also positioned to give an important speech about religious toleration. The speech was highly successful with the Arkansas delegation. This helped the delegation lead a spontaneous parade. Many in Arkansas believed that the Robinson candidacy could lead to a newly found pride and respect for both the state and the South, and Robinson remained a major figure at the convention primarily because of his speech. The Gazette editorial board, top politicians, and citizens believed that he was expected to lead a united South to victory in the the post-convention period.³⁷

³⁶ Arkansas Gazette, 6-19-28, p. 1, 8.

³⁷ Arkansas Gazette, 6-30-28, p. 6.

The Arkansas Gazette began to issue pro-Robinson articles relating to the Vice Presidency. Editorials were printed that conveyed the regional message that the South must not use religion as a barrier to any person's election as president.³⁸ Because of Arkansas' low African-American population, race did not become a vibrant election issue. As stated earlier, Arkansas did not have a history of race baiting. This occurrence was reflective of the high vote totals the G.O.P. received. But, despite this, the connection between Robinson and Smith caused Arkansas to proudly participate on the national stage. The feeling in Arkansas was one of a new found national acceptance. The feeling of a 'new day' in Arkansas and the South was evident. Many felt that the post-bellum political decline of the South was about to end. The good feelings of the Wilson Administration were to begin again. This feeling was an Arkansas catharsis and not even the prohibitionist Gazette would let the state down. The Gazette printed an editorial on August, 7 questioning the loyalty of the state's prohibitionist Democrats. They raised an alarming tone with their rhetoric when they asked that "Before southern Democrats separate themselves from their party on the prohibition issue, they should 'think and reason' whether there is any 'drier' place for them to go than their own party."³⁹ The Democrats had a strong 'dry' party platform. They were the party that wrote the Prohibition Amendment. These two features were respected inside Arkansas. Prohibition was a vibrant election issue inside Arkansas! The Gazette and state political leaders were fearful

³⁸ Arkansas Gazette, 6-29-28, p. 6.

³⁹ Arkansas Gazette, 8-7-28, p. 6.

that the A.S.L. targeting of the Arkansas would lead to an embarrassing defeat in November. Arkansas tried to separate itself from anything negatively related to the Smith-Robinson ticket. In early July the Arkansas Democratic party announced that all party bolters would be banned. These swift moves instilled confidence in local Democrats. Hoover only remained a minor figure inside the state because of the perceived loyalty Arkansas had for Robinson. G.O.P. activity was a product of the historical and natural success they had during the post-Reconstruction era. From July to November, anti-Smith activity was quiet on all fronts. The level of activity would remain minimal.

Conclusion

Originally, the 1928 presidential campaign received more negative coverage from the Arkansas papers than from any others in the South. Undoubtedly Arkansas' reaction to Smith changed when Robinson was nominated to second place on the ticket. The election would have been much closer without Robinson's unfailing support. Arkansas was also the state with the lowest African-American population to cast a majority for Smith. Without Robinson, the state's history of racial cohesion would have led to a much closer election. The 10 of the 75 counties that Smith lost were in the predominantly white upcountry. The vote total was 60.5% to 39.5% or 119,196 to 77,784. This election continued a political trend; Arkansas did not return a Republican majority from 1880-1960 in any presidential election. Race, Prohibition, and religion were peripheral issues because of Robinson's position on the ticket.

3

The Upper South Opposition

Virginia, North Carolina, and Tennessee were the Upper South opposition. These states were united in their low percentages of African-American population, the strength of post-bellum opposition political parties, and strong intrastate opposition leaders or groups. These states were able to oppose Smith for these three reasons which were connected with their quest to maintain cultural conservative values.

Virginia: The Byrd Machine Versus a Changing Political Tide

Social Characteristics

Virginia was the only southern state in 1928 that was experiencing a movement away from traditional southern beliefs and values. Its movement from the Democratic party preceded the civil rights party realignment of the 1950's and 1960's. One cause was that Virginia was experiencing a migratory influx similar to that of Florida. This dispersed the traditional values that were expressed throughout the remainder of the South. But Virginia's connection

with the core of the Democratic party was already waning because it began to lose traditional values. Virginia, with its relatively high standard of living (fourth in the South in 1930), plus its low African-American population, was a state that by all indications should have favored Hoover.¹ Virginia had a natural two-party tendency rooted in its history. During the 1880's, Virginia was a strong independent state, and its Readjuster movement was the strongest anti-Democratic force in the South.² The Democrats were not securely in power and their hold on the state would decline as the twentieth century progressed.³ This general party weakness had dire consequences for the Democrats in 1928.

Political Characteristics

Unlike any other southern state, Virginia operated like a centralized political oligarchy. Its localities acted together in complete unison, but only after the centralized power center had spoken.⁴ The problems with the machine's power was that Virginia regularly had the lowest number of Democrats voting or participating in primaries.⁵ Historically, Senator Thomas S. Martin controlled the machine for many years with the help of Bishop Cannon. After Martin's death in 1919, the party was looking for a leader, but because politics did not supply one until the ascendancy of Governor

¹ Odum, Southern Regions of the United States, pp. 18, 46.

² Kousser, The Shaping of Southern Politics, pp. 171-173.

³ Stephen F. Lawson, Black Ballots: Voting Rights in the South, 1944-1969 (New York, Columbia University Press, 1976), he sets the time frame for disfranchisement of the South and its effect on the national electorate.

⁴ Key, Southern Politics: In State and Nation, pp. 21-23.

⁵ Key, Southern Politics: In State and Nation, p. 20; Kousser, The Shaping of Southern Politics, pp. 179-181.

Harry F. Byrd in 1926, Bishop Cannon was its preeminent figure until the late 1920's. Cannon was not happy when he lost some of his power to Byrd. In Virginia the conflict between the two forever "severed the the Anti-Saloon League's ties to the Democratic organization."⁶ This did not however diminish Byrd's political effectiveness in the long run. He would serve in the U.S. Senate until his death in 1965 and become a chief power broker in the South.

Bishop Cannon was a potent figure inside the state because he headquartered his Methodist Episcopal Church, South in Virginia where its strength emanated throughout the southern region. The A.S.L. was also active mostly in Virginia and North Carolina. The alliance these two groups maintained was effective in this area because they were strong enough to set their own agenda. The Democratic party was forced many times to acquiesce to Cannon or compromise its beliefs because of the strength his organization maintained.

Background

The years between 1924 and 1928 were important because they set the tone for the 1928 election. Cannon and Byrd became enemies when Byrd was elected governor in 1926. This was partly because Byrd was elected to power without Cannon.⁷ This created a rift between the two leaders.⁸ The natural animosity that these leaders had for each other increased because of Governor Smith's campaign

⁶ James R. Sweeney, "Rum, Romanism, and Virginia Democrats: The Party Leaders and the Campaign of 1928." Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, 90, (1982), p. 404.

⁷ Sweeney, "Rum, Romanism, and Virginia Democrats", p.404.

⁸ Sweeney, "Rum, Romanism, and Virginia Democrats", pp. 404, 405.

struggles. Cannon had the upper hand because his fight against Smith began in 1924, while Byrd only began to champion Smith's cause later in 1928. Byrd would eventually back Smith because that opposed Cannon's position.

The Election of 1928

Besides the Presidential race, Virginia Democrats had a competing interest that affected the 1928 election; Byrd's and Cannon's personal animosity toward each other, though Byrd now controlled Virginia's political machine. Religious prejudice was the top issue of the election, partly due to its emphasis by Cannon. The conflict over Smith only increased statewide tensions between the two leaders. Byrd was not wildly in favor of Governor Smith as a presidential candidate, but the coolness he displayed could never be described as hostile. In fact, Byrd began working for Smith before other major state figures did. Though opposed to many of Smith's beliefs and aware of the problems Smith's candidacy would cause in Virginia, Byrd was a political pragmatist who realized that Smith was the strongest candidate and would be nominated in Houston.

At the Houston convention the Virginia political leaders Governor Byrd, Senators Claude A. Swanson and Carter Glass decided that the Virginia delegation would cast 6 of its 24 votes for Smith with the remainder going to Cordell Hull of Tennessee.⁹ This was the third highest southern nominating vote total for Smith at the convention. Virginia acted kindly throughout the convention with its sole overt

⁹ Sweeney, "Rum, Romanism, and Virginia Democrats", p. 406.

hostile reaction was not joining the parade following Smith's nomination.

The major sticking point between the state party and Governor Smith was Smith's stand on Prohibition. He refused to endorse the 'dry' party platform. This was difficult for Senator Glass to accept because he was an author of the Eighteenth Amendment. However, Glass refused to damage the party at the convention and stated that in regard to a letter Smith wrote to the convention refusing to accept Prohibition, the nominee's statement was "'typical of the candor and courage of the writer.'"¹⁰ This was a product of Glass' extreme sensitivity to Smith's uncertain national political position. Glass had strong views concerning religious prejudice. He once stated that Smith's religious views "'would not, as it certainly should not, cause him to lose Virginia or any other southern state at the election.'"¹¹ But this statement was an underestimation of the strong feelings that Cannon and many Virginians had concerning Smith.

