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George Romney and the Michigan Gubernatorial Campaign - 1962

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GEORGE ROMNEY AND THE MICHIGAN GUBERNATORIAL CAMPAIGN - 1962

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 C. Fuller
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INTRODUCTION

"Politics" is a dirty word in Michigan. Being involved in politics in the Auto State places a person on approximately the same level as the operator of a numbers racket, a bistro, or perhaps one of Detroit's higher-class burlesque houses. To the average citizen of Michigan, a politician is a denizen of a hazy other-world who steps out of his natural habitat of shyster lawyers, rackets, bosses, gangster hideouts, secret passage ways, and corrupt labor union officials to buy enough votes to keep him in his lucrative position until the next election.

Into this scene steps George Romney, riding the White Charger of Virtue, and armed only with Honesty, Faith In The People, Belief In God, and Morality. Are these outdated, medieval-style weapons capable of subduing and overcoming the modern, well-used and highly effective armaments of Corruption, Graft, Lethargy, and Intrenched Machine Politics? This, figuratively speaking, is the central question posed by the Michigan gubernatorial election of 1962.

The author had the opportunity to observe first hand the various elements of this fascinating drama as they unfolded in the most unusual political career of this most unusual man. What follows is an effort to tell this story.

An important part of the Romney story has its roots in the
political conditions of the state itself.\textsuperscript{1} The 110-member House of Representatives is apportioned on a straight population basis with the provision that any county or group of counties is entitled to a representative if its population is equal to one-half of the current ratio of representation. The legislature is reapportioned to meet population changes every ten years.\textsuperscript{2} This gives the rural areas of lower population a proportionally greater representation than the more densely populated urban areas. As the Democratic party tends to draw its major strength from the urban areas, and the Republican party draws its supporters from the more rural areas, the apportionment provisions have tended to favor the Republican party. The Republicans have, therefore, tended to dominate the House of Representatives. In 1958, the Republicans lost their majority in the House for the first time since 1938, and then only by a 55-55 tie.\textsuperscript{3} Many of the Republican Representatives have been elected time after time to the House and because of their long incumbency, have failed to keep up with the political thinking of the more urban segment of the party. These "Old Guard" Republicans have continued to wield considerable influence in the legislature and have often proved more of an obstacle to the other segment of the party in legislative matters than the Democratic legislators.

\textsuperscript{1}Many of these conditions have changed with the adoption of the new constitution. These will be treated in some detail in a later chapter. However, as the Romney election took place under the old constitution, treatment of it is pertinent to our discussion here.


\textsuperscript{3}John P. White, Michigan Votes (Ann Arbor: Institute of Public Administration, University of Michigan, 1958 Supplement).
The constitution provides for a Senate of 34 members and defines the 25 senatorial districts outside of Wayne and Kent counties. Two Senators are allotted to Kent county and seven to Wayne. The senatorial districts are set by the constitution. The apportionment is also heavily favorable to the rural-Republican areas of the state. The same problem of the "Old Guard" that exists in the House also exists in the Senate.

Opposition to change from the legislature has become a by-word in Michigan politics. Part of the problem can be seen in the fact that three of Michigan’s counties, Wayne, Macomb, and Oakland, have 48 per cent of the state’s population but only 26 per cent of the Senate seats and only 43 per cent of the House seats. An increase in political power for these counties would obviously be at the expense of the other eighty counties, which now have the other 52 per cent of the state’s population, 74 per cent of the Senate seats and 57 per cent of the House seats. The potential conflict inherent in this situation is obvious.

Michigan has the "weak executive" form of government, wherein the people elect, in addition to the governor, seven other members of the executive branch. These seven officials comprise what is called the "Administrative Council." These officers are: Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of State, State Treasurer, Auditor General, Attorney General, Superintendent of Public Instruction, and Highway Commissioner.

Michigan is the only state in the Union that elects its Highway

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4 Citizens Research Council, op. cit., p. 15.
5 Ibid., p. ii.
6 Under the new constitution this number is reduced to four: Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of State, and Attorney General.
The entire Administrative Council, including the Governor, is elected for two-year terms.

As administrative agencies have grown, the appointive power has grown haphazardly with them. As a result, no specific method of appointment exists, but rather a system of conflicting methods. Some appointments are made by the governor, others by special boards, some by members of the Administrative Council, and still others by the legislature. There are some 120 separate state administrative agencies. Many are headed by boards and commissions only indirectly responsible to the governor. Numerous jurisdictional conflicts result from this system.

The last Republican governor before Governor Romney was Kim Segler who served from 1947-1949. From 1949 to 1963, a period of 14 years, there was a Democrat in Lansing who was continually in conflict with the always-Republican legislature. During this time, there were only two governors, G. Mennen (Soapy) Williams, now Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs in the Kennedy-Johnson administration, who served as governor from 1949 to 1960, and John B. Swainson, a Purple Heart veteran of World War II (in which he lost both legs) who served from 1961 to 1963.

At issue during this 14-year Democratic sojourn in the governor's chair have been charges by the Republicans of ever-increasing labor union domination and control of Democratic public officials and party goals and policies. The Democrats deny this and point to the support of the "common man" whom they represent rather than the

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7Citizens Research Council, op. cit., pp. 3, 4. Mississippi elects a three-man commission for highways, but Michigan is the only one that elects a single commissioner.
support of "vested interests" and "big business" which they feel the Republican party represents. This all adds up to a stormy political climate, many conflicts, charges and counter-charges, and many, many problems.

The average citizen of Michigan feels that a person has to be corrupt to fit into the political system and that if he is not corrupt when he decides to go into politics, he will have to become corrupt to get elected and to stay in office. A typical expression encountered by the author in interviewing hundreds of people during the Romney campaign was: "Why does a good clean guy like Romney want to get into a dirty racket like politics?" Perhaps an even more significant question would be "What will a good clean guy like Romney do in politics?" This thesis is an attempt to answer these questions.
CHAPTER ONE

"THIS ROMNEY GUY—WHAT'S HE REALLY LIKE?" 1

This question is significant. What compels a man who has reached the pinnacle of success in the business world, who is financially secure and who carries an impeccable reputation with him into the highest social and religious areas of our society, to risk losing all this in the rough and tumble world of politics? Perhaps a brief sketch of the life of this man will provide some clues.

George Romney was born in the Mormon colonies in Mexico July 8, 1907, the fourth of seven children born to Gaskell and Anna Amelia Pratt Romney. 2 When George was five, the revolution forced his family out of Mexico. After living in such places as El Paso, Texas; Los Angeles, California; and Oakley and Rexburg, Idaho, his family settled in Salt Lake City in 1921. While in Rexburg, George graduated from grammar school as valedictorian. 3 In Salt Lake City, George's father became a well known contractor, and George demonstrated considerable skill as a carpenter.

While living in Salt Lake City, George attended Roosevelt Junior High School, then the old Latter-day Saints University high school and junior college. As he was from a family of athletes,

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1A question asked almost daily of the Romney staff members during the campaign.


