

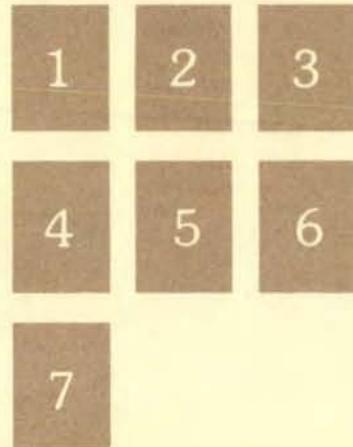
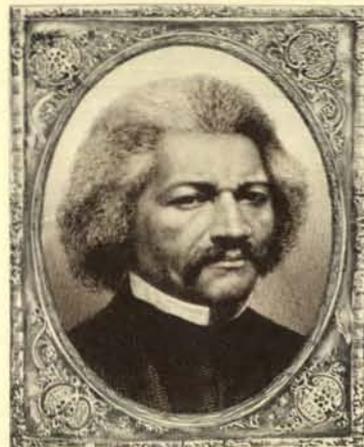
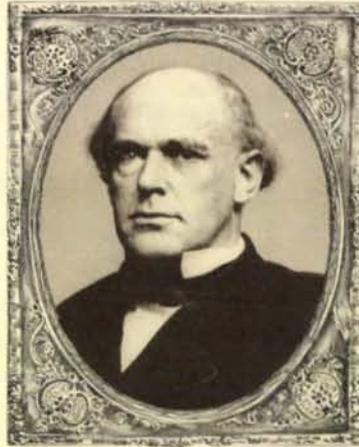
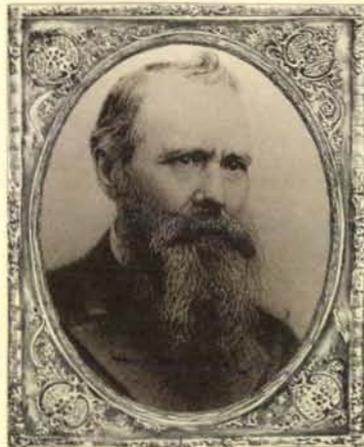
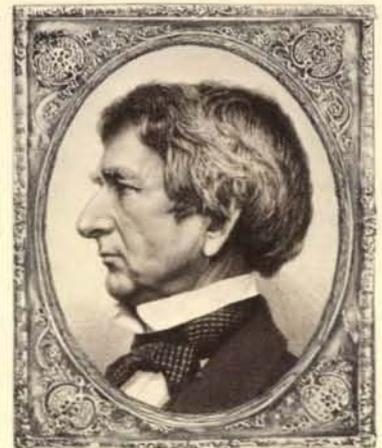
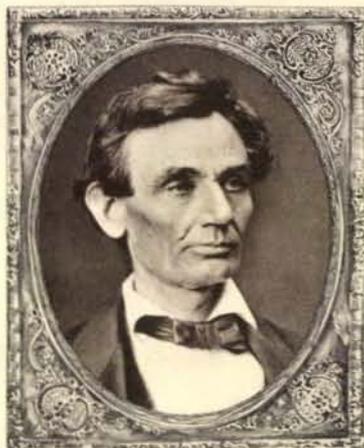
125<sup>th</sup> GOP Anniversary Issue

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# RIPON FORUM

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1. Abraham Lincoln
2. Charles Sumner
3. William H. Seward
4. Alvan Bovay
5. Salmon P. Chase
6. John C. Fremont
7. Frederick Douglass

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## RIPON FORUM

Editor: Arthur M. Hill II

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THE RIPON FORUM is published monthly by the Ripon Society, Inc.

In the publication, the Society hopes to provide a forum for fresh ideas, well researched proposals, and a spirit of creative criticism and innovation in the Republican Party. Manuscripts and photographs are solicited, but do not represent the views of the Society unless so stated.

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The Ripon Society, Inc., John C. Topping, Jr., President, is a Republican research and policy organization whose members are business, academic, and professional men and women. It is headquartered in Washington, D.C., with fifteen chapters, several affiliated subchapters, and National Associate members throughout the United States. The Society is supported by chapter dues, individual contributions, and revenues from its publications and contract work.

## COMMENTARY

### Nelson A. Rockefeller

Since its founding in December, 1962 the Ripon Society has shared the hopes, the exhilaration and the frustration that marked Nelson Rockefeller's political life. Like "the Governor", proud of our party's long tradition of civil rights advocacy, we rejoiced in the mid-sixties as the nation swept away the remnants of the Jim Crow system, but grieved that our party temporized at this great moment of moral crisis. Nelson Rockefeller, a man born to privilege, was the champion of those who believed that our party should represent not only the comfortable majority but also the non-white and the underprivileged.

Despite the tendency of the media to create a shorthand term "Rockefeller Republicanism", the measure of Nelson Rockefeller could not be found in an ideology or political philosophy. Never a stirring orator, "Rocky" as he was called by the man in the street, was instead a person to be known by his deeds. His zest for life and his genuine love for people shone through even at the end of a long day of campaigning. In the spirit of a family which has done much to shape America, Rocky poured enormous energy into his public service and undertook to accomplish Bunyanesque tasks. The huge and sometimes overambitious scale of Nelson Rockefeller's projects was an occasional source of disappointment.

One of the most natural campaigners in the twentieth century, Nelson Rockefeller could never master the presidential nominating process of his own party. This, undoubtedly the greatest disappointment of his public life, could be attributed to a combination of ill-timing, bad luck and a lack of stomach for the tedious chores of organization building between elections, a knack developed by Richard Nixon.

Rockefeller's disappointments were not merely personal, they profoundly shaped the course of American politics. Had Nelson Rockefeller somehow secured his party's presidential nomination in 1960, the Republican Party would probably, as Robert Kennedy later suggested, have handily won the Presidency. The Civil Rights revolution of the nineteen sixties would have been carried out largely under Republican auspices and the GOP might again have enjoyed the allegiance of a majority of America's blacks, many union

families and a large portion of the intellectual community.

While one can speculate endlessly about what might have been had Nelson Rockefeller achieved his ultimate political ambition, this son of Dartmouth, Pocantico Hills and Manhattan left an impact on his country more enduring than that of most twentieth century Presidents. As perhaps the outstanding governor of the second half of the twentieth century, Rockefeller showed that creative state government was an alternative to expansion of the Federal leviathan. He recruited into public service some of the ablest Americans of our time. Henry Kissinger is the best known Rockefeller recruit, but Nelson Rockefeller attracted hundreds of other able Americans into public service, from whence many went on to serve Presidents and governors of both parties. Left and right wing conspiracy theorists have delighted in tying such appointments to some sinister Rockefeller conspiracy. Instead Rockefeller's ability to funnel brilliant people into public life was more a testament to "the Governor's" guts, personal drive and commitment to excellence.

During the past year the nation and the Rockefeller family have been saddened by the death of two remarkable brothers. John D. Rockefeller III, as private a personality as his younger brother Nelson was a public personage, provided worldwide leadership in such areas as population planning and private philanthropy. Both brothers in their own way fulfilled to the best of their ability the sense of duty inculcated in them by their parents. In so doing they have greatly enriched our world.

## Rediscovering Our Roots

Just a year ago many political pundits and quite a few Republicans were questioning whether the Republican Party would go the way of the Whigs. Yet now, as the GOP begins to celebrate the 125th anniversary of its birth, our party has regained its self confidence. Under the brilliant leadership of Bill Brock the Republican Party has begun to reverse a generation long erosion in its strength at the grass roots. This Republican resurgence is not merely the product of superbly executed "nuts and bolts" politics. Increasingly the Republican Party is seizing the intellectual high ground and demoralized Democrats, inheritors or a series of shopworn and anachronistic cliches, are in disarray.

From its founding in 1854 in the Midwestern Heartland until the dawn of the New Deal, the Republican Party dominated the political agenda of America. During these years the Republican Party accomplished more than any other political party in a free nation in human history. The Republican record included the eradication of slavery and the development of the constitutional basis for racial equality, the transformation of the American continent through westward railroad construction and homestead land for settlers, the revolution in American agricultural productivity resulting from the land grant colleges, and the creation of the strongest

and most innovative capitalist industrial economy ever seen.

Despite its much longer history, the Democratic Party has few achievements that can come close to the undeniably Republican Emancipation Proclamation, Thirteenth, Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments, the Homestead Act, the Land Grant Act or the Sherman Anti-Trust Act.

In contrast to these achievements which have undergirded the growth of a free and competitive enterprise system, the Democrats have offered often only a curious amalgam of slogans and acronyms. In case our yearning for novelty was not slaked by the New Deal or the New Frontier, Jimmy Carter offers us a New Foundation. His Administration has not yet been able to produce a coherent energy policy, but he and his fellow Democrats have given us a DOE. We can expect a similar stroke of Democratic ingenuity to solve the crisis of rampant illiteracy, crime and truancy in our public schools. Before the year is out the Democrats undoubtedly will have given us a second DOE and the quality of education will have slipped only a little bit more.

There is a circus-like atmosphere to that collection of politicians who parade under the label of Democrats, "friends of the common man". Jerry Brown seems to have concluded that what this country yearns for is strong followership. Carter appears to curry popular favor by firing his own appointees. More and more he looks like the craftsman who blames his shoddy work on his tools.

The Democratic Party is today, just as it was in the eighteen fifties, a disparate collection of interest groups, politicians and ideologues. It is a party incapable of a unifying vision and bound together only by a desire to cling to the levers of power.

In this setting Republicans can redirect the political destiny of this nation, particularly if they emulate the example of early party leaders. The passion for human freedom that motivated such early Republicans as Charles Sumner, William Seward, Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln can be manifested today in a sustained defense of individual rights against bureaucratic encroachment. Rather than following the sterile "stoke the bureaucracy" urban policy approach of today's Democrats our party can, in the spirit of the Homestead Act, promote neighborhood empowerment.

The "free labor" concept so dear to early Republican thinking can translate into a sustained party commitment to maximize the opportunity for the entrepreneur, the inventor or the risk-taker. A tax policy that encourages innovation and risk-taking should be pursued vigorously.

These radical concepts that gave birth to our party can provide some guide as we prepare to emancipate our country from the shackles of lethargic, paternalistic and meddling government. This issue of the *Forum* is devoted largely to an examination of the impulses and the events that gave birth to our party. Together with local Republicans across the country the Ripon Society is commemorating the Republican Party's 125th anniversary with a series of local events. From this renewed examination of our party's early history will come, we believe, a strengthened realization of the great moral ends that can be achieved by partisan politics.

# RIPON ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1978

In 1978, buoyed by the growing public hunger for some alternatives to a Democratic Administration adrift, the Ripon Society made significant progress on three fronts. First, in April, 1978 the Society transformed its *Forum* newsletter into a magazine. The eye-catching format of the new *Forum* has made the publication much more readable. The revised *Forum* has subsequently gained a larger circulation and developed a wider circle of contributors. Within a few months and on a bare-bones budget the *Ripon Forum* has become competitive in appearance and in editorial content with leading political journals on both the left and the right.

Parallel with this transformation of the *Forum* the Ripon Society has substantially increased its policy research output. In January, 1978 the Society issued a Policy Paper proposing a Free Trade Zone on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. This paper was prepared by Mark Frazier of Santa Barbara, California. Mr. Frazier's paper provided a springboard for discussion of Middle East Policy at an Issues Conference Symposium involving former Senate Minority Leader Hugh Scott, Senator James Abourezk, Zvi Rafiah and Mohammed Hakki representing respectively the Governments of Israel and Egypt. In its July-August combined issue the *Forum* published two detailed proposals by Dr. Seymour C. Yuter, an international lawyer from New York, to achieve peace in the Middle East. Together with a number of other groups and individuals of both parties the Ripon Society helped to bring about ratification of the two Panama Canal Treaties. Glenn Gerstell, then President of the Ripon Society, developed a Society statement favoring ratification of the treaties. On January 25, 1978 Peter V. Baugher, then Chairman of the National Governing Board of the Ripon Society, testified in favor of treaty ratification before the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. Mr. Baugher after presenting a detailed legal and historical analysis of both treaties concluded "they are fundamentally sound and in the best interest of both this

country and Panama."

