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George Romney in 1968, from Front-Runner to Drop-Out, an Analysis of Cause

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GEORGE ROMNEY IN 1968, FROM FRONT-RUNNER TO DROP-OUT,
AN ANALYSIS OF CAUSE

A Thesis
Presented to the
Department of Political Science
Brigham Young University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

by
Richard Melvin Eyre
August 1969
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INTRODUCTION

George Romney, shortly after his landslide victory in the 1966 Michigan Gubernatorial election, found himself the frontrunner for the 1968 Republican Presidential Nomination. Throughout the nation, the mass media proclaimed him the favorite. Many journalists went as far as to call him the most generally accepted potential candidate of the century. Sundry opinion polls indicated that his popularity was even greater than that of General Eisenhower prior to the 1952 election.

Romney, at that golden hour, had never lost an election. His victories in Michigan had become more pronounced each successive election year. He had been elected Governor three times: in 1962 by 80,000 votes, in 1964 by 382,000 votes, and finally, in 1966 by a remarkable 527,000 vote margin. With each victory, Romney's coat-tails had appeared to grow longer until, in 1966, his personal magnetism proved itself by sweeping virtually every Republican on the Michigan ballot into office. All of this, as if to make itself more noticed, had taken place in Michigan, a traditionally Democratic state, a state usually controlled by Democratic labor unions, a state which, until Romney, had not had a Republican Governor for fourteen years.

In short, George Romney in late 1966 was atop a stunningly successful political career; he had a bright record as Governor, he had made very few noticeable mistakes, he seemed to be the key to the Republican hopes for the Presidency.
In March of 1968, this same George Romney stepped up to a microphone in Washington D. C. and announced his withdrawal from the Presidential race. In his own words, he had "failed to gain the support of the general body of the American people." His popularity had ridden a roller coaster from above sixty percent in early 1967 to as low as twenty-six percent a week before his announcement of withdrawal. Romney was, at that point, in such a hopeless position in the final stages of the New Hampshire Presidential Primary, that many of his advisors along with a private opinion research firm predicted that, had he remained in the race, he would have received less than twelve percent of the New Hampshire vote. Observers had noted that Romney's usual driving, dynamic nature had turned, in his campaign's final weeks, to an attitude of defensiveness and apology.

History may be searched in vain for a popularity decline so steep and pronounced as that which George Romney experienced. The frontrunner of January, 1967 had become the dropout of March, 1968. What had happened? What factors or reasons had been responsible for Romney's demise? The purpose of this thesis and the goal of its content is to answer these questions.

The popularity of George Romney and its rapid decline is indeed a political phenomenon. It is virtually unparalleled in political history. Because of its unique nature, it is a subject that merits examination and appraisal. To the author's knowledge, this appraisal has not been made as of the present time either in the form of a book, a thesis, or even a major article. The reason for this absence of literary analysis may be due to a general lack of specific knowledge and insight on the subject. As is the case in most campaigns,
particularly national ones, the most significant factors and inputs leading to Romney's decline were the "inside" factors; the occurrences and attitudes of which only a small handful of Romney staff members were aware. Therefore, any analysis of his decline by one not aware of these "inside" factors would, of necessity, be only a surface analysis, only a superficial treatment of the phenomena.

The author, as a member of Romney's Presidential campaign staff from the summer of 1967 until the campaign's culmination in March of 1968, had a chance to observe first hand a great deal of the drama as it unfolded. Elements which transpired prior to his involvement were consistently referred to and reiterated following his inclusion on the staff. In his subsequent capacities as National Student Campaign Director, Advance Man, and New Hampshire Home Headquarters Supervisor, the author was able to note the occurrences of the campaign, and to gain access to the opinions and observations of the eight or ten men who made most of the campaign's crucial decisions and who possess the most "in-depth" knowledge as to the factors involved in the campaign's failure.

With this background, the author undertakes the task of writing an analysis of one of the most dramatic popularity declines in political history.

It should be pointed out initially that the thesis of this presentation is an appraisal of cause. It would be easy to merely report the events of the campaign, to write an article on what happened, where, and when. Rather than concentrate on this type of a historical, chronological report, this thesis will seek to uncover and explore the reasons, both circumstantial and personal, for the
failure of Romney's candidacy. It is true that events and occurrences will have to be discussed in order to build a framework for analysis, but the reporting of these items is not to be the purpose nor the thesis of this presentation. Background material, both on the man and on his campaign, will be used and presented in order to firmly establish a basis for which to determine reasons and causes for Romney's rapid decline.

In 1966, the United States stood at a crossroads. Dissent over the Vietnam war was coming into full bloom, riots in the cities had been particularly bad that summer, fiscal problems abounded, and President Lyndon Johnson was rapidly losing the last strands of the overwhelming popular sentiment that had swept him to victory two years earlier. The country was looking for a change. President Johnson had escalated the war he had promised to end, he had begun to meet stiff resistance from congress in the domestic areas of his effort. The American people seemed untrusting and unconvinced that they were being told the truth about the war. Too many times Mr. Johnson had spoken to them with tones of optimism only to turn around and commit more troops and more money to a war that, to so many, seemed wasteful and meaningless.

As Lyndon Johnson developed this credibility gap, George Romney, in Michigan, seemed more and more to possess the capacity to fill it. Romney, to the press and to the American people, was a straight talker, a driver, a tell-it-like-it-is pragmatist. Romney was a Mormon, a moralist, a family man, and a man whose honesty and credibility seemed to radiate through any newspaper photograph, any press statement. Romney, to many Republicans, was the antithesis of Johnson, the answer
to America's cries for credibility, the bright hope for a G.O.P. administration in 1968.

The first mention of George Romney as a possible Presidential candidate came before he had even declared himself an official candidate for the Michigan Governorship. On December 16, 1961 he commented that he was "considering becoming a candidate for Governor." Immediately, U. S. News and World Report referred to him as "another Wendell Wilkie" and called him "a prime candidate for the 1964 Presidential banner."¹ From that time until Romney's announcement of Presidential candidacy on November 18, 1967, his political stock had experienced a steady rise.

George Romney was born in the Mormon colonies in Mexico on July 8, 1907, the fourth of seven children born to Gaskell and Anna Amelia Pratt Romney.² Times were hard in Mexico, and before young George had reached his sixth year, the revolution forced his family to leave the country of his birth. They migrated from El Paso, Texas to Los Angeles and then to Rexburg, Idaho. While in Rexburg, George graduated from grammar school as valedictorian.³ One might say that it was also in Rexburg that he experienced his first Presidential aspirations. According to a story retained in the family, the thirteen year old George Romney once was told by his younger brother that he could never be President of the United States. "I am the only one in our family who can ever run for President,"

³Ibid., p. 67.
said George's brother, "because I am the only one that was born in the United States." "Not so," shot back George, "Since our parents were citizens, we are all natural born citizens. I can be President." It is questionable if young George knew that his statement was to be near prophetic.

When the Romney's moved from Idaho to Salt Lake City, George attended Roosevelt Junior High School and then the Latter-day Saints University High School. In an attempt to uphold the tradition of a family of athletes, he played on various baseball, football and basketball teams during his high school years. He came to be known for his never-say-die spirit more than for his ability. During his Presidential campaign, Romney often quoted his high school football coach who said "George Romney has tried to do more with less ability than anyone I have ever known." During his senior year at the high school, George was studentbody president and, more importantly, met Lenore Lafaunt who was to become his wife and eventually one of his greatest political assets.

Following his high school graduation, George embarked on a two year mission for his Church. Between 1926 and 1928 he lived and worked in London and Scotland, preaching the doctrines of Mormonism to the British. This experience was a powerful input into the developing character of the young man. While there he held numerous

5 George Romney, speaking in New Hampshire Presidential Primary Campaign.
leadership positions and perhaps began to feel his ability to motivate and to lead. The mission field was a place of uncompromising integrity, of self-discipline, of goal setting and attaining. George returned home with broadened outlooks, with significant human relations experience, and with solidified views of world affairs and politics.

This interest continued as he enrolled at George Washington University in Washington D.C. He took mostly night classes, and spent his days in the office of U. S. Senator David I. Walsh where he became a tariff specialist. He did most of the Democratic Senator's research during the debates on the Smoot-Hawley tariff bill and was responsible for most of the speeches that Walsh delivered on the floor of the Senate.\(^7\)

His tariff work brought Romney into contact with the Aluminum Company of America. At this point, his interests seemed to be split between politics and business, and when the Aluminum Company offered him a job as a lobbyist, he saw the opportunity to accommodate both interests at the same time.

George's interest in Lenore Lafaunt had continued, and in 1930, when he accepted the Aluminum job, he asked to be assigned to the Alcoa office in Los Angeles where she was beginning her career as an actress. It wasn't long before he had persuaded her to give up her acting ambitions in favor of him, and on July 2, 1931 they were married in the Salt Lake Temple of the Mormon Church.\(^8\)

Having achieved his goal in Los Angeles, George requested that

\(^7\)Mahoney, op. cit., pp. 91-94.

\(^8\)Ibid., p. 98.
he now be moved back to Washington, and to his capacity as lobbyist. He stayed with Alcoa in Washington until 1939. His connections there led him into the area of automobile manufacturing and the Automobile Manufacturers Association. The Association had an opening in Detroit and offered Romney the position. He accepted, and became the manager of the Detroit office.

War intervened, and the AMA soon became almost completely involved in the productive efforts needed to sustain the Allied powers. Shortly after Pearl Harbor, Romney was named managing director of the Automotive Council of War Production. Almost simultaneously, in 1942, in March, he was made general manager of the AMA.  

Following the War, Romney found himself holding a rather prominent standing in the industrial world. Several offers came his way, the most significant two being from Nash Kelvinator and Packard. The Packard offer was more lucrative, but Romney chose the Nash offer because of the company's structure which appeared to hold more promise of rapid advancement. His appraisal proved to be correct, and he was a vice-president by 1950, senior vice-president by 1952, and in 1953 when Nash-Kelvinator joined the Hudson Company, George Romney was named president. The name of the new company—American Motors.

During his rise in the business world, Romney managed to remain active in governmental affairs. During the war period, in addition to managing the Automotive Council for War Production, he helped organize the "Detroit Victory Council" to lend support to housing, transportation

9 Ibid., p. 115.

10 Newsweek, February 19, 1962, p. 25.
and other war-created problems.

Romney, soon after taking over American Motors, took an active part in the formation of the "Detroit Citizens Advisory Committee on School Needs." This group proposed one hundred and eighty-two recommendations for school improvement, all of which were eventually adopted. Very possibly the success of this endeavor stimulated his political ambition and gave him confidence in his political ability.

In addition to his work for school improvement, Romney, during his pre-governorship days, provided leadership for: The Detroit Tomorrow Committee, The United Foundation, Detroit Children's Week, Detroit Boys Committee, United Negro College Fund, Project HOPE, and others. The question of whether these activities led him into elective politics, or whether he involved himself in these things because of political ambitions is hard to answer. Whatever the case, George Romney was drawn almost inevitably toward public service.

At the same time, Romney was being recognized nationally through his industrial and business accomplishments. He had become widely known as the "father of the compact car." He received one of industries greatest honors be being awarded the "Industries' man of the Year" award. He received this award not once, but four years in a row (1958-61). These were only a part of the many honors that began to let the public know who George Romney was and what he stood for.

Several traits made Romney appealing to those who read and heard about him. For one thing, there was Romney's physical fitness program. Romney feels that the "body is the temple of the spirit" and that it is each man's responsibility to maintain that "temple" in which his spirit dwells. This trait can be traced directly to
Romney's Mormon background. His early morning "compact golf" games (three balls for six holes, playing as though he were three players going against each other) and his early morning runs through the snow in the winter are almost a legend in the Detroit suburb of Bloomfield Hills where he lived.

In addition to this, Romney is an active family man. He has always been able to find time to devote to his wife Lenore and to their four children.

Last, but certainly not least, George Romney, even then, had the image of a deeply spiritual man. He did not work on Sunday, he did not smoke or drink, he held a high ecclesiastical position in his Church.

With these components forming his public image, is it any wonder that people in Michigan began to talk about Romney running for public office?

Whatever the reason, rather suddenly, late in 1961, people began to mention Romney as a candidate for Governor. John Swanson, the Democratic Governor at the time, had been in office for one half of his first term, and seemed to be pulling the state deeper and deeper into the fiscal quandary left by the prior seven-term Governor, G. Mennen (Soapy) Williams. Swanson was a young man (37) with a distinguished war record, but many people felt that he could be beaten in spite of the fact that Michigan had been governed by Democrats for fourteen years.