3Ibid., p. 67.
George attempted to uphold the tradition. He played on various baseball, football, and basketball teams during his high school and college days. While known for his indomitable spirit and fair ability, he never managed to match some of his athletically superior relatives.\(^4\)

During his senior year, George, then seventeen, met Lenore LaFount, a fifteen-year old brunette who was a high school junior. This was an important event for George as Lenore was to play an increasingly significant role in his life.

The next year, George was elected president of the student body at Latter-day Saints University. Some of George's classmates at LDSU were Frank E. Moss, currently U. S. Senator from Utah; Meridith Wilson, presently president of the University of Minnesota; and Richard L. Evans, who is now an apostle of the Mormon Church.\(^5\)

On October 22, 1926, George left for a mission to Great Britain.\(^6\) During his two years in the British Isles, which was spent mostly in London and Scotland, he served under both James E. Talmage and John A. Widtsoe as mission presidents. He held several positions, including that of District Clerk and District President, and was known by all as a dynamic, friendly, and exceptionally successful missionary.\(^7\)

Returning to the United States in 1928, George studied at the University of Utah for part of a year, and then went to Washington, D. C. where he enrolled at George Washington University. Taking night classes, he answered a want ad and obtained a job as a stenographer

\(^4\)Ibid., pp. 68, 69.

\(^5\)Ibid., p. 72.


\(^7\)Mahoney, op. cit., pp. 75-88.
on the staff of Senator David I. Walsh, the first Democrat sent by Massachusetts to the Senate since the Civil War.  

Not always adequate as a stenographer, George soon was doing research for Senator Walsh. He did all of the Senator's research during the debates on the Hawley-Smoot tariff bill and sat with him as he delivered speeches on the floor of the Senate. His numerous activities in this position gave him invaluable experience in government.

During the course of his work on the tariff research, George had come in contact with several top executives of the Aluminum Company of America. In 1930, they offered him a job which he accepted.

During his apprenticeship, he requested and was assigned to the Alcoa office in Los Angeles, where Lenore LaFount, his high school sweetheart, was working as an actress. He persuaded her to give up her career, and on July 2, 1931, there were married in the Salt Lake Temple. He later said this was the "best selling job I ever did."

His apprenticeship over, the newly married couple moved back to Washington, D. C. where George worked as lobbyist for Alcoa until 1939. During this time, he rose from a salary of $250.00 per month to something over $10,000 per year.

Irritated when he did not receive a promotion he felt he deserved, Romney accepted a position he was offered by the Automobile Manufacturers Association to head their new office in Detroit, which

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8 Ibid., p. 91.
9 Saunders, op. cit., p. 5. Mahoney, op. cit., pp. 91-94.
10 Mahoney, op. cit., p. 96.
11 Ibid., p. 98.
12 Newsweek, February 19, 1962, p. 25.
position he assumed in January of 1940. The AMA soon became involved in the war effort in support of the Allied powers, and shortly after Pearl Harbor, Romney was named managing director of the Automotive Council for War Production. On March 4, 1942, he was also made general manager of the AMA.

By 1948, Romney was well known in the world of industry. He was offered several positions by various leading companies, but he finally decided to go to Nash-Kelvinator in April of 1948. He chose this job at thirty thousand a year over a similar offer from Packard at fifty thousand a year because he felt the Nash-Kelvinator position offered him a brighter future. At Nash Kelvinator, Romney soon made a name for himself as a fighter and a man with good ideas. In January of 1953, he was named executive vice-president of the company.

He was instrumental in effecting the merger of Nash-Kelvinator with Hudson Motor Car Company to form the new American Motors Corporation. The merger was finalized on May 1, 1954. Upon the death of George Mason, Romney took over as president, general manager, and chairman of the board of American Motors on October 12, 1954. Since this time, American Motors has, under his leadership, moved from a position of bankruptcy to a position of serious competition with the Big Three. Many observers credit Romney with having "saved" the industry with his leadership of the "compact car revolution" which created American

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14Ibid., p. 109.
15Ibid., p. 115.
17Mahoney, op. cit., p. 165.
18Ibid., p. 172.
19Ibid., p. 184.
competition to the ever increasing amount of foreign cars imported into
the U. S. each year. This tide has been stemmed considerably by the
current American competition in this field.  

In December of 1956, Romney was asked by the Detroit Board of
Education to be chairman of a Citizens' Advisory Committee to advise
on school needs and to help solve the steadily worsening problems of
Detroit public schools. Although this was probably his busiest and
most challenging period at American Motors, Romney accepted and sub­
sequently exercised a great influence in the making of drastic and im­
portant changes in the school structure and especially in the procure­
ment and more efficient use of funds.  

In May of 1959, a month after the now famous "Payless Pay
Day" in Michigan at which time the State was unable to meet its payroll,
Romney and other prominent leaders of the state met together and formed
"Citizens for Michigan," a non-partisan group which suggested many
reforms, such as a modernized tax structure, and a proposal which
eventually led to the calling of a constitutional convention. Romney
was formally elected chairman of the group in September of 1959. He
served in this capacity until the beginning of his gubernatorial campaign.

George Romney did not originate the "compact car revolution." It had long been a dream of George Mason, Romney's predecessor as
president of American Motors, to build a small car to fill the needs
of the American public. The Nash Metropolitan is an example of
Mason's effort to fill this need. Most people in the automobile
industry credit Romney with the business and promotional know-how
to sell this idea to the public. As an example of his influence, the
term "compact," now standard throughout the industry, is Romney's own
term, coined in the process of selling "compact" Ramblers.

Newsweek, February 19, 1962, p. 25.

or notorious.

in February of 1962.\textsuperscript{24}

In 1961, Romney was elected as a delegate from Oakland county to the Constitutional Convention, which met in Lansing from October 3, 1961, to May 11, 1962.\textsuperscript{25} During this period Romney served as vice-president of the Convention and commuted almost daily from his home in the Detroit suburb of Bloomfield Hills to Lansing,\textsuperscript{26} a distance of eighty miles, and prorated his salary for time off from work.

On February 10, 1962, George Romney, after a 24-hour period of fasting and prayer, announced he would be a candidate for the governorship of Michigan. On February 12, 1962, he resigned as president and chairman of the board of American Motors, but remained as a director and vice-chairman of the board. Upon his election to the governorship in November 1962, he severed all ties with the company.

Although not a college graduate, Romney has received honorary degrees from Wayne State University (1959), Brigham Young University (1959), University of Utah (1960), Michigan State University (1961), George Washington University (1961), Macalester College (1961), Albion College (1962), Detroit Institute of Technology (1962), and Arizona State University (1962). In addition to these degrees, he has received numerous civic, industrial, and public service awards.

Faithfully devoted to his religion, George Romney believes a basic foundation in religion to be a necessity in forming the philosophy and value system of every person. In 1944, he was made Branch President

\textsuperscript{24}Mahoney, op. cit., p. 244.