After the return of the delegation to Virginia, Byrd travelled throughout the state and the South, countering attacks on Smith. But, his speeches were negative and defensive.¹² Byrd was not able to set a positive agenda, but instead found himself continually defending Smith against Cannon and his followers. In their personal battle, Cannon had the natural advantages mentioned earlier, the low African-American population and relative economic prosperity. He also had a head start in the propaganda war that ensued. Cannon's

¹⁰ Sweeney, "Rum, Romanism, and Virginia Democrats", p. 408.

¹¹ Sweeney, "Rum, Romanism, and Virginia Democrats", p. 404.

¹² Sweeney, "Rum, Romanism, and Virginia Democrats", p. 422.

people canvassed the state with the flier "Is Southern Protestantism More Intolerant Than Romanism?"¹³ This was a vicious piece of propaganda distributed late in the campaign to over 148,000 Virginians. The Smith/Byrd forces did not have time to defend themselves against this attack. That flier was on the minds of the voters when they entered the voting booth. Its effect was multiplied when one realizes that the A.S.L. also successfully distributed the bogus Knights of Columbus oath throughout Virginia.¹⁴ Cannon spoke during all stages of the campaign and his rhetoric grew more venomous. He then simultaneously organized and registered thousands of new voters against Smith.¹⁵

The anti-Smith forces were in full motion well before the pro-Smith forces. This quick start was a difficulty the Byrd/Smith forces had to overcome. For example, while Governor Smith's acceptance speech did not occur until August, 22, the wildly successful Asheville Convention was held on July, 19. This was a meeting of 'dry' southern Democratic forces who wanted to defeat Smith. Prominent Democratic prohibitionists such as Senator Glass were invited, but did not attend.¹⁶ The attending convention forces pledged their "'unswerving allegiance to the principles of true Democracy,' and their 'determination to labor to preserve the spirit, ideals and unity of southern Democracy.'"¹⁷ They fully believed that Smith had

¹³ Sweeney, "Rum, Romanism, and Virginia Democrats", p. 410.

¹⁴ This was noted earlier in this thesis.

¹⁵ Henry C. Ferrell, Claude A. Swanson of Virginia: A Political Biography (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1985), p. 146.

¹⁶ Reagan, "The Presidential Campaign of 1928 in Alabama", pp. 199, 200.

¹⁷ Reagan, "The Presidential Campaign of 1928 in Alabama", p. 201.

abandoned the principles of the Democratic party with his pledge to soften the Eighteenth Amendment. They also stated a general dislike for the Democratic Campaign Chairman John J. Raskob, a 'wet' former Republican, as well as the corruption of Tammany Hall politics. They articulated a positive argument with which many Virginians and Southerners could and would agree. This was not just open ended hyperbole or rhetoric, it was a coherent argument and a public statement of purpose that would prove effective in November. The convention leaders also protected themselves by stating their allegiance to the Democratic party and their promise to return after Smith's defeat. The convention invigorated the already united Upper South forces while the Byrd organization remained relatively unaffected until after Smith's acceptance.

Senator's Glass and Swanson followed Governor Byrd's earlier initiatives with endorsements on August, 24th and 26th, respectively. State Democratic Chairman J. Murray Hooker was also relatively inactive until late August. The Democratic party's structure forced itself to wait until the top acted before the localities followed. Except for Byrd, the Virginia organization did not actively begin to fight until late August or early September, many months after the re-activated Cannon and A.S.L. anti-Smith forces.

The Democratic party's support for Governor Smith moved at a hectic pace once it began, but the late start was a hindrance. The Norfolk Ledger-Dispatch stated that "'for the first time since 1896 the Democratic state organization is stirred into getting out its vote

by a systematic canvass in the state at large."¹⁸ However this statement was made on October 23rd. The anti-Smithites were now being bolstered by more propaganda and G.O.P. funds. The Republicans targeted Virginia early in the campaign, and they were not loosening their grip.¹⁹

The local state papers followed the party line but did not begin to actively campaign for Governor Smith until after his acceptance speech. Their vocal support was generally aligned with that of the prevailing Democratic organization. The Richmond News Leader was quick to criticize Heflin in his early battle with Robinson and it recognized the power of the Smith movement before the Houston convention. But, the News Leader did not caucus for Smith until it became evident he was backed by the party. By October, the paper was openly comparing the candidates, the platforms, and the pro- and anti-Smith groups. On October, 12 the editorial board attacked the anti-Smith group by stating that they were in fact making Governor Smith stronger through their preaching and that a backlash would occur.²⁰ The News Leader also examined the religious bigotry levelled against Catholics in general. They led the news on October, 24 with the reprinting of a speech by Senator Glass where he stated that those who used religious prejudice against the Democratic party were cowards. They were "'willing for the Catholic boys to give up their lives for their country but they're not willing for them to hold

¹⁸ Sweeney, "Rum, Romanism, and Virginia Democrats", p. 416.

¹⁹ Memphis Commercial Appeal, 7-23-28 p. 1.

²⁰ Richmond News Leader, 10-12-28 p. 8.

office."²¹ The Norfolk Ledger-Dispatch generally followed the same pattern with its support for Smith peaking at the election.

Virginia was won by the anti-Smith forces as Hoover carried the state 54.0% to 46.0%. The key to Hoover's victory was probably the number of new voters registered by Cannon. Hoover received twice as many votes as President Coolidge received in 1924, even though Smith still received more votes than Davis.²² The late start by the Democrats crippled their drive toward victory. They did not have enough time to start a positive drive nor convey a positive message. The support they received from the local journals was similar to the remainder of the South. The single difference was the length of time it took both the Democratic organization and the journals to organize and support Smith. Cannon's early start in organization and his already entrenched anti-Smith group were formidable obstacles to overcome. The evolving endemic trends in Virginia described earlier, along with the slow campaign start, were too much for the Democrats to overcome.

North Carolina: The Power of Senator Simmons

Social Characteristics

North Carolina was always an uncertain state in close elections for the Democrats, even though they carried the state in every presidential election but one between 1880 and 1960. Many of these

²¹ Sweeney, "Rum, Romanism, and Virginia Democrats", p. 418.

²² Sweeney, "Rum, Romanism, and Virginia Democrats", p. 425.

races were toss ups. The reasons for close elections were closely related to the states' geography and political history. The dominant geography is similar to that of the remainder of the South, only in North Carolina the fertile soil is located on a coastal plain with a mountainous region containing marginal lands in the states' western half. During the antebellum era, North Carolina had fewer slaves and plantations than most of the South. This kept a distinct class and race division from being formed.²³ North Carolina had a relatively low African American population of 29% in 1930.²⁴ This was the fifth lowest in the region. The level of racial hatred in North Carolina was greater than in the rest of the Upper South but it did not approach that of the Deep South. Mildness in race relations plus a progressive educational agenda distanced North Carolina from other southern states. With these variables working against each other the key to the equation became the activities of the anti-Smith leader; North Carolina's venerable Senator Furnifold M. Simmons.

Political Characteristics

North Carolina's Democratic political machine was thoroughly controlled by Senator Simmons.²⁵ His ideas and beliefs were stamped on the party's major activities. If he did not like an issue that the party was championing, the support for the party issue would almost surely remain marginal. Beginning with his election to the U.S. Senate in 1898 at the age of 43, he slowly united the state

²³ Key, Southern Politics: In State and Nation, pp. 207, 208.

²⁴ Odum, Southern Regions of the United States, p. 482.

²⁵ Stuart Dekins, "The 1928 Presidential Election in North Carolina"(Ph.D. dissertation University of North Carolina, 1944), p. 6.

under his political control.²⁶ As with other machines, in most areas Simmons' organization handpicked statewide officeholders. He was able to control judicial, bureaucratic, and general party organization appointments. The other political leaders in North Carolina were relatively unimportant because they were followers and not leaders at all. For example, longtime Senator Lee S. Overman served with Simmons in all but five years of his 27 year tenure, but his mark on North Carolina politics was almost inconsequential. His one great accomplishment was passing the 1918 Overman Law which widened the president's power in transferring functions from one department to another. But inside North Carolina, Senator Simmons activities were the real key.

Background

The conflict between Senator Simmons and Governor Smith began in 1924 when the Simmons organization supported McAdoo and aligned itself with the Ku Klux Klan. The Klan was powerful in North Carolina because Senator Simmons knowingly approved of its activities. This connection continued during the 1928 campaign and helped lead both groups together in their opposition to Smith. Both Simmons and the Klan believed that religion was a key issue in society. This led the North Carolina Democratic party to oppose Smith in 1924 and favor any candidate whose views opposed Smith's.²⁷ Because the Klan was connected to Simmons in North Carolina, the state was one of the strongest Smith opponents before

²⁶ Key, Southern Politics: In State and Nation, p. 212; Dekins, "North Carolina", p. 6.