In 1978 the Ripon Society published two policy papers on domestic issues. In March, 1978 Ripon issued a paper entitled *Neighborhood Democracy: A Blueprint to Revitalize City Government*. This paper written by Wisconsin State Senator Thomas E. Petri proposed model state enabling legislation to create limited purpose units of local government below the city level. Senator Petri's proposal has attracted considerable interest from urban policy makers and neighborhood strategists across the country. In 1978 Ripon published a policy paper entitled *How to Reinvigorate Small Business*. This paper written by John C. Topping, Jr. has attracted considerable interest from those interested in untangling the present confused web of Federal small business assistance programs.

In addition to its *Forum* and policy research initiatives the Society has stepped up its activities in the areas of election reform and election analysis. In mid-1978 the Ripon Society of New York, one of the Society's two largest chapters, and John Schmid who chairs that chapter, joined the Republican National Committee as co-plaintiffs in a suit to strike down provisions of the Federal Election Campaign Act discouraging grassroots political activity. Pressing the parallel theme that recent campaign reforms and Congressionally authorized increases in prerequisites have strengthened incumbency Ripon President John C. Topping, Jr. spoke at Dartmouth College and at Harvard's Kennedy Institute.

In its Election Preview issue the *Ripon Forum* provided detailed analyses and forecasts of the elections in each state and the District of Columbia. The *Forum* forecasts proved more accurate than those of any other national political publication. Thus it was hardly surprising that the national press gave considerable attention to the *Forum's* Post Election issue which suggested the feasibility of a 1980 Republican Presidential Strategy built upon the Heartland States of the Great Lakes, the Upper South and the Great Plains. Republican control of the governorships in these normally closely contested states could, the Society suggested, provide a key to a GOP sweep of the Heartland in 1980.

The dramatic advances that Ripon registered in 1978 were accomplished on a shoestring budget. The Society's expenses in 1978 totaled \$57,583.05. Of this \$26,080.52 was related to the publication of the *Forum* and the remainder covered staff expenditures such as press mailings or conference costs. Ripon revenues totaled \$51,267.59 in 1978. The Society, has, however, for the past several years been impeded by a serious debt overhang. At the end of 1978 the Society had medium and short-term debts approximating eighteen thousand dollars. The Society managed to sustain its momentum even in the face of financial crisis as a result of various personal guarantees provided by several Ripon officers.

The Society has begun recently to make a dent in the debt which has plagued Ripon for the past several years. This is being accomplished through an austerity budget involving the reduction of paid staff to one individual on a part-time basis and by an enhanced fund raising program. Since October, 1978 Russell Pennoyer of New York (212) 483-3778 has chaired Ripon's fund raising efforts. By the end of January 1979, traditionally a good month for contributions, the Rip-

on debt had been reduced to approximately \$10,000.00. In the next few months the Society is planning fund-raising events in New York City, Washington, D.C. and Minneapolis.

What is perhaps most surprising about the Ripon's minuscule annual budget—equivalent to the cost of several television commercials in a statewide campaign—is the amazing leverage the Society has made of its funds. In 1977 the Ripon Society first exposed the scandalous nature of Jimmy Carter's campaign commitment to maritime cargo preference. The *Ripon expose* together with press and Congressional follow-up helped to overcome a million dollar campaign by the maritime industry and the combined clout of the Carter Administration and organized labor. With the defeat of cargo preference American consumers saved by Federal Trade Commission estimates about six hundred million dollars, annually.

In 1978 Ripon again defied the political oddsmakers by helping secure a rollback of capital gains taxes. Richard Rahn, Executive Director of the American Council for Capital Formation and his Deputy Mark Bloomfield, both long-time Ripon activists, led the fight for the enactment of the Steiger Amendment. Several years before while serving as Ripon's representative on the Republican Party's Rule 29 Committee chaired by Congressman William Steiger, Mr. Bloomfield had developed a close relationship with the brilliant Wisconsin legislator. Facing a Carter Administration move to penalize capital investment further, Steiger and Bloomfield combined to draft the Steiger Amendment. Dr. Rahn, a business economist and skilled political strategist, gathered strong documentation to demonstrate that a capital gains tax cut could buoy investment. Again the Carter Administration and the Democratic Congressional leadership were routed.

The reversal of public policy concerning capital gains taxation followed a pattern set a decade or more earlier in which Ripon proposed such heretical notions as Federal revenue sharing (1965), an opening to the People's Republic of China (1967) and a conversion to a volunteer military (1967) and Ripon members played an active role in the translation of these concepts to reality.

As the Republican Party prepares itself for the possibility of assuming the Presidency in January, 1981 the Ripon Society is seeking again to play a "cutting edge" role in national policy development. Possible Ripon initiatives for 1979 now under consideration include the development of changes in the campaign finance system to unlock the enormous advantage Congressional incumbents currently enjoy, an overhaul of U.S. foreign aid programs to encourage indigenous entrepreneurship and local capital markets, and a redirection of U.S. energy research to produce commercial fusion energy within the next fifteen years. Ripon Research Chairman Samuel Sherer (202) 347-7141 is overseeing research in these and other areas and maintaining a close liaison with interested Congressional Republicans.

Perhaps the most serious effect of the Society's continuing financial bind has been a scaling back of national Ripon resources for new chapter development. It has been several years since the Society has had a field staff member to travel around the country to meet with existing or prospective chapters. In October, 1978 as part of its austerity budget the

Society eliminated the position of Political Director. The Chapter support and liaison functions have now largely been transferred to volunteer officers.

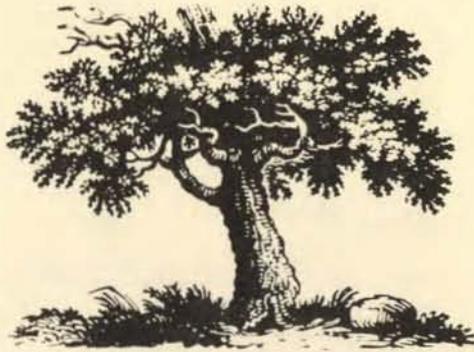
Despite the practical necessity to "sink or swim" on their own, a number of Ripon chapters have thrived over the past year. Besides its involvement in the Republican National Committee—FEC lawsuit, the New York Chapter has seen one of its members, S. William Green, score a smashing upset over Bella Abzug for Congress and overcome a million dollar plus Democratic Congressional challenge to win reelection. Daniel Cochran, Chairperson (212) 398-3651 of Ripon's National Governing Board is overseeing a Chapter project to develop proposals for the 1980 Republican Platform. Chapter President Kenneth Grossberger (212) 962-2480 is also seeking to develop new Ripon chapters outside the New York City area.

The Washington, D.C. chapter has provided critical support to the national Ripon office based in the District of Columbia. In May, 1978 at the Society's Annual Meeting the D.C. Chapter sponsored an Issues Conference and a dinner spoofing the Carter Administration. Kathleen McDonald, President of the Washington chapter, chaired the issues conference which included provocative panel discussions on Middle East policy, tax issues, small business entrepreneurship and urban policy.

Perhaps the fastest growing Ripon Chapter is in Peoria, Illinois where the Society's National Vice President Michael Maibach (309) 675-5813 has built a model chapter and developed close links with the local Republican organization. The election results in Illinois, Minnesota, Tennessee and Texas provided a shot in the arm to Ripon's Chicago, Minneapolis, Memphis and Houston chapters, a number of whose members were involved in successful statewide campaigns. The Houston chapter is continuing to research the very perplexing national policy considerations concerning the illegal alien question.

Through the efforts of Ripon Executive Director Steve Livengood (202) 347-6477 the Ripon contributor base has been increased by 32 percent during the past year and the Society has begun to assemble a national moderate Republican mailing list. Thanks to the extensive volunteer efforts of Robert Thiem, the Society has begun to develop an extensive network of political correspondents around the country.

While the Ripon Society is not without its problems, the group has never had greater opportunities than today as the Republican Party begins to celebrate the 125th anniversary of its founding. Moderate Republican governors control every Great Lakes industrial state from Pennsylvania to Minnesota. Republicans are within striking range of capturing control of the U.S. Senate within two to four years, with the likeliest pickups among Republicans particularly in tune with Ripon's ideals. The Republican National Committee under Bill Brock's able leadership is moving in tangible ways to broaden the Republican base. No longer need Ripon or moderate Republicans feel that the motto of a great educational institution *Vox Clamantis in Deserto* characterizes their plight. Our voices are listened to; our task now is to develop and implement creative alternatives to the anachronistic ways of governing that have too long held sway. ■



# View From Hawkins Gore

## The Republican Birthday Party

by Hollis Colby

The evening of March 20 having arrived, I rose up in the midst of my feller old-timers to call to order the Hawkins Gore Historical, Literary, and Athletic Wagering Society's celebration of the 125th birthday of the Grand Old Party which has claimed the allegiance of us old Vermont farmers these past seventy or so years. "Tonight's presentations," I announced, "are to honor them unsung heroes of the past without whom today's Republican Party would be no more a reality than maple sap in August. Which of you venerable old Republicans is prepared to commence?"

"Well," says Ebenezer Colby, "I spec' I will say a word for the immortal Thomas Jefferson. It was him who not only wrote the Declaration of Independence, but also provided the inspiration for the Northwest Ordinance of 1787 which said there weren't to be any slavery in the new territories. That belief was mighty powerful among them who organized the Republican Party in 18 and 54. In fact, when our grandpas went to Burlington in that year with old Jacob Colamer and Lawrence Brainerd to organize the anti-slavery fusion ticket, they picked July 13, the anniversary of the Northwest Ordinance, on purpose for their meeting date."

"Our 18 and 56 Platform, you will remember, pledged to 'restore the action of the Federal government to the principles of Washington and Jefferson.'" Ebenezer continued. In 18 and 59 our party held great Jefferson Day dinners to honor the man who had provided such inspiration to the New Party. It was Abe Lincoln who sent a message to the Boston dinner saying 'All honor to Jefferson—to the man who, in the concrete pressure of struggle for national independence by a single people, had the coolness, forecast, and capacity to introduce into a merely revolutionary document, an abstract truth, applicable to all men and all times, and so to embalm it there, that today, and in all coming days, it shall be a rebuke and a stumbling block to the very harbingers of re-appearing tyranny and oppression.' So, gentlemen"—and here Ebenezer raised his jug of cider in solemn tribute—"I says let's toss one down to the memory of Mr. Jefferson,

and may it stay alive to guide the Republicans of present and future times."

This pleasant deed was quickly accomplished, and Elias rose to address the small but prestigious multitude assembled around the potbelly stove in his store. "Gentlemen," he says, "it is time for some kind words for Jake Brinkerhoff and Israel Washburne. Old Jake, as you may know, was a Dimmycrat Congressman from Ohio in 1846. He was in mighty poor shape with the leaders of the Dimmycrat Party however, on account of he didn't want no truck with the expansion of slavery. When the issue of annexing Texas come up, it was Jake Brinkerhoff who went to his friend David Wilmot of Pennsylvania, and got the latter to introduce the rightly celebrated Wilmot Proviso. This is the thing what said that slavery must be kept out of the new territories we got from Mexico. It didn't pass, but it brought the issue of the extension of slavery to center stage, and that issue led to the birth of the Grand Old Party."

"It was Representative Israel Washburne of the great state of Maine," Elias continued, "who took the initiative in 1854 to organize the anti-slavery members of the House into a caucus, which become the group what elected Nathaniel Banks as the first Republican Speaker of the House. So I say let's drink up to the memory of all them folks." This proposition met with little resistance, and then came Perley Farnham's turn.

"I say a toast to the Free Soilers. They only lasted four years as an organized party, but they forced the issue of free soil onto the political agenda of the nation. Let us pay tribute to the Barnburners, the radical anti-slavery faction of the New York Democratic Party, which hosted the first convention that nominated the Red Fox of Kinderhook Mr. Martin Van Buren, and Mr. Charles Francis Adams, as the first national ticket dedicated to restraining the spread of slavery."

"And while we're at it," adds Perley, "let's give a loud huz-zah for the memory of John P. Hale of New Hampshire. He was the leader of the Liberty Party of 1847, which merged into the Free Soilers. On the base of this monument on the New Hampshire Capitol grounds today a traveller may pause to read these immortal words of John P. Hale: 'The measure of my ambition will be full, if when my wife and children shall repair to my grave to drop the tear of affection to my memory, they may read on my tombstone, he who lies beneath surrendered office, place and power, rather than bow down and worship Slavery.'" This remembrance of the courageous Senator from our neighboring state of New Hampshire brought lumps to our throats, which required considerable cider to suppress.

Luther Leach come next. "I spose we oughta drink one to them unwitting opponents whose errors gave the early Republicans their main chance. I refer of course to Stephen A. Douglas, late of Brandon, Vermont, who brought the Kansas-Nebraska bill before the Senate with the "squatter sovereignty" clause in it. As you all know, this bill caused the stink out of which come the sweet smell of Republicanism." Luther ain't educated, but he can be colorful.