\textsuperscript{25}Michigan Challenge, June 1962, p. 5.

\textsuperscript{26}During the return trip from Lansing (usually late at night), Romney would don pajamas and utilize the fold-back seat in his chauffeur-driven Rambler to get a good hour of sleep.
of the Detroit Branch of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and since that time has served in various positions of religious leadership in the Mormon Church as well as other religious organizations, notably the Detroit Round Table of Christians and Jews. Since its inception, Romney served as President of the Detroit Stake of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, resigning only after he was elected governor of Michigan.

This brings us to the present. What is he like today? How did he present himself to the voters of Michigan? How does he think, and what makes him do the things he does? Some personal glimpses might help:

George Romney, prophet of the compact car, Mormon Church leader and Republican candidate for Governor of Michigan, is a most unusual politician. He is more than that. He is about as remarkable a political phenomenon as has appeared on the American scene in a couple of decades.

George Romney is perhaps the most interesting and important figure to emerge on the Detroit scene in a quarter of a century.

These comments are typical of hundreds made about George Romney. Why do so many people who meet him comment on the "aura of greatness" he seems to have about him? What are some of the factors that have caused him to receive such favorable public reaction?

Fifty-five years old, 5 feet 11 inches tall, 175 pounds, trim rugged looking, he is an impressive figure with his graying hair, which is a rich "gun-metal" color on top, shading to a "frosty white


28 Mahoney, op. cit., p. vii (This was written in 1960, before it was known Romney would run for the governorship of Michigan).
at the temples. His ready and winning smile; his warm, powerful handshake, his habit of grasping the shoulder of the person with whom he is shaking hands and the aura of ebullient energy he seems to carry with him wherever he goes, all seem to make him almost an ideal political candidate.

Perhaps the most striking thing with which one is impressed upon meeting George Romney is his boundless energy. He seems always to be in a hurry. One reporter described him as follows:

Romney, whose normal walking gait approaches that of a practiced quarter-miler, strode through his pre-arranged tour, shaking hands and chatting with everyone in sight. Campaign aides tried their best to keep ahead of the oncoming candidate to distribute literature, but often found themselves panting along in his wake.

He is almost disarming when meeting people. Here he is at his best. During the campaign, he would descend upon a store, cafe, fire station, or any other place where he knew he would find a few people, announce that he was George Romney, and would begin shaking hands. His usual approach while shaking hands was something like, "Hi, I'm George Romney--I need your vote on election day," or, "I feel I can do a good job for you." Whenever his schedule left him a few minutes without anything to do, he could be found somewhere shaking hands and chatting with prospective voters.

Anytime anyone would ask him a question, he would stop immediately and answer it to the best of his ability. If his questioner were of an opposite political persuasion and wanted to argue, Romney was always ready, grasping the person's shoulder and shaking it occasionally to

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29 Newsweek, February 19, 1962, p. 23.

30 St. Johns, Clinton County (Michigan) Republican-News, August 3, 1962, p. 2 (The author can testify to this, as he worked as a Romney aide on many occasions).
emphasize a point, or poking his finger into the chest of his questioner to make sure he had his undivided attention. It was always difficult to escape the impression that Romney, though not always smoothly articulate, had ended up on top of the argument.

Occasionally, however, his sense of right would be offended, for example, when someone would refuse to shake hands with him. When this would occur, Romney would roar, "See what I mean about partisanship? This man won't even shake hands with me! This is what's wrong with Michigan!"31 Once, during a visit to the offices of the Detroit Free Press for a group interview, Romney accused a reporter of prejudice against him. This was more than the managing editor, himself a Romney admirer, could take. He jumped to his feet and yelled, "That's a ___ lie, George!" Retorted Romney, "The hell it is!"32 More than once during the campaign his temper caused him serious trouble. However, as a general rule, he was able to hold his composure quite well. For example, when Romney and August Scholle, Michigan's AFL-CIO boss, debated the question of apportionment, Mr. Scholle became livid with rage while Romney, unperturbed, suggested, "Calm down, Gus."33 During some of the TV debates, and other times when Romney was exposed to some rather pointed and many times calculated questions, those who worked closely with him and knew him would shudder as they would see his face begin to color. However, his anger usually appeared to take the form of righteous indignation, and the people listening generally felt he had a right to be angry. During questioning by union officials on a

32 Ibid., p. 22.
number of occasions, Romney would explode, "You don't want to hear my answers—I know your type—you know all the questions, but are not open-minded enough to hear my answers!"

Romney's close friends, who served as his advisors during the campaign, and those of his staff who participated in the decision-making sessions, soon found out about his iron will—sometimes they would persuade him on a point, but generally he would say, "We can't afford to tie ourselves to traditional methods—this is the way we are going to do it." All who worked with him agreed, it was Romney and no one else who was running the campaign. He seemed to have the facility to let all the small details stay in the hands of his staff, yet to have his finger on all the major decisions.

Romney generated a tremendous amount of respect from his staff and those who worked closely with him. His staff members never referred to him as other than "Mr. Romney" or some similar title showing their respect. His drivers and others of the staff who traveled with him, although most smoked, would not smoke in his presence, out of deference for his beliefs, as he had not asked them to refrain from smoking.

Many people remarked that he seemed to have a flair for the unorthodox and unusual, yet that he had the ability to make it all seem right and logical and just the thing to do. For instance, few political candidates have made a roaring success of door-to-door campaigning. Yet, one of the most successful and interesting afternoons of the author’s experience with Romney was spent going door to door, calling on voters and asking them to come to a meeting to be held later on in the evening at a neighborhood high school. Romney went from one door to the next, campaign aides, reporters, photographers, and children following him. He would knock, introduce himself, ask them for their vote, answer any
questions they might have and invite them to the meeting to be held that evening. The meeting was crowded to overflowing.\textsuperscript{34}

One of George's close associates remarked, "The more you see of George Romney, the more you realize his religion is the key to the man."\textsuperscript{35} Skeptical at first, the author came to believe this to be exactly true. His political philosophy is obviously grounded in the teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith and LDS theology as is plainly evident by a study of his speeches and remarks. An example of this is found in the belief that he holds and often expresses, that the Constitution of the United States is inspired of God,\textsuperscript{36} and that America is a land chosen of God as a "land which is choice above all other lands."\textsuperscript{37} His belief in the fundamental worth of the individual as God's greatest creation, which belief supplied the theoretical basis of Citizens for Michigan and much of his political platform, can also be traced to his Mormon religion. Phrases and ideas involving these tenets will invariably crop up in a political discussion with George Romney. Behind all these ideas lies a simple fundamental faith in God, to which his philosophical tenets can be traced.

Romney has the ability to get to the root of a matter and to discover, at least to his own satisfaction, "What is wrong," or, "What the trouble is." This he does occasionally at the expense of bypassing

\textsuperscript{34}During a brief lunch break, in which Romney consumed two sandwiches and a glass of milk in about 35 seconds, he remarked to the author, "Just like the mission field all over again, isn't it?"