²⁷ Dekins, "The 1928 Presidential Election in North Carolina", p. 17.

the 1924 convention. But, in November they quickly returned to the Democratic fold to return a healthy majority for the party nominee, Governor Davis.

The Election of 1928

1928 was long election year for North Carolinians. The state party was at a crossroads. The party would split in its views regarding Smith. The reason for this was because of the personal beliefs of Simmons. Both prior to and after the Houston convention, Simmons remained low key in his public activities. Publicly, most understood that he remained unhappy with the civic and political figure that was Al Smith. Unlike the loud, gesticulating, unorganized South Carolinian senators of this era, Simmons was often quiet in public but a feverish organizer in private. Publicly, he often stated that he was not plotting against Smith.²⁸ He supported the local Democratic ticket, but remained quiet regarding the national campaign. But his behind the scenes actions often spoke louder than his words. For example, he introduced Senator Heflin at a New Bern anti-Smith rally on May, 21.²⁹ Many regional politicians visited Simmons in April to help formulate their later activities regarding Smith.³⁰ Later Simmons would resign as Democratic National Committee National Chairman because of Smith.³¹ Simmons gave his political blessings to Bishop Cannon and Reverend Arthur J. Barton so they could hold the Asheville Convention in North Carolina to state

²⁸ *Charlotte Observer*, 5-2-28, p. 1.

²⁹ Dekins, "The 1928 Presidential Election in North Carolina", p. 25.

³⁰ Dekins, "The 1928 Presidential Election in North Carolina", p. 24.

³¹ Dekins, "The 1928 Presidential Election in North Carolina", pp. 58-60.

their opposition to Smith.³² The states that Cannon visited were connected to the anti-Smith movement. North Carolina, Florida, and Virginia received the most visits from Cannon because he had friendly political connections in those states.

At the Houston convention, Cordell Hull was the chosen candidate of the North Carolina delegation. It was surprising that North Carolina was not overly hostile to Smith at Houston. The state delegation did not lead demonstrations, and its only open protest was in not joining the "Old Time Religion" caucus after Senator Robinson's speech. This could be directly related to the rule of Simmons. Work behind the scenes and through the organization was more important than false publicity. At nomination time, North Carolina gave Smith his fourth largest vote from the South with 4 2/3 from a possible 24 votes.

Whereas other politicians who strongly opposed Smith lessened their attacks after the Houston convention, Simmons did not. His support for Hoover grew stronger as did his public gesturing against Smith. He resigned all posts with the Democratic National Committee on July 25th. He stated his open support for the Broad Axe, which was a violent anti-Smith publication.³³ Simmons personally distributed anti-Smith pamphlets and circulars and refused to endorse Smith.³⁴ These mailers supplemented those distributed by local churches and the Anti-Saloon League as organized by Cannon and Barton.

³² Dekins, "The 1928 Presidential Election in North Carolina", pp. 24, 52.

³³ Charlotte Observer, 8-31-28, p. 4, Dekins, "North Carolina", p. 60.

³⁴ Dekins, "The 1928 Presidential Election in North Carolina", pp. 60, 61, 121.

North Carolina also held numerous anti-Smith meetings. These meetings were used to both bolster the statewide anti-Smith forces and also to strengthen Simmons' power base. Simmons was the state's only major politician who openly backed Hoover. Governor Angus McLean, statesman Josephus Daniels, Senator Lee S. Overman, and former Governor Cameron Morrison all actively supported Smith. In addition, many other politicians endorsed Smith immediately after the Houston convention. Many of Simmons' contemporaries attacked his stance, but he remained firm. This was partly because he had the organizational strength to support his activities. Because of Simmons, North Carolina was the only state with a fully statewide Democratic anti-Smith organization.³⁵ Statewide political leaders attacked Simmons, but he built an anti-Smith organization filled with powerful bureaucrats and professional politicians.³⁶

During the beginning of the year, the local newspapers operated similarly with other southern journals. The Charlotte Observer was a strong Democratic daily that often published many pro-Smith and overly subjective reports related to Democratic and subsequently Republican issues. The large amounts of quantitative material leads one to believe that political interests were important. But, as the threats of a Smith victory materialized, the reporting turned negative once again until after the Houston convention. Some editorials prior to the convention used the term "fixing up" to describe the activities of Smith and Tammany politicians.³⁷ The Observer did not portray

³⁵ Dekins, "The 1928 Presidential Election in North Carolina", p. 64.

³⁶ Dekins, "The 1928 Presidential Election in North Carolina", p. 71.

³⁷ Charlotte Observer, 6-20-28, p. 8.

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Smith in a glowing light. The usual issues discussed and emphasized were religion, Prohibition, and Tammany corruption in that order. The notable difference in North Carolina was the lack of fighting spirit exhibited inside both the Democratic party and the local newspapers. This was related to the opposition Senator Simmons felt towards Smith. The Observer even continued to print some anti-Smith articles and editorials after the Houston convention. An unusually harsh editorial was published on August 5th. This editorial openly criticized Smith for questionable fund raising techniques and personal questions of character, calling him a "dope".³⁸ This word was used by the Observer with a dual meaning of both stupidity and corruption. But, Simmons strong control of the Democratic organization had a rippling effect on all parts of society. The Democratic journals, grassroots political organizations, and other marginally pro-Smith groups were unmotivated for good reasons. Since the state leader was unsupportive and hostile, many of his followers were unsupportive and hostile, or at most ambivalent. This lack of general support allowed openly pro-Hoover groups to use North Carolina as a springboard of support.

Simmons sacrificed his political future to ensure Smith's defeat in 1928. His open but relatively quiet opposition was highly effective. Even though his opposition was a public issue that was widely discussed in the local papers, his activity was quiet when compared to that of Senator Heflin. He and Heflin would both pay dearly for

³⁸ Charlotte Observer, 8-5-28, p, 8.

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their activity and would both be defeated in 1930. But both continued their anti-Smith activity until election day.

Conclusion

The 1928 election in North Carolina was relatively close. In comparing the number of southern electoral splits since 1880, the power of Senator Simmons became more evident. The general election characteristics surrounding North Carolina were less important than the alacrity that the Simmons organization showed in its opposition to Governor Smith. Hoover was only relevant because he opposed Smith. Any moderate Republican candidate would have received the state's support with the battle lines that were drawn. In 1928 Hoover carried a majority of counties with a 54.9% to 45.1% or 348,928 to 286,227. But, North Carolina did not vote Republican in either 1952 or 1956 when Virginia, Florida, Texas, and Tennessee did. North Carolina remained loyal to the party in these later years when its 1928 allies abandoned the state. Thus, one could conclude that North Carolina was either a closer state or a state Smith should have carried in 1928. Without Simmons' opposition to Governor Smith, the Democrats would have almost surely held firm.

Tennessee: The Return to a Two-Party Struggle

Social Characteristics

Tennessee had a post-bellum history of strong two-party political struggle.³⁹ Disfranchisement lessened the competitiveness of the

³⁹ Kousser, The Shaping of Southern Politics, p. 214.

G.O.P. on both the state and national levels, but the threat of G.O.P. rule was still strong. This was because Tennessee had two natural geographic regions that facilitated a political split. The upcountry was a mountainous area with bad soils, those who were last to the state or had unforeseen problems in their migration were forced onto these lands. Most of these settlers were not able to make a positive economic living in this area. The bluffs area, on the other hand, resembled the delta of the Lower South. Fertile soil fostered a plantation type economy for the counties on the Mississippi River and especially in the area near Memphis. This area was a densely populated former slave area. The upcountry or cumberland area had a natural geographic split with the lower or bluffs region. This created a perfect breeding ground for a class and party split inside the state. In 1861, for example, eastern Tennessee was a Union stronghold while the remainder of the state supported the Confederacy.⁴⁰ Primarily because of this split, as well as the low African-American population of 18.3% in 1930, the Democratic party had a relatively unstable future inside the state.⁴¹

Tennessee voted Republican in the presidential elections of 1920, 1928, and 1952-1960. Even during the New Deal era when seemingly every southern county voted Democratic, the cumberland region remained true to the G.O.P.. In every election between 1880 and 1960, the same two-party trend was evident. The same counties consistently voted with their party allegiance, disfranchisement notwithstanding. An individual candidate's strength or weakness had

⁴⁰ Key, Southern Politics: In State and Nation, p. 59.

⁴¹ Odum, Southern Regions of the United States, p. 482.

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little effect on these trends. In close elections, competition was more fierce. 1928 was important to understand in Tennessee primarily because it closely correlated with this 80 year regional trend.