"Well," says I, "no gathering of this sort would be complete

without a tribute to that great American George Henry Evans, and to Big Thunder Boughton, and to Major Alvan Bovay. You see, it was George Henry Evans, the workingman's advocate, the champion of young America, who at the time of the Wilmot Proviso saw clearly, even to the name, that there would be a new Republican Party. Said Evans, there will be 'but two parties, the Great Republican Party of Progress and the Little Tory Party of Holdbacks.' And it was George Henry Evans, peace be upon his gallant soul, who sent his young reporter Alvan Bovay up the Hudson to report on the Tin Horn War and the Calico Indians." At this strategic point I paused to give someone the chance to ask "What was them, Hollis?"

"What was them, Hollis?" asked Luther.

"The Calico Indians," I continued, "was a bunch of Dutch farmers in the Hudson Valley who had been reduced to serfdom by a legal trick invented by a young lawyer beholden to the great landowner Philip Schuyler. It was called a "contract of incomplete sale", and it as much as bound the farmer to the baron's land forever."

"Sounds like Alexander Hamilton's work," observed Perley.

"Quite right, Perley," I went on. "Well, Dr. Smith Boughton was a young physician who had learned all about Ethan Allen and the Green Mountain Boys while studying medicine at Middlebury College here in Vermont. When he saw the injustice and suffering of the Hudson Valley farmers, he donned an Indian costume made of calico and led the disguised farmers who drove off sheriffs trying to evict honest farmers who couldn't pay the rack rent demanded by the land barons. All this young Alvan Bovay reported to the world through George Henry Evans' paper. It had a lot to do with forming Alvan Bovay's ideas of justice and freedom."

"Well, after Big Thunder Boughton and the Calico Indians had won the Anti-Rent War, Alvan Bovay got a law degree and went off to Ripon, Wisconsin to practice. And when the Kansas-Nebraska bill came up, it was he who organized the justly celebrated meeting which launched the Republican Party. Joining Bovay—who was a Whig—was a farmer name of Jehdiah Bowen, and a local Free Soiler name of Amos Loper. Bowen was an anti-slavery Democrat who had come from New York, and Bowen was an anti-slavery Democrat who had come from New York, and Bovay had known him there as a Calico Indian in Big Thunder's Anti-Rent War. Now if Big Thunder hadn't organized the Calico Indians, and if George Henry Evans hadn't sent young Alvan Bovay up there to report on it, and meet Jed Bowen, who knows but what that famous event in the Ripon Schoolhouse wouldn't have come off? So I says let's drink one to George Henry Evans and Alvan Bovay, and Big Thunder Boughton and Jed Bowen, and also to the bold men of Jackson, Michigan and many other places, who saw clearly their country's need, and who gave us the Grand Old Republican Party!"

We drank to that, and as the celebration came to a close, Ebenezer raised a final toast. "Let us pray that the young folks who are leading today's Republican Party can keep alive the bright vision and high purpose of them what went before." It was a mighty fitting conclusion to an evening rich in inspiring memories. ■

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# 1854 Republican Calendar

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## January 23

Introduction in Senate of final version of Kansas-Nebraska Act by Stephen A. Douglas.

## January 24

"Appeal of the Independent Democrats in Congress to the People of the United States", drafted by Salmon P. Chase and also signed by Benjamin Wade, Gerrit Smith, Charles Sumner and Alexander DeWitt. An appeal to Northerners to oppose the Act and the extension of slavery.

## January 30

Beginning of formal Senate debate on the Kansas-Nebraska Act.

## February 28

First Anti-Nebraska meeting in Ripon, Wisconsin. Led by Alvan E. Bovay it resolved to form a new party if the Act was passed.

## March 4

Senate passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act.

## March 20

Second Anti-Nebraska meeting in Ripon, Wisconsin at the schoolhouse. First use of the Republican Party name.

## May 9

Meeting of 30 anti-slavery Whig and Democratic members of Congress in Washington at Mrs.'s Cratchett's Boardinghouse, Sixth and D Streets. It was called by Rep. Israel Washburn of Maine to form a new party.

## May 22

House passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act.

## May 26

Rump convention of Indiana Free Soil Democrats led by George W. Julian.

## May 30

Kansas-Nebraska Act signed by President Pierce.

## June 16

Editorial by Horace Greeley in *New York Tribune* recommending use of Republican name.

## July 6

First Republican Party State Convention held in Jackson, Michigan.

## July 13

Wisconsin Republican Party Convention held in Madison, Anti-Nebraska conventions in Ohio and Indiana.

## July 20

Organization of Massachusetts Republican Party at convention in Worcester.

## August

Election of James W. Grimes as Governor of Iowa on a fusionist ticket.

## October 4

Lincoln's first great speech answering Douglas at Springfield, Illinois.

## October 16

Lincoln's Peoria speech outlining arguments against the Kansas-Nebraska Act.

## October

Election of fusionist candidates to Congress in Indiana (7 of 11 districts) and Ohio (all 21 districts).

## November

Victories for Republican Party Organizations in Michigan and Wisconsin. Election of Kinsley Bingham of Michigan as first Republican governor.

Victory of fusionist candidates in Illinois, Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, and Massachusetts. Democrats placed in minority in House of Representatives (83 of 234 seats). Persons who became Republicans before the end of the session held 108 seats in the House and 15 seats (of 62) in the Senate.

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# 125th Anniversary Calendar

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This year the Ripon Society is working closely with Ripon members and other Republicans around the country to encourage a series of local events commemorating the 125th anniversary of the founding of our party.

The Ripon Society and the Ripon, Wisconsin Republican Club are working closely to commemorate the March 20, 1854 Ripon meeting founding the Republican Party. A 125th Anniversary Dinner is scheduled for Saturday, March 24 at Ripon College in Ripon. Congressman John B. Anderson, Chairman of the House Republican Conference, will speak at this dinner. On March 20, another event will be held commemorating the meeting convened by Alvan Bovay. Professor Warren Wade of Ripon College is coordinating these events and can be reached at the following telephone numbers: (414) 748-8197 and (414) 748-2070.

On Wednesday, May 9, the Washington Chapter of the Ripon Society will hold a celebration commemorating the 125th anniversary of the first Republican Congressional caucus. The details on this event will be printed in the March *Forum*.

As you can see by looking at the calendar of 1854 events, there are numerous opportunities this year for local celebrations. It is our hope that this issue of the *Forum* may encourage Republicans in various cities and towns across America to reenact or commemorate events in their localities critical to our party's formation. Please keep the Ripon office informed of any coming events in order that we can announce your activities in the *Forum* to others who might be interested in participating. The Ripon office telephone number is (202) 347-6477.

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## Addenda and Errata

In the January 1979 issue the narrative preceding the presentation of the Ripon Congressional Ratings regrettably omitted Republican Congresswoman Shirley Pettis of California from the list of those Members who scored 100 percent. ■

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## The Republican Platform of 1856

This Convention of Delegates, assembled in pursuance of a call addressed to the people of the United States, without regard to past political differences or divisions, who are opposed to the repeal of the Missouri

Compromise; to the policy of the present Administration; to the extension of Slavery into Free Territory; in favor of the admission of Kansas as a Free State; of restoring the action of the Federal Government to the principles of Washington and Jefferson; and for the purpose of presenting candidates for the offices of President and Vice President, do

*Resolved:* That the maintenance of the principles promulgated in the Declaration of Independence, and embodied in the Federal Constitution are essential to the preservation of our Republican institutions, and that the Federal Constitution, the rights of the States, and the union of the States, must and shall be preserved.

*Resolved:* That, with our Republican fathers, we hold it to be self-evident, that all men are endowed with the inalienable right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, and that the primary objective and ulterior design of our Federal Government were to secure these rights to all persons under its exclusive jurisdiction; that, as our Republican fathers, when they had abolished Slavery in all our National Territory, ordained that no person shall be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law, it becomes our duty to maintain this provision of the Constitution against all attempts to violate it for the purpose of establishing Slavery in the Territories of the United States by positive legislation, prohibiting its existence or extension therein. That we deny the authority of Congress, of a Territorial Legislation, of any individual, or association of individuals, to give legal existence to Slavery in any Territory of the United States, while the present Constitution shall be maintained.

*Resolved:* That the Constitution confers upon Congress sovereign powers over the Territories of the United States for their government; and that in the exercise of this power, it is both the right and the imperative duty of Congress to prohibit in the Territories those twin relics of barbarism—Polygamy, and Slavery.

*Resolved:* That while the Constitution of the United States was ordained and established by the people, in order to “form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty,” and contain ample provision for the protection of the life, liberty, and property of every citizen, the dearest Constitutional rights of the people of Kansas have been fraudulently and violently taken from them.

Their Territory has been invaded by an armed force:

Spurious and pretended legislative, judicial, and executive officers have been set over them, by whose usurped authority, sustained by the military power of the government, tyrannical and unconstitutional laws have been enacted and enforced;

The right of the people to keep and bear arms has been infringed.

Test oaths of an extraordinary and entangling nature have been imposed as a condition of exercising the right of suffrage and holding office.

The right of an accused person to a speedy and public trial by an impartial jury has been denied;

The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and sei-

zures, has been violated;

They have been deprived of life, liberty, and property without due process of law;

That the freedom of speech and of the press has been abridged;

The right to choose their representatives has been made of no effect;

Murders, robberies, and arsons have been instigated and encouraged, and the offenders have been allowed to go unpunished;

That all these things have been done with the knowledge, sanction, and procurement of the present National Administration, the high crime against the Constitution, the Union, and humanity, we arraign that Administration, the President, his advisers, agents, supporters, apologists, and accessories, either *before* or *after* the fact, before the country and before the world; and that it is our fixed purpose to bring the actual perpetrators of these atrocious outrages and their accomplices to a sure and condign punishment thereafter.

*Resolved:* That Kansas should be immediately admitted as a state of this Union, with her present Free Constitution, as at once the most effectual way of securing to her citizens the enjoyment of the rights and privileges to which they are entitled, and of ending the civil strife now raging in her territory.

*Resolved:* That the highwayman’s plea, that “might makes right,” embodied in the Ostend Circular, was in every respect unworthy of American diplomacy, and would bring shame and dishonor upon any Government or people that gave it their sanction.

*Resolved:* That a railroad to the Pacific Ocean by the most central and practicable route is imperatively demanded by the interests of the whole country, and that the Federal Government ought to render immediate and efficient aid in its construction, and as an auxiliary thereto, to the immediate construction of an emigrant road on the line of the railroad.

*Resolved:* That appropriations by Congress for the improvement of rivers and harbors of a national character, required for the accommodation and security of our existing commerce, are authorized by the Constitution, and justified by the obligation of the Government to protect the lives and property of its citizens.

*Resolved:* That we invite the affiliation and cooperation of the men of all parties, however differing from us in other respects, in support of the principles herein declared and believing that the spirit of our institutions as well as the Constitution of our country guarantees liberty of conscience and equality of rights among citizens, we oppose all legislation improving their security. ■

## The Republican Platform of 1860

**R**esolved, That we, the delegated representatives of the Republican electors of the United States, in Convention assembled, in discharge of the duty we owe to our constituents and our country, unite in the following

declarations:

1. That the history of the nation during the last four years has fully established the propriety and necessity of the organization and perpetuation of the Republican party, and that the causes which called it into existence are permanent in their nature, and now, more than ever before, demand its peaceful and constitutional triumph.

2. That the maintenance of the principles promulgated in the Declaration of Independence and embodied in the Federal Constitution, "That all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed," is essential to the preservation of our Republican institutions; and that the Federal Constitution, the Rights of the States and the Union of the States must and shall be preserved.

3. That to the Union of the States this nation owes its unprecedented increase in population, its surprising development of material resources, its rapid augmentation of wealth, its happiness at home and its honor abroad; and we hold in abhorrence all schemes for disunion, come from whatever source they may. And we congratulate the country that no Republican member of Congress has uttered or countenanced the threats of disunion so often made by Democratic members, without rebuke and with applause from their political associates; and we denounce those threats of disunion, in case of a popular overthrow of their ascendancy as denying the vital principles of a free government, and as an avowal of contemplated treason, which it is the imperative duty of an indignant people sternly to rebuke and forever silence.