\textsuperscript{35}Alsop, op. cit., p. 16.

\textsuperscript{36}Doctrine & Covenants (Salt Lake City, Utah: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1955), Sec. 101: 77, 80.

\textsuperscript{37}The Book of Mormon (Salt Lake City, Utah: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1955), 1 Nephi, 2:20.
some of the complicating factors in a situation. This ability served him well as a political candidate. Few who listened to his speeches failed to grasp what he was talking about. His statements are blunt, forthright, to the point. In fact, he finds it almost impossible to answer a question or make a comment without candidly saying exactly what he thinks.  

A comment typical of Romney's political philosophy: "The political parties are not run by the citizens any more, they are run by the special interest groups, and that's wrong." "Politics has developed a very low status in our society. The ethics of people in politics has been on the low side." His cure: "citizen participation" in government and a greatly increased "citizen awareness" of governmental processes. These ideas provided the theoretical basis for the "Citizens for Michigan Committee" whose actions led directly to the calling of a constitutional convention as well as many other needed Michigan reforms.

Romney feels that any large aggregation of power is dangerous to our fundamental governmental system. For this reason, he has advocated the break-up of such large corporations as General Motors, and has recommended the cessation of industry-wide bargaining in favor of bargaining on the individual company level. He feels industry-wide strikes are not only harmful but unnecessary. It is not meant here to convey the idea that, because many of these ideas are relatively

38 A possible exception to this could be the method with which he has handled interviewers' questions about the presidential issue. Here, on occasion, he has managed to sound somewhat like a politician.

39 Alsop, op. cit., p. 18.

40 In spite of this fact, many General Motors executives worked diligently for his election.

simple and uncomplicated, they are not valid, but merely to point out Romney's facility to get to the basics of a situation and to start from there to solve the problems.

Another Romney trait, his personal physical fitness program, can be traced directly to his LDS background. He believes the "body is the temple of the spirit" and that it is our responsibility to maintain our bodies as fit "temples" in which our spirits may dwell. As with everything else, he attacks this aspect of his life with vigor and purposefulness. His early morning "compact golf" games (3 balls for 6 holes) in the summer and his early morning runs through the snow in the winter are almost legend in the Detroit suburb of Bloomfield Hills where he lives. One key to his boundless energy is his ability to rejuvenate himself with short naps during the day--a daily necessity on his campaign schedule. These naps, from 20 minutes to an hour, seemed to be all he needed to keep up his brisk pace throughout campaign days beginning anywhere from 3:30 to 6 a.m. and lasting generally until 11 or 12 p.m.

An active family man, George could always find time to devote to his wife and four children. This wholesome family image, which included taking each Sunday off during the campaign to attend church with his family, proved to be a great asset to Romney's candidacy.

Especially of value to the campaign was Romney's wife, Lenore. When George first announced his intention to run for governor, Mrs. Romney said that she felt her greatest contribution to the campaign would probably be by "keeping things serene at home." However, after

42Romney once remarked to the author, "No man can do a good day's work if he is not in good physical shape . . . all desk workers need supplementary exercise to maintain peak efficiency."
the success of several public appearances she made early in the campaign, this approach was vetoed by Romney staff officials.

Early in the campaign the strategy adopted was to have Mrs. Romney "fill in the spaces" where George's coverage of the state was weak. In other words, Mrs. Romney's schedule undertook the project of supporting and sustaining the initial Romney campaign effort. In addition to this, she was nearly always available to fill in at the last minute when her husband was unable to fulfill some speaking assignment.

Mrs. Romney spent almost five months on the campaign trail, during which time she was accompanied by Mrs. Elly Peterson, the state GOP vice chairman and field services director. Her political tour, dubbed the "Hello Mrs. Romney" project, consisted of speaking at public rallies and luncheon meetings in all of the state's 83 counties. As did her husband, she traveled both by car and airplane.

Her political image seemed to have that magic combination of style, sincerity, and enthusiasm that caused even the opposition to comment on her apparent "sincerity" and "goodness." One newspaper commented that her success as a speaker was due to her "artlessness." According to Mrs. Romney, who admits that she is nervous before a speaking engagement, she just stands up and says "what's on my mind and in my heart." In almost all cases, she spoke without notes. Her delivery is rapid, articulate, and extremely enthusiastic. Her speeches generally reflect the current issues of the campaign, and her phrases and ideas in many cases are the same as those found in her husband's speeches.

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43 The Detroit News, July 29, 1962, p. 3-A.
44 Ibid., June 15, 1962, p. 3-A.
45 Ibid.
She seems, however, to have the knack of simplifying these ideas and bringing them to the level where they can be understood by her predominately female audiences. One woman commented, "during these political things my attention usually wanders, but not this time. She had the whole audience in the palm of her hand." Others expressed the idea that listening to Mrs. Romney was just like talking to a good friend about deeply held beliefs.

Mrs. Romney seems to have the knack of bringing everything to a real personal level. For example, she told her audiences of her deep pride in her husband and generally illustrated this with an example that most women could understand. Speaking of her husband's honesty, she said this: "It's sometimes embarrassing to be married to a man who won't tell an untruth, even to be polite. Sometimes I will kick him under the table when he is being too honest, and then he will ask me—right out loud—why I am kicking him." Most of her speeches follow approximately the same line of reasoning. Invariably she will talk of her husband's qualifications and abilities. She speaks of his "real genius" of being able to communicate and to bring diverse groups to agreement and tells of how she has never known her husband to lie to her. She speaks of his success in bringing American Motors from a state of financial crisis to that of industry leadership and talks of his success as vice president of the Constitutional Convention. She also speaks of his success and concern over his family and his successful role as a father.

In many ways Mrs. Romney was a complete contrast to her "opponent,"

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46 Ibid.
47 Ibid.
Mrs. John B. Swainson. Mrs. Romney, 52, a grandmother, thrived on the vigorous schedule of the campaign and often made speeches lasting as long as one hour. Mrs. Swainson, 35, and a mother of three young children, preferred talking to small groups on a person to person basis and often made speeches of less than three minutes duration. Both, however, are similar in many ways. Both women present an extremely striking appearance. Both are always appropriately dressed in the latest fashions and both reflect the same unswerving dedication and loyalty to their husbands' political beliefs. Throughout the campaign neither woman, as near as can be determined, ever said anything derogatory about the other or any of their political opponents.\(^48\)

Mrs. Romney has been an important factor in her husband's success. When they first met, as high school students in Salt Lake City, George was immediately fascinated. She was a member of a wealthy and influential Salt Lake family, and George had a difficult time impressing her. However, as in all other things, he persisted and after following her from Washington D.C. through New York City, back to Salt Lake, and eventually to Los Angeles, he finally persuaded her not to accept a movie contract she had been offered, and they were married in the Salt Lake temple July 2, 1931.\(^49\) From this time on, Lenore devoted her considerable talents to helping George ascend the ladder of success. She is an exemplary hostess and is generally equal to any emergency. These emergencies came often as her husband would characteristically bring home as many as 30 people for supper.\(^50\)

\(^{48}\) Ibid., October 30, 1962, p. 19-A.