Romney was looked to by many as an innovator, as the father of the compact car, as a man of action who found solutions for problems and rammed them into effect. People encouraged him to throw his hat
into the political ring for the welfare of the state.

Back in 1961, Romney had been elected as a delegate from Oakland county to the Michigan Constitutional Convention, which met in Lansing from October 3, 1961 to May 11, 1962. During this period, he had served as vice-chairman of the Convention and commuted almost daily from his home in the Detroit suburbs, a distance of eighty miles, and had prorated his American Motors salary for the time off from work. All in all George Romney had great influence and significance in the calling and subsequent meeting of the convention. Michigan badly needed a new constitution, and most of the state's citizens realized it.

The new constitution, in its completed form, contained numerous significant alterations for Michigan's government. The Governor's term was lengthened; the former 120 State Boards and Commissions were consolidated into twenty principal departments; single-member districts were exclusively provided for; senate terms were lengthened from two to four years. The constitution was submitted to the voters in April and passed by a close majority.

Following the Constitutional Convention, Romney's public image, already bright, took on a public service aspect which gave it credibility and which gave emphasis to the "Romney for Governor" cries that were being voiced throughout the state.

Romney's first public comment on his potential candidacy came

12 Ibid., June, 1962, pp. 8-11.
13 Deseret News, April 2, 1963, p. 1. (The final count was 807,847 yes; and 796,223 no.)
on December 16, 1961, during the Convention. He said, on that occasion, that he was "considering becoming a candidate for the Republican nomination for Governor."\textsuperscript{14}

After weighing the alternatives and prospects for two months, Romney announced his candidacy on February 25, 1962. His national reputation was so strong by that time that his mere announcement of a try at public life catapulted him into the national limelight. Within a week, both former President Eisenhower and former vice-president Nixon commented on Romney as "A strong prospect for the '64 Presidential nomination."\textsuperscript{15} In looking back, it was truly phenomenal; a man who had, only a year before, declared himself a Republican was suddenly being talked about as a candidate for the Presidency.

Romney got his first taste of political opinion polls the week after he announced his intentions. A Michigan pollster published the first results showing Romney with 41 percent of the vote, Swanson with 50 percent, and nine percent undecided. Thus George Romney entered politics as an underdog, a role that he was well accustomed to from his experience of working himself up the business ladder.

In November, when the returns finally were in, Romney had won by 80 thousand votes, garnering a little over 51 percent of the vote cast. His campaign had been of the personal, door-to-door variety and Romney had learned that he communicated best to people in small groups rather than in large gatherings.

George Romney's great success during his first term as

\textsuperscript{15} Ibid., p. 25.
Governor was due largely to good fortune. A national boom in auto sales boosted tax revenue to an all time high. The state, which was 85.6 million dollars in debt upon Romney's election, was very nearly into the black by the end of his first two year term in office.\textsuperscript{16}

Romney's political momentum continued to grow until, late in 1963, his elaborate fiscal reform proposal was defeated by the state legislature. Many of the press felt that this setback ended his hopes of getting the '64 G.O.P. Presidential nod. Romney responded by saying, "I've got no political ambitions, but I am profoundly concerned about the problems of Michigan."\textsuperscript{17}

Behaving as though he meant this statement, Romney worked for re-election while Goldwater's forces rallied the support that was to overwhelm the '64 convention in San Francisco's Cow Palace. Romney's campaign for re-election in Michigan was extremely effective, and he rolled to victory, gaining a whopping 56 percent of the vote and winning his second term by 382,000 votes. After this victory, the Governor seemed more openly concerned with his national image. Trips to Europe and to Japan early in 1965 were only a couple of the things that Romney did to bolster his image as a man of international experience and knowledge. Many have since said that Romney's drive for the '68 nomination really began just following the '64 convention.

As the '66 campaign approached, Congressman Melvin Laird, a staunch Nixon man who thought that Romney's appeal was non-transferable, stated that "If Romney can win Michigan by a good margin and pull

\textsuperscript{16} Business Week, Volume 92, p. 78.

\textsuperscript{17} Newsweek, October 28, 1963, p. 19.
Senator Griffin through too, the '68 nomination will be his . As if accepting the challenge, Romney did just that, winning his third term by 527,000 votes and helping to elect not only Senator Griffin but also a host of other Michigan Republicans.

This, then, was the George Romney that emerged on the Presidential scene; a man who had never lost an election, a man who in every way looked the part of political success.

The following analysis views Romney's failure to win the nomination from three vantage points: (1) The public view. An evaluation of the reason held by the American People for Romney's failure. (These "reasons held by the public" are derived from press coverage which usually expresses the public view. This public view is termed "the 'outside' opinion.") (2) The view of Romneys own staff members. An analysis of the reasons which his own aides think were responsible for his political demise. (The views of his staff members are termed "the 'inside' opinion.") (3) The view of the author. The author evaluates the "inside" views and the "outside" views on the basis of his own involvement in the campaign and on the basis of personal correspondence with Governor Romney and staff members since the campaign. He then draws conclusions as to the actual "reasons." (The author's view is called the "conclusion.")

\(^{18}\) Newsweek, November 21, 1966, p. 35.
CHAPTER I

THE "OUTSIDE" OPINION OF ROMNEY'S DECLINE

The mass media records public feelings. It also influences public feelings, and sometimes creates them. The media then, is a good place to go to ascertain the most prominent publicly held opinions about George Romney's presidential demise. The New York Times, between March of 1967 and February of 1968, carried hundreds of articles dealing with, either wholly or in part, Romney's dropping popularity and with various criticisms of some phases of his candidacy.¹ A detailed perusal of this press coverage reveals that there were eleven "reasons" or potential reasons for Romney's drop that were mentioned more often than any others. Different writers emphasized different factors, but eleven possible causes for Romney's political decline were mentioned more than any others.² They were:

1. His "brainwashed" statement and other verbal blunders.
2. The fact that he entered the race too soon; he announced his candidacy earlier than he should have for best results.
3. Campaign finance problems.
4. His lack of knowledge of foreign affairs.
5. Overall bad strategy in his entire campaign.

² These 11, by actual count, were most prominent.
6. The conservative mood of the Republican Party (Romney was simply too liberal to be accepted by most Republicans, especially party leaders.)

7. His religion.

8. His defensive attitude toward reporters; his lack of ability to respond tersely to their questions.

9. Lack of support from other Republican Governors.

10. His refusal to "play politics."

11. Nixon's underestimated strength. (Nixon turning out to be stronger than Romney and his advisors thought he would be; both in the primaries and in the national opinion polls.)

The first of these oft-mentioned "reasons" is perhaps the most worthy of extensive comment. When Romney, on a late evening Detroit radio broadcast, said that he felt the administration had "brainwashed" him concerning what was really happening in Viet Nam, he touched off a stream of criticism and downgrading toward himself that did not ease up until his withdrawal from the race. A great many political observers called this single remark the turning point of his candidacy. The general reaction of the press was that the last thing that the country needed was a President who could be "brainwashed." The term itself was capable of arousing negative feeling due to its Korean War connotations.

3 Obviously there is some interpretation involved in determining what reporters are saying in their articles, but these eleven factors were mentioned more often than any others. The twelfth most mentioned "reason" was Romney's overloaded schedule as he tried to govern Michigan and run for the presidency at the same time. This "reason" was mentioned significantly less than the eleven listed here, thereby justifying the discussion of only the first eleven.
Was this verbal blunder really the crucial factor in Romney's popularity slip, or was the press "out to get him" so much by then, that they would have found something to attack him on no matter what he had said? This is the kind of question that the subsequent analysis of the campaign will answer.

Did Romney enter the race too soon? He announced his candidacy on November 18, 1967, about a year before the election, and was the first major candidate to do so. As the only major candidate officially announced, Romney seemed to bear the brunt of press attacks, while others, who in actuality were candidates, sat back and allowed the nation and the press to continue to urge them to declare their candidacy. Perhaps if Romney had done likewise he would have avoided the immense criticism from the press. This too we will examine as we look closely at the entire campaign. It is well to note that history would tend to negate this factor as a significant reason for Romney's failure. A study of the announcement dates of candidates in the last eight presidential elections seems to indicate no trends as to the most propitious time to announce candidacy (see Table 1).

Romney's religion was mentioned extensively by the Times in many different contexts, both positive and negative. Was his membership in the Mormon Church a factor in his failure? Here again, recent trends seem to indicate that Romney's religion was not a significant factor in his decline. Since World War II, the American people have become progressively more liberal in their views concerning a non-Protestant President. This more tolerant view is exemplified by surveys measuring the country's attitude toward potential Catholic presidents. Even before John Kennedy's victory in 1960, Americans,
TABLE 1
DATES OF PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDACY ANNOUNCEMENTS

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<th>1936</th>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stevenson</td>
<td>Nov. 16</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nixon</td>
<td>Jan. 9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kennedy</td>
<td>Jan. 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humphrey</td>
<td>Dec. 30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stevenson</td>
<td>July</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rockefeller</td>
<td>Jan. 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goldwater</td>
<td>Jan. 4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scranton</td>
<td>June 7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

particularly well educated Americans, were generally able to accept
the idea of a Catholic president (see Table 2). In the minds of
many political scientists, Kennedy's election permanently and un-
equivocally ended the Catholic debacle, and perhaps the entire
religion debacle in general. Kennedy approached the issue head on,
asked the people to vote for the man and not for his religion, and
they did.  

Of course, there is still some serious question as to whether
the American people would vote for a member of a cult or sect with
suspicious and threatening background. The point is however, that
Romney's religion, Mormonism, has become less and less suspicious in
most people's eyes. Mormons had a very high and disproportionate
share of high government offices already, 5 and are thought of in most
areas of the country as highly principled and ethical people.
Indeed, at a time when the country seemed troubled about the
"credibility gap" and the "arm-twisting tactics" of its current
president, it would seem that a member of such a notably scrupulous
religion would have, in his church membership, a rather formidable
advantage. It is true that the policy of the Mormon Church toward
Negros plagued Romney in some instances during his effort, but this
would seem to be the only creditable aspect of the claim that
Romney's religion was an important factor in his popularity decline.

Governor Romney did indeed have campaign finance problems.
Though the press was often not well informed as to the specific nature

4Theodore White, The Making of a President, 1960 (New York:

# TABLE 2

**STATED REACTION TO A SUITABLE CATHOLIC PRESIDENTIAL NOMINEE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>Negative</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Education (1956)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education Level</th>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>Negative</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade School</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Age (1956)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>Negative</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21-29</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-49</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50+</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Region (1956)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>Negative</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>East</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midwest</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Far West</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

of these difficulties, it was accurate in its implications, as will be developed in Chapter III.

The press was accurate in the other "reasons" that it mentioned most. Romney's lack of foreign affairs knowledge, his lack of an overall campaign strategy, his defensive attitude toward reporters, his refusal to "play politics," his lack of support from other Republican Governors, and his underestimation of Nixon—all of these were genuine factors in Romney's failure to gain the nomination.

As the following analysis of the campaign will show, the press was, in some cases, remarkably accurate in its appraisals, and in other cases, inaccurate if not naive.

Since the press generally mirrors the sentiment of the general public, it is likely that these eleven reasons are the ones that are most prominently held by the American people. Comparisons can now be made between these reasons and the reasons expressed by Romneys staff as to his political demise.
CHAPTER II

THE "INSIDE OPINION"

Even to people who understand his deep religious convictions and his iron-clad character, George Romney is a complex individual. To people who do not understand these character inputs, he is literally an anathema. To this day, many of Romney's closest aides fail to understand some of his actions during the campaign.

Most of the members of his presidential campaign staff however, particularly those from Michigan who have known him the longest and best understand the inner man, agree that there were certain discernible key factors that contributed most to his political demise. These factors, derived from the author's personal association with these men, can be put in the following list:

1. Leonard Hall, the campaign manager.
2. The Organizational problems, Romney's administration, or lack of it.
3. Romney's own personal commitment, the fact that he never really made up his own mind.
4. The "Teddy White Syndrome."
5. Romney's press relations, his attitude toward reporters.
6. The Detroit riots and their effect on his "briefings" on the important issues.
7. Improper handling of the "brainwashed" statement after it
had once occurred.