4. That the maintenance inviolate of the rights of the states, and especially the right of each state to order and control its own domestic institutions according to its own judgment exclusively, is essential to that balance of powers on which the perfection and endurance of our political fabric depends; and we denounce the lawless invasion by armed force of the soil of any state or territory, no matter under what pretext as among the gravest of crimes.

5. That the present Democratic Administration has far exceeded our worst apprehensions, in its measureless subserviency to the exactions of a sectional interest, as especially evinced in its desperate exertions to force the infamous Lecompton Constitution upon the protesting people of Kansas; in construing the personal relations between master and servant to involve an unqualified property in persons; in its attempted enforcement everywhere, on land and sea, through the intervention of Congress and of the Federal Courts of the extreme pretensions of a purely local interest; and in its general and unvarying abuse of the power intrusted to it by a confiding people.

6. That the people justly view with alarm the reckless extravagance which pervades every department of the Federal Government; that a return to rigid economy and accountability is indispensable to arrest the systematic plunder of the public treasury by favored partisans; while the recent startling developments of frauds and corruptions at the Federal metropolis, show that an entire change of administration is imperatively demanded.

7. That the new dogma that the Constitution, of its own force, carries slavery into any or all of the territories of the United States, is a dangerous political heresy, at variance with the explicit provisions of that instrument itself, with contemporaneous exposition, and with legislative and ju-

dicial precedent; is revolutionary in its tendency, and subversive of the peace and harmony of the country.

8. That the normal condition of all the territory of the United States is that of freedom: That, as our Republican fathers, when they had abolished slavery in all our national territory, ordained that "no persons should be deprived of life, liberty or property without due process of law," it becomes our duty, by legislation, whenever such legislation is necessary, to maintain this provision of the Constitution against all attempts to violate it and we deny the authority of Congress, of a territorial legislature, or of any individuals, to give legal existence to slavery in any territory of the United States.

9. That we brand the recent reopening of the African slave trade, under the cover of our national flag, aided by perversions of judicial power, as a crime against humanity and a burning shame to our country and age, and we call upon Congress to take prompt and efficient measures for the total and final suppression of that execrable traffic.

10. That in the recent vetoes, by their Federal Governors, of the acts of the legislatures of Kansas and Nebraska, prohibiting slavery in those territories, we find a practical illustration of the boasted Democratic principle of Non-Intervention and Popular Sovereignty, embodied in the Kansas-Nebraska Bill, and a demonstration of the deception and fraud involved therein.

11. That Kansas should, of right, be immediately admitted as a state under the Constitution recently formed and adopted by her people, and accepted by the House of Representatives.

12. That, while providing revenue for the support of the general government by duties upon imports, sound policy requires such an adjustment of these imports as to encourage the development of the industrial interests of the whole country; and we commend that policy of national exchanges, which secures to the workingmen liberal wages, to agriculture remunerative prices, to mechanics and manufacturers an adequate reward for their skill, labor, and enterprise, and to the nation commercial prosperity and independence.

13. That we protest against any sale or alienation to others of the public lands held by actual settlers, and against any view of the free-homestead policy which regards the settlers as paupers or suppliants for public bounty; and we demand the passage by Congress of the complete and satisfactory homestead measure which has already passed the House.

14. That the Republican party is opposed to any change in our naturalization laws or any state legislation by which the rights of citizens hitherto accorded to immigrants from foreign lands shall be abridged or impaired; and in favor of giving a full and efficient protection to the rights of all classes of citizens, whether native or naturalized, both at home and abroad.

15. The appropriations by Congress for river and harbor improvements of a national character, required for the accommodation and security of an existing commerce, are authorized by the Constitution, and justified by the obligation of Government to protect the lives and property of its citizens.

16. That a railroad to the Pacific Ocean is imperatively demanded by the interests of the whole country; that the federal government ought to render immediate and efficient aid in its construction; and that, as a preliminary thereto, a daily overland mail should be promptly established.

17. Finally, having thus set forth our distinctive principles, and views, we invite the co-operation of all citizens, however differing on other questions, who substantially agree with us in their affirmance and support. ■

# The Birth of the Republican Party

By Fred Schwengel



photo courtesy Ripon Commonwealth Press

One hundred twenty-five years ago the Republican Party was born in one of the most spontaneous and rapidly successful political revolutions in American history. While several towns and cities, mostly in the Midwest, can lay some claim to being the Republican birthplace, the growth of this new party was marked mostly its decentralized and popularly based origins. In 1854 the original Republican meetings were held in such places as a Ripon, Wisconsin schoolhouse, a Crawfordsville, Iowa church, in the open air under the oaks at Jackson, Michigan and in the private quarters of two New England Congressmen in Washington, D.C. Each of these meetings which helped to give life to a new political party was enveloped in a moral fervor against the potential advance of slavery into Kansas and Nebraska. Some would claim that the present Wednesday Group that meet in the Capitol are worthy successors of those who met there in 1854.

Before 1854 no one could have foreseen the rapid growth of an organization that would sweep away slavery and transform the continent. In that year Senator Stephen A. Douglas of Illinois, made an unbelievable political miscalculation, a mistake which for decades plagued and divided his party. Unwittingly he became a prime cause of the rapid growth and organization of the Republican Party. Caring little about slavery, Douglas made the mistake of trying to sidetrack a great moral problem by leaving it to local determination, or what was called "popular sovereignty". Hoping for the further development of the West, he led a fight in Congress

for the Kansas-Nebraska Act which permitted the extension or exclusion of slavery by local choice in two new territories. The political storm which arose over this measure grew to hurricane proportions because the Act, in effect, repealed the Missouri Compromise of 1820, breaking the understandings on which it rested. In 1820 Missouri had been admitted as a slave state and Maine as a free state with accompanying legislation providing that elsewhere in the territory of the Louisiana Purchase, north of latitude 36 30' (west and north of Missouri), slavery should forever be prohibited.

Few thought seriously that slavery could take permanent root in the plains of Kansas, much less in Nebraska. Douglas and the Democrat administration of President Franklin Pierce, a "northern man with southern principles", came to believe that the country could be united on a policy of westward expansion coupled with concessions to slaveholders giving them legal status but not control of new states. They thought of politics; many others thought more earnestly of moral implications.

The resulting indignation and protest cut many ties of long party allegiance. The already-weakened Whig Party broke apart in sectional controversy, never again to recover. Men of the North, fearing the extension of legalized slavery even into the northern reaches of the territory acquired from Mexico, talked of a new party. The Compromise of 1850 had at least tacitly excluded slavery from the northern portions of that

© 1979 Fred Schwengel. A former Congressman from Iowa, Mr. Schwengel heads both the U.S. Capitol Historical Society and the Republican Heritage Foundation. This article is adapted from a manuscript Mr. Schwengel hopes to complete on the history of the Republican Party.

territory, and it too could be repudiated as the Democratic administration had revoked the Missouri Compromise of 1820. Uncounted northern Democrats proudly called themselves anti-Nebraska Democrats and organized meetings from East to West to defy the administration. Press and pulpit joined in denouncing the Kansas-Nebraska bill. Scarcely had it been introduced when Senator Salmon P. Chase of Ohio, who had endorsed the Free Soil ticket against Pierce in 1852, drafted an influential "Appeal of the Independent Democrats": "Let all protest, earnestly and emphatically, by correspondence, through the press, by memorials, by resolutions of public meetings and legislative bodies, and in whatever other mode may seem expedient, against this enormous crime."

In such strife the Republican Party, bearing anew the name of the party of Jefferson, came into being. Its genesis was legion, in northern meetings of farmers, merchants, and laborers. Its philosophy was deeply imbued with the Jeffersonian spirit of independent artisans and back-country agrarians; it drew, too, from the frontier nationalism and from the internal-improvements and protective-tariff programs of the National Republican Party of John Quincy Adams and Henry Clay. That party, the second to bear the Republican name died with the growth of the Jacksonian era. After the election of 1832, opponents of Andrew Jackson formed a basically ineffectual consolidation under the name of the Whig Party, with the old National Republicans at its core. The Whigs attracted the prosperous of North and South, held together loosely by an increasing conservatism but never unified with common national programs or a national purpose. When the Anti-Nebraska meetings began, they prepared the way for a new party, although only prophets among those who went to them could have been certain of it. At Ripon, Wisconsin, Alvan E. Bovay, lawyer and Whig idealist reformer, worked with enthusiasm for the name Republican. He had moved westward after an admiring association with Horace Greeley, the eminent but eccentric foe of slavery and Whig editor of the nationally influential *New York Tribune*. Bovay and helpers whom he had enlisted called anti-Nebraska meetings at Ripon. The first on February 28, 1854, resolved to form a new party to fight the extension of slavery if the bill passed. At the second, held on March 20, 53 men as Bovay said, went into the meeting as Whigs, Free Soilers, and Democrats but "came out of it Republicans." Bovay wrote to his friend Greeley in February and in June to propose the party name for national use. Greeley answered in a favorable editorial, published on June 16. By his reluctance to leave the New York Whigs, however, Greeley lost any genuine claim to be a founder of the new party.

Greeley's widely read editorial gave new currency to the name Republican whose Jeffersonian overtones appealed in New England and other parts of the North as well as in the West. On May 9 about 30 members of Congress met in the rooms of two colleagues from Massachusetts, at the call of a member from Maine, and they agreed that a new party should rise and that the name Republican would be appropriate.

A state convention at Jackson, Michigan, held on July 6, 1854 and overflowing into a mass meeting in a grove of oaks, approved a platform and nominated a full slate of state candidates under the banner of the Republican Party. These

first state nominees of the new party, headed by Kinsley S. Bingham as the first Republican nominee for governor, swept to victory by a statewide margin of almost five to four. The party movement born at Ripon led to a convention in Wisconsin, held at Madison on July 13, also for the nomination of successful candidates. The Republican Party of Massachusetts was organized at a convention in Worcester on July 20.

The new Republican Party and the old parties, Democrats and Whigs alike, were threatened by burgeoning political dissent from other movements. The Free Soil Party had organized in 1848 to advocate national prohibition of slavery in the territories and a firm policy of admitting only free states to the union. Its members also favored free homesteads for settlers and national improvement of rivers and harbors. By 1854 they were politically handicapped by another party almost everywhere called Know-Nothing. Anti-immigrant Americans, especially middle-class Protestants of Anglo-Saxon stock suspicious of Catholicism, had formed secret lodges to protest the arrival of Irish and Germans and to demand immigrant restriction. Soon loosely organized as Know-Nothings, a name derived from the secrecy of their rituals, and also called the American Party, they became especially powerful in Massachusetts, in the eastern cities and in the border states. Prohibitionists opposing whiskey and beer with single minded dedication, added to the dissent from existing political alignments.

## THE WESTWARD PUSH.

Economic and sectional change, brought about by the vibrant development of the American West, helped to give rise to the Republican Party. Population of the rich agricultural lands of the Middle West was growing more than anywhere else in the country. The grain farmer of prairieland had replaced the backwoodsman as the American pioneer, and for the most part he lived in a land where slavery was unknown, unprofitable, and unwanted. His own profits were already enhanced by the development of new farm machinery. Prices for his produce rose with general prosperity, pushed upward by the effects of gold mining in the West.

Of equal importance politically, east-west railroad construction to the Mississippi and beyond was fast linking eastern markets and centers of manufacturing to the expanding Middle West. With increased commerce came greater identity of economic and political interest. Migrants to the opening prairies streamed westward over the faster and more efficient rail facilities. Small inland towns, hubs of commercial activity, grew as never before. Economic linkages with the South, long prevalent by boat up and down the Mississippi watershed, declined in relative importance. Rail connections from north to south developed more slowly than the east-west lines, and all forms of trade to and from the Middle West began to be redirected. On the surface, all sections of the nation appeared to enjoy the increasing prosperity, but the South began to feel the consequences of its undiversified economy, dominated by cotton production by slave labor.

Migrants to the West brought with them political demands

for free land on the public domain and pressures for improvement of transportation at the expense of the government. Most of these settlers were farmers, or workers in small towns, migrating from areas scattered from rural New England to the uplands of the Ohio Valley. Others were immigrants from the farms of northern Europe. Their demands for land and public improvements aroused opposition from substantial businessmen North and South, who feared larger public expenditures, higher taxes and a diminished supply of labor in established towns and cities as a result of westward migration. Small growers of cotton and other working men in the South, loyal to the familiar institution of slavery though often not owners of slaves, joined in the opposition to free land as a menace to their own security in a cotton economy. These middle-class farmers and workers of the South, in alliance with grain growers and workmen of the North, formed the voting strength of the Democrat Party necessary for success in national elections. If the northern middle class broke away, especially with its increasing population and enlarging representation in the electoral college, Democrat presidential candidates would be doomed. The rising conflict forced such northern Democrat leaders as Senator Stephen A. Douglas to seek concession and compromise, to search for a formula that would hold party and nation together. If they could succeed, the new Republican Party would become, as had the Whigs before, minor opposition. If they failed to heal or salve Democrat wounds, they were in serious trouble. If the North united its electoral strength, it could control the presidency and bestow it upon the Republican or any other party.