Political Characteristics

V.O. Key described Tennessee as a state with two one-party traditions. East Tennessee was traditionally Republican with few African-Americans and Middle and West Tennessee was Democratic with more African-Americans and plantation style agriculture.⁴²

Tennessee's main political leaders were Democrats even though a political machine existed for both parties. Cordell Hull was the nominal state leader. He was the only true national leader inside Tennessee. He was a member of the U.S. House of Representatives from 1907-1921 and 1923-31. He was elected to the U.S. Senate and served from 1931-1933 when he was appointed Secretary of State. His distinguished career culminated with the Nobel Peace Prize in 1945 for helping to organize and create the United Nations. Even with these credentials, he did not run the Tennessee machine. Tennessee's two Senator's were Kenneth D. McKellar and Lawrence D. Tyson. McKellar served from 1917-1953, but was not usually a major figure in intrastate politics. Tyson was a short term, mostly transitional figure. It was a conglomeration of forces that operated Tennessee's democracy. The truth was that the individual leaders were not as important as the general regional and party trends that existed though. The state fit neatly inside a pattern.

⁴² Key, Southern Politics: In State and Nation, p. 59.

⁴³ Memphis Commercial Appeal, 1-20-28, p. 6.

⁴⁴ Hinton, Cordell Hull, p. 182.

Background

Tennessee was not at the forefront in the battle against the candidacy of Al Smith in 1924. Like many other secondary southern states, it showed a general animosity for the candidate and aligned itself in a regional coalition. But, beyond this, its activities were minimal. In the 1924 election, Tennessee supported the candidacy of Governor Davis against Coolidge in a close race.

The Election of 1928

The year began without any major events. Tennessee was slowly coasting through the nomination process. The state was not at the pinnacle of national politics. Tennessee's leading paper, The Memphis Commercial Appeal, was quick to commend Robinson and to criticize Heflin for standing for "issues foreign to every conception of tolerance and justice."⁴³ The Appeal vehemently supported Robinson and toleration. Later, the Democratic party announced on May 10th that statesman Cordell Hull would receive the unanimous support of the state at the Houston convention. This was widely popular with both the Democratic journals and the Democratic party. Hull was a U.S. Congressman and marginal Presidential candidate. He had the full support of the Tennessee delegation. Because Hull's support was so strong and widespread within the Tennessee Democratic ranks, the party used it to attack Smith's stand on the issues, especially Prohibition. Hull was an almost fanatical dry and remained cool to Smith throughout 1928. Realistically Hull understood the limitations of his candidacy and never took his

chances seriously.⁴⁴ But Hull and the Tennessee Democratic organization did take Smith seriously. Tennessee was a leading prohibitionist state. On numerous occasions throughout the year, Protestant and prohibitionist groups met in Tennessee to galvanize their opposition to Smith or any other 'wet'. The Methodist Education Association was a regular mouthpiece in Memphis for anti-Smith sentiment. It was important to understand the strength of anti-Smith forces inside the state. A strong anti-Smith figure, Bishop H.H. Dubois, chairman of the Southland Committee of Safety for the Southern Methodist Church, resided in Nashville and held a great deal of power. The Southland Committee of Safety believed in maintaining traditional southern beliefs. This was where he pledged to "defeat presidential aspirations of any wet Democrat."⁴⁵

The local Democratic machine was not active in its support of Smith. Cordell Hull was in many ways nominally supportive of Hoover because of the liquor question.⁴⁶ Former Governor Malcolm R. Patterson penned a widely syndicated daily column on politics and statewide activities called 'Day by Day'. His writings were relatively conservative and politically pragmatic. He was in many ways feeling the political wind currents in order to make the popular decision. Several columns of his are worthy of recognition. His June, 14 column was especially laudatory of Hoover and his June, 19 column had questionable motivations. In the latter, he was discussing a speech given in Syracuse, N.Y. by Heflin in which a stage collapsed

⁴⁵ Memphis Commercial Appeal, 5-5-28, p. 1.

⁴⁶ Hinton, Cordell Hull, p. 182.

⁴⁷ Memphis Commercial Appeal, 6-19-28, p. 6.

during Heflin's speech which caused concern. Patterson stated with a mild bit of sarcasm that it "must be especially pleasing to the Pope to hear that he had no hand in the collapse of the platform upon which Senator Heflin stood or connived at it as a method of securing religious control in the United States."⁴⁷ An educated person would realize his criticism of Heflin and Patterson's animosity toward religious bigotry. But a typical reader of the Commercial Appeal could have misunderstood this sarcastic approach and this could have heightened religious tensions. Beyond this event, Patterson's columns were rather mild. He began the year discussing a regional coalition of Democratic support to win the presidency. It was an issue related to which region could gain more support over the other. This was what happened in 1924, and was the symptom of the two-thirds nomination rule. Patterson wrote many pro-Smith columns that continued throughout the year, but only after Smith's nomination at Houston. He was reserved and mildly supportive of Hoover until early July. He then followed the political wind currents inside the Democratic party and felt comfortable supporting Smith. A big step for Patterson was when his column compared Smith's and Woodrow Wilson's Prohibition stance favorably. He believed earlier that the party and the federal government should not be active regarding the Prohibition issue.⁴⁸ This was a commonality between Patterson and Smith. This type of quiet support continued until the election. But Patterson strategically placed pro-Hoover comments and editorials that gave the impression that he was either having

⁴⁸ Memphis Commercial Appeal, 2-4-28, p. 6.

second thoughts about Smith, or just fence sitting.⁴⁹ Patterson's support of both Smith and Hoover was the product of a politically divided state.

At the Houston convention, Tennessee unanimously cast its votes for Hull. But, Tennessee was a difficult state to pacify. The delegation did not join either the Smith nominating parade nor the "Old Time Religion" celebration after the Robinson speech. This was a reflection of the unhappiness that the state felt about the nominee. This was an example of general Democratic political weakness inside the state because of Tennessee's long-term political trends discussed earlier.

After the Houston convention, everything inside Tennessee remained relatively quiet until Smith's mid-October visit. Part of the reason for this inactivity was that an aggressive campaign for Governor Smith or Senator Robinson did not materialize. As late as the end of July, a firm organization was not in place for the elections stretch drive.⁵⁰ Nonetheless, Smith was greeted with reassuring screams and rebel yells as thousands met his train in Nashville. Senator Kenneth D. McKellar and Governor Harry H. Horton claimed that Tennessee was a safe state for Smith.⁵¹ The Commercial Appeal was more prophetic. It regularly carried Association Press articles regarding the tenuous hold Smith had in the South. G.O.P. officials believed that they were assured of Tennessee's electoral votes as

⁴⁹ The 6-14-28, p. 6 column should be recognized because of its many outwardly positive comments about Hoover.

⁵⁰ Memphis Commercial Appeal, 7-19-28, p. 1.

⁵¹ Memphis Commercial Appeal, 10-13-28, p. 1.

early as July 23rd.⁵² Tennessee was one of the Upper South states being targeted by the G.O.P.⁵³

The Memphis Commercial Appeal and the Nashville Banner were invaluable sources for the study of Tennessee politics. The first paper resembled the best pro-Democratic journals the South had to offer. Much of its political reporting was one-sided, especially in the pre-Houston convention period. It resembled a Deep South black-belt paper. It was early in its support of Senator Robinson in his struggle against Senator Heflin. The Commercial Appeal also regularly ran daily letters to the editor column. This column closely followed political happenings. Many of the letters that were reprinted, represented the support that the paper issued for individual candidates. The daily letters were too numerous to reprint but the stack of work taken together showed a good example of the Appeal's readership's general ideological stance. For example, when the Smith nomination was assured, very few negative letters were reprinted regarding the New York Governor. The Banner was a pro-Democratic paper but more reserved than its black-belt counterpart. This was a definite example of the differing support Smith received inside the state. This was a regionally and geographically motivated divide.

Conclusion

Hoover carried Tennessee 55.4% to 44.6% or 195,388 to 157,143. This was very close to the 15,000 to 40,000 vote margin predicted

⁵² Memphis Commercial Appeal, 7-23-28, p. 1.

⁵³ Memphis Commercial Appeal, 7-23-28, p. 1.

by a confidential source reporter in September.⁵⁴ The state split in the same fashion as in 1920, 1952, and 1956. The same counties exhibited the same long term trends. Tennessee, because of its historical intra-regional division, along with an inherently weak candidate, voted with the Republicans. But, the weakness of the party and its inability to build a strong pro-Smith organization were an issue. The Democrats never mobilized their forces and when they tried to build a Smith coalition, they were too late. In many ways, it was a Republican victory by default because their activity was behind the scenes.

⁵⁴ Memphis Commercial Appeal, 9-12-28, p. 1.