8. Rivalries and lack of communication and coordination between various elements of the campaign staff.¹

Leonard Hall

Even before his last election victory in Michigan, Romney had been meeting with Leonard Hall, the grand old man of the G.O.P. Hall had been national party chairman during the Eisenhower years, but had been somewhat out of the power picture since that time. Perhaps he saw, in Romney, a chance to get back into the mainstream of power. In any case, Hall dropped some impressive names, and Romney hired him without any consultation with his long time Michigan aides. This independent action by the Governor led to extensive in-fighting within the campaign structure. Mr. Hall, while possessing numerous abilities and contacts, failed to grasp the tempo of the country. Hall is a campaigner of the "old school." At 64, he seemed more suited and adapted to and more familiar with the methods of the 40's and the 50's. As John Byington, long time Romney aide and campaign manager of his last Gubernatorial effort, said, "When Romney hired Hall it was on the same plane as if John F. Kennedy had hired James Farley to run his 1960 campaign."²

Organizational problems

George Romney climbed to the top as an administrator, as a

¹Letters and tapes from campaign leaders to the author confirm these to be the eight most prominently held "reasons" in the minds of Romney's staff members as to why he failed to win the nomination.

²Personal communication (letter) from John Byington.
businessman, yet in his drive for the highest office in the land, he exhibited an almost total lack of organizational ability. No one in the campaign really knew who to report to, and there was no real communication in the organization, either vertically or horizontally. This fact is forcibly illustrated by the fact that during the entire campaign George Romney never once sat down with all of his key people, collectively, to discuss strategy, finance, or any of the other essential elements of the campaign. This organizational problem will be covered more thoroughly in the analysis of the campaign in Chapter III.

Romney's personal commitment

Many people who were close to the Governor, including the author, felt that the firmness of his resolve was a key factor in many things. Several of his closest Michigan staff members have said, in essence, "The run for the presidency needs, first of all, a candidate completely committed to himself, with solid confidence that he should be president." As one staff member said specifically, "the moment must come when the man stands alone, looks into a mirror, lays his ego on the line, and tells himself that he is really going to go for it." Romney, for some reason, it seems, never really made this strong, personal, private commitment.

"Teddy White Syndrome"

Since historian Theodore White became famous for his "Making of

\(^3\) Personal observation and communication with other staff members.

\(^4\) John Byington, op. cit.
a President" books in 1960 and 1964, a condition had existed in Presidential politics that Romney did not recognize and did not cope successfully with. The phenomenon is, simply, that the press and the sundry writers and reporters of the country, start watching candidates earlier, and closer. Some of the things that John Kennedy was able to do in relative obscurity in 1960 were extremely visible to the nation when Romney did them, even as early as 1966. In December of 1966 for example, it was being reported, from the Republican Governors Conference in Colorado Springs, that Romney was failing to get the support of moderate Governors for his presidential bid. This early scrutiny by the press did not give Romney the time he so badly needed to prepare himself to be a respectable candidate.

Romney's press relations

George Romney is not a man who can sit down with a reporter, sip a cocktail, and be a buddy. This factor hurt him greatly. The press, consistently given the feeling that he was above them and that they were his enemies, became exactly that. They began to pick at him more and more, and the more they picked, the more antagonized he became. The more antagonized he became, the less he was able to be confident in the presence of the press.

The Detroit riots

The riots during the summer of 1967 probably didn't hurt Romney in the public eye as much as they hurt him by simply consuming so much of his critical time. The Governor had planned to use his summer to

be briefed on national issues, and the riots completely prevented this by taking every minute of Romney's spare time. His plan was to meet with experts from various fields on an island in Lake Michigan during the summer, and thereby prepare himself to hit the campaign trail in the fall.  

**Brainwashed statement**

In an interview conducted on the Lou Gordon Show on radio in Detroit on September 2, 1967, Romney made a statement that, because of poor handling later on, became the symbol of his political demise. Romney had good reason for saying that he was "brainwashed" on the Viet Nam situation. In fact, there is some evidence that he simply lifted the term from an editorial that had appeared in the *Detroit Free Press* only a few days earlier.  

Romney later said that he had used the word on purpose in order to hit the American people with some impact. He had said basically the same thing several other times, only with the use of a milder word, such as "snowed." The less exciting words had not given him the impact that he wanted, however, so, on the Lou Gordon show, he said "brainwashed." After the word became an issue, most of Romney's Michigan people wanted him to meet it head on, saying that it was the American people who had been brainwashed, and that it was precisely the proper word to use since they were not being told the truth about the depth of our involvement in Viet Nam. Leonard Hall, however, prevailed upon the Governor to

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6 Later analysis in Chapter III sheds further light on Romney's intentions for these briefings.

leave the hot issue alone, to let it go whatever way it would. It went the wrong way.

**Internal strife**

Disagreements with Hall became more and more frequent among the Michigan staffers, and, as we shall see, contributed greatly to the downfall of the campaign. Two factions formed within the campaign; one consisting of the Michigan staff and the other consisting of Leonard Hall and the other people whom he brought into the organization.

Having looked briefly now at both the "inside" and "outside" reasons for Romney's failure, the analysis can now move to a direct, step by step evaluation of the campaign itself. This type of chronological study of the actual events of the campaign will provide the data with which to evaluate both the public opinion and the staff opinion. On the basis of the actual facts of the campaign, final conclusions will be drawn.
CHAPTER III

THE CAMPAIGN ANALYSIS

In the summer of 1966, as it began to appear that Romney would win his third Gubernatorial campaign by an overwhelming margin, he gained progressively greater status in national opinion polls. His Michigan campaign was in the capable hands of John Byington, and Romney was able to turn a part of his attention to the presidential decision which he had to make.

In August, he began taking occasional unannounced trips to New York. Generally there were pretenses of some sort for the trips, but in actuality they consisted of meetings with Leonard Hall, long time Republican leader and past G.O.P. National Chairman. The only people that accompanied Romney on these trips were Jack McIntosh, Walter DeFries, Dick Van Dusen and Max Fisher.\(^1\)

McIntosh, a former U.S. Congressman,\(^2\) had been a Romney staff member at various times during the Governor's administration while maintaining his active law practice as well. Until Leonard Hall's takeover, McIntosh headed up the potential presidential plans of the Governor.

Van Dusen, a Detroit attorney, and DeFries, a Political

\(^1\)Mrs. Romney and Peg Little, the Governor's personal correspondence secretary, also often went along on these trips.

\(^2\)McIntosh served in Congress from 1958 to 1960.
Scientist with a Doctorate from Michigan State, were well established Romney advisors.

Fisher, the millionaire head of a Detroit printing firm, had been Romney's chief fund raiser during the past two years. He was the head of the United Jewish Appeal on a national basis, and had vast fund raising experience.

As the occasional meetings in New York became more frequent, McIntosh began working rather closely with Bill Siedman, a partner in Diedman and Diedman, an international accounting firm. Siedman was not without previous contact with Romney. In 1962, at Romney's request, he had run for state Auditor General. At McIntosh's invitation, he began to handle the operations area of the formulating plans.

The New York meetings with Hall came about as a result of two primary factors: First, Governor Romney, and to an even greater degree Mrs. Romney, felt that it was important to be advised by someone with long time national experience. Mrs. Romney particularly seemed to feel that a "big name" was important in any kind of a presidential effort, even if the effort was, as the Governor put it, "only exploratory at that time." She did have a certain amount of confidence in the long time Michigan staffers, but she seemed to doubt their capacity to shoulder an effort as massive as a national campaign.

Second, Leonard Hall had partially lost the power base within the Republican Party that he had once enjoyed. Nixon had more or less ignored him in the 1960 campaign, even though Hall had been national Chairman during the Eisenhower administration. Since that
time, Hall seemed to have aligned himself more with Governor Nelson Rockefeller of New York than with any other leading Republican. At the time he and Romney got together, however, Romney was the undisputed front runner, and Hall, in Romney, probably saw the opportunity he had been seeking to get back at the helm of the Republican controls. This is not to say that Hall was ideologically opposed to Romney; it is likely, however, that he was more closely aligned both in ideology and in character with Rockefeller. Under the circumstances however, he went after the Romney chairmanship with vigor.

It is hard to know what the attitude of McIntosh and the other Michigan people was toward Hall at that point. Quite possibly there was some resentment, but Leonard Hall is very impressive when talking politics. He can drop the right names at the right times, he can talk of his personal relationships with past presidents, and his listeners usually leave his presence with a feeling of discipleship to the man, or at least with a feeling of confidence in his ability to successfully manage a campaign.

It is important to note at this point that Romney was neither committed nor decided as to his candidacy. He constantly referred to his meetings as part of an "exploratory effort" to help him to decide what to do. The pressures of the press, the polls, and his fellow Republicans kept nudging him closer and closer to an active candidacy, but he kept resisting and continued to state that he was "still
exploring."

As Autumn approached, the Michigan Gubernatorial Campaign continued to gain momentum. Simultaneously, the meetings in New York began to get more conclusive. In October, Willard Marriott and Cliff Foldger, both of Washington D.C. began to figure more prominently in the effort. Marriott, a Mormon like Romney, is the chairman of the board of the nationwide Marriott Hot Shoppes, and a long time Romney friend. Foldger, a Washington investment banker is a close friend of Marriott. He too was well acquainted with the Governor. The two men came in with great financial potential, expecting to raise and supply the necessary funds in the event that Romney made the decision to pick up the presidential candidacy banner.

As the November election drew nearer, and as his popularity continued to rise, the press began to set its own goals for Romney. "If he wins big in Michigan no one can stop him" was the general attitude of the media. Columnist Emmit Hughes of Newsweek magazine stated, before the election that "if Romney can win in Michigan next year by over 500,000 votes, no one will be able to stop him from gaining the G.O.P. nomination."

Romney's "coattails" were also becoming an issue of great discussion. Could he pull other Republicans into office with him? Could he get Senator Griffin, whom he had appointed to fill an

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3 As is often the case, the people applying the greatest amount of pressure to an announced candidacy by Romney were his close personal aides.

4 Romney and his close aides met fairly often, though not regularly, with Hall, Marriott and Foldger in New York and Washington during the last summer and fall.

5 Newsweek, November 29, 1965, p. 29.
unfilled term, elected to the U.S. Senate? These and other similar questions appeared constantly in the media. Romney and every segment of his life became more and more a part of the country's everyday news. The "Teddy White Syndrome" was coming into full and early effect.  

As the 1966 election day drew nearer, Romney's time was divided between his Michigan campaign and his national "exploratory effort." His allegiance, as well as his time seemed somewhat divided at this point. As Leonard Hall's plans moved forward in New York, the Michigan personnel were less and less included in high level planning and decisions. A battle between the "old" and the "young" seemed to be developing; between the young men who had run Romney's gubernatorial campaigns, and who felt that Romney owed them a certain amount of allegiance, and the old, symbolized by Hall, who felt that, by virtue of their experience and seniority, they were qualified to call the shots and to overlook the Michigan people who were pressing for recognition.

Lines, then, were beginning to form. However, not all of the Michigan people were lining up against Hall. People like Elly Peterson, the Michigan G.O.P. chairman and Larry Lindimer, long time Republican leader in the state, aligned themselves immediately with Hall, partially because they recognized that power was concentrated there, and partly because they were simply more in their own element with Hall. Mrs. Peterson, for example, is an old pro of the same variety as Hall. She had passed through the same stages, the same campaigns, and the same philosophy-forming experiences that he had, and she agreed

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6See supra, p. 24.
with him on almost every point. Mrs. Peterson, at that point, was particularly significant because of her rather great influence on Mrs. Romney. The two, in their dealings with each other, doubtlessly bolstered their favorable feelings toward Hall and toward the desirability of putting the campaign in the hands of the nationally experienced "big names." A man like Leonard Hall, who had been national chairman in 1952, before George Romney had even declared himself a Republican, fit this mold to a tee.

When election day 1966 finally arrived, Romney came through with flying colors. He won by 527,000 votes, a margin of 61 percent of the vote cast. Republican Senator Richard Griffin, an underdog until the last minute, also won and his victory was attributed largely, if not wholly, to Romney's coattails. The G.O.P. in Michigan gained five state senate seats, eighteen state House seats, and five seats in the U.S. House of Representatives. Most of the credit in all cases went to Romney. Newsweek Magazine commented on the outcome and on Romney's performance in this manner:

Romney did all that had been expected of him in Michigan . . . and more. He swept to a lopsided triumph over the Democrats in an overwhelmingly Democratic State. He cracked the labor vote (50 percent), and the Negro vote (34 percent) for the first time in Michigan Republican history. He carried protégé Robert Griffin to a handsome Senate victory over one-time Governor G. Mennen (Soapy) Williams, and boosted five hand-crafted, Romney-style G.O.P. Congressional candidates to upsets over Democratic incumbents.\footnote{Newsweek, November 21, 1966, p. 35.}

On the eve of the election, Romney appeared to be virtually unbeatable. The Newsweek article continued by saying:

Months ago, when it looked as if Romney's appeal was non-transferable, Melvin Laird, a congressman and a staunch Nixon
man, pointedly observed that if Romney could pull Griffin through, the '68 nomination would be his. Romney has passed the test.\(^8\)

Following the election, in late November of 1966, John Byington, the Michigan campaign manager, and Dick Headlee, long time Romney aide and personal friend, found themselves in Florida for a week of rest following the successful campaign. The two had been co-chairmen of the inaugural and now were resting prior to their return and suspected high-level involvement in the developing presidential campaign of George Romney. Byington, after a couple of days rest in the sun, picked up a copy of a weekly news magazine and realized suddenly that, in his own words, "all hell had broken loose."\(^9\) The magazine had somehow gained access to some important information leaks, and there, on the printed page, was the story of the battle between the young and the old within Romney's organization. Byington and Headlee denied the report emphatically to the press, as did all staff members, but in actuality, the article was stunningly accurate.