Deeply as the Democratic Party was dividing, full crisis had not yet arrived. By 1856 the Whig Party was in complete disarray, the Know-Nothing Party with its native American slogans was diminishing, and the Republican Party was not yet nationally organized.

## THE FREMONT PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN.

Reluctance of major public figures to speak out openly as members of a new party added to the burden of launching a Republican national organization to nominate and support a presidential candidate. However, the struggle in Kansas, the success in electing Republican Nathaniel P. Banks to the House speakership, and northern outcry against the physical assault on Senator Charles Sumner provided a tremendous impetus to Republican organizing effort.

The prize of the presidency required not only organization but a candidate. By the spring of 1856 John C. Fremont of California was clearly in the lead. Others were receptive, especially if there were strong signs of nomination by acclamation. Senator William H. Seward of New York could probably have won by a vigorous effort, but he and his advisers were doubtful of Republican victory in the election and beside that Seward was reluctant to woo the favor of nativist Americans joining the party from the Know-Nothing movement. Salmon P. Chase, recently elected governor of Ohio, impressed conservatives as too radical in his anti-slavery positions. The elderly, conservative John McLean of Ohio, associate justice of the Supreme Court, eagerly hoped for the honor and had strong support from many former

Whigs.

Formal organization of a national Republican Party proceeded as negotiations over candidacies continued. In December 1855 Francis P. Blair, a venerable leader of Jacksonian Democracy strongly opposed to expansion of slavery, was host for a small conference on his estate at Silver Spring, Maryland, to plan a Republican national convention. Among those present were Speaker Nathaniel P. Banks of the House, who had become one of the earliest and most influential supporters of Fremont, and such prominent leaders of the new Republican movement as Governor Chase of Ohio and Senator Charles Sumner of Massachusetts. Five Republican state chairmen, acting after a series of leadership conferences at which both organizing strategies and presidential candidacies came under review, issued a public call on January 17, 1856, inviting Republicans to meet in informal convention at Pittsburgh on February 22, Washington's Birthday, "for the purpose of perfecting the National Organization, and providing for a National Delegate Convention of the Republican Party" to nominate candidates for president and vice president.

Old-line Democrats and Whigs of the North suffered the most and were forced to the most drastic adjustments. In numerous northern states fusion tickets, developed with varying support from anti-Nebraska Democrats, Republicans often under Free-Soil leadership, Know-Nothings, and Prohibitionists, entered the state campaigns of 1854 against the established Democratic and Whig organizations.

In the congressional elections, Democrats lost control of the House and no single party had a majority of the votes when the new Congress first met in December 1855. For eight weeks the House was deadlocked over the election of a speaker. By the 133rd ballot it selected by a vote of 103 to 100 the capable Nathaniel P. Banks of Massachusetts, who had moved from Democratic to Know-Nothing to Republican affiliation. It was a stupendous victory for the new party, whose adherents held the largest number of House seats but who could win only with coalition support. The delicate balance of rival affiliations among dissenters against the old order of politics began quickly to turn in Republican favor. The presidential election of 1856 was taking shape as a serious contest for Republicans.

Leading anti-slavery Whigs of the North, despite their differences with slave-holding Whigs of the South, were understandably reluctant to dismantle their party organizations or to risk their political future upon an uncertain tide. One of the most prominent was William H. Seward, Senator from New York, who resisted the pressure of Horace Greeley to form in 1854 an anti-Nebraska coalition ticket. Even with electoral success that year, Seward and Thurlow Weed, master strategist of New York politics, quickly sensed the drift and began to move the Whig organization toward the Republican cause.

Abraham Lincoln, another staunch Whig, receptive to a seat in the Senate from Illinois, avoided the Republican convention of 1854 in Springfield. Practical and moderate, Lincoln did not hesitate to express concern about agitating tendencies of abolitionist leaders active in the fusionist movement forming the Republican Party in the state. Placed

on the state committee of the party without having given his consent, Lincoln wrote in November to Ichabod Coddington, abolitionist and temperance leader: "I suppose my opposition to the principle of slavery is as strong as that of any member of the Republican party; but I had also supposed that the extent to which I feel authorized to carry that opposition, practically, was not at all satisfactory to that party."

Yet Lincoln's was a fresh voice in the West, moral rather than strictly legalistic or partisan. He had said at a great rally in Peoria in October, "But if the Negro is a man, is it not to that extent, a total destruction of self-government, to say that he too shall not govern himself?" He had declared, too, that "no man is good enough to govern another man, without that other's consent. I say this is the leading principle—the sheet anchor of American republicanism."

Already Lincoln had taken up the cudgel with Senator Stephen A. Douglas, who had returned to Illinois in late summer, 1854, to defend his stand for squatter sovereignty in the territories of Kansas and Nebraska. The Senator also faced aroused voters because of defeat in the Senate, by Southern Democrats, of free-homestead legislation for actual settlers. Had not the Senator been in alliance with the wrong Democrats, and was not his party—in which he was now a leading northern figure—in danger? Douglas needed to protect his position, and Lincoln challenged it. Indeed, Lincoln became the Whig candidate before the Illinois legislative session of 1855 for the seat in the United States Senate held since 1849 by General James Shields, a colorful but not always subservient, supporter of Douglas. On the fist ballot Lincoln obtained 45 votes to Shields' 41 with a few scattered. Lincoln might have been elected if five of the anti-Nebraska Democrats had not refused to vote for any Whig. But the real Douglas tactic was soon apparent: his friends in the legislature, after a few courtesy ballots for Shields, cast their votes for Governor Joel A. Matteson, who could attract several anti-Nebraska members. Lincoln at a critical moment threw his support and with it the election to Lyman Trumbull, an anti-Nebraska Democrat soon to be a Republican stalwart.

"I could have headed off every combination and been elected," Lincoln wrote, "had it not been for Matteson's double game—and his defeat now gives me more pleasure than my own gives me pain. On the whole, it is perhaps as well for our general cause that Trumbull is elected. The Nebraska men confess that they hate it worse than any thing that could have happened. It is a great consolation to see them worse whipped than I am." To another friend he penned the comment that "it would not have been done without my consent. I could not, however, let the whole political result go to ruin, on a point merely personal to myself."

Indignation over the Kansas-Nebraska Act had launched the Republican Party in a multitude of widely separated places. The threat of growing violence in Kansas aroused principled emotion to a level in the North that pushed the party role within two years to the central opposition. The year 1855, moreover, brought signs of organizational weakness in the Know-Nothing Party, to which many Whigs and some Democrats had repaired. Its principles of prejudice were provincial and fortunately could not long endure. Lincoln said of

it: "As a nation, we began by declaring that 'all men are created equal.' We now practically read it 'all men are created equal, except Negroes.' When the Know-Nothings get control, it will read 'all men are created equal, except Negroes, and foreigners, and Catholics.'" A stream of northern leaders began to join the Republican Party, and by May 1856 Lincoln was one of them.

Bleeding Kansas preempted the national political scene, and all the artful oratory of Senator Douglas and his denunciation of Abolitionists, Black Republicans, and Know-Nothings alike could not change the facts. Slavery sympathizers from western Missouri and free-state settlers recruited by the New England Emigrant Aid Society, the latter greatly augmented by settlers from other northern states, whipped themselves into a frenzied and armed rivalry over creation and control of territorial government. The Pierce administration supported the pro-slavery forces. Douglas denounced the "intervention" of the Emigrant Aid Society, as if it were foreign and proposed a measure continuing a pro-slavery territorial regime. Seward advocated immediate free-state admission to the union, declaring that he would oppose admission of another slave state at any time.

In the spring of 1856 virtually all other business in Congress was set aside by the deadlock over Kansas. In the course of it Senator Charles Sumner of Massachusetts, egotistical, cultivated, imbued with a sense of national responsibility that carried him to Republican leadership, planned "the most thorough philippic" ever pronounced against slavery in a legislative body. In the course of his protracted speech, entitled "The Crime against Kansas," he hurled insult upon Senator Andrew P. Butler of South Carolina.

Senator Butler, Sumner lashed out, "has chosen a mistress to whom he has made his vows, and who, though ugly to others, is always lovely to him; though polluted in the sight of the world, is chaste in his sight—I mean the harlot, Slavery.... If the slave states cannot enjoy what, in mockery of the great fathers of the Republic, he misnames equality under the Constitution—in other words, the full power in the National Territories to compel fellow-men to unpaid toil, to separate husband and wife, and to sell little children at the auction block—then, sir, the chivalric Senator will conduct the State of South Carolina out of the Union! Heroic knight! Exhaulted Senator! A second Moses come for a second exodus!"

The denunciation, particularly jarring when applied to the gracious and studious Butler, was symptomatic of the bitterness of its day. Its consequences were no less revealing. Preston S. Brooks, nephew of Butler and a Member of the House from the same state, later came upon Sumner in the Senate chamber. Brooks struck blow after blow with a heavy cane on the Senator's head. Sumner reeled and fell and was incapacitated for several years. Republicans in the House could not override a defending Democratic minority to obtain the two-thirds vote necessary to expel Brooks, who resigned to be reelected immediately by an exulting constituency. In the North there were many mass meetings of protest. They were addressed by Henry Ward Beecher, William Cullen Bryant, William M. Evarts, Edward Everett, President Charles King of Columbia, Theodore Parker, Wendell Phillips, and a host of other intellectual and political leaders;

copies of Sumner's speech sold by the tens of thousands throughout the United States.

On the third night after the attack on Sumner, the abolitionist John Brown, led a band of seven armed marauders in killing five pro-slavery settlers at Pottawatomie Creek in Kansas. In inflamed Kansas and in Congress the violent prelude of civil war had begun, and men of the North pressed anew the organization of the Republican Party. Extremists on both sides were marshalling their talents and forces. A political storm was brewing waiting for leadership to lead the nation out of chaos or into it.

Party leaders from all the free states and spokesmen from eight southern states met for two days in Pittsburgh, with Francis P. Blair as president. Horace Greeley, now imbued with Republicanism, telegraphed news to the New York Tribune and stirred the convention with oratory. "The gathering is very large and the enthusiasm unbounded," he wrote. "Its moral and political effect upon the country will be felt for the next quarter of a century." On recommendation of a committee on organization, the Pittsburgh convention created a national committee to call a nominating convention in Philadelphia on June 17 the anniversary of the Battle of Bunker Hill. Edwin D. Morgan, successful merchant-banker of New York and an able political organizer, was elected first chairman of the national committee. With cheers the crowded hall adopted resolutions that opposed slavery in any territory, supported by all lawful measures free state men in Kansas, and urged overthrow of the Pierce administration.

Within a few days the Know-Nothings, meeting at Philadelphia in a dissension-ridden convention and now using the American Party as their name, nominated former President Millard Fillmore. He had never been a member of the party, and his principal importance was to attract conservative Whigs away from the Republican movement. The American platform was so favorable to popular sovereignty in Kansas that numerous northern delegates promptly withdrew, repudiated the convention, and formed the North American Party. They set June 12 as the opening date for their own convention in New York, five days before the scheduled national meeting of Republican delegates.

Obviously the defecting North Americans could help the Republican cause if they were handled rightly, and Chairman Morgan and other astute Republican leaders undertook to do so. A North American nomination of Fremont would damage him immeasurably with foreign-born voters and their sympathizers; a nomination of Justice McLean, undoubtedly willing to accept it, would hopelessly splinter the efforts of anti-slavery and free-soil voters in the North. Republican leaders hit upon a plan and diligently worked with North American delegates to persuade them to it. The North American convention dutifully nominated Speaker Nathaniel P. Banks, a major supporter of Fremont, with at least the tacit understanding the Banks would withdraw in his favor if Fremont won the Republican nomination.

In the meantime, the Democratic convention held at Cincinnati had nominated James Buchanan, a Pennsylvanian who had the good fortune to be minister to England and therefore away from party squabbles and sectional conflict



during the Pierce administration. President Pierce, eager for renomination, was not really a serious contender; and Douglas magnanimously withdrew when he could not break Buchanan's majority, much less attain the two-thirds convention vote required by Democratic rules. Essentially a timid man, Buchanan had been passed over for the presidential nomination in early years. In 1856 no candidate could have been found who would better hold together the warring northern and southern factions of his party.