The Peripheral South

Florida and Texas were both fringe states inside the southern region. Their connections with the South were limited. Both were sparsely populated and received a large influx of new residents in the post-bellum era. The issues of economic and cultural control were more important than traditional racial repression. Florida and Texas' quest for economic progress was the motivation behind the 1928 election. The underlying factor was their limited connection with traditional Democratic values.

Florida: The Failure to Remain Loyal

Social Characteristics

Florida was a traditionally strong Democratic state until the 1920's. Since then, Florida has slowly evolved into a fringe state inside the southern region. Partly because of geographic conditions, Florida wavered in its allegiance to the Democratic party. Parts of Florida's northern sector consisted of traditional cotton and tobacco

lands while the southern sector's agriculture was mostly citrus and vegetables. This was unlike any other region of the South. Because of this, southern traditional agricultural labor systems were not fortified statewide, meaning that the state agricultural pattern had a regional diversity. The northern area was primarily occupied by early settlers with the southern areas becoming more densely populated during this era. As the population moved south, lands that were removed from the Seminole tribe were gradually populated by relatively prosperous farmers and land developers. Many were migrants from the North looking to maximize their capital investments. Their key concern was not southern traditionalism, but capitalism. They did not have a natural allegiance to the Democratic party. The quest for economic success allowed Florida's farmers to acquire the highest per capita farm income by 1930.¹ This lack of attachment to the Democratic party, the entrepreneurial quest of the population, and the state's relatively low, 29.4% African American population were good indicators of a Smith defeat.

Political Characteristics

Politically Florida was not factionally divided and did not consist of any strong party organization.² Florida was a free wheeling political climate where self-fulfillment was more important than allegiance.³ Florida was not engulfed in the strong Democratic and southern traditions that connected the deep South and could not be classified with these states. Florida was a politically divided state

¹ Odum, Southern Regions of the United States, p. 46.

² Key, Southern Politics: In State and Nation, p. 83.

³ Key, Southern Politics: In State and Nation, pp. 82-82.

with mixed beliefs. Because of this, there was no one key political figure who could unite Florida. Florida's longtime Senators were Park Trammell and Duncan U. Fletcher. Trammell was a former Governor from 1913-1917 and Senator from 1917-1936. He was an uncontroversial politician interested in re-election. Fletcher had a stronger connection to the National Democratic Party. He wanted to ascend the political ladder and often volunteered for Presidential commissions and other publicized duties. The Governors of this era were relatively unimportant men who were only regional figures. The main variation that remained inside the state was that racial politics were important in the traditional northern region while a type of capitalist quest existed in the southern area. This area was more economically motivated because settlers recently migrated there because of cheap land and economic opportunities. They were not connected to traditional Democratic politics and few African-Americans resided in these areas.

Background

The era between 1924 and 1928 was relatively unimportant. Migration was the key factor. The state Democratic party maintained a general dislike for Governor Smith and followed the general regional animosity. Because the character of the party was amorphous, its inaction was of little affect. The general conflict that occurred inside Florida in 1928 was a product of the difficulty Governor Smith faced inside the South and the endemic regional difference inside Florida.

The Election of 1928

As described above, Florida's geography is important to understand. This affected the 1928 election. The major politicians and issues were regionally divided. Smith's long held arrogance in the face of Prohibition supporters and the flaunting of his urban provincialism were important handicaps. These resurgent divisions were not anticipated by the early national pro-Smith supporters. Florida remained politically quiet until the Houston convention when the state Democratic delegation was provided with a platform to vent its anger. The delegation refused to caucus for Smith or Senator Robinson when nominated. They did not join the victory parade that marched throughout Sam Houston Hall. Florida held firm at nomination time and continued to support its candidate, Senator Walter F. George of Georgia.⁴ Whereas other states aligned with their old Democratic traditions, Floridians refused to swallow the bitter pill of Smith. Many politicians predicted early into the Houston proceedings that if Smith was nominated, Florida would vote Republican.⁵

During the post-convention period, Florida's major politicians played an active, if minor, role in Governor Smith's candidacy. Senator Fletcher was the state chairman of the Florida Smith campaign. He traveled throughout Florida and discussed the religious question. He was generally aligned with conservative causes and what later became the Prohibition alliance. This was

⁴ Melvin Edward Hughes, "The 1928 Presidential Election in Florida", (Ph.D. dissertation, Florida State University, 1976), p. 58.

⁵ Memphis Commercial Appeal, 7-23-28, p. 1, and Hughes, "Florida", p. 52.

ironic because those people who used religion against Governor Smith were members of prohibitionist groups. Nonetheless, he battled hard both inside and outside Florida for Smith during the campaign. Less can be said for the junior Senator Park Trammell. Trammell was running for re-election and did not want to face controversial issues. Thus, he played smart politics and endorsed the party while distancing himself from Smith. Trammell refused to openly endorse Smith. This hurt Smith and damaged his credibility statewide. Trammell's motivations were Heflinesque because he was trying to further his own political fortunes. He blamed illness for his inactivity in the campaign. He wrote to a member of the Democratic party almost two weeks after the election that:

Due to having been sick for some three or four weeks I was unable to take an active part in the campaign. From the result I do not believe, however, that it would have been different if I had been otherwise situated.⁶

Full endorsements from officials such as former Governor John W. Martin and other high officials, arrived late, if at all. Most felt obligated to openly endorse Smith only in the last six weeks of the campaign.⁷ Most major journals and religious leaders often discussed the state Democratic organizations non-support of Smith. There were many top party leaders who supported Smith immediately after the Houston convention. But, unlike the Deep South states, this support was marginal because Florida was not

⁶ Hughes, "The 1928 Presidential Election in Florida", p. 133.

⁷ Hughes, "The 1928 Presidential Election in Florida", pp. 134-138.

⁸ Hughes, "The 1928 Presidential Election in Florida", p. 163.

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overtly race conscious. Their level of racial animosity was not statewide and was focused mostly in the northern half.

The statewide Democratic organization actively organized pro-Smith clubs. These clubs were a major factor in making Florida a toss-up state. "Smith For President" clubs were in 65 of Florida's 67 counties prior to the election.⁸ The support in these organizations seemed to grow and peak immediately before the election. The clubs resorted to open race baiting for votes and reminded Floridians to remember its history with advertisements saying "White Supremacy, Now and Forever—The Only Issue in Florida and the South" printed in parts of the state.⁹ The problem with this approach was that Florida's religious journals and organizations often declared race a non-issue because Florida felt assured that white supremacy would continue. This lead them to believe that cultural and not racial issues would be at the forefront. Plus, many felt that Smith was weak on the race issue. His connection with southern Democrats on this issue was marginal. Many Democrats read the anti-Smith Democrat's counter to the above advertisement which was also printed in a few journals that stated "'Tammany Draws No Color Line'" and "'Don't Be Deceived! Herbert Hoover Stands for White Supremacy and 100 Per Cent Americanism.'"¹⁰ The Smith clubs also had to deal with the past animosity Florida harbored against their candidate.

Religious journals that were often aligned with loyal state politicians increased their animosity against Governor Smith. These journals became increasingly important because their dedicated

⁹ Hughes, "The 1928 Presidential Election in Florida", p. 16.

¹⁰ Hughes, "The 1928 Presidential Election in Florida", p. 16.

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readership was wide. The Florida Baptist Witness was a prohibitionist paper that refused to support any 'wet' candidate. Florida's religious papers tried to weaken Smith by printing that he was weak on racial questions. The Chipley Banner stated that Smith appointed more African-Americans to "public positions in New York...than have been appointed by the Federal Government under Republican rule, in all the rest of the United States."¹¹ With this criticism it was often inferred that Smith was an outsider and did not understand the southern culture.

As the election approached, hostile organizations often decreased their rhetoric or received less newsprint in local mainstream journals. This was not evident in Florida. The Florida Times Union from Jacksonville and the Tampa Tribune often continued to print critical news reports. Both papers discussed the perceived Smith connection to Wall Street and the Teapot Dome corruption in front page headlines. But the Times Union wrote pro-Hoover editorials and reprinted positive articles only prior to the conventions. Even after June, the two paper's perceived non-support of Hoover was conveyed through a surprisingly objective eye. This was not the normal method of operation for southern Democratic or even neutral southern papers. The Tribune did not run positive editorials or stories about Smith prior to July. Only his negatives were discussed as the Houston convention neared. During the Republican pre-convention period, Hoover received many positive stories. These stories consisted of the traditional accolades. The Tribune and the

¹¹ Hughes, "The 1928 Presidential Election in Florida", p. 17.

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Times Union did not align with the general trends exhibited throughout the South. They did not markedly accelerate their support for Smith during the election's stretch drive.