Excerpts from the issue included:

Already, his strategists are split over strategy. Former G.O.P. national Chairman (and ex-Nixon man) Leonard Hall has signed on with the Romney forces, but, according to knowing Republicans, he is in a jurisdictional squabble with Romney agent Jack McIntosch, an ex-congressman who is closest to the Governor. McIntosch wants, among other things, to organize a nationwide chain of citizens' clubs for Romney; old pro Hall considers citizens' groups more trouble than they are worth and wants to concentrate on county chairmen and delegates, the men with the power and the convention votes.\(^10\)

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\(^8\)Ibid., p. 35.

\(^9\)Personal statement by Byington to the author.

\(^10\)Newsweek, December 5, 1966, p. 31.
The same article went on to indicate some of the views of high level Republicans whose interest in Romney was becoming more intense.

Pennsylvania's retiring Governor William Scranton and some other moderates think Romney should softpedal his piety and concentrate on honing his positions. Romney has, however, according to one associate, "the deep feeling that he must emerge as what he is: a spiritually oriented, decent businessman who has spent his life as a family and church force."\(^{11}\)

Byington, for obvious reasons, was disturbed by the article and returned directly to Lansing to see the Governor. He walked in on Romney and told him frankly that he felt Hall's elevation and acquisition of authority was a great and potentially costly mistake.

Governor Romney was visibly upset. Apparently he had complaints coming to him from all sides, and he chastised Byington and told him that he was being poisoned by the rumors that were currently circulating among the Michigan staff. Byington retorted that he had been in Florida, hadn't seen anyone who could poison him, and had read it all in *Newsweek Magazine.* George Romney had not yet seen the article.\(^{12}\)

From that time on, the schism was more defined. Antagonism between the "old" and the "young" was more visible. Romney made one full-scale effort to bring the two factions together. On December 6, he allowed the official opening of his "Romney for President" headquarters in the Shoram Building in Washington D.C., and gave the go-ahead for a plan that put Hall in as chairman and McIntosh as Vice-Chairman.

Meanwhile, in Lansing, the Michigan people were going ahead


\(^{12}\) Personal recollection of John Byington.
with an effort of their own. Under the title, "Romney Associates" they plunged into the two major areas of research and scheduling. The research area was to deal with policy formulation and speech-writing. The scheduling area handled the Governor's itinerary outside of Michigan and weighed and selected from the speaking invitations that flooded the office.

From December 6th, Leonard Hall was chairman and overseer of all that transpired in Lansing as well as in Washington. In theory, the campaign at that point was divided by function, with Washington handling publicity, convention delegate acquisition and general public relations, and Lansing supplementing these plus doing the brunt of the work in the important scheduling and research areas.

Even though, by this time, some of the Michigan people felt disappointed in the amount of power vested in Hall, most realized that what the campaign needed most at that point was simply to have someone in charge. Up until that time, there had seemed to be no ultimate authority on anything. Lines of responsibility had not been drawn, no one knew to whom he was to report to or who he was to go to in order to get the go-ahead on things that he wanted to do.

Perhaps if Leonard Hall had taken full control at this point, when he really had the opportunity to do so, the ultimate result of the campaign would have been different. Hall, however, did not. Apparently he was still facing some animosity, and feeling it in return, in working with so many of the Michigan people. His authority to bring other people into the campaign was somewhat limited by their
Hall also, at that time, wanted to move somewhat slower than Romney and Rockefeller (who by then was actively pushing Romney) wanted or would let him move. Hall, from many indication, thought it would be wise to run a slowed-down, moderated campaign at least until Romney announced his official candidacy, but pressures from the public and from Romney's staff did not permit this.

Whatever the reasons for his reluctancy, Leonard Hall did not grasp control when he had the chance. Today, even among those who resented Hall from the first, there is a feeling that "if anyone had taken control in early 1967, including Hall, the campaign possibly could have been saved."

As it was, however, no one did take control, and the efforts went forward in a divided and non-unified way that left everyone in a perpetual state of confusion and frustration.

To firmly illustrate this fact, it can be pointed out that never, at any time during the entire campaign, was an overall staff meeting held. There was no instance when all of the responsible parties sat down together in the same room to decide the structure, the lines of authority, or the overall strategy for the campaign.

13 Mr. Hall, through his years and years of work within the Republican Party, had built up his own set of allegiances and loyalties to various people, and it was his natural tendency to want these people in the most responsible slots within the campaign organization rather than the Michigan people.

14 Today, with the benefit of hindsight, it appears that Hall was completely correct in his feeling that the campaign should have moved slower in its initial stages. He wanted to quietly begin to work on the probable delegates to the Republican Convention, knowing that they were the ones who had to be convinced before Romney could get the nomination. Mass organization of the public, in Hall's mind, should have waited until Romney was sufficiently prepared on the issues of the day.
Therefore, what was done was usually done on a piecemeal basis, and always lacked coordination and harmony with other things being done simultaneously.

This problem, it would seem, must be blamed on either Leonard Hall or on Romney himself, because they were the only two who had the authority to call such a meeting. Indeed, others proposed meetings of this nature, in lengthy memos sent directly to the Governor. No one seems quite sure what happened to these memos, but they were never acted upon. As the analysis of the campaign develops, numerous efforts made by various people to pull the campaign together, to give it the congruency and the unity that it so badly needed, will be evident.

While "Romney Associates" in Lansing and "Romney for President" in Washington struggled along, other semi-independent efforts developed. Under the direction of Dick Headlee, the volunteer and "grass-roots" arm of the organization began to take shape. Headlee, a past president of the National Junior Chamber of Commerce, possessed vast organizing experience and a wealth of friends and contacts across the entire country from his J.C. experience. He was an impeccably qualified man to handle the volunteer area. He broke the country down into the western, central and eastern regions, and began Romney volunteer clubs, college student Romney organizations, and community "Romney for President" groups in each region. Headlee filled in his organization rapidly once he got started on it. Manuals were published for everything from local fund raising to the organization and maintenance of small community "Romney for President" clubs.

At the same time that Headlee and others were developing the
volunteer corps for the general public, another organizational arm was forming a more specific purpose. The "delegate acquisition" facet of the campaign had begun to develop as a separate entity. Its purpose was simply to choose a qualified state chairman in each state who would have the responsibility to personally contact and speak with each potential delegate from his state to the upcoming National Convention. The goal, of course, was to commit as many delegates as possible to Romney very early in the game.

At this point then, in the early part of 1967, the total campaign structure looked rather formidable on paper (see Figure 1). In actuality, however, as we shall see, the internal problems of the campaign structure were becoming greater rather than lessening.

One area of growing concern was finance. As the following chart indicates, finance was handled somewhat independently of the rest of the campaign. Max Fisher, head of the New Monarch Company, a giant Michigan printing and industrial firm, was the finance chairman. Fisher was widely known for his adroit fund-raising abilities, and had helped Romney significantly in his Gubernatorial fund-raising efforts. Fisher was one of the earliest and most influential "prodders" trying to get the Governor actively into the presidential race. As Romney moved closer and closer to candidacy, and as his

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15At that time, of course, delegates to the National Convention had not yet been selected. In most states, however, most if not all of the delegates are pretty much pre-determined by their activity and prominence in the party.

16Primarily for religious causes, such as his chairmanship of the United Jewish Appeal.
VOLUNTEER AND GRASS ROOTS (Headlee, etc.)

ROMNEY FOR PRESIDENT. Wash. D.C. (Len Hall)

FINANCE (Max Fisher)

ROMNEY ASSOCIATES. Lansing (Byington, Cross)

DELEGATE ACQUISITION

WEST MID. EAST

Fig. 2.--Organization Chart
popularity continued to increase, Fisher became more and more selfish about the responsibility of fund raising. Fisher seemed almost defensive at many times as he tried to shoulder the entire money raising job himself. Sometime before the end of 1966 he met with Marriott and Foldger on his yacht off the Miami coast and discussed finance with them. His rather pointed opinion at that time was that he could and would control the entire effort. Unfortunately for the campaign, Fisher, a Jew, was also the chief American fund-raiser for the support of Israel in the Israeli War which began to brew at just the time that the Romney funds were needed most. As a result, Fisher was consistently urging frugality in campaign expenditures while he spent his most dynamic efforts raising money to send to Israel.

Walt DeVries, about that time, described the situation in a rather classic manner. Speaking of Fisher, he said, "The son of a . . . can raise six million dollars for war, but he can't put together one half million for peace." ("Peace," of course, referring to Romney's candidacy."

Fisher, in essence, became so wrapped up with the Jewish effort that finance follow-through became virtually non-existent. According to the views of many staff members, well-healed individuals were tapped for a thousand dollars for the Romney cause and fully

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17 Romney, following his election victory in Michigan, held his most commanding lead in the public opinion polls. At that time, he led President Johnson by a comfortable 54 to 46 margin in Newsweek's November 28 reprint of the latest Harris survey. Nixon, Percy, Reagan and Rockefeller all trailed the President in the same poll. Romney's popularity fluctuated in that same general area for the first three months of 1967.

18 Statement made to the author and others in Lansing in August, 1967.
expected to be asked for an additional ten thousand as the campaign progressed. These people in many cases were not even thanked properly, let alone approached a second and potentially more lucrative time.

Many of the more involved campaign staffers sensed the magnitude of the finance problem and made various corrective proposals. An example of these was an idea proposed by John Byington early in 1967. Byington felt, first of all, that the fund-raising responsibilities needed to be more spread out. He therefore suggested that either Milton Eisenhower or General Lucious Clay be publicly named the National Finance Head for the Campaign. Both had offered to do the job. Max Fisher would become the vice-chairman. Under these two, the country would be divided into five areas, each headed by a proven fund raiser, from that area, who could make the contacts and the follow-through. The western region, for example, would have been headed by the Driggs brothers, owners of Western Savings and Loan Corporation based in Phoenix. Byington called his plan "operation greenback." It was drawn up in the form of a lengthy memo, which, like so many of the memos of the campaign, somehow disappeared without action or deliberation.

Fisher, therefore, continued his individual struggle, and every facet of the campaign struggled financially. It is quite possible that, had more funds been readily available, many of the impending problems could have been avoided.

19 General Lucious Clay, at the time, was the National head of fund raising for the Republican Party and was working directly with National Chairman Ray Bliss. He did, however, unknown to many, make the offer to leave his national G.O.P. post in order to serve as chief Romney fund raiser. Fisher, realizing that Clay would have to be chairman, turned down the idea.
Dick Headlee, in his volunteer area of the campaign even went as far as to set up a separate fund raising element in the Western United States. He used the Driggs brothers (passed over by Fisher) and began a separate account aimed at financing the Oregon Primary. Headlee's effort was representative of the alienation felt toward Fisher for his lack of efficiency in the all important fund raising area.

By the spring of 1967, the still unannounced campaign and candidacy of George Romney had serious internal problems. Frustrations were growing, and nothing was being done to mend them. Why Romney himself never asserted his influence will be discussed in depth in the last chapter of this thesis. Whatever the reason, lack of coordination at all levels of the campaign was becoming evident.

Efforts continued to be made to clear the air, to put the ship back on course. Dick Headlee, in early summer of 1967, prepared a complete organizational breakdown proposal which he felt would define the lines of responsibility and eliminate the duplication and omission that was occurring with such frequency. Headlee, even though very close to the Governor personally, was unable to convince him of the need for this clarification. Mrs. Romney, interestingly, at this point, could see Headlee's idea, and its feasibility, more readily than her husband and expressed her agreement with the need to more clearly define responsibility.