\(^{49}\) Mahoney, op. cit., p. 98.

\(^{50}\) Ibid., p. 103.
During the campaign the Romneys' oldest son, Scott, was on a mission in England. He is now attending Stanford University. The Romneys' two daughters, both married, did not participate in the campaign. The Romneys' youngest son, Mitt, sometimes traveled with his father and other campaign aides, but was not an active participant in the campaign.

Most political analysts agree that Mrs. Romney, whose speaking style and public image were in many ways superior to that of her husband, was an extremely positive factor in his ultimate election. One of her admirers expressed his feeling, after Mrs. Romney had concluded a particularly successful speech, in this manner, "Mrs. Romney, is it too late to run you for Governor?"\(^{51}\)

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\(^{51}\)The Detroit News, July 29, 1962, p. 3-A.
CHAPTER TWO

HOW IT ALL BEGAN

As a result of the now famous "Payless Pay Day" in Michigan in April of 1959, many of Michigan's citizens realized that some type of action must be taken. George Romney was one of these.

In late April of 1959, George Romney and seven other leading citizens of Michigan met at a dinner at the Sheraton-Cadillac Hotel in Detroit, as one later described it, "to pool their frustrations." A second meeting the next month at the Student Union Building in Ann Arbor included 15 individuals who here decided to form "Citizens for Michigan." A few days later Romney called a press conference in which he announced that approximately a hundred individuals were being asked to join this group, not as partisans or proponents of any particular faction or group, but solely as individual citizens. In subsequent meetings about 300 of Michigan's leading citizens became actively engaged in working for the goals of CFM.1 Three basic committees were formed, (1) The Committee on Structure of Government, (2) The Committee on Government Services, and (3) The Committee on Finance and Taxation.2 In September, Romney was formally elected chairman of the group, a position he had tacitly held from the outset.

Using much of the methodology gained from his school board

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1Robert McNamara, later Secretary of Defense in the Kennedy-Johnson administration, was included in this group.

advisory committee experience plus the personal talents and abilities of the persons who had volunteered to work in CFM, Romney and this group vigorously began to study, analyze, and recommend changes and improvements in all areas of Michigan government.

Every possible precaution was taken to insure that CFM did not partake of the disabilities inherent in almost any other group then active on the Michigan political scene. For example, contributions were accepted entirely on an individual basis and not from any organized group. No contribution of over one hundred dollars in any given year was accepted under any circumstances. Persons of known connection or affiliation with any political party, political action group, labor union, or other similar organization were discouraged (though not prohibited) from active participation in CFM.

Among other things, CFM brought to light the following facts: Michigan's population increase in the ten years preceding 1959 was exceeded only by Florida and California. As one of the wealthiest states in the Union, Michigan's treasury took in more than a billion dollars in 1959. Although some industry had been lost during this time, much more new industry had been gained. Although there were many problems, not the least of which was the mounting unemployment, none of these was insurmountable. On the positive side of the ledger, 1959 automobile production was running considerably ahead of 1958 figures. Sales tax collections were among the highest ever recorded in Michigan history. Things certainly should have been better, but they were getting steadily worse.

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3 The unemployment problem was aggravated considerably by the closing of Packard, Hudson, and Kaiser-Frazer automobile plants that year (1959).

One trouble CFM noted was to be found in the structure of state government. Michigan's constitution, though revised somewhat in 1909, was in large measure drawn up in 1850 when the population was sparse and almost completely rural. This constitution, coupled with myriads of statutes designed to prop up many of its unsteady provisions, produced an ungainly monster incapable of concise and logical action in many areas. For example, many funds were earmarked for specific purposes such as highway construction and could not under any circumstances be used for other purposes.

Another problem of great moment was the impasse between longtime Democratic Governor G. Mennen Williams and the Republican-dominated legislature. Even in the financial crisis of April 1959, these two were not able to get together to break the stalemate. The first "Payless Pay Day" involved only 325 state employees including 144 legislators. However, by the end of the first week in May, 26,000 state workers were unable to collect their paychecks.  

A third major problem was that of taxation. The governor and the legislature could not agree as to the type, amount, and sources to be used in taxing Michigan's citizens. It was obvious to those members of CFM studying the problem that many glaring inequities existed and many archaic provisions still formed a major portion of Michigan's tax structure.  

The subsequent role of CFM in working for constitutional reform, tax reform, reapportionment, and other reforms was a significant one, and

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5 Ibid.

will be treated as it is pertinent to our study. CFM was a major factor in bringing about many important changes in Michigan government as well as bringing the level of politics in Michigan to a much higher plane. Romney's participation in CFM led directly to the next step he was to take in climbing the ladder that was to lead to the governorship of Michigan.

The story of the fight for a new constitution by the Citizens for Michigan organization is an inspiring story of democracy in action. In order to understand its significance to the campaign and the role played by George Romney in the calling and subsequent meeting of the convention, it is necessary to review briefly its history.

Article 27 of the Michigan constitution\(^7\) provided that the question of a constitutional convention could be put before the voters at any time by a simple majority vote in both Houses. This constitution also required that this question be submitted to the people at 16 year intervals beginning in 1926. A constitutional amendment in 1913 provided that the people could initiate a call for a constitutional convention by petitions signed by qualified electors of the state.\(^8\) These provisions indicated the concern of the framers that the constitution be revised from time to time to adjust to future political situations that could not be anticipated during the early years of the constitution. According to the constitutional provisions, the convention would have power to amend or revise the constitution to any extent it felt was necessary, including the drafting of a completely new document.

\(^7\)1908 version.

\(^8\)The number of signatures was to be at least 10 percent of the total vote for governor in the last election.
In keeping with the constitutional provisions, the question was placed on the ballot in 1926 and again in 1942. In both cases it was defeated. In 1948, the legislature voted to have the question placed on the ballot. This time it was passed by a simple majority of those voting on the question. The State Supreme Court, however, ruled that the constitutional requirement for passage was a majority of those voting in the election—not simply the majority of those voting on the question. Under the constitutional provisions, the question came up again in 1958 (at the 16 year interval) and again lost by virtue of the Court's ruling.

In both the 1948 and 1958 elections the League of Women Voters had campaigned strenuously for a constitutional convention. In 1948 the League was joined by many other civic groups, notably the Michigan Junior Chamber of Commerce.

When the 1958 vote was thrown out, a movement was started by these groups to have the question placed on the ballot in 1959 by legislative resolution. The legislature, however, failed to act and for a time the constitutional convention idea seemed doomed. Then in 1959, the state experienced its famous "Payless Pay Day" that resulted in much unfavorable publicity throughout the nation. Many of the problems leading to this situation were blamed upon constitutional restrictions which earmarked certain funds and which placed many illogical restrictions on both the legislative and executive branches of the government.