Florida's population growth played a large role in the changing conditions of the electorate. By 1930, Florida had over 50% more people than in 1920.¹² The immigration from a newly completed highway which would later become Interstate-75, plus the scarcity of a populace, led to increased urban development and growing numbers of northern migrants. These migrants altered the core of Florida's political structure. Florida did have a history of political dual partyism due to its experiments with Populism and the G.O.P. in the post-bellum era.¹³ But it still maintained a large African-American population in 1930. Florida had the highest African-American population of any state that carried a Hoover majority. Arkansas, for example, had a 4% lower total. Of course other considerations had to be made with Senator Robinson being a large factor in the Smith victory in Arkansas. But, nonetheless, the new composition of the changing electorate affected the election. Florida's northern section returned strong majorities for Smith, while the southern two-thirds strongly supported Hoover. Most of Florida's migrants moved to the southern areas. The strong twentieth century growth in Florida gradually led to a decrease in both the number of African-Americans and the tradition of Democratic allegiance in Florida.

¹² Key, Southern Politics: In State and Nation, p. 86.

¹³ Kousser, The Shaping of Southern Politics, p. 212-213.

Conclusion

Hoover's majority was larger in Florida than in any other southern state. He carried 42 of 67 counties with a 57.95% to Smith's 40.45% or 145,860 to 101,764. The victory for Hoover can be credited to the weakness of the state Democratic organization, the marginal support of many major political leaders, and the failure of two of the states' major papers to fully back Governor Smith. He received more support in the post-convention period, but that support was not enough for victory. The large African-American population itself should have made the vote total closer but could not ensure a Smith victory. But the lack of a faithfully entrenched traditional white supremacy Democratic party allowed Governor Smith to be defeated by a large margin. Race baiting was an effective issue only in the northern part of the state, while religious animosity was effective in the southern part of the state. In the end result, prosperity, decreasing African-American population, and new migrating white residents were the key factors.

Texas: Prohibition, The Unifying Issue

Social Conditions

Traditionally Texas has been viewed by outsiders as not being a true southern state.¹⁴ Texas' lack of traditional southern agricultural patterns, its small African-American population, and its limited allegiance to the Democratic party have led to this conclusion. The

¹⁴ Foner, Reconstruction, p. 196.

1928 election affirmed these beliefs. Texas had a large non-Protestant population, mostly Roman Catholic. Texas was originally aligned with the southern states during the Civil War because the eastern half of the state closely resembled the remaining South and this was the only area of Texas that was densely populated at this time. Civil War era east Texas held high numbers of slaves and participated in familiar southern agricultural patterns.¹⁵ By the end of the 1920's, however, Texas' African-Americans fell to 14.7% of the population while its per capita income was second in the South only to Florida.¹⁶ The decreasing African-American population was a product of positive migration trends. Economics is the key to understanding Texas. In many ways, Texas viewed itself through dollar signs.¹⁷ Also, as will be explained later in the paper, Texas was fanatical about the enforcement of Prohibition. Plus, Texas also had the second best educated and second most urban population in the South.¹⁸ Texas' low African-American population, fanaticism about Prohibition, economic quest for wealth, and relative general prosperity favored the G.O.P. and it was only reasonable to believe that they would carry the state.

Political Characteristics

Governor Dan Moody was the key figure in Texas' one-party rule. Since Reconstruction and until the transformation of party allegiance

¹⁵ Key, Southern Politics: In State and Nation, p. 254.

¹⁶ Odum, Southern Regions of the United States, pp. 46, 482.

¹⁷ Key, Southern Politics: In State and Nation, p. 254, and this statement is the basis of Chandler Davidson's Race and Class in Texas Politics. Texas elites used race to separate classes while not allowing the less fortunate to racially unite in fighting them.

¹⁸ Odum, Southern Regions of the United States, pp. 18, 94.

in the 1956-1964 era, Texas was dominated by a Democratic machine. Moody had won the Governorship by beating Miriam Ferguson in the 1926 Democratic primary and easily beat his Republican opponent to become the state's youngest elected Governor. Moody was also an almost fanatical 'dry' who used that issue to win elections. This was an issue that was and still is important to Texans. But Texas' political trends have been manipulated by the elite in the post-bellum era. The elite often used what they felt was an unimportant issue to build their economic power and control of Texas.¹⁹ In the 1920's and early 1930's they used Prohibition as this lightning rod. They found a leader in Moody to champion their cause so they could increase their wealth in the prosperous economic times of the 1920's. It was undeniable that the 1920's was a good era for Texas' economic leadership.

Background

Texas was not a fanatical anti-Smith state. Its activities were not out of the ordinary for a marginal southern state. Its political leadership was focused on the maintenance of the status quo. It did not matter whether that meant Prohibition or the continuance of prosperous but proportionately unfair economic times. In the 1924-26 era, then Governor Miriam Ferguson, serving for her husband former Governor James Ferguson (legally forbidden to run because he was convicted of embezzlement while Governor of Texas), had an ongoing dispute with the University of Texas. This dispute had

¹⁹ Davidson, Race and Class In Texas Politics, is the key to understanding Texas' general trends. Davidson does not begin his study until 1936, but the ideology of the state still was prevalent and was a product of its development.

populist overtones, with the Fergusons fighting the administration and university professors over academic high salaries. The dispute would be resolved with the election of Moody.

Texas supported Democratic nominee Governor John W. Davis in 1924. The gubernatorial transition of 1926 was the main political development in Texas during the 1924-1928 era. It has been recognized that the South was aware of Smith's weakness and tried to limit his political future. Texas was not an exception to this trend. Smith's general characteristics were at the core of the cultural problems that Smith's opponents had in the South and in Texas. As Smith and his organization grew in 1927 to become a 1928 threat, southern Protestant churches perceived him as a threat to "Southern Protestant sensibilities."²⁰ This perception was at the core of the cultural conservative reaction.

The Election of 1928

Prohibition was the most important issue in Texas' society.²¹ Throughout its history, Texas has been sensitive to the powers and controlling influence of alcohol. Even today Texas maintains this position and still has numerous 'dry' counties. In the 1920's, the 'wet' and 'dry' issue seemed to be a rallying point for many. But, as in other states, this issue tended to be associated with other causes. The attacks on Governor Smith's character related to Prohibition were personal attacks on all immigrants. The fear associated with Smith was an irrational fear that was discussed in Wilbur Cash's

²⁰ Richard Bennett Hughes, "Texas Churches and Presidential Politics, 1928 and 1960" (Ph. D. dissertation, St. Louis University, 1968), p. 14.

²¹ Woodward, Origins of the New South, noted that by 1876 Texas had the most restrictive Prohibition laws in the South, p. 171.

Mind of the South. But this irrationality led to the belief that Smith's constituents would outwardly change society or even relocate to the South. The endemic character of the South could be changed altogether. Cash discussed the fear of outsiders during this era in stating that,

the restaurants of the Greeks and the stores of Jews—who were usually thought of as aliens even when their fathers had fought in the Confederate armies—did multiply rapidly in the country in these years of town growth, and now and then a wandering alien from the North would turn up to take a job in the mills, promptly to be made so uncomfortable that he usually fled.²²

The internal workings of Texan society would thus be altered because of the questionable morals of these individuals. Individual sovereignty would be interrupted and communities would have to answer to higher authorities for their actions. Thus, a loss of states' rights would take place and consequently would be connected to a loss of economic sovereignty. These issues were important to Texas leadership. However irrational, many felt that Al Smith or even the Pope would become a tough national ruler. Nonetheless, Texas politicians and church leaders conspired from early 1927 until the election of 1928 to protect the perceived threat to "Southern Protestant sensibilities" as stated earlier. But, unlike other southern states, Texas failed to make mention of bigger issues and believed that it was motivated by a single issue.

Texas had many state newspapers that conveyed an impression of unattachment with the remainder of the country. The most important daily journals, the Dallas Morning News and the Austin

²² Cash, The Mind of the South, p. 305.

American, primarily reported information relating only to local and state issues. Their reporting was much more state-driven than any of the other southern newspapers cited. Partly because of Texas' large geographic size, its isolated geographic nature, and its perceived sovereignty, Texans felt outer issues were of little importance and continued to focus their attention on intra-state issues.

The Texas Republican party also made Prohibition the key issue. It closely aligned itself with church leaders. The general popularity of Hoover, plus the division between 'wet'/'dry' forces, led G.O.P. organizers to be upbeat about their chances.²³ The G.O.P. received support from many disgruntled local Democratic organizations. The Democratic delegation was split between the Moody group and the ultra 'drys'. The ultra 'drys' were mostly religious fanatics that cared less about politics and more about traditional values and fundamental beliefs. The ultra 'drys' refused to back Smith at all.²⁴ The Moody group, on the other hand, refused to bolt the party if Smith was victorious.²⁵

The mixed delegation met in Beaumont on May, 23 to decide on its candidates.²⁶ A chord of harmony was struck because both sides agreed that they should only support a 'dry' candidate with a prohibitionist platform. The Beaumont Conference also attacked past Republican corruption in the past and corrupt eastern leaders. This

²³ Arkansas Gazette, 4-4-28, p. 1.