It is important to sense the large amount of import that Romney's success or failure had in the minds of his staff members. When a man is standing in sight of the presidency, as Romney was, his every action greatly influences not only himself and his own image, but also the
future and the lives of all those involved in his campaign with him. Men leave their jobs, their occupational security, and hitch their wagons to the rather speculative star of a chance for involvement with the presidency of the United States.

With this in mind, it is not difficult to imagine the frustration of the Romney staff members as they watched his presidential ship begin to sink. As they saw the signs of leakage, each tried, in his own way, for himself as well as for Romney, to plug the leak. Leonard Hall, still reluctant at moving the campaign into full gear, balked and stalled at almost every suggestion. Max Fisher, preoccupied with the Israeli War, held the purse strings so tight that all actions were somewhat confined, and Romney himself, still seemingly undecided about his complete candidacy, pondered in relative seclusion and did nothing about the mounting organizational problems. In essence, everyone had decided that Romney was a candidate but Romney himself. Pressures from the bottom were either ignored or dismembered from the top, and the campaign floundered. Romney staffers, who had given up much in order to gamble on Romney running for and winning the presidency, went forward full steam. They had committed themselves. Romney felt their pressures and knew how much stock they were putting in him and in his candidacy. Romney, however, was still not committed to anything other than an exploration of the possibility of becoming a candidate. The problems created by this discrepancy in commitment were massive.

"Romney Associates," during the long spring of 1967, went through innumerable changes and reorganizations. Originally chaired by McIntosh at its inception in December of 1966, it had subsequently been headed by Siedman, DeVries, Byington, and finally Travis Cross.
Mr. Cross was a "big name." He had run a remarkably successful Oregon Senatorial campaign for Mark Hatfield, and was widely recognized for his public relations abilities. Mrs. Romney, still obsessed with the need for "big names" with "national reputations," had been pushing for the addition of Cross to the staff, and finally Romney made him an offer that he could not turn down. Cross was given $50,000 a year and an option to quit at every three month interval. He was also provided with a house on Michigan's Mackinah Island for his wife and family.20

The night that Travis arrived, the Lansing staff threw him a party featuring a big banner that proclaimed the slogan: "Welcome Savior Travis." No one was quite sure if the sign expressed a genuine hope that Cross could revive the slipping campaign or if it was mere sarcasm to another of the "big names" being brought in to transfuse the effort.

Cross came in full of hopes and ideas, but soon was to realize that things were too far afloat to be rapidly salvaged. Travis became the Governor's press secretary as well as head of "Romney Associates." He soon realized that the internal stresses of the organization were too great. At first he looked for a way to get out. Unsuccessful, he moved his efforts into the press area, and Byington took over the helm of "Romney Associates" once again.

People like Cross, through no fault of thier own, served to step up the already great internal frustrations of the campaign. Experienced staff members like Dick Headlee were working for twelve

20 Personal recollection of the author.
to fourteen thousand dollars a year while Cross was making fifty thousand. In addition to the monetary inequities, Michigan people found themselves working as errand boys for the new "big names." John Byington, for example, remembers being "tracked down" by Mrs. Romney's phone calls on several occasions. Mrs. Romney wanted to know why John hadn't located a cottage yet for Travis Cross's family to live in.  

At the same time that negotiations were going on with Travis Cross, Romney was also trying to hire Clifton White, mastermind of Barry Goldwater's pre-1964 delegate hunt. Some glittering offers were made to White but he declined them all. Just the fact that the offers were made had a similar effect on the Michigan staffers as did the whole Travis Cross episode.

As spring progressed into summer, the national press was becoming surprisingly aware of Romney's internal campaign problems. The most precise press comment was the already mentioned one from Newsweek that Byington and Headlee discovered while in Miami. It proved, however, to be only the start of increasing press criticism. An in-depth perusal of national news weeklies shows that December of 1966, and that particular Newsweek issue, marked a real turning point in the attitude of the media toward Romney. Prior to that time, it was difficult, if not impossible to find any negative comments toward Romney in the press. Just one issue before, in the same magazine, on November 28 one could read:

Romney stands a better chance of winning the White House than any other Republican since Ike. Among Republicans

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21 John Byington, personal letter to the author.
and Independents alike, George Romney is the clear favorite for the G.O.P. nomination.22

Until December Romney was the golden boy of the upcoming election. With Romney's vigor, his integrity, his orientation toward church and family, it was next to blasphemy to discredit him in the written or spoken word.

The change, however, was abrupt. Following that particular issue (December 6, 1966), almost every press article on Romney was either partly or wholly negative or sarcastic. From that point on, though he made some temporary recoveries, Romney went steadily down in the polls. This decline can be graphically illustrated (Figure 2).

The trend of press comments following December went from bad to worse. By March, people were reading things like:

A penchant for self embarrassment as well as failure to deliver clear-cut foreign policy pronouncements have convinced some observers that Romney is his own worst enemy.23

On the first of April, Leonard Hall opened a new "Romney for President" headquarters in the Seagram Building in Washington. The press reaction was negative:

Romney's headquarters opening was an unimpressive affair. There was no candidate, no band, no liquor, no girls, not even Leonard Hall who was in Florida for a funeral.24

A week or so later, Romney gave his first major Viet Nam address. The press,25 again, was anything but impressed:

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22 Newsweek, November 28, 1966, p. 31.
23 Newsweek, March 6, 1967, p. 34.
25 Newsweek magazine is used consistently here to show the consistent trend of the coverage of a single magazine. Other prominent news periodicals followed a similar trend.
Among Republicans

Among All Voters

The Five Leading Republicans

Fig. 1.—The Gallop Polls
Romney finally delivered his long-awainted pronouncement on Vietnam . . . He simply acknowledged what L.B.J. had said for years, that the conflict is complex. Romney has yet to show a sure grasp of nationwide domestic problems and he is an almost total stranger to the shadow world of foreign affairs. A master of primer-book rhetoric, he has yet to harness the kind of establishmentarianism ideologies and skilled ghosts who gave such assurance to John Kennedy's and Nelson Rockefellers speeches and position papers.26

In spite of the steadily declining attitude of the media toward Romney, the campaign went into early summer with him still holding his own in the polls and still looked upon as a strong and serious candidate. True, his speech was not always precise and elegant, but America was looking for an honest, upright candidate, one who put telling-it-like-it-is ahead of impressive verbage, one who's integrity outbalanced his eloquence. Romney still was, to a great many, just that man.

The problem, however, was that Romney himself, at that point, was still genuinely undecided as to whether or not he was a candidate. With the background we have established so far, it becomes evident that this fact was the root of most of, if not all of, the campaign's problems. Romney, a proven administrator, had failed to administer the campaign at all. While he continued to wrestle with his personal decision as to whether or not he would run, his campaign, long established in the minds of his subordinates, struggled along without real leadership or direction.

It was during this long period of indecision that Romney cultured his poor relationship with the press.

Newsmen assigned to cover a presidential campaign are generally

26 Newsweek, April 17, 1967, p. 31.
a crusty, tough and well informed breed. No one fools them, and no
one gets very far with them by the use of worn out platitudes and
mimic phrases. Most of the press, before Romney began traveling and
speaking extensively, genuinely liked the man. They seemed to see in
Romney a sharp contrast to Lyndon Johnson and they realized that a
sharp contrast was what Americans wanted.

As Romney began to travel more and speak more often on national
issues, thirty or forty newsmen and members of the national press
consistently tagged along. It has become traditional for potential
presidential candidates to provide transportation, accommodations and
even food for the pressmen assigned to cover them. Romney did this
and by summer he was constantly followed by a plane, a bus, or several
car loads of reporters and photographers from all of America's major
news services.

During the late spring and early summer, Romney, still un­
decided and unbriefed on national affairs, began to be pushed more
and more into national policy statements. As this occurred, the
press was quick to note his lack of confidence, his non-precise
comments, and his usually exhibited lack of depth in commenting on
issues. As the press began to attack him by the use of catchy
questions, Romney became naturally defensive toward them.

In an interview with Tom Foley27 and Tony Ripley of the Los
Angeles Times and the New York Times respectively, the author was told
that, "In general, reporters have no particular dislike for Romney."
"Actually," said Foley, "most of the press rather likes the man."

27Foley had covered Romney for two years by then.
"They like Mrs. Romney too, and the way that they are always together. Romney's problem is simply his apprehension and literal fear of the press. This makes his communication with us somewhat strained and usually rather poor. Governor Romney simply hasn't learned to be himself around the press." "When he does," Foley went on, "he will be much more liked by the press than his greatest opponent, Mr. Nixon."

Ripley added, "If Romney can gain back the confidence and self-assurance that I have seen in him at other times, and that he had in Michigan, he will break this problem that he is having with the press. It may be true that he needs some work on his foreign affairs too. What he really needs though," concluded Ripley, "is the calm, easy assurance that Rockefeller exhibits when he deals with us."

What Foley and Ripley apparently didn't fully realize was that George Romney's lack of assurance and confidence was stemming primarily from the fact that his own mind was still undecided as to whether he was yet a candidate. It was hard for a man as basically honest as Romney to sound completely confident and committed on something that he was not himself completely resigned to.

Tying in with Romney's lack of commitment was the decision he was facing as to whether to resign the Michigan Governorship or not. Romney ran the executive arm of Michigan much as he had run his business operations. Five executive assistants reported directly to him and he parcelled out the various tasks and followed through on them directly. By the summer of '67, Romney not only had these five people reporting directly to him, but also Siedman, McIntosh, Byington, Cross, and
DeVries of "Romney Associates," not to mention Hall, Headlee and others. This intense activity simply did not leave him the time he needed to make personal decisions.

The question was one of staying on as Governor and trying to campaign for the presidency at the same time or resigning from the Governorship, leaving Michigan in the capable hands of Lieutenant Governor Miliken, and making a total commitment to the presidential drive. Romney did not feel ready for the second alternative yet, and was having trouble handling the first. Seeing this, Walt DeVries suggested a possible third alternative or compromise. His proposal was that Romney take a temporary leave of absence from the Governorship, refuse his salary during the time, and let Miliken take over Michigan for the campaign period. Romney saw this memo, but, for an unknown reason, put off taking any action on the matter.

Another example of the lack of overall strategy in the campaign is the personal travel of Romney during the spring and summer. There was no provision made for outlining the areas of the country where Romney needed to speak, the areas where his popularity needed bolstering. The task was simply never assigned. As a result, when the sundry calls came in, requesting Romney to appear, some were randomly accepted, and some were randomly turned down. It was sort of a "first come first served" proposition without any regard at all to the areas of the country that most needed the attention.

As the summer progressed, many campaign staffers recognized the need to make some decisions relating to the rapidly approaching

28 Many Michigan citizens were becoming upset with Romney for spending as much time out of the state as he was.
presidential primaries. It was becoming apparent that Romney would not announce his candidacy officially until November or December, and there was a great deal that had to be done prior to that time in states that were to have presidential primaries.29

As with seemingly every issue, there was significant disagreement within the organization as to just what the strategy should be for the primaries. Most of the Michigan people felt that entering the wrong primaries could be disasterous. Romney's popularity was largely based with independent and even dissenting Democratic voters. In the Republican primaries, he would be forced to face Nixon on Nixon's home battlefield: the rank and file Republicans. Nixon's great strength was within the party, and to many, confronting him with only Republican voters participating, was a risk too great to take.

Late in the summer, Walt DeVries came up with another plan, this one relating to participation in the primaries. DeVries prepared the plan in conjunction with Byington, Siedman, and other Michigan people, and there was a rather general consensus behind it among the "Romney Associates" group. The plan consisted of three alternatives. The first two were considered very strong, and the third was included as a last resort. The three alternatives of the DeVries plan were basically as follows:

First, enter none of the primaries. Instead, make a statement indicating that the Romney campaign was to be a campaign to the entire country, not just to the isolated seventeen states that had

29The first presidential primaries are held in the early spring, thus time was short and decisions were needed.
presidential primaries. Indicate that Romney's campaign was to be a campaign to all the people; Republicans, Independents, and Democrats, not only to the Republicans who would be voting in the G.O.P. primaries. Because of these reasons, state that Romney would enter none of the primaries. In states that require the names of all potential candidates to appear on the ballot, simply do not campaign at all, thus keeping the entire effort on a national level. (This plan was favored by DeVries and most of the others as it provided a way to avoid dangerous confrontation with Nixon on Nixon's "home ground."

Second, enter all of the primaries but campaign in none of them. This would essentially accomplish the same purpose as entering none of them. Simply allow Romney's name to appear on all of the ballots but make a statement indicating that, since his campaign was to all of America, he would campaign to all of America and let the primaries fall as they would. (This too was an accepted plan to DeVries and the others because under it, they felt Romney could lose a portion of the primaries and say, in effect, "So what, I never was in those states, I was campaigning to the entire country.)