This event fanned the smoldering embers of constitutional revision into a roaring flame. Michigan's 356 daily and weekly newspapers and 109 radio and T.V. stations all got into the act. Not all favored revision, but the majority—especially those in the large metropolitan areas—did. They succeeded admirably in making the
citizens aware of the problem and its issues.

The League and the J.C.C. took the ball from there. They realized that before a convention could be called it would be necessary to amend the constitution to provide for approval by a simple majority of those voting on the question. Accordingly, a constitutional amendment embodying this change was drawn up and prepared in petition form. This amendment provided for the election of Constitutional Convention delegates on the basis of one delegate for each State Representative and corrected an obvious point of confusion by providing that the convention should convene at the capital city instead of at the capitol as was stated in the 1908 version of the constitution. The petitions were printed and the 3000 members of the League and the 6000 members of the J.C.C. began the leg work of obtaining signatures.

Meanwhile, in April of 1959, Citizens for Michigan was formed at Lansing and immediately began a close study of the constitutional convention proposal. In May of 1960, CFM endorsed the program of the League and J.C.C. and added its assistance. To this point these groups had succeeded in obtaining only 85,000 signatures and were seriously handicapped by lack of funds. The deadline (July 8, 1960) for filing petitions was only six weeks away.

CFM immediately raised $10,800 which was used for printing 100,000 petitions and mailing them to organizations friendly to the constitutional convention, which by then had been dubbed "ConCon." Next a coordinating committee was formed, and rallies and special events were staged throughout the state. With the added boost provided by the executive talent of CFM, more than 300,000 signatures were obtained by the deadline. The propositions proposed by the petitions

\[9\text{Only 231,000 were required.}\]
were presented to the people in the November 1960 election and were approved.

It now became necessary for the question to be put on the ballot in the April 1961 election. It passed by a simple majority of those voting on the issue. The convention was subsequently called, and convened in October of 1961.\textsuperscript{10}

The convention was held in the Civic Center at Lansing, and lasted seven and one-half months. Each delegate received a salary of $1000 per month plus expenses.\textsuperscript{11}

His interest whetted by the active part he had played in the calling of the convention, Romney ran for and was elected as a delegate to represent Oakland county at the Constitutional Convention. He began his term of service October 3, 1961.

Romney soon became one of the leading lights at the convention. He was elected a vice-president and wielded considerable influence in most of the decisions made regarding constitutional changes.

On Friday, May 11, 1962, the 144 delegates completed 136 days of deliberation and adjourned until August 1, 1962. At the August meeting, last minute changes in phraseology were made, and the constitution was officially submitted to the Secretary of State. Submission of the new constitution was the final act of the convention, and upon its completion, the convention was officially dissolved.

Changes made in the constitution were many and extremely significant. The net result was that the entire constitution was considerably streamlined, changed and shortened.

\textsuperscript{10}\textit{Michigan Challenge}, September 1961, pp. 3-5, 26.

\textsuperscript{11}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 20.
The executive branch was altered to a significant degree. The Governor's term, as well as those of the other major elected officials, was changed from two to four years. Provision was made for the Lieutenant Governor to be nominated with, run as a teammate of, and be elected along with the Governor. Most of the principal executive department heads, with the exception of the Secretary of State and Attorney General, were made appointive on the basis of expertise rather than elective as under the old constitution. Provision was made for the appointment of a competent Highway Commissioner. Michigan was formerly the only state with an elected Highway Commissioner.

The former 120 State Boards and Commissions were consolidated into twenty principal departments. The Governor now has the option to reorganize the executive branch, subject to legislative approval, to maintain the most effective and timely executive action.\textsuperscript{12}

The legislative branch was also considerably modified. The House of Representatives was to continue to be composed of 110 members, elected for 2-year terms. A new formula replaced the apportionment provisions with a precise mathematical formula, the same one used for allocating the national Congressional seats. Single-member districts were exclusively provided for. Provisions were made to guard against "gerrymandering."

In the Senate, the term was raised from two to four years. Four more seats were added making a total of 38. Beginning in 1966, the Senators will be elected in non-presidential election years as was similarly provided for the Governor, thus focusing more attention on state issues. The Senate apportionment provision is based 80 percent

\textsuperscript{12}Ibid., June 1962, pp. 8-11.
on population and 20 percent on area.

Reapportionment was provided for at 10 year intervals. A special bipartisan apportionment committee was provided for this purpose. A strong anti-discrimination clause was added, and most of the election details were left up to the legislature. The taxation, finance, and business provisions of the constitution were streamlined and made to provide more advantages to business in order to make Michigan more attractive in this respect.\(^\text{13}\)

In the judicial branch a unified, modern, five-tier court system was established. The legislature can now only create courts of limited jurisdiction. Previously it could establish any court inferior to the Supreme Court.

The number of Supreme Court justices was fixed at seven with an eight-year term of office. The Chief Justice is to be selected by the members of the Supreme Court. In addition to the Supreme Court, the other four types of courts created were: Courts of Appeal, Circuit Courts, Probate Courts, and Administrative tribunals with quasi-judicial status. The Justice of the Peace courts were eliminated, and the legislature was given five years to develop courts of limited jurisdiction.\(^\text{14}\)

Immediately upon the publication of the proposed constitution, Governor Swainson, along with other leading Democrats and labor leaders, spoke out violently in opposition to it. John C. Mackie, the Highway Commissioner, was appointed by Governor Swainson to analyze the new constitution. Soon Mackie and others who opposed the new constitution came up with the following criticisms of it. They claimed the

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\(^{13}\) Ibid., June 1962, pp. 6-18.

\(^{14}\) Ibid., pp. 11-23.
apportionment formula was "obscure and unclear" and that the legislature would have "blanket approval" to raid highway funds. The executive branch, the Democrats stated, was "seriously weakened." They pointed out that the right to elect state officials was taken away and that the Senate's power to obstruct executive appointments was expanded.15

Governor Swainson charged that the "most flagrant abuse" was the abolition of the office of State Highway Commissioner. The Mackie report also denounced the constitution by saying it was written "by a selfish few in secret meetings off the convention floor, and beyond the pale of public scrutiny, after agreeing to an open convention."16

From the very beginning, the constitutional battle was drawn along partisan lines. The Democrats used their control of the executive branch and their labor support to fight against the new document, and the Republicans used their control of the legislature, and their business and industry ties to fight for it. The Republicans charged that Commissioner Mackie had "forced" many of Michigan's highway builders and contractors to "contribute" to a fund to fight the new constitution.17 This fund did exist, but it was never proved that there had been any pressure exerted to collect it.