The Republican National Committee, over the signatures of members from 21 states and the District of Columbia, issued its call for the national nominating convention in Philadelphia without mention of the party name and as an appeal to the people of the United States "without regard to past political differences or divisions." More than five hundred official delegates attended, representing every free state, the slaveholding states of Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, and Kentucky, and four territories. The strength of the party was clearly sectional, but it represented the populous North and the growing West whose electoral votes were already dominant.

Moderation in action but evangelism in purpose characterized most of the voices of the diverse convention. Edwin D. Morgan, the national chairman, struck that note in calling the delegates to order in the Musical Fund Hall:

You are here today to give direction to a movement which is to decide whether the people of the United States are to be hereafter and forever chained to the present national policy of the extension of human slavery. Not whether the South is to rule, or the North to do the same thing .... In its consideration, let us avoid all extremes—plant ourselves firmly on the Platform of the Constitution and the Union, taking no position which does not commend itself to the judgment of our consciences, our country, and of mankind.

Judge Robert Emmet of New York, a former Democrat elected temporary chairman, followed the same theme in bolder language in the party's first keynote address:

They may laugh at us. They may call us Black Republicans and Negro-Worshippers .... They may say that we mean to concentrate and gather all the odds and ends of parties—all the isms of the day .... Let them come to us with all their isms. We will merge them all in that great ism, patriotism .... Now, I say this boldly .... there is not a man—an honest man, who understands his own rights and the rights and the rights of others—who respects the immortal Declaration of Independence—who does not hope to see the day .... when such a thing as human bondage shall not exist in the world .... Slavery is, so far as our functions are

concerned with it, a political evil .... Whether it be moral or immoral, it exists here among us, and we must manage it as well as we can .... We must prevent it from being, as its nature always urges it to be, aggressive. We must keep it back.

The platform of 1856 also avoided violent proposals, even on the question of slavery. It was written by a committee under the chairmanship of David Wilmot, who as a Democratic member of Congress from Pennsylvania had proposed in 1846 a famous and controversial proviso that, in territory acquired from Mexico, slavery should never exist. The promptly adopted resolutions in the platform declared that both the rights and the union of states must be preserved, that Congress must exercise its sovereign power over territories to prohibit both slavery and polygamy in them, that Kansas should be admitted as a free state, and that both a railroad to the Pacific and improvements of rivers and harbors should be given the aid of national appropriations.

Nomination of John C. Fremont for president followed on the same day. An informal ballot, taken after Chase's friends had withdrawn his name, gave Fremont 359 votes and McLean 190 with 4 scattered. A formal vote left no doubt: Fremont, 520; McLean, 37 (minorities in the Pennsylvania and Ohio delegations staying with him); Seward, 1. With the nomination made unanimous there began, as Senator Henry Wilson of Massachusetts declared to the convention, a campaign of "Free Speech, Free Press, Free Men, Free Labor, Free Territory, and Fremont."

An informal ballot for vice-president scattered votes among fifteen nominees but gave a wide lead, 253 to 110, to former Whig Senator William L. Dayton of New Jersey over Abraham Lincoln of Illinois. The formal vote made unanimous the choice of Dayton, who was regarded as acceptable to Know-Nothings and helpful for victory in New Jersey. Lincoln was fortuitously saved for the future. The party would have been wiser, as Fremont undoubtedly thought, to have given the vice-presidential nomination to a Pennsylvanian such as Buchanan's old enemy Simon Cameron in order to bolster the fight for that pivotal state.

Col. John Charles Fremont was already a national hero for his exploits in traversing the wild reaches of the West. He was credited with more daring than his famous guide Kit Carson. He had married Jessie, daughter of the intrepid Senator Thomas Hart Benton, Jacksonian leader from Missouri, and she herself was an able political strategist. Fremont's own political experience was minor. He had been elected as a Democrat in 1850 to a short term as one of California's first senators, but his actual work in Congress had been limited to a few days. He was impetuous, courageous, egotistical, and sensitive about his dignity. The most trenchant thing said of him as a public figure was that he possessed all of the attributes of genius except ability. Yet he had many admirers all over the country. His ideas about free soil and westward expansion, as well as his moderate but not radical opposition to extension of slavery, drew strong support in the North and West.

The campaign of 1856 was flamboyant with parades, banners, cartoons, pamphlets, books, and songs. It had an unusual intellectual element, too. Lincoln, campaigning in Il-

linois for Fremont, declared that the central difference between the two parties was a single question: Shall slavery be allowed to extend into the national territories now legally free? "Buchanan says it shall; and Fremont says it shall not." In the West even Ralph Waldo Emerson spoke for Fremont. In the South, however, prominent firebrands were inflamed by the Fremont candidacy, and it was certain that he would not receive a significant vote in any slave state. Threats of disunion from press and stump unquestionably gave pause to some northern conservatives who sought peace through compromise and therefore gave their allegiance to Buchanan or Fillmore. A conservative remnant of the Whig Party met in Baltimore in September, with delegates from 21 states, to endorse Fillmore as the best hope for peace but to write their own platform repudiating that of the Know-Nothing American Party which had nominated him. The North Americans who had nominated Banks for president dropped him somewhat reluctantly, as planned, in favor of Fremont. The race was always clearly between Buchanan and Fremont, although neither became active campaigners.

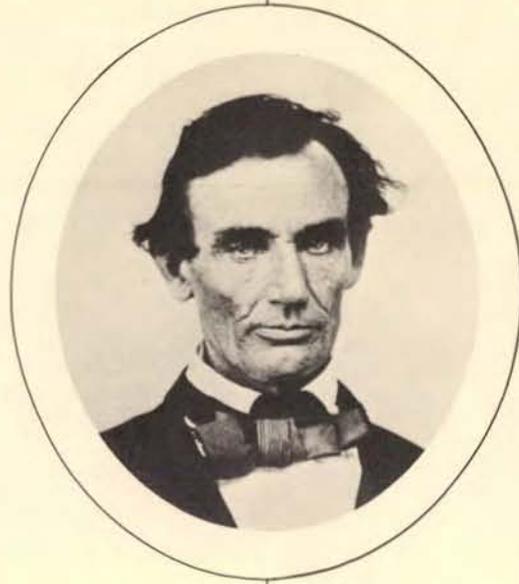
The three great battlegrounds in the election were Pennsylvania, Indiana, and Illinois, and they gave Buchanan his victory. The Democratic Party was superbly organized and well financed in comparison with the newly launched Republicans. Republican Chairman Morgan had difficulty raising money, especially because bankers and other businessmen were often fearful that a Republican administration with policies of change would have an unsettling effect on commercial enterprise. Moreover, many were impressed with the greater public experience of Buchanan and with the likelihood that he could deal with both North and South.

Buchanan carried all of the slave states except Maryland (which alone gave its electoral votes to Fillmore) plus the five free states of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Indiana, Illinois, and California, a total of nineteen. Fremont carried eleven free states, including New York and all of New England. The election outcome, giving Buchanan 174 electoral votes, Fremont 114, and Fillmore 8, was closer than it appeared. The popular vote won by Buchanan, larger by nearly half a million than that for Fremont, was nevertheless over a third of a million smaller than the combined votes for the two losing candidates. Buchanan became a minority president. The margin in the electoral college, 25 over the required majority, was also deceptive. If Buchanan had lost his home state of Pennsylvania with its 27 electoral votes, the contest would have been thrown into the House of Representatives for decision. If he had lost Pennsylvania and either Indiana or Illinois to Fremont, the Republican nominee would have been elected. The Democratic victory had in fact depended on Whig votes cast for Buchanan or for Fillmore, a discomfiting turn of events for a party that had long held a national majority. The Republican Party had done exceedingly well with its inexperienced candidate, and voters of the North were still moving toward open Republican affiliation. ■

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## A National Republican Leader Is Born

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In 1854 the slavery controversy that had vexed the nation for decades erupted anew. On May 30, President Franklin Pierce signed into law the Kansas-Nebraska Act and inflamed the anti-slavery zealots whose numbers had vastly increased in recent years. The act provided that the inhabitants of the Kansas and Nebraska territories would decide whether or not slavery would be established there. With the passage of this new law, Congress took a hands-off policy on the expansion of slavery. Across the land alarmed anti-slavery men sounded a call to action.

For Lincoln the anti-Nebraska groundswell led to his first

battle for a seat in the Senate. Yet the anti-slavery sentiment was still tenuous and suppressed by the partisan ties which men had long held. His campaign ended in a narrow defeat, and foreshadowed the shattering effect in store for the national political picture.

The strong anti-slavery elements in the North and Midwest took the form of splinter parties, among them the Liberty and Free Soil Parties. These elements now began to coalesce with disaffected Democrats and Whigs of marked anti-slavery views, and a new political movement—the Republican Party—began to emerge.

The new party found strong support in Midwestern states—Michigan, Wisconsin, Ohio and Indiana. Most Illinoisans opposed the Kansas-Nebraska Act, but anti-slavery Illinoisans moved only slowly towards Republicanism.

So did Lincoln. Republicans held an early organizing meeting in Springfield in 1854, but Lincoln refused to at-

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Congressman Paul Findley is the Republican Member of Congress who represents Springfield, Illinois, Lincoln's hometown, and much of the Congressional district which Lincoln represented as a Member of the 30th Congress in 1847-49. Findley has just finished writing a book on Lincoln's service in Congress entitled, *A. Lincoln: The Crucible of Congress*. The book will be published in June. Findley is also the author of legislation which established the Lincoln Home National Historic Site in Springfield as part of the National Park System.

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tend. Nevertheless, his name was placed on a letterhead as a member of the State Republican Central Committee. When Lincoln found out, he quickly acted to repudiate those trying to co-opt him. In a letter to Ichabod Coddling, a noted abolitionist and temperance lecturer and one of the most prominent leaders of the new Republican Party in Illinois, Lincoln noted:

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I have been perplexed some to understand why my name was placed on that committee. I was not consulted on the subject; nor was I apprized of the appointment, until I discovered it by accident two or three weeks afterwards. I suppose my opposition to the principle of slavery is as strong as that of any member of the Republican party; but I had also supposed that the *extent* to which I feel authorized to carry that opposition, practically, was not at all satisfactory to that party. The leading men who organized that party, were present, on the 4th of Oct. at the discussion between Douglas and myself at Springfield, and had full opportunity to not misunderstand my position.

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Lincoln would not yet embrace the radical doctrines espoused by most Republicans; nor would he yet forsake the Whig Party which had been his home for more than twenty years.

An early leader of the new party in Illinois was Owen Lovejoy of Princeton, brother of Elijah Lovejoy, the abolitionist editor killed in 1837 by a mob in Alton, Illinois. In his campaign for the Senate, Lincoln impressed Lovejoy with the force of his anti-Nebraska views. On August 7, 1855, Lovejoy wrote to Lincoln, apparently trying to convert him to Republicanism. In response, Lincoln wrote:

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Not even you are more anxious to prevent the extension of slavery than I; and yet the political atmosphere is such, just now, that I fear to do anything, lest I do wrong. Know Nothingsism has not yet entirely tumbled to pieces—nay, it is even a little encouraged by the late elections in Tennessee, Kentucky & Alabama. Until we can get the elements of this organization, there is not sufficient materials to successfully combat the Nebraska democracy with. We can not get them so long as they cling to a hope of success under their own organization .... Of their principles, I think little better than I do of those of the slavery extensionists. Indeed I do not perceive how any one professing to be sensitive to the wrongs of the Negroes, can join in a league to degrade a class of white men.

I have no objections to "fuse" on ground which I think is right; and I believe the opponents of slavery extension could do this, if it were not for this K.N.-ism.

Lincoln had no objections to a fusion party, but he wanted to preserve his political integrity. From that time on Lincoln began an inevitable movement towards Republicanism.

In February, 1856, anti-slavery newspaper editors held a convention in Decatur. According to historian Don Fehrenbacher, "This Decatur editorial convention marks the launching of the state Republican party, and Lincoln significantly was the one prominent political leader who attended it." At this point Lincoln embraced Republicanism. Traditionally, the Bloomington convention, a meeting of state anti-Nebraska men which occurred three months later in May, has been cited as the turning point in Lincoln's partisan affiliation. But the Decatur Convention is far more appropriate because by June his ties to Republicanism had become so strong that he was one of ten nominated by the Republican national convention in Philadelphia for the Vice Presidency. On the first ballot, Lincoln received 110 votes. The nomination eventually went to the better known William L. Dayton of Ohio, a former Whig congressman whose ties with the anti-slavery branch of the party were longstanding.