Both alternatives one and two, it was felt, would be successful. Number three was least preferred.

Pick carefully the primaries that Romney enters and hit those particular ones very hard, making sure of victory in the ones entered. (This alternative was considered the weakest because of the possible losses that could result without excuse and also because the opposition could say that Romney was afraid to enter the other primaries.
As it turned out, any of these alternatives would have been superior to what finally happened. Any decision would have been superior to no decision, and no decision was made.

In the absence of a decision or guideline, staff members went ahead on as many preliminaries as possible for the primaries. In Lansing, the preparation of a "book" for each primary state began. These "books" included the election rules of the particular state, the names of and essential information about the most influential people of the state, population and ethnic charts and tables, and sundry other information to facilitate a successful primary campaign if and when the Governor decided to go into that particular state.

The most pointed example of the indecision existing on the issue of which primaries to enter took place in connection with the Nation's first presidential primary, that of New Hampshire.

William R. Johnson, of Hanover, New Hampshire and Dartmouth College was widely recognized as the most adroit Republican politician in the state. He was known to favor Rockefeller for the presidency, but with some urging, both from Romney's camp and from Rockefeller, he aligned himself closely with Romney as early as the beginning of 1967. Johnson was and is a scholarly and thorough individual, and in those early stages of Presidential speculation, he delved into some extensive research relating to the question of whether Romney would enter his state's primary. Johnson administered questionnaires, he analyzed the current feelings of the state on various issues, he assessed the ethnic backgrounds of the sundry sections of the state. He then put his results in the form of a 100 page memo which he completed in February of 1967. The simple conclusion drawn by the
memo: Romney should stay out of New Hampshire.

No one seems to know what happened to this memo either. No one was aware of it until summer, and by then Romney had semicommitted himself to New Hampshire by allowing his staff to make some preparations there and by refusing to deny his candidacy.

In the case of the presidential primaries, there evolved still another ideology conflict between Leonard Hall and the Michigan staffers. Hall's philosophy was that local people should shoulder the responsibilities in the primaries. If a campaign was being waged in New Hampshire, according to Hall's inclination, New Hampshire people should run it. The Michigan people, on the other hand, realized the need for local involvement, but felt that the effort had to be run by knowledgable professionals with access to modern and sophisticated techniques.

Before going further into the New Hampshire primary, it is necessary to explore one other area: that of Romney's lack of preparation on the issues of the day.

Early in the speculation, plans were laid to use much of the summer of '67 for foreign and national affairs briefings. These briefings were to take place on an island in Lake Michigan called McKinah Island. Romney originally felt that if he were to spend two or three days a week there, during the summer, with top experts in various fields, he could come away well prepared to face the rigorous schedule that he would have once he announced his candidacy. Romney had been an extremely successful pupil of briefings during his Gubernatorial campaigns. Particularly in his first campaign, which was his first try for any public office, people were amazed at his
knowledge of Michigan and of the states' problems. He handled the press and fielded questions adroitly and with ease and accuracy.

Romney, then, had always been one to "do his homework," to be well prepared for whatever situation he might face, and with the McKinah Island briefings, his presidential effort was to be no exception.

These seminars were thoroughly planned and had taken considerable time to formulate. Many of Romney's most valuable staff members had put considerable time and effort into their preparation and planning. Through a long chain of circumstances and procrastinations however, they never materialized.

Early in the spring of '67, Byington, DeVries, and Johnathan Moore\(^30\) began to put together volumes developing each area of foreign and domestic policy for use in the planned briefings. The briefings were designed to include thirteen sessions of two or three days each, with one to occur each week during the summer. Eight of these sessions would deal with foreign affairs and five with domestic matters.\(^31\) The plan was that "Romney Associates" would prepare a volume for each session and get it to Romney at least a week before he went to the island for that particular session. The volume would include research into the area of discussion for that week, clippings from books and articles dealing with the subject, and other information in the general

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\(^{30}\) Johnathan Moore is a Kennedy Institute member and a long time student of and specialist in the Far East.

\(^{31}\) Actually, two of the eight "foreign sessions" were designed to deal with the military; to discuss such matters as an anti-ballistic missile system. As such, they would have had domestic as well as foreign ramifications. The plan, then, in detail called for six foreign sessions, five domestic ones, and two that would involve both areas.
area. Romney would go through the volume, giving himself at least a conversant knowledge of the subject for that week, and then go to McKinah for three days where he would discuss the topic with leaders in the field, imported from universities and elsewhere.

Work went forward on these volumes; all thirteen were in various stages of preparation by late spring, and contacts had been made with many of the "experts" who were to come and brief Romney. The invitations were quite well received, and many top names in various areas such as economist Walter Heller and foreign affairs expert Henry Kissinger had committed themselves to be there at the appointed times.

Romney, at this time, had offered little if any encouragement to the preparation efforts, and most of the staff had begun to doubt that the meetings would ever take place.

By spring the Lansing staff was holding staff meetings bi-weekly. In one of these meetings, in May, Byington brought the McKinah Island issue to a head by asking, "Do any of you really think any of these briefings will materialize?" The answer was generally "no." Byington's conclusion was, "This whole situation is ridiculous because our time-consuming preparation is being utterly wasted." 33

As the time for the first meeting drew near, Romney postponed it. Too many other issues were pressing, he said. The second meeting was also put off. Then came the Detroit summer riots.

The riots were, politically, an interesting phenomenon. Romney

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32 Meetings were sub-official, and poorly attended.
actually went up in the polls as a result of them, apparently as a consequence of the American people's dissatisfaction with Johnson's slowness in sending federal troops to Michigan's aid. The riots did, however, prevent Romney from ever attending a single one of the planned briefings.

This is not to say that no use at all was made of the vast amount of collected data. Romney did pursue it, and quite possibly it was of some aid to him. The actual meetings, though, the well planned briefings, the high level issue talks, never took place.

As the summer ended then, work was being done in all areas of the campaign: finance, delegate acquisition, volunteer mobilization, scheduling, publicity, and research. The kind of work that was taking place however, was disconnected and therefore, in many cases, inefficient.

No cation had been taken on the proposals concerning the upcoming primaries submitted by DeVries. Romney did finally give Hall a partial go-ahead for New Hampshire, however, and Bill Johnson, in spite of his 100 page memo advising Romney to stay out of New Hampshire, finally agreed to be campaign chairman for New Hampshire.

As the summer burned itself out, nothing of note seemed to be happening in New Hampshire. Byington, who by that time was primarily concerned with public relations, wanted to go to the state and see what was happening and, if nothing else, at least lay some groundwork for effective publicity and public relations. Hall acknowledged that this was indeed Byington's field, but, said Hall, not in New Hampshire. Hall re-emphasized his feeling that the "local people must handle it" and turned down Byington's request to go.
The date of voting in New Hampshire, the nation's first primary, was the middle of March. By early fall, most of the Michigan staffers, failing to see anything happening there, began to be very concerned. Finally Dick Headlee elected to leave the helm of his volunteer organizations and take a trip to the New England state. Headlee did this on his own volition, without assignment or acknowledgement from Hall. In Headlee's mind, it was time to take matters into hand, regardless of organizational structure. Headlee had already been working rather independently in the finance area and on arrangements for the Oregon primary. His semi-isolated efforts had been effective and his volunteer programs seemed to be the most vital part of the campaign at that point, so Hall made no move to stop him from going to New Hampshire.

Headlee arrived on the scene in Concord, New Hampshire, where Johnson had set up state headquarters, and found that, in essence, nothing was going. Johnson had a couple of young local New Hampshirites, who had no vision whatsoever of what needed to be done, running the office while he himself was off in Hanover preparing information for a computerized mailout that he hoped to send out before the voting.

Headlee was visibly upset; in his mind, it was organization and grass roots support that was needed there, not a facade headquarters and an overly sophisticated mailout. Headlee had to get back to the reigns of his nationwide volunteer movement, so he called in Robert Norsworthy, a former Junior Chamber of Commerce cohort and confidant,

34 Supra, p. 43.

35 Headlee, from the start, appeared to have more capacity to get along and see eye to eye with Hall.
and put him to work organizing a system of "home headquarters." Norsworthy and others that Headlee sent in went about this task, and by Christmas they had over a thousand of these "home headquarters" set up.

Meanwhile, the same autumn, Romney himself was somewhat upset about the slowness of the New Hampshire effort. He counseled with Rockefeller, who had faced the same primary before, and the New York Governor suggested that he bring in "Campaign Consultants Incorporated," (CCI) to help out. CCI had masterminded the brilliant "write-in" victory of Henry Cabot Lodge in New Hampshire in the 1964 Presidential primary. They had a budding reputation for effectiveness, particularly in New England.

Romney followed this suggestion and one of the three CCI partners, John Deerdourf, moved residence to New Hampshire and began to work directly with Johnson there. Deerdourf and Johnson worked on the research necessary for the campaign effort, and continued work on Johnson's computerized mailout. Norsworthy, Headlee and others organized the grass roots, and, for a time, it looked as if things were moving profitably in New Hampshire.

Meanwhile, in Lansing, Romney had at long last come to his decision to officially enter the race. Once he had decided, he moved directly ahead. On a rainy, windswept November 18, he stepped to the same spot where he had entered politics five years before and announced his candidacy for president of the United States.

36 These were homes throughout the state that would serve as places of literature distribution, a place for Romney to meet small groups, and a place to post "Home Headquarters, Romney for President" signs.
Immediately following his announcement, Romney had planned to declare Hall the official chairman and Siedman and VanDusen the two vice-chairmen. Siedman would take care of all operations, and VanDusen would handle research and preparation. This was to be a strong and obvious effort by Romney to bring the two campaign factions together. Under Siedman and VanDusen would have been eight lesser vice-chairmen, each in charge of a specific area of the campaign, and possessing complete authority to administer that area.\(^\text{37}\)

The night before the announcement, however, Hall and Larry Lindimer came in to talk with Romney, and before they left, they had convinced him to leave Siedman and VanDusen and the other Michigan people out of the top of the campaign picture.

If Romney had gone ahead with his planned reorganization, the results may have been quite different. The plan was one that would have given each staffer a specific area of responsibility, and would have given him complete authority to deal with that area in the way that he saw fit. This was precisely what the campaign needed.

For an unknown reason, Romney was persuaded by Hall and the new organizational structure never surfaced.\(^\text{38}\)

At this point, the campaign was very much adrift but perhaps

\(^{37}\)The eight vice-chairmen under this plan were to be mostly Michigan people. Byington, for example, was to be in complete charge of Public Relations, Headlee would assume complete responsibility for all volunteer activities, Johnathan Moore would handle international policy formulation.

\(^{38}\)It is true that this organizational structure was pretty close to the way that people were already operating, but the point is that, had Romney set this organization down as official, then, for the first time, each person would have possessed specific authority for a specific area.
the proposed revamping of the organization could have pulled it out of its tailspin and put it back on its track. When the structural change did not take place, it was like the driving of the last nail into the coffin.

Back in New Hampshire, the Christmas holidays were passing. Most of Headlee's people had gone home for a couple of weeks, and things were at a standstill. Early in January they were back, along with Headlee himself but support seemed to be dwindling. Nixon had always been strong in New Hampshire, and when he was in the state people flocked to hear him.

The second week in January, Headlee came back to Michigan with a report of gloom. "We are down to just the Mormons," he said, "and in New Hampshire, there aren't very many of those."

Romney answered Headlee's plea himself, and for the remainder of January and all of February, he and Mrs. Romney spent the majority of their time in the state.

The "home headquarters" idea had been pioneered in Michigan, in Romney's last two Gubernatorial campaigns. They had proved to be immensely successful, and seemed to be a natural for New Hampshire where most of the people are somewhat provincial, and would much rather go next door to a neighbors home to hear a candidate speak than to go to a meeting elsewhere for the same purpose. The theory seemed sound, but it failed miserably. While Romney trudged wearily from house to home headquarters, talking to perhaps 20 people at a time, Nixon was speaking once a week or so, to large audiences in public.

39 Personal observance of the author.
It seemed that for a Gubernatorial campaign the close, folksy, small group approach was fine, but for president the American people want someone just a little above that, someone with an aura, a mistique, not someone who will come into their living room and grovel with them on their own level. Nixon, in New Hampshire, had that aura, that social distance; Romney did not. As a result, Romney's slide gained momentum.