In addition to the Republicans, many non-partisan groups, such as civic committees, P.T.A. groups, and other organizations, joined forces to fight for the constitution. The efforts of these groups

15 The Detroit News, June 10, 1962, p. 14-B.
16 The Detroit Free Press, June 3, 1962, pp. 1, 2-A. Two possible reasons for this Democratic and labor opposition could be (1) they felt the reforms did not go far enough, e.g., they felt the apportionment provisions should be on a "one man, one vote" basis, and (2) they felt Romney was using the constitution as a political stepping stone.
were considerable and did much to educate the public as to the issues involved. As the issues became better known, it became obvious that support for the new constitution was also growing. The Democratic charges of the great cost involved in producing the new document\textsuperscript{18} were overshadowed by the benefits promised by the Republicans and the other groups supporting its adoption. The hard core of opposition remained in the Democratic party and the labor unions and this opposition probably was a significant factor in changing the minds of some of the normally Democratic voters who voted for Romney in the election.

After the convention had completed all but the final day of its sessions, the new document was unofficially presented to state officials in May of 1962. This presentation was made with the idea in mind of having the constitution put on the ballot in the November election, to be voted on at the same time the governor was to be elected. As no action was taken by the Democratic officials who were responsible for such action, a suit was filed by ConCon officers to require the Democratic officials to put the question on the November ballot.

From the time of the filing of the suit until late July there ensued a series of legal movements by the Attorney General, Circuit Court, judges, and ConCon lawyers; the upshot of which was a delay of action until it was too late to have the constitution put on the November ballot.\textsuperscript{19}

When the Constitutional Convention met on August 1 for its final session, a few minor changes in the constitution were made and final recommendations were formulated for the procedure that was to be

\textsuperscript{18}The total cost of the convention was near two million dollars.

\textsuperscript{19}The Detroit News, June 6, 1962, p. 1.
followed in presenting the constitution to the voters. The suit to have
the constitution placed on the November ballot was formally abandoned,
and the convention unanimously recommended that the constitution be sub-
mitted to the voters in the election of April 1963.\footnote{Ibid., August 2, 1962, p. 12-A.}

As a consequence of these events, the ConCon issue was vir-
tually dropped as an active element of the campaign. It is thought,
however, that its influence was still significant to the final outcome
of the election, as it had been a key issue during most of the campaign,
and many voters had expressed strong opinions concerning it.

The constitution was submitted to the voters in the April elec-
tion as directed and was passed by a close majority.\footnote{Deseret News, April 2, 1963, p. 1. The final count was 807,847, yes; and 796,223, no.}
CHAPTER THREE

A CAMPAIGN EMERGES

As the news releases were made public during the course of the Constitutional Convention, more often than not George Romney's name would be included, or his opinion would be solicited by a reporter and quoted in connection with the item. Already a well-known public figure because of his success in the automobile industry, his name became even better known throughout Michigan, this time as a figure on the political scene.

As was inevitable, speculation began as to Romney's future in the political arena. The rumors began: Romney was thinking of running for the U. S. Senate, House of Representatives, State Senate, or even Governor. At first Romney's public pronouncements indicated he had no such intentions. But as he became more deeply involved in the convention, the indications became stronger that George Romney, automaker, was seriously considering becoming George Romney, politician.

His approach to this new challenge was typically Romney, thorough and complete, almost meticulous in some respects, yet in the end, somewhat impetuous. He talked to his many confidential friends, many of whom were the business, financial, and in some cases, political leaders of the state. He let a few feelers out to the news media to test the public reaction, and according to those who know him best, he made it a matter of fervent, personal prayer. The reaction was varied, but mostly encouraging.
At last the time came when a decision had to be made. The factors involved in this decision were complex. His work at the convention was ending; he would have the time to devote to a campaign. The Democrats were coming out strongly against the new constitution; someone who thoroughly believed in and understood the new constitution would be needed to fight for its adoption. His years of effort at American Motors were bearing fruit; he could leave the company in the capable hands of those who had helped him pull it back into industry leadership. Perhaps most significant of all, here was a new challenge. Machine politics, labor union domination, and the intrenched groups, both in the governor's chair and the legislative seats, needed to be cleaned out. A new face would be refreshing, and was, in fact, badly needed, in either the Democratic or the Republican camps.

George realized his background had inadvertently prepared him to meet these challenges, perhaps better than any other person in Michigan. He had extensive contacts with both major factions in Michigan politics, labor and industry. His unprecedented profit sharing program at American Motors had put him on a first-name basis with all the important labor union officials, such as August Scholle, president of Michigan's AFL-CIO, and Walter Reuther, United Auto Workers president. Reuther even went so far as to say that Romney's action was "the most significant and historic collective-bargaining agreement ever signed in the United States." His "personal diplomacy" policy with the workers in the plants controlled by AMC, which include such companies as Kelvinator, earned him literally thousands of friends among the rank-and-file of the labor unions.

His contacts in the business world were equally impressive. His friends included many of the leading executives at corporations such as General Motors, as well as many of the other leading business organizations of the state. He had long been a leader in business and industrial groups and organizations, both in and out of the state of Michigan. In short, he had all the natural advantages of Republican backing if he should decide to run; these included business and the always-Republican outstate\(^2\) vote, plus a significant possibility of penetration into the areas of traditional Democratic dominance—the urban-labor population. His experiences with the Detroit public schools, Citizens for Michigan and the Constitutional Convention, gave him a substantial background and deep insight into the intricacies of state government and especially the problem areas where reform was urgently needed.

The negative side, too, presented substantial factors. Romney was a political novice, and excluding his position as a ConCon delegate, he had never held public office. To aspire to the governorship of one of the key states in the union was a jump of considerable magnitude. The office itself had not been in Republican hands for fourteen years. The urban-labor-Democratic strength was growing—the strength of the Republicans was in turn diminishing. To run as a Republican would be swimming upstream against a strong current. Romney had misgivings about identifying himself with either party, as he felt both were dominated by pressure groups who were setting aside the wishes of the general public in favor of their own selfish ends.

The Michigan State Legislature also presented its problems.

\(^2\)"Outstate" is the Michigan term for the areas outside of metropolitan Detroit.
The "Old Guard" Republicans had dominated this body for years and could prove to be as much a source of opposition to Romney's reform ideas as the Democrats. Not only would he have to run against the incumbent Democrats, but also many of the incumbent Republicans.

There was his family to consider. Could they stand the glare of constant publicity and the inevitable mud-slinging that was sure to arise in a Michigan political battle? What about his religion? He held a high ecclesiastical office in the LDS church which was an important part of his life. This would have to be given up. Also, there were theological questions that would arise and might cause his church a considerable amount of unfavorable publicity. Beneath all these factors ran an undercurrent that eventually swept all these factors into their proper perspective. This undercurrent was, in reality, the key to George Romney's lifelong actions and can only be described as his own personal morality. This was that something that had always set him apart from other men and that had driven him to risk his reputation on several previous occasions in order to act in accordance with his personal convictions of duty and of right and wrong. It was not a question of political glory or personal ambition, but a question of duty and of moral responsibility.

On February 10, 1962, after a period of personal fasting and prayer, George Romney announced his decision to the world. He would be a candidate for the governorship of the state of Michigan. He had done it because he felt it was his responsibility.