²⁴ Austin American, 5-11-28, p. 1.

²⁵ Austin American, 5-12-28, p. 1.

²⁶ Austin American, 5-24-28, p. 1.

picture of a corrupt East adversely affected the reputation of Governor Smith. Whenever eastern corruption was mentioned, Raskob and Smith were connected to the larger picture of different regional priorities. But, at the Houston convention, Governor Moody wisely controlled his state delegation with strong centralized organization. He was waiting to feel the political currents and to protect Texas and his political position from embarrassment. The Texas delegation cast its support for favorite son candidate and former U.S. Congressman Jesse Jones. Jones ultimately received unanimous support from the delegation, but remained quiet about any prevailing issues. Moody acted intelligently and did not allow Texas to become swept away with negative emotion and join other states protests against Smith. Texas marched with the vast majority of states to celebrate both Governor Smith's nomination and the feelings of celebratory party euphoria after Senator Robinson's "Old Time Religion" speech. But the once united Texas delegation remained split on Smith and departed Houston disgruntled. This divided group created a weakened Democratic organization and Texas Democrats did not ban their party bolters in 1928.²⁷ Without unity, the party could not prohibit bolters and effectively campaign for Smith. The party refused to endorse Smith and engaged in a continual power struggle.²⁸ This activity almost ensured a G.O.P. victory and the continuance of economic rule by the elite and the Republican party.

²⁷ Memphis Commercial Appeal, 8-12-28, p. 10.

²⁸ Charlotte Observer, 9-12-28, p. 1.

The G.O.P. remained quiet regarding the majority party's discord but continued its campaign of highlighting Hoover's agrarian and traditional background. The G.O.P. captured the state primarily because of these issues as well as because of Governor Smith's political belligerence. Governor Smith refused to support the Eighteenth Amendment, dooming his candidacy in Texas. The Austin American stated in a May 13th editorial, that "If Gov. Smith can and does accept the Eighteenth Amendment as a part of his platform, he will become the favorite in the betting to defeat Hoover".²⁹ Governor Smith did not do this, thus Texas did not support him. Seth Shepard McKay described the election as extremely easy to analyze in Texas Politics: 1906-1944. He said that:

As had been the case in Prohibition contests over the past twenty years, it was freely predicted and generally agreed that Smith would carry South Texas...while Hoover presumed to be a dry, would lead in North Texas and would have the advantage of the greater voting strength in this part of the state.³⁰

The issue of the election was also driven by the political aspirations of the powerful Governor, Dan Moody.

Moody overshadowed every other state figure. He was the primary and preeminent figure in Smith's Texas battles. Moody was a diehard prohibitionist who openly discussed his opposition to Smith early in the campaign. Neither the local papers nor Moody ever unequivocally stated that they would support the Democratic Presidential nominee. This behavior was inconsistent with other

²⁹ Austin American, 5-13-28, p.1.

³⁰ Seth Shepard McKay, Texas Politics: 1906-1944(Lubbock Tx., Texas Tech Press, 1952), p. 179.

southern states. Moody would eventually publicly support Smith after the Houston convention, but he tested the political winds to maintain long term control of Texas' political activities. At the Houston convention, Moody was perceived as being one of the most important politicians in the South primarily because of the sheer size of Texas.³¹ Moody realized the problems that average Texans had with Smith. His cool reception toward Smith throughout the campaign was an intelligent long-term political decision. But from the campaigns early days until election day, the acrimony Moody directed toward Smith did not noticeably diminish. He earlier delivered a stirring speech on April 8th that stated his firm opposition to Smith in all forms.³² But he soon realized that it was more important to be on the winning side of the aisle. He mildly supported Governor Smith after the Houston convention, but also remained strong in his prohibitionist stance.

Texas Senator Morris Sheppard, the co-author of the Eighteenth Amendment, endorsed Smith in mid-September. He made a conservative address to the nation during a programmed radio broadcast. This address was necessary for political purposes. Sheppard could now state that he followed the party at its time of need. Senator-elect Thomas Connally was also a mildly vocal supporter of Smith. He travelled to several states to speak on Smith's behalf.³³ Connally was trying to familiarize himself with the

³¹ Tampa Tribune, 6-23-28, p. 1.

³² Dallas Morning News, 4-9-28, p. 8.

³³ Hughes, "The 1928 Presidential Election in Florida", p. 154.

national Democratic circles as he often spoke with senior Democratic statesmen.

Conclusion

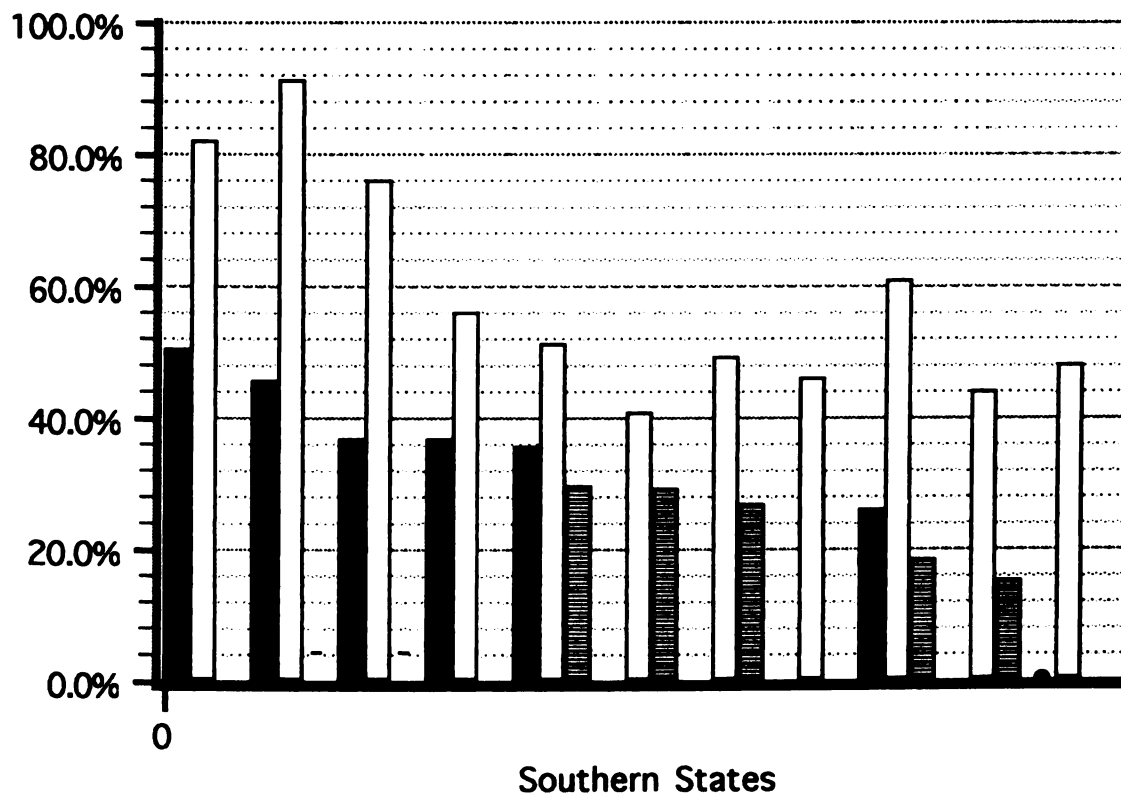
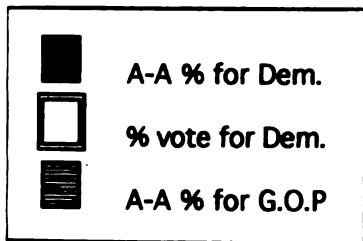
The activity at and immediately after the Houston convention almost assured a Smith defeat. The final vote total was surprisingly close with the G.O.P. winning 51.9% to 48.1% or 372,324 to 344,542. The vote was split between traditionally conservative east Texas and the states' northern and western parts. Texas did not vote Republican again until 1952. But Texas understood its actions and did not blindly follow the lead of the Democratic party or prohibitionist leaders. Governor Moody and Senator -elect Connolly both ran on the same day and received strikingly different vote totals than Smith received. Moody beat his G.O.P. opponent 82.6% to 17.4% and Connolly beat his 81.3% to 18.7%. The gubernatorial, Senatorial, and Presidential races received relatively equal vote totals which indicates that they were of equal importance in the voters eyes. In the final outcome, Moody and the other state politicians did little to support Smith and made little or no effect with helping to organize or strengthen the Texas' grass roots political organization. None of these leaders were true Smith supporters. But they gave Smith marginal support so he could remain respected in public party circles. Also, the lack of a large African-American population, along with Smith's persistence in attacking the Eighteenth Amendment, plus the good economic times for the Texas elite, led to Smith's defeat. Smith's small success in Texas could be connected with the large percentage of Mexican Catholics who supported Smith

in several southeastern counties. But, ultimately their support was overmatched by the Protestant majority.