By the first of February, in desperation, the Romney forces had moved in mass to New Hampshire. From the dual headquarters at the Highway Hotel and the storefront in Concord, the state was divided into eight areas or districts, each headed by a staff member. When Romney was scheduled for that area handled by a specific staffer, that staffer would be in charge of the Governor while there. Romney would come in on a bus with Travis Cross his press secretary, followed by a full bus load of press members. The staff member would then lead him through his itinerary of meeting workers at plant gates, speaking in home headquarters, and occasionally in larger gatherings, and then send him off on his way to the next area and the next engagement.

Governor and Mrs. Romney both seemed well accepted wherever they went, and yet the Governor continued to fall further behind Nixon in the opinion polls of the state.

On March 11, an unexpected call came into the Concord headquarters from Romney himself. It was, he said, to inform the staff there that he was about to withdraw from the presidential race. Two hours later, in Washington's Hilton Hotel, Romney took the microphone and did just that. "I have failed to gain the general support of the
American people that I had hoped to gain," he said. Thus, in a bright, almost relieved manner, he ended his presidential campaign.

Romney had gone to Washington two days earlier, presumably to be on the television show "Meet the Press." He had sent for Johnson, deliberated with him and with Hall and had made his decision to withdraw. He felt that a bad defeat in New Hampshire would not only knock him out of the race, but would destroy what influence he had left with reference to the party and to the formulation of the parties platform at the convention.

When word of the withdrawal got to New Hampshire, there was only a couple of hours left before the time that Romney said he would announce his pull-out publicly. Headlee and Byington, true to their character, immediately began a crash effort to get the Governor to change his mind. They and the other staffers in the office sent telegrams to the Governor in Washington indicating that they thought the polls were not accurate, and that there was still a chance for a good showing in New Hampshire.

The staff members should have known Romney better. When the man does decide to do something, he does it. George Romney had decided to withdraw.

The foregoing chronological digest of campaign happenings has steered itself relatively clear of analysis or value judgement. In the following chapter this history will be transformed and divided into its component parts in relation to an analysis of the causes or reasons for political decline that were involved.
CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSIONS

Having completed a chronological overview of the campaign, it is now possible to draw final conclusions regarding Romney's decline, and back them up with established data.

The listing of the actual reasons for Romney's failure corresponds in some instances to the generally held public opinions regarding it. It corresponds in many instances to the feelings of most of the "insiders" of his campaign. In sum, the real "reasons" for Romney's failure to conduct a successful campaign, based on the foregoing campaign history, along with a detailed analysis of each, follows.

1. The "Teddy White Syndrome" combined with,

2. Romney's inability to decide unequivocally on his candidacy, accompanied by his actions of allowing his subordinates to move his "campaign" along without this solid commitment to candidacy, which led to:

3. Strained and defensive relations with the press because of Romney's lack of preparedness on foreign and domestic issues; because of his failure to hold briefings and learning sessions. This led to:

4. The media's attack on Romney's "Brainwashed" statement.

5. Number two also led to the almost unbelievable fact that,
at no time, was an overall strategy developed; nor were the key people ever assembled to discuss strategy.

6. Number two also led to the division and competition between Leonard Hall and the "old guard" of the campaign, and the young Michigan people, which, consequently caused:

7. All of the middle management positions of the campaign structure to be filled as the result of two factions working against each other. Thus, each time any position in the campaign was filled, someone else in the campaign was offended and alienated.

8. Number six also led to the alienation and lack of effectiveness of McIntosh, Siedman, and Marriott, and, to a lesser extent, Headlee, Byington, Cross, DeVries, Van Dusen and others.

9. Number six was compounded by the fact that Romney never really understood who his "friends" were, and was therefore swayed back and forth in his search for advice by personally ambitious people not really interested in his success or failure and also by people without any working knowledge of politics. (i.e., Fisher and Marriott were and are almost completely apolitical people.)

10. Finance problems: Max Fisher's failures and oversights in this area, compounded by:

11. Willard Marriott's heart attack which forced him to give up the portion of the financial responsibility he was carrying and the influence that he might have had on Fisher in persuading him to handle the fund-raising
area in a better and more effective way.

12. Improper initial assessment of Romney's public image and subsequent wrong decisions on how to present him to the public during the campaign. (Particularly at his candidacy announcement and just following his "brain-washed" statement.)

13. Romney's lack of ability to create a working organization and a functioning campaign framework and structure; his inability to set up a working blueprint, both of people and of strategies.

14. The fact that, even after his announcement of candidacy, Romney was never totally committed to the effort and was, therefore, unable to control:

15. Rifts and differences among his staff concerning the primaries, particularly the New Hampshire one.

16. Romney's mistake in even entering the New Hampshire primary.

17. Number fourteen also caused Romney to fail to ever really delegate sufficient authority for anyone (except Hall) to act independently and forceably.

18. Number fourteen also led to the fact that Romney's decision-making priorities were out of whack; the smallest and most insignificant decisions that should have been left in the hands of lower members of the staff often took hours, days, and even months of meetings, memos and communications of the higher powers, often including the Governor. This kept everyone "mired in
minutia." Sometimes these small decisions would be made over and over again or would be revised and then revised again, and then revised again.

On the other hand, some of the most significant decisions over important matters were either never made, or were made with no consultation even with the people directly involved. Some of these instances were so severe that they left the staff "reeling in disbelief."

19. Romney's lack of support from other Republican Governors, brought on by his lack of ability to communicate with them.

20. Nixon's beautifully planned and executed campaign plus the lack of ability of other segments within the Republican party to either find or unite behind a single individual who could give Nixon a real run for his money.

Many of these final "reasons" have been well verified already in the previous chapter. On some, however, final, conclusive points may still be pointedly elaborated and expanded.

*The Teddy White Syndrome*\(^1\) which has already been explained, was not a problem in and of itself as much as it was in connection with Romney's lack of recognition of it. Had Romney realized how intense and demanding his press coverage was to be, he would have realized that he had only two possible courses of action: (1) to decide on his candidacy, at least within his own mind very early, and thereby prepare himself for the early and demanding scrutinization of the

\(^1\)Supra, pp. 24-25.
press, or (2) to completely curtail all of the presidential activities of himself and his staff until he had come to a decision to run, and prepared himself fully.

Romney's failure to anticipate the extensive early press coverage (the Teddy White Syndrome) simply resulted in his failure to take action to combat it. This oversight was perhaps the first significant mistake he made.

*Romney's inability to decide* in his own mind concerning his candidacy was complicated not only by the Teddy White Syndrome, but also by the anxious nature of his staff members. As already mentioned, the men who were closest to Romney had their futures at stake just as much as Romney himself did. They wanted Romney's candidacy long before Romney himself did. Had Romney recognized this fully, he could have, again, done one of two things: (1) made it clear to his staff that there could be no organization established until his own mind was made up, and therefore asked them to wait, to refrain from any efforts to promote his candidacy until he gave them the go-ahead, or (2) decided, at least tentatively, to run and assigned specific jobs to specific people.

As it actually went though, Romney tried to be too open about everything. He had not decided to run, and yet when a staff member came to him with a campaign idea that sounded good, he said, in essence, "Well, go ahead with it and we will see." Consequently, because of his hesitancy to discourage his staff's efforts, he let them go ahead on scattered, sundry programs, most of which were neither completed nor fully approved, and certainly not coordinated with each other.
Perhaps Romney thought that these efforts by his staff would help him decide, perhaps he thought that they would attract the press in a positive way. The result was quite the contrary.

What he ended up doing was to create a situation where he was saying publically that he did not know if he would seek the presidency while at the same time he was traveling in a huge chartered aircraft with forty members of the national press, making speeches and holding press conferences on national issues all over the country.

In summing up, instead of either coming out and seeking the nomination and taking the necessary steps to obtain it; or staying home and running Michigan while possibly trying to privately prime himself for a future campaign, Romney tried to do both.

The strained press relations that Romney developed caught him by surprise. He had enjoyed a fairly stable relationship with the Michigan press, and they had generally shown great respect for his character as well as for his solid grasp of state problems and issues. Romney had not gained these Michigan press relationships without effort. He had spent weeks being briefed on issues and discussing various alternative solutions before each of his Gubernatorial campaigns.

Although it sounds almost inconceivable, Romney completely refused in the Presidential endeavor to take any significant time for in-depth briefings or for discussions with people who could present alternative solutions and answers to him.

This oversight inevitably led to his public inarticulateness and his continual "reclarifications of previous clarifying statements."
Romney began to show his lack of information at a particularly inappropriate time. He was the front-runner, and he was the best target that the press had to shoot at. This is not to say that the blame rests with the press, because the real blame can be put only on Romney's lack of preparation. The press, however, does have a definite tendency to "get on the bandwagon" and once a few leading commentators had criticized Romney, the whole press corps seemed inclined to follow a very similar pattern in their own coverage of Romney.

Romney wasn't used to such "open confrontations" from the press, and made the severe mistake of verbally "lashing back" at them. Verbal battles resulted, and Romney grew progressively more defensive even to the well-meaning members of the press. It wasn't long before "pinning Romney down" or "catching Romney" on a point was the accepted norm among the reporters.

Some candidates somehow develop a relationship with the press whereby the reporters actually help them by asking questions in a way that the candidate can make his best statements and exhibit his most precise knowledge; with Romney, it was quite the opposite.

Romney, in an effort to be open and sincere, did too much of his thinking out loud, where everybody could hear it and take pot-shots at his thoughts and proposals before they had been discussed and refined in private. These thoughts should have been carefully combed over and polished before being exposed in public speech or press conference.

*Romney's "Brainwashed" statement*, made on September 2, 1967, in Detroit, was simply the focal point that much of the press had been
waiting for. Already convinced of his lack of knowledge of issues, they seized the opportunity to convince the nation of their views. In the opinion of the author if Romney had not used the term "brain-washed," the press would soon have found another equally effective focal point for their attack.

No overall strategy was ever discussed for the simple reason that Romney never called all of his factions together for a strategy session. Instead, the Governor talked exclusively to one or two people at a time and always told them not to say anything about the conversation or meeting that they had just had. This left the staff in a situation of little groups of people with little bits of information, not knowing to whom they could speak concerning the information they had. This factor alone was responsible for a great deal of the dividing of faction from faction and individual. The failure of Romney's campaign then, was not based on poor strategy, but on an absolute lack of strategy.

Competition between Leonard Hall and the Michigan people was rather inevitable under the circumstances. Both wanted the Governor to be more assertive and to make up his mind yet both wanted to be in control. Hall felt that the Michigan people were too provincially oriented, too used to dealing with things on a state level. The Michigan people, on the other hand, thought Leonard Hall was too old, was out of touch with reality and with the present, and was unskilled in modern political techniques.

The rift between the "old" and the "young" has been adequately discussed. Byington, Siedman, McIntosh, and many others were literally perged from power by Hall. Byington ended up handling part of
scheduling. Siedman ended up handling the comptroller duties, and McIntosh eventually was in charge only of congressional relationships. Thus Romney's effort to mix the new and the old people and their philosophies worked about as well as mixing oil with water.

The only Michigan staffer who really survived the storm in good shape was Richard Van Dusen. He somehow managed to stay above and aloof from the constant bickering between factions. This, of course, was partly because Van Dusen was merely an advisor—he still had his law practice and was not basing his entire future on the campaign as were so many others.

Romney found himself caught between being his old self and trying to be someone who would fit Hall's model of the "sophisticated national candidate." Romney is very poor at trying to be anything other than what he is, but Hall had him convinced that he had to shed some of his straight-forward directness and assume a more sophisticated demeanor. Sometimes Romney tried very hard to do this, other times he tried very hard to be his old straight-forward self. The result was that he was never quite either. He was in a twilight zone somewhere between the two and therefore pleased no one instead of everyone as he intended.

Middle management positions in the campaign were filled by the contesting that went on between factions. By the time Romney finally did announce his candidacy, such divisions had grown to a point that when someone was appointed to a position or responsibility (even though that was what the campaign needed most of all) someone else,

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2 Van Dusen is now Romney's Undersecretary of HUD.
from the other faction was offended.

Many Michigan staffers were alienated by slowness and indecisiveness. They, in most cases, stayed with the campaign, exhibiting a front of supposed loyalty, and genuinely doing all they could. Underneath the facade, however, many of them felt as though they were playing the martyr role, the role of the long time loyalist who is pushed aside when the big reward is in sight. This attitude, though subconscious in most cases, had profound effects on their ability to work cohesively for a single, undivided cause.

Romney really never knew who his friends were because he had advice coming at him from every direction. The task of discerning the opportunists from those who were really loyal to him and to his philosophies was an extremely difficult one.