In spite of its moral undercurrent, his decision stood up well under the light of the hard realities of practical politics. George

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3 Notably the Negro question. See Chapter Six.
Romney had not, as some had attempted to intimate, spent his entire decision-making time in seclusion, fasting and praying for guidance. He had drawn upon his tremendous reservoir of friends and acquaintances and had come up with all the facts and figures necessary to make an objective decision. Most important of all, he had found and gained the support of many people. Some of these were long-time acquaintances, others he met in the process of talking and gathering facts. All were willing to do what they could to help him get elected. In a well planned series of meetings, lunches and discussions, Romney chose his skeleton campaign organization. Long before he made his decision, he knew in considerable detail the resources upon which he could draw, should he decide to run. When he made the final decision, his organization was ready to go, and go it did. Although certainly not political professionals, the staff was composed of well qualified men and women from all aspects of Michigan citizenry and was among the best that could be assembled at any price from the considerable amount of talent available. Some of the key persons deserve attention.

Arthur George Elliott Jr., George Romney's 5-foot-4 campaign manager, expressed the belief that every citizen has the responsibility to select the political party that best represents his interests and beliefs and to work within that party. Says Art, "My political work is simply my manner of discharging that responsibility."  

4"The mighty mite," as he is called by Romney, was born in Indianapolis, Indiana, in October of 1916. He graduated from high school in 1933 and spent three years at Michigan State University. He spent five years in the United States Army (1940-45) during which time he rose from the rank of private to captain. He is a family and church man, a former president of the Ferndale (Michigan) Rotary Club, a former member of the Oakland County Board of Supervisors, past chairman of the Ferndale City Commission, and an active participant in the Chamber of Commerce and the Boy Scouts. He and his wife
At the time of the campaign, he was a partner with his brother Jack in a Royal Oak real estate, insurance, and building company.

Art began his political career in 1952, when, at the insistence of his wife, he ran for precinct delegate from their hometown of Pleasant Ridge. Pleasant Ridge was then the largest precinct in the state. He and his door-to-door crew turned out 95% of the potential precinct vote. After this, his rise to political leadership was swift. During the 1954 elections, he served as regional campaign director for the Republican Party. Two years later he headed the Oakland County delegation to the state Republican Convention. Later on in 1956, he was named county director of the presidential campaign. In 1957, the Oakland County Republican Chairman resigned, and Elliott succeeded him. As chairman of the Oakland County Republican party, Elliott caused a complete revolution of the GOP in that county. As the 1960 election approached, he mobilized the county as had never been done before. In keeping with his belief that the party should broaden the base of its participation, he organized a county-wide network of women's clubs. Existing men's clubs were doubled and all aspects of the organization were strengthened. He pioneered new programs with regard to education, research, public relations, special events and financing. Elliott made realities of such activities as a county-wide, door-to-door, finance drive which doubled the former high in contributions; a volunteer voter registration drive; and a "band wagon" that toured shopping centers, business districts, and residential areas passing out campaign literature and buttons. As a result of these activities, the county GOP candidates won 24 out of the 27 races. President Kennedy carried Michigan, Betty have three sons, Arthur III, 18 and a student at Kalamazoo College; Tom, 15; and David 13.
but not Oakland, the state's second most populous county.

Elliott was next elected as one of Oakland County's seven representatives to the Constitutional Convention. At the convention, he served as chairman of the Local Government Committee and as a member of the Legislative Organization Committee. On May 17, 1962, George Romney announced that he had chosen Arthur George Elliott Jr. to be his campaign manager.

Lucille Kaplinger, assistant and secretary to Mr. Elliott, is holder of a B.A. degree from Michigan State University in History and Social Science. She also holds two Master's degrees from the University of Michigan, one in education and one in political science. She has taught for a number of years at Saginaw High School in Saginaw, Michigan, and holds a Michigan State Jr. College teacher's certificate. She worked as administrative assistant to the president of the Constitutional Convention, from which position she was asked to work with the Romney for Governor staff. At the time of the campaign, she held a fellowship at Michigan State University for Ph.D. work in political science which was being held for her until the completion of the campaign.

Dr. Walter DeVries, research director, holds his B.A., M.A., and Ph.D. from Michigan State University in political science. While attending Michigan State University, he worked in the office of the Speaker of the House as an assistant. He did such an outstanding job, that upon his graduation, the job was made a permanent position, and he held it for another five years. During the campaign he was on leave of absence from Calvin College where he was a member of the Department of Political Science. He was chairman of the Administrative Committee of the Constitutional Convention, and from this position was asked by Romney and Elliott to serve on the campaign staff.
Phil O. Pittenger, scheduling director, is a former executive secretary of the Chamber of Commerce of Howell, Michigan. He was formerly executive director of the Lansing Clinic in Lansing, Michigan, and has served in several significant positions in the public relations field. He worked as scheduling director for Paul Bagwell, unsuccessful Republican gubernatorial candidate, in both the 1958 and 1960 campaigns.

Other members of the staff included Clyde Bennett, a professional free lance advertising agent who was in charge of making up advertising copy, radio and TV programs, and all paid advertisements, brochures, bumper stickers, etc; Richard Milliman, press aide, a former assistant to the mayor of Lansing, and a newspaperman of long standing in Lansing, and other areas of the state, and Charles Tucker. Richard, along with George Trumbull, his assistant, were in charge of all publicity and press releases, as well as television and other coverage. Richard traveled with Romney, and George worked in campaign headquarters in Detroit. Tucker, a Negro, was in charge of the civil rights publicity and other activities of the campaign. Jeannette Weiss, campaign headquarters receptionist, is also a Negro.

The fund raising was done entirely by volunteer personnel. The volunteers included the fund raising chairman, Max Fisher, an executive of New Monarch Company, a fast growing Michigan industrial firm. He has had considerable experience as chairman of United Fund drives and other drives of this nature. The fund raising was handled through various groups, such as the Romney Volunteers, and the Romney for Governor staff. Various "ad hoc" committees were set up for door-to-door campaigns, fund raising breakfasts, and other activities of similar nature. There was an extensive effort to get contributions of one dollar or less from the common voter--not so much for the value of the
contribution, but for the commitment which it implied. The Romney Volunteers distributed a coin holder which could be filled with dimes and sent in to Romney headquarters. Several of these were returned daily. Each day's mail brought checks in various amounts ranging from one dollar to five hundred dollars. Some came from out of state, but most came from local voters. According to Miss Kaplinger, a letter personally observed by the author was typical. It contained a check accompanied by a small note reading something like this: "We need good men like George Romney in government, success in the coming campaign."

The Romney staff made no attempt to solicit money through the regular Republican organization, although it did receive a portion of the state funds from the State Central Committee. According to Romney staff officials, finances were not one of the major problems of the campaign.

Total expenditures, as reported by the State Republican and Democratic Party committees, as required by law, at the close of the campaign, show that the loser, Governor Swainson, spent $230,850, while the winner, Romney, spent only $193,927.  

Both the Republicans and Democrats collected more money than they spent on the campaign. The Democrats