Conclusion--Reflections About 1928 and Its Connection With Other Elections

The 1928 presidential election was intrinsically a conflict and struggle between the differing motivations of the southern electorate. It was once believed that the South was one dimensional, lacking depth and diversity. 1928 disproves this myth. It is true that Governor Smith carried the majority of the South's electoral votes with a 64 to 62 victory, and a margin in the popular vote of 52.12% to 47.86%. This simple assertion is problematic because it does not describe the reasons for this division. Why did this happen? What actually split the southern political establishment in 1928? The graph on the following page shows two things: the percentage of African-Americans in a southern state's population and the percentage of votes the Democrats and Republicans received in regard to that percentage. The dark line is the African-American population percentage for the pro-Smith state. The line with horizontal slashes shows the African-American population percentage of the anti-Smith state. The white line shows the actual percentage of votes Smith received from that state (The state's vote is immediately to the right). The geography shows that as the

Table: 1928 Presidential Election Voting Percentages in the South



percentage of African-Americans population decreased in pro-Smith states, the total Smith vote also decreased. Arkansas is not included because of Senator Robinson's place on the ticket and strong intra-state support.

The ultimate conclusion is that the states with the highest African-American populations voted with the Democrats and all others voted with the Republicans. But this explanation is also too superficial. The election was much more complex.

There are several long term southern political trends that evolved between the end of Reconstruction and the national realignment of the 1964 election. A continuous linear connection was present. The trends and connection that have been discussed are numerous. The core Democratic South (Alabama, Mississippi, South Carolina, Georgia), only occasionally failed in its unwavering support of Democratic presidential candidates (three in 1948, one in 1960). It supported Democrats in every other election. The second Democratic group—the Smith supporters (Louisiana, Arkansas), displayed a political pragmatism connected to economic progressivism and racial issues. They maintained a very strong connection to the Democratic party and this connection is still strong at the national level. The Upper South (North Carolina, Virginia, Tennessee), displayed a natural difference with the core Democratic South because of the differing type of conservatism in each area. They maintained the belief that race was not the most important issue in their political universe and instead voted with their minds in connection to their state's political past (These states had a strong post-bellum

connection with the Populist and Republican parties). But, North Carolina was a transitional state and should not be classified with Virginia and Tennessee. It would remain loyal to the Democratic party during the 1952 and 1956 presidential elections when the later two supported the Republicans. 1928 was an anomalous for North Carolina because of Senator Simmons activities. The peripheral-South (Florida, Texas) was motivated primarily by issues of economic growth. They were the least 'southern' of these states, largely because they had the strongest influx of new emigrants in the post-bellum era and continually abandoned their Democratic roots after the 1928 and especially the 1944 presidential election. But the explanations are still more numerous.

States that supported Smith were often deeply influenced by the individual activities inside that state. The issues that were effective were: the number of or power of state leaders who had strong feelings concerning Smith after the Houston convention; the time it took for that state to mobilize; the success the Democrats had in setting a positive political agenda for Smith inside that state; and the issues which were most important to the politicians and voters of that state.

The southern states in the 1928 presidential election were really very different from each other. Undoubtedly there was a racial/cultural split that was connected to the intrinsic differences of each southern state. Each state faced different motivations with differing consequences. African-American population was also a key as it helped to dictate whether a state would favor racial conservative policies or cultural conservative policies. The

geographic region with large numbers of African-Americans voted on the basis of white supremacy, while all other areas voted for cultural conservatism. Intrastate support and opposition was extremely important as it helped to set an agenda for the election. Mobilization was an important issue. It was connected with the question of setting an agenda. The issues of white supremacy, religion, Prohibition, Smith's combined provincialism, Democratic party strength, and economic destiny were of unequal importance in different regions. The endemic traits of the South dictated the activities and success of Governor Smith. In many ways, his success in 1928 was in the hands of the forces of southern regionalism.

The presence of southern conservatism was prevalent throughout the remainder of the twentieth century South. Racial and cultural conservatism were both pre-eminent issues during the 1928 presidential election and they led to a divergence in the once solid nationwide Democratic coalition. A problem was that under these overt conservative beliefs were covert reasons for this ideology. Racial conservatism was a cover used to protect economic and class divisions from forming. Cultural conservatism was a cover to protect set societal structures and economic success. The reasons for both were interrelated. The maintenance of the status quo was most important. Beginning in 1928, the Democratic party was beginning to become the party of change and this affected the inherent conservative beliefs of the South. The South was shocked to understand that Al Smith was moderate on race relations and accepting of G.O.P. leaders into his inner circle. The once strong party boundaries in our two-party system were slowly dissolving. What

was once accepted as Democratic and Republican was progressively changing. This was connected to future activities inside the party in the post-1928 period.

During the New Deal era, the South quickly accepted Roosevelt's positive economic policies with alacrity until Senator Pat Harrison and others realized that behind the scenes the national party was trying to liberalize racial policy and include African-Americans into the national economic picture. A backlash occurred during the mid-term elections of 1938 when President Franklin Roosevelt's progressive candidates did not receive support from southern politicians in the South and were soundly defeated in the primaries effectively ending the passage of effective New Deal legislation. Roosevelt's candidates were viewed as opposition candidates. Southern politicians generally began to openly question New Deal policies and their effect on the South in the future. This was an openly united conservative reaction to these progressive policies. It could be stated that economic progressivism could and should not be connected with racial and cultural progressivism.¹

The Democratic party faced an ideological crossroads during the 1948 presidential election year. Race was the issue that motivated the party's two opposing sides. Northern progressives championed civil rights and Southerners supported status quo white supremacy. In the final outcome racial progressivism began to gain the upper hand as the the Democratic party of Hubert Humphrey was victorious

¹ Again the words of Woodward and Kousser play a role in the "Progressivism--For Whites Only" theory. It is extremely relevant and is closely related to the demolition of the Democratic conservative-progressive coalition of this era.

over the Democratic party of Strom Thurmond. More interestingly, once progressive Southerners such as Thurmond, Alabama's George Wallace and "Big Jim" Folsom, Louisiana's Earl Long, Florida's Claude Pepper and many others were either defeated by conservative Democrats or re-educated by the party to reject progressivism when it was connected to African-American progress. This was connected to their individual political viability and the future composition of the South. In the post-World War II era there was a major disjunction in the Democratic party and to conservatives in general.² The Upper/Deep South conservative cultural/racial divide remained prominent though. The elections of between 1948-1960 saw the Deep South remaining loyal to the Democrats because of white supremacy and racial conservatism with the Upper South accepting the G.O.P. because of economic policies and the northernization of the Party. The realignment of 1964 was important to note because the Deep South strongly supported the G.O.P. for the first time in its history with the Upper South supporting the Democrats. This similar divide was also notable in 1968.

It seems that with the end of Prohibition and the integration of Catholics due to the suburbanization of American in the 1950's, the enemy of southern cultural conservatives had changed. The social chemistry of Protestant and Catholics was becoming united. An alliance between these old enemies was slowly becoming a reality as liberal intellectuals were becoming more prevalent inside the

² Hixson's book Search For the American Right Wing is the most important source on this phenomena.

Democratic party. Liberal theories regarding social activism, sexual freedom, racial integration, and welfare politics were becoming the focal point of conservative disgust. Southerners found these theories being championed by their party and the national conservative realignment had started again in full force by the mid-term elections of 1958. Southern Democrats realized that the party they once knew was no more and now more often began to seek salvation with the once hated Republicans.

The conservative reaction of the 1950's was connected to the loss of conservative ideals. A changing America was detrimental to the southern way of life. White Southerners would not trade economic progress for racial equality. Furthermore, by the 1970's, it became more apparent that this trade was no longer necessary as affirmative action robbed whites of jobs that belonged to them. Many Southerners viewed the problems affirmative action programs had in the North and realized they had made the right decision. By the 1972 presidential election, the North and the South became politically united in a conservatism that extended past the 1988 presidential election. But unlike the national unity felt in Roosevelt's election of 1932, the party structure had changed with the Republicans holding the mandate. With the acceptance of racial and cultural change by the Democratic party on the national level, white Southerners opposed progressive policies because of the inclusion of African-Americans. This change in the Democratic party was a direct result of the national party's attack on conservatism. Change was equated with fear. In 1928 the South did not fear Al Smith but feared the twentieth century and the issue of a changing South. In

1938 the South did not fear President Roosevelt's candidates, but the policy of an outsider trying to dictate and change southern culture. In 1948 much of the Deep South accepted the politics of the Dixiecrats because they discussed a southern continua of belief. Conservatism would remain in place. In 1964, 1968, and 1972, these issues were alive, vibrant and connected to the questions regarding the 1928 presidential election.

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