Romney wanted to use others' advice to make his decision, but he wanted to solicit that advice at his own pace, and assimilate it at his own speed and make his final decision in a personal way. So many "friends," well meaning and otherwise, thrust such a constant stream of sundry suggestions at him that the task of discerning the gold from the flax became next to impossible.

Romney's financial problems served as a general "slow down" factor throughout the campaign. During the entire fifteen month period (December, 1966 through February, 1968) there was never a national financial organization; there was never a system set down for a solicitation of national funds. Again, there was a complete lack of a plan or strategy and Romney allowed himself to become the "captive" of one man--Max Fisher--who "guaranteed" that he would raise "sufficient" funds for the campaign.
The vast financial support that Romney could have tapped in late 1966 and early 1967 (when he was the front runner and had a national popularity of over 70 percent) was never solicited. People who weren't approached at that early stage felt shut out and later were unresponsive to fund-raising as Romney's popularity dropped.

There was never an official budget for expenditures until the fall of 1967. People didn't know from month to month or even from one day to the next just how much money would be available in a particular area or for a particular project.

Siedman pushed Fisher fervently for a more responsible fiscal policy and finally at least achieved a regular budget and an accounting of area expenditures in late 1967. Up until then, both fund raising and expenditure regulation were conducted haphazardly. "Then" was too late.

Speaking in terms of specific amounts, the entire fifteen month campaign was run on an expenditure of less than one and a half million dollars. The "announced candidacy" campaign (November to February) had a total budget of less than $700,000. These were grossly insufficient amounts. Rockefeller, by comparison, spent more money in his two month "crash campaign" (June to August) than Romney did in his total fifteen months.

A presidential campaign is basically a matter of "selling" a personality or an entity to the American people. Any marketing executive of any major corporation would instantly agree that one and

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4The author, following Romney's withdrawal, went to work for Nelson Rockefeller's campaign and therefore is aware of his expenditures.
a half million dollars is much too small of a budget to market a new product to the United States. Romney, as a man, a personality, or a product, was not marketed successfully.

Willard Marriott's heart attack in early 1967 left him virtually disabled for a time and sharply curtailed his fund raising efforts. It is quite possible that, had he remained healthy, he could have helped to "plug the gap" left financially by Fisher's inefficiency and involvement with the Israeli war.

An improper initial assessment of Romney's popular image by Hall and others resulted in some rather significant errors in planning.

Romney, in late '66 and early '67 was viewed by the masses as exciting, as a vibrant personality who turned all he touched into success. The public saw him, in general, as a charger, as the man who ran a mile every morning, invented the compact car, fought the "gas guzzling dinosaurs," slaughtered his political opponents in elections and backed down at nothing.

Hall, in his strategy, failed to utilize this asset at all; in fact, he completely ignored it.

The best example of this came with Romney's announcement of candidacy. Instead of staging an exciting announcement, with the usual balloons, crowds and hoopla, Hall and others called for a somber, rather austere luncheon. Romney announced his candidacy in an almost apologetic tone, and the nation looked on rather blandly.

Romney's personality radiates when he is animated, excited, or espousing a cause that is genuinely dear to him. Hall, instead of using this enthusiasm, tried to suppress it and build Romney into a man that he simply was not. Hall, in effect, tried to mold Romney to
fit his kind of campaign, rather than molding his campaign to fit Romney.

Another example, and perhaps the most significant, came with the "brainwashed" statement. Hall and Fisher convinced Romney that he had to play ostrich, put his head in the sand and wonder what all the fuss was about; pretend that the statement had been a slip of the tongue. This type of behavior was simply foreign to Romney's character and personality.

He had meant what he had said, and many members of the staff believed that the brainwash statement could have been turned to his benefit immediately. Romney, they felt, should have gone on television and stated that he had used the term on purpose to shock the American people into seeing that they had been brainwashed regarding Viet Nam and what was going on there. This approach would have fit to a tee Romney's personality and his image as a crusader for truth and credibility.

Romney's lack of ability to create a working organization surprised many people. This was the man who had risen to the top of the business world by virtue of his organizational ability, who had governed Michigan with organizational ability that was virtually unparalleled.

People failed to realize one very subtle complication: all of Romney's success as an organizer and leader had come in cases where a structure, a framework, already existed. Time after time, Romney had proven his ability to step into a framework, assess its strengths and weaknesses, and take precise and purposeful steps to make it smoother and more effective. For every job he had owned in church,
in business, in politics, he had a manual he had a framework. Never, in any previous case, however, had Romney proved himself in a situation where he had to start from scratch, with no existing framework of any kind.

Romney is a creative person in the sense of implementing and motivating much more than he is creative in the realms of framework and organization. If Romney had been given a manual, a blueprint, for a successful campaign, no one could have implemented it better; but to create the manual, to develop the blueprint strategy was a different thing, and was not in the sphere of superior Romney abilities.

Even after his announcement, Romney was not totally committed to his presidential drive. As late as three days before he announced, he was still saying, in private, to staff members, that he wasn't completely sure just what he was going to announce.

The best evidence that he was not ever totally committed was his decision to try to remain an active Governor of Michigan while campaigning for the presidency. No man, regardless of the endowments which his Creator gave him can possibly govern a state, manage a presidential campaign, prepare himself intellectually for the presidency, and campaign effectively for the presidency all at the same time.

Perhaps Romney, being as religiously inclined as he is, felt that his prayers were never truly answered. Perhaps, in his decision to run, he never felt fully sanctioned by Higher Powers. Whatever the reason, Romney failed to exhibit the sense of total commitment that had marked his life in all the other things he had ever done.

The rifts and differences among Romney staff members, concerning
the primaries contributed to his final withdrawal, but by the time the primaries came, Romney was virtually "through" anyway. The implementation of the "home headquarters" programs, and other programs that had proved successful in Michigan failed miserably in the primaries. Time was not taken to assess the reasons for their success in Michigan in order to determine their applicability in other states and other circumstances.

Romney's mistake in entering the New Hampshire primary was the culminating blow which felled his candidacy officially. In rejecting the advice of William Johnson and others who warned him of Nixon's strength there, Romney drove the final nails into his political coffin.

It is just possible that Romney could have salvaged his candidacy if he had waited for the nation's second primary, that of Wisconsin. Since Wisconsin boarders on Michigan, Romney was better known there than in New Hampshire, and probably was much better liked.

New Hampshire is a strange state in many ways. The state has long been the first to hold a presidential primary each election year, and consequently presidential candidates on the streets are rather common place. Many times, Romney found people in New Hampshire unwilling to walk across the street to meet him—the people, realizing the disproportionate importance of their primary, want the candidates to come to them.

New Hampshire is anything but representative of a typical cross section of America. There is very little industry, and, except in two or three cities, the population is rural and provincial. Romney initially thought this would work to his good as he exhibited his folksy, door to door approach. As it turned out, however, it
takes New Hampshire a long time to get used to someone. Nixon had campaigned there three times before and people knew and liked him. In the slow-to-change New Hampshire minds, Romney could have never overcome Nixon’s popularity of sixteen years in three or four short months.

Romney’s failure to designate sufficient authority to anyone was the root of sundry small as well as large problems. The old problem of responsibility without authority came into play over and over again.

Romney’s decision making priorities, as illustrated throughout the previous chapter, caused undue concern over small matters and, more importantly, caused the complete neglect of many larger, more weighty matters. When he should have been drawing up an overall primary state strategy plan, for example, Romney was occupied with getting Travis Cross a cottage on McKinah Island.

Romney’s lack of support from other Republican Governors was a demoralizing factor throughout the course of the campaign. Early in the campaign, many people felt that the 26 Republican Governors were the strongest single force within the party and that they, if they could unite, would bring the nomination to one of their number. The support that was continually being expected by the press, never came from them for Romney. The reasons are many, and some are on a rather personal side.

One must first understand that George Romney had no "friends," or more accurately, no "buddies" among the other Republican Governors. Romney, in the criteria of most, is simply not a "friendly fellow." He is not the type of person that one would think to call to go on a
camping trip or a restful vacation. He does not know how to "relax" in the conventional sense of the term, he does not drink, he does not make "small talk" very well. All of these things, insignificant as they may seem, and indeed admirable as they may seem, served as blockaids in the communications of Romney and his colleague governors.

Romney went to the governor's conferences to work, he did not go to relax or to swap stories. Therefore, while most if not all of the governors respected and admired him, and his innate ability to be both creative and productive in his role as governor, they never thought of him as a "buddy."

This fact was well known and privately discussed by staff members who realized the implications it had with regard to deriving public or private support from the governors. Many ideas and plans were put forward to counteract the situation, but implementation never occurred.

Consequently, the staff was not overly surprised when Romney's active support among the governors narrowed down to Chaffee of Rhode Island and Rockefeller of New York. These two supported Romney not out of personal friendship but out of a very real belief that Romney was the only so called "moderate" or "progressive" Republican who could give Nixon a good race.

Nixon's underestimated strength was a final factor. Richard Nixon, having learned and retained a stupendous amount of lessons from his 1960 campaign, run a beautifully planned and executed campaign. Most of the problems of Romney's campaign can find their exact opposites in Nixon's effort. His people had a goal, they had precise plans to reach that goal, and they had black and white, precisely
outlined organization and responsibility delegation system to implement these plans.

These last twenty reasons (italicized), overlapping and tying in together as they did, worked together to create Romney's downfall.
POSTSCRIPT

How is it possible that a man who went over so well for so long in Michigan, and who made so few mistakes there, could fail so completely to sell himself to the American people?

To answer this one final question, we must realize that, even within Michigan, Romney was never really "in" with the Republican Party. His election victories there came not from the Republicans, but rather, in spite of the Republicans in Michigan. Romney aroused the deep emotional goodness and feelings of the independents and of many Democrats as well as Republicans. These were the people who elected him in Michigan—people who had seen him work in their state for years, who had seen his honesty in business, his concern for their state, who had learned to accept an occasional verbal blunder as one small imperfection in an otherwise almost perfect individual.

The great question of Romney's presidential campaign is why he forsook these people from whom he had derived his greatest and most loyal support. It is true that Republicans nominate Republicans and Democrats nominate Democrats and Independents nominate no one. Still, Romney's staff was aware, and so should have been Romney himself, that the Republican Party, still so conservative at the top, would not accept Romney as its nominee unless he was forced literally down their throats. If Democrats and Independents had been used more, if the backdoor had been used to "get to" the conservative Republican bosses, perhaps things would have gone differently.
The one other element, which, could it have been foreseen could have changed things, was Lyndon Johnson's withdrawal from candidacy. Had Romney been able to foresee this, he well might have remained in the race, banking on the feeling that the G.O.P. would have had to nominate a man with broad voter appeal to beat the new Democratic nominee. One of the reasons that Romney gave up as soon as he did was because he was convinced that Johnson would run again. He knew that the mood of the Republican Party was that "anyone can beat Johnson." Most of the party regulars, indebted to Nixon, had always wanted to nominate him, and could have been deterred only if they really were convinced that Nixon had no chance of winning. With Johnson still apparently in the race, and with his popularity slipping every day, it did indeed appear that almost anyone could beat him. This being the case, Romney concluded that the Republican regulars, not fearing defeat, would nominate the man to whom they owed so many political favors--Richard Nixon.

A casual reader of this thesis might set it down with the feeling that the author is casting total blame on George Romney and on his indecision. Thus, in conclusion, it should be pointed out that this is not the case. All twenty innumerated reasons were involved, and Romney can be directly blamed for only a few of them. In actuality the author deeply admires Romney and values his friendship greatly. In spite of this admiration however, and in spite of the other factors involved, the balance of blame must be shouldered by the candidate himself. The personal reasons for Romney's indecision and lack of decision may never be known more fully than they are innumerated herein and Romney may sometime come to be known as the man with the greatest chance who least wanted the presidency.
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The meteoric political decline of George Romney is unparalleled in political history and in the history of presidential campaigning. In the space of one year, the man evolved from the overwhelming presidential favorite of Republicans, Democrats, and Independents alike to a presidential drop out, criticized severely and even mocked by press and public alike.

There are many opinions as to why this phenomenon occurred. The press has opinions, the public has opinions, and the people closest to George Romney have opinions.

A step by step analysis of Romney's campaign casts light on these opinions and completely discredits some while validating and emphasizing others.

Romney's campaign had finance problems, it had personnel problems, and, most of all, it had a candidate who never fully committed himself to the campaign, who never truly and deeply wanted the Presidency of the United States.

July 23, 1969

Chairman, Advisory Committee

Ray C. Hellam

Member, Advisory Committee

Chairman, Major Department