Following the convention, Lincoln campaigned arduously for candidate John C. Fremont, the famed "Pathfinder of the West," who undoubtedly hoped to trade the reputation his explorations had garnered him for political power. Lincoln's personal choice for the presidential nomination had been John McLean, a Supreme Court Justice whose centrist views were more in accord with his own. Later, he estimated that he delivered as many as fifty speeches on behalf of the Republican Party. He limited campaigning to Illinois, however, with the exception of a single speech in Kalamazoo, Michigan. Not only did he campaign for Fremont, but he set the stage for the Illinois Senatorial contest in 1858. By the end of the campaign he had become the leading and best known Republican in the state of Illinois. And national events were inexorably pushing sectional tensions to the breaking point.

The Senatorial race of 1858 loomed large on Lincoln's personal horizon, and in that race he and the Republican Party introduced several innovative techniques. Until 1913, when the 17th Amendment took effect, United States Senators were chosen by state legislatures. Most candidates for the office, like Lincoln in 1854, courted the legislators more than the people. In addition, party conventions scrupulously avoided endorsing candidates for the Senate lest they seem to be infringing upon a legislative prerogative.

The Senate race in 1858 was different. When the Republican state convention met on June 16, 1858, it designated Lincoln as its choice for the Senate seat occupied by Douglas. The convention did not want to usurp the legislative prerogative and their endorsement of Lincoln was not intended to be a nomination; rather it was meant to voice strong disapproval of Greeley and other non-Illinois Republicans who supported Democrat Douglas. These interlopers were put on notice that Illinois Republicanism was none of their business. It nevertheless settled the question of candidacy and had the effect of a nomination. Lincoln was the Republican choice and could be assured of election if Republicans won control of the legislature. After the "nomination" Lincoln took his campaign directly to the people, something he had not done in 1854.

He opened his campaign in Springfield the evening of his nomination. Speaking in Representative Hall, he said:

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If we could first know *where* we are, and *whither* we are tending, we could better judge *what* to do, and *how* to do it .... 'A House divided against itself cannot stand.'

I believe this government cannot endure, permanently half *slave* and half *free* ....

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The speech received an interpretation Lincoln did not intend, and it certainly provided Stephen A. Douglas with campaign material. He continually charged that Lincoln wished to abolish slavery and advocated the political and social equality of the races.

Lincoln, however, was a careful and conscious stylist. In the course of the campaign he succeeded in defending himself adequately. He insisted that his controversial "house divided" statement was more a look ahead than a recommendation. In that speech Lincoln had not suddenly become an abolitionist. His objective remained that of restricting the extension of slavery. Except for the District of Columbia, he did not propose abolition where slavery existed. Nevertheless he forecast that slavery would eventually disappear.

The campaign proceeded for two months with Douglas and Lincoln responding to each other in separate speeches. This led to suggestions of joint debates between the two men. Lincoln wrote to Douglas on July 24, 1858, asking if he would be agreeable to a "joint canvass." Douglas replied that he would be willing to have one joint discussion with Lincoln in a prominent place in each Congressional District, except the two in which each had already spoken. With this agreement, the Lincoln-Douglas debates were born.

The Illinois Senatorial campaign attracted far more nationwide attention than had any other state election in the nation's history.

The reason may be found in the prominence of Douglas and the controversy and confusion over his position in opposition to the Lecompton constitution. Many observers felt that the future of the Democratic Party nationally was at stake in the Illinois race. Republicans, some of whom saw Douglas as a prospective and valuable convert, also watched the race with heightened interest.

Lincoln's views were illuminated in the reflected limelight of Douglas' reputation. He emerged from the campaign as a respected and prominent national Republican figure. So high was the interest in the contest that two Illinois newspapers printed the complete texts of the debates between Lincoln and Douglas. This made Lincoln's arguments far more accessible nationally than any amount of nationwide stump speaking could have accomplished.

The growth of the new party in two years had been phenomenal, but it had not been quite strong enough in Illinois to undercut the overpowering allegiance of the electorate to the Democratic Party. As a result, Lincoln once again was rejected by the state legislature.

Lincoln had become accustomed to defeat; for the second time he had lost a Senate bid. Paradoxically, however, his defeat thrust him into a larger political arena, a national one. He had held his own against the leading Democratic contender for the next Presidential nomination. Republicans throughout the country were looking with curiosity at this tall Illinoisan of whom they knew so little. Once again events helped him.

John Brown's ill-fated expedition against the federal arsenal at Harper's Ferry roused both applause and outrage. Public reaction to Brown's raid damaged the two leading prospects for the Republican Presidential nomination, William H. Seward and Salmon P. Chase. They had long been identified with the more ardent anti-slavery factions, and the violence of Brown's raid and the emotional reaction to it linked their position in the public mind with extremism and lawlessness. Lincoln, a man of greater moderation on the slavery issue, became more and more appealing.

In speeches in Cooper Union, New York, and throughout New England, Lincoln was the voice of moderation. His adamant stand against extension of slavery coupled with his equally adamant stand against federal interference with slavery where it existed placed him near the broad center of public sentiment.

As the Republican national convention of 1860 approached, pro-Lincoln sentiment grew. Traditional political wisdom gave William H. Seward the edge when delegates began to arrive at the Chicago convention hall called the Wigwam. Then David Davis, Lincoln's shrewd manager, took charge. A telegram from Lincoln demanding that Davis make no promises on his behalf went ignored. Davis and his lieutenants promised a cabinet post here, a judgeship there, and so it went. Their adept grasp of political reality and tough resourcefulness greased the wheels of the Lincoln bandwagon.

Attracted by the political pragmatism of Davis and the moderation of Lincoln's views, the delegates steadily moved to support Illinois' "lone star." On the third ballot, Lincoln became the Republican nominee for President. A rooftop cannon boomed the news to the throng gathered outside.

The message came clattering by telegraph to Springfield and to the anxious candidate sitting in a hickory chair in the office of the *Sangamo Journal*. With a smile on his face, he stood up and announced, "Well, there's a little lady down on Eighth Street who'll want to hear the news."

A divided Democratic Party nominated two candidates—the northern wing put forward Stephen A. Douglas of Illinois. The South rallied behind John C. Breckinridge of Kentucky. A hastily formed party, the Constitutional Union Party, vainly struggled to defuse the incendiary slavery issue by running on a simple plank of love of country. Its candidates were John Bell and Edward Everett, who later achieved fame by preceding Lincoln at Gettysburg, and eschewed his own two-hour lecture in favor of Lincoln's three-minute address. The split in the Democratic Party, plus the new splinter party, sealed its doom and election day saw Lincoln emerge victorious. Once more, compromise had proven its election-day value. ■

# Lincoln's Peoria Speech<sup>1</sup>

October 16, 1854

The repeal of the Missouri Compromise, and the propriety of its restoration, constitute the subject of what I am about to say.

As I desire to present my own connected view of this subject, my remarks will not be, specifically, an answer to Judge Douglas; yet, as I proceed, the main points he has presented will arise, and will receive such respectful attention as I may be able to give them.

I wish further to say, that I do not propose to question the patriotism, or to assail the motives of any man, or class of men; but rather to strictly confine myself to the naked merits of the question.

I also wish to be no less than National in all the positions I may take; and whenever I take ground which others have thought, or may think, narrow, sectional and dangerous to the Union, I hope to give a reason which will appear sufficient, at least to some, why I think differently.

And, as this subject is no other, than part and parcel of the larger general question of domestic-slavery, I wish to MAKE and to KEEP the distinction between the EXISTING institution, and the EXTENSION of it, so broad, and so clear, that no honest man can misunderstand me, and no dishonest one, successfully misrepresent me.

In order to [get?] a clear understanding of what the Missouri Compromise is, a short history of the preceding kindred subjects will perhaps be proper . . . . .

(Discussion of past history including the prohibition of slavery in the Northwest Ordinance of 1787 and the organization of the Missouri Compromise, emphasizing that the public has not demanded its repeal and against the argument that equal justice to the south requires consent to the extending of slavery to new areas.)

(review of history of Missouri Compromise)

**This is the repeal of the Missouri Compromise.** The foregoing history may not be precisely accurate in every particular; but I am sure it is sufficiently so, for all the uses I shall attempt to make of it, and in it, we have before us, the chief material enabling us to correctly judge whether the repeal of the Missouri Compromise is right or wrong.

I think, and shall try to show, that it is wrong; wrong in its direct effect, letting slavery into Kansas and Nebraska—and wrong in its prospective principle, allowing it to spread to every other part of the wide world, where men can be found inclined to take it.

This declared indifference, but as I must think, covert real zeal for the spread of slavery, I can not but hate. I hate it because of the monstrous injustice of slavery itself. I hate it because it deprives our republican example of its just influence in the world—enables the enemies of free institution, with plausibility, to taunt us as hypocrites—causes the real friends of freedom to doubt our sincerity, and especially be-

cause it forces so many really good men amongst ourselves into an open war with the very fundamental principles of civil liberty—criticising the Declaration of Independence, and insisting that there is no right principle of action but self-interest.

. . . . . When southern people tell us they are no more responsible for the origin of slavery, than we; I acknowledge the fact. When it is said that the institution exists; and that is very difficult to get rid of it, in any satisfactory way, I can understand and appreciate the saying. . . . .

. . . . . But all this; to my judgment, furnishes no more excuse for permitting slavery to go into our own free territory, than it would for reviving the African slave trade by law . . . . .

(review and demolition of argument that public demanded repeal of Missouri Compromise by passage of Compromise of 1850)

. . . . . But one great argument in the support of the repeal of the Missouri Compromise, is still to come. That argument is "the sacred right of self government." It seems our distinguished Senator has found great difficulty in getting his antagonists, even in the Senate to meet him fairly on this argument—some poet has said

"Fools rush in where angels fear to tread."

At the hazard of being thought one of the fools of this quotation, I meet that argument—I rush in, I take that bull by the horns.

I trust I understand, and truly estimate the right of self-government. My faith in the proposition that each man should do precisely as he pleases with all which is exclusively his own, lies at the foundation of the sense of justice there is in me. I extend the principles to communities of men, as well as to individuals. I so extend it, because it is politically wise, as well as naturally just: politically wise, in saving us from broils about matters which do not concern us. Here, or at Washington, I would not trouble myself with the oyster laws of Virginia, or the cranberry laws of Indiana.

The doctrine of self government is right—absolutely and eternally right—but it has no just application, as here attempted. Or perhaps I should rather say that whether it has such just application depends upon whether a Negro is *not* or is a man. If he is *not* a man, why is that case, he who is a man may, as a matter of self-government, do just as he pleases with him. But if the Negro is a man, is it not to that extent, a total destruction of self-government, to say that he too shall not govern himself? When the white man governs himself that is self-government; but when he governs himself, and also governs another man, that is *more* than self-

<sup>1</sup>For the full text of the speech see Roy P. Basler, editor, *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln* (Rutgers University Press: 1953), Vol. II 247-283, pages 247-283.

government—that is despotism. If the Negro is a man, why then my ancient faith teaches me that “all men are created equal;” and that there can be no moral right in connection with one man’s making a slave of another. . . . .

Well I doubt not that the people of Nebraska are, and will continue to be good as the average of people elsewhere. I do not say the contrary. What I do say is, that no man is good enough to govern another man, without that other’s consent. I say this is the leading principle—the sheet anchor of American republicanism. Our Declaration of Independence says:

“We hold these truths to be self evident: that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. That to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, DERIVING THEIR JUST POWERS FROM THE CONSENT OF THE GOVERNED.”

I have quoted so much at this time merely to show that according to our ancient faith, the just powers of governments are derived from the consent of the governed. Now the relation of masters and slaves is, PRO TANTO, a total violation of this principle. The master not only governs the slave without his consent; but he governs him by a set of rules altogether different from those which he prescribes for himself. Allow ALL the governed an equal voice in the government, and that, and that only is self government.

But when I am told I must leave it altogether to OTHER PEOPLE to say whether new partners are to be bred up and brought into the firm, on the same degrading terms against me, I respectfully demur. I insist, that whether I shall be a whole man, or only, the half of one, in comparison with others, is a question in which I am somewhat concerned; and one which no other man can have a sacred right of deciding for me. If I am wrong in this—if it really be a sacred right of self-government, in the man who shall go to Nebraska, to decide whether he will be the EQUAL of me or the DOUBLE of me, then after he shall have exercised that right, and thereby shall have reduced me to a still smaller fraction of a man than I already am, I should like for some gentleman deeply skilled in the mysteries of sacred rights, to provide himself with a microscope, and peep about, and find out, if he can, what has become of my sacred rights! They will surely be too small for detection with the naked eye.

Finally, I insist, that if there is ANYTHING which it is the duty of the WHOLE PEOPLE to never entrust to any hands but their own, that thing is the preservations and perpetuity, of their own liberties, and institutions. And if they shall think, as I do, that the extension of slavery endangers them, more than any, or all other causes, how recreant to themselves, if they submit the question, and with it, the fate of their country, to a mere hand-full of men, bent only on temporary self-interest. If this question of slavery extension were an insignificant one—one having no power to do harm—it might be shuffled aside in this way. But being, as it is, the great Behemoth of danger, shall the strong gripe of the nation be loosened upon him, to entrust him to the hands of such feeble keepers?

I have done with this mighty argument, of self-government. Go, sacred thing! Go in peace.

But Nebraska is urged as a great Union-saving measure. Well I too, go for saving the Union. Much as I hate slavery, I would consent to the extension of it rather than see the Union dissolved, just as I would consent to any GREAT evil, to avoid a GREATER one. But when I go to Union saving, I must believe, at least, that the means I employ has some adaptation to the end. To my mind, Nebraska has no such adaptation.

“It hath no relish of salvation in it.”

It is an aggravation, rather, of the only one thing which ever endangers the Union. When it came upon us, all was peace and quiet. The nation was looking to the forming of new bonds of Union; and a long course of peace and prosperity seemed to lie before us. In the whole range of possibility, there scarcely appears to me to have been any thing, out of which the slavery agitation could have been revived, except the very project of repealing the Missouri compromise. Every inch of territory we owned, already had a definite settlement of the slavery question, and by which, all parties were pledged to abide. Indeed, there was no uninhabited country on the continent, which we could acquire; if we except some extreme northern regions, which are wholly out of the question. In this state of case, the genius of Discord himself, could scarcely have invented a way of again getting [setting?] us by the ears, but by turning back and destroying the peace measures of the past. The councils of that genius seem to have prevailed, the Missouri compromise was repealed; and here we are, in the midst of a new slavery agitation, such, I think, as we have never seen before. Who is responsible for this? Is it those who resist the measure; or those who, causelessly, brought it forward, and pressed it through, having reason to know, and, in fact, knowing it must and would be so resisted? It could not but be expected by its author, that it would be looked upon as a measure for the extension of slavery, aggravated by a gross breach of faith. Argue as you will, and long as you will, this is the naked FRONT and ASPECT, of the measure. And in this aspect, it could not but produce agitation. Slavery is founded in the selfishness of man’s nature—opposition to it, is [on?] his love of justice. These principles are an eternal antagonism; and when brought into collision so fiercely, as slavery extension brings them, shocks, and throes, and convulsions must ceaselessly follow. Repeal the Missouri compromise—repeal all compromises—repeal the declaration of independence—repeal all past history, you still can not repeal human nature. It still will be the abundance of man’s heart, that slavery extension is wrong; and out of the abundance of his heart, his mouth will continue to speak.

Our republican robe is soiled, and trailed in the dust. Let us purify it. Let us turn and wash it white, in the spirit, if not the blood, of the Revolution. Let us turn slavery from its claims of “moral right,” back upon its existing legal rights, and its arguments of “necessity.” Let us return it to the position our fathers gave it; and there let it rest in peace. Let us re-adopt the Declaration of Independence, and with it, the practices, and policy, which lovers of liberty everywhere—join in the great and good work. If we do this, we shall not only have saved the Union; but we shall have so saved it, as to make, and to keep it, forever worthy of the saving. We shall have so saved it, that the succeeding millions of free happy people, the world over, shall rise up, and call us blessed, to the latest generations. . . . . ■

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# The Future of the **GOP**

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by Representative John B. Anderson of Illinois

As we Republicans celebrate the 125th anniversary of our party's birth, we face a strange paradox. On one hand, public attitudes seem to be moving with startling rapidity toward positions with which the Republican Party has long been identified. Increasingly, the public seems to favor a stronger national defense, lower taxes, less regulation, restrained spending and lower deficits. On the other hand, as the 1978 Congressional elections showed, Democrats can be remarkably adept at coopting traditional Republican issues.

A number of Democrats have stolen the march in exploiting a growing popular resentment of big and burdensome government. This has proved especially ironic and galling to Republicans in view of our party's long-time commitment to fiscal responsibility. To add insult to injury, Democrats even managed to turn the promising Roth-Kemp tax cut proposal to Republicans' disadvantage. They made it out to seem a fiscally irresponsible free lunch. Many voters apparently came less to look on it as a substantive platform than a sort of snake-oil a party turns to peddling when it is desperate for political survival.

With the modest Republican comeback in the 1978 elections, our party is in no immediate danger of extinction, but it faces serious hurdles before capitalizing on the new public mood. Over the years the GOP has acquired in many minds a hard-to-shake image of being a bit behind the times. Thus when the GOP talks taxes and inflation and budget-balancing, it often sounds like just the same old tune—and a lot of people instinctively tune it out. Yet, when Democrats say much the same thing, it can sound almost refreshing, as though they're keeping pace with the times, demonstrating courage and boldness.

Moreover, even if the GOP gets some credit for its fiscal virtues, it has some serious liabilities in its background that keep would-be supporters away. Impressions still linger that it is the party of Herbert Hoover, and big business; that it lacks the common touch, concern for working people, for civil rights, and for the actual welfare of people as much as for their theoretical freedom.

Of course these are wild generalizations, but they do have a way of trickling into people's subconsciousness. No doubt

many voters have the gut feeling that a Democratic tax cut will be ipso facto more egalitarian and humane than a Republican one, even if in truth they're identical. Republicans, after all, are thought emotionless ogres with green eye-shades who can be counted on to tilt tax relief to business or the upper classes. This seems the only explanation for polls indicating that even when voters concede the importance of fighting inflation, they seem to feel free-spending Democrats better qualified for the task than austere Republicans.

Yet no one familiar with the proud heritage and creed of the Republican party should imagine that it stands for such negative and heartless things as caricatures sometimes ascribe. It is true that certain things we stand for, such as free enterprise and restricted government, are sometimes considered bugaboos to liberals. But if the truth be told, these ideals of ours are most of them genuine, well-meaning, and hardly meant to undermine the popular welfare.

To the contrary, for example, we support a vigorous private sector precisely because it is the engine of a productive economy that in turn be harnessed in the service of our citizens. As for our advocating limits on the public sector, it is not that we object to the noble goals of Great-Society-like programs, but rather, to the presumption and naivete that massive social change can be achieved, and ought be achieved, by the strong-armed intervention of outsiders. It is the Republican notion that the relationships of dependency inevitably created by the modern welfare state can serve to crowd out private initiative, act as depressants rather than stimulants in the economy, and in general dull the senses of society. That Republicans admire the profit motive does not imply they are unrepentantly materialistic. On the contrary, it is their feeling that such incentives are required by human nature for the sort of inventiveness, hard work, and progress that has characterized the illustrious history of the American nation.

And that we esteem the values of personal liberty and human freedom is hardly meant as a grandiose rationalization for the unbridled profiteering of big business, tyranny by the elite, or assorted other nefarious purposes seemingly assumed sometimes by our political adversaries. Instead, these values are considered ones that impart a special dynamic to our society, keeping it always resourceful and resilient, and on the cutting edge of change and progress. At the same time, it is considered an almost self-evident purpose of so-

ciety to promote the cherished freedom and liberty that brought us all together in the first place that they might be preserved.

Giving play to free market forces goes hand-in-hand with the full and free political expression also identified with American democracy. It is the nature of our society that personal identities are to be exalted, or at least protected. It is not for a big central government to flatten them out as a steam-roller. The role of government should be as referee, and at times as leader. It is not, however, as an Orwellian big brother who barks orders and enforces a pervasive and arbitrary rule. The Republican party is not ashamed that it strives to preserve our Constitution, that sacred document which enshrines the individual liberty we hold so dear. Neither do we apologize for seeking to enlarge the economic pie so that more and bigger pieces can be distributed to our people. And least of all do we recant our fundamental love of peace, freedom, and prosperity, ideals which surely must be shared by all men of good will.

Our Republican heritage traces all the way back to Jefferson. Here was an apostle of decent but limited government, a man who believed in the sanctity and potential of the individual, and indeed who justified government as that minimum collective effort required to accomplish what individuals required for their freedom but could not achieve themselves. Our first Presidential candidate, John C. Fremont, stood for the small farmer, the small businessman, and the everyday worker. And it is Republican Teddy Roosevelt we look back on as the original trust-buster and battler of the abuses of power and wealth.

A complementary strain of the Republican heritage, however, has been the notion that the nation as a unit should be developed, so that the blessings of a rich and productive society can all the better be shared by its individual members. Lincoln is of course remembered for preserving the Union and emancipating the slaves but his Administration was also dedicated to homesteading legislation, reorganization of the banking system, and continued development of the transcontinental railroad.

Even today, for all the reaction of which we are accused, surely few believe anymore in turning the clock back on our international responsibilities and retreating to isolationism; or in scuttling civil rights legislation; or in any wholesale sot of abandonment of the New Deal. It has been a long time since serious Republican Presidential candidates have denounced the nuclear test ban, TVA, or NATO. When Richard Nixon established detente with Russia and rapprochement with China, and when he sponsored wage and price controls and the devaluation of the dollar, it was obvious that an old era was a long bygone one. The philosophies of the parties have been over the years responsive to events, and in a sort of perpetual transition.

It is simply not possible to crawl back into a shell and blame the government for everything gone wrong. The public has come to expect a high level of services to be provided. Even skeptics of government these days, as Irving Kristol has said, at best hope for only a "conservative welfare state." The question is not whether we want to return to some fabled, and perhaps apocryphal, golden age of simplicity. Rather,

the question is which philosophy and program will best accommodate the social and economic changes and realities which at this point are inescapable and irreversible.

For the last ten years, Republicans have fantasized somewhat idly about the possibilities of an emerging new majority party. Although our Presidential candidates have sometimes risen above the 15 or 20% party registration to win a majority, we have nonetheless realized the necessity of changing traditional voting patterns and recruiting new members. Progress in such things will require a serious rebranding of the party image.

The secret of winning elections is not to fight blindly for a narrow ideological purity. This may open up the gates of Heaven, but those of the White House will remain firmly shut. Jimmy Carter has so disaffected a number of groups that once supported him—blacks, labor, women, Jews, farmers—that while some of these may not be natural Republican constituencies, they are certainly ready for a change. Bill Brock has with some success tried to persuade black leaders that the GOP is not to be written off; indeed, Richard Thornburgh in Pennsylvania won an unexpected victory in the gubernatorial race in part because his moderation attracted more than half the black vote. (For that matter, up until the 1930's, blacks voted predominantly Republican, owing to the lasting aura Abe Lincoln gave the party.) Labor, too, has given consideration in the past to individual Republican candidates. The fact that the 1980 GOP convention will be held in Detroit should be taken as an opportunity, if not an explicit message, that the party leadership supports a broadening of our base. We don't have to align ourselves with one group or the other, one class or the other. If the Democrats care to be divisive, we should be quite content to be cast in a role as healers.

New answers are being sought by our people in the face of unbridled inflation and the patent inadequacy of traditional Democratic remedies. Even if a consensus is now emerging in favor of long-time Republican philosophy, Democrats could win out, because in addition to their new image of fiscal responsibility they can boast an old image, too, of being progressive and compassionate.

But there is no reason Republicans can't step ahead to present forward-looking approaches in education, health, civil rights, rebuilding our cities, reforming civil service and welfare, and streamlining our defense budget. None of these are sacrosanct Democratic issues, anymore than fiscal responsibility was ours to monopolize.

Moreover, the Republican Party can champion the rights of the consumer of public services. The Democratic Party is so mortgaged to the interests of the public service bureaucracy that Democrats can not effectively match this potential Republican appeal. This advocacy of consumer sovereignty over public services can be manifested in education and health policy and in efforts to empower neighborhood residents and associations to improve their immediate environment. Once our party is identified in the public mind with consumer sovereignty, entrepreneurship and innovation, and neighborhood self help, we can reestablish the vitality that allowed the Republican Party to shape American politics for three quarters of a century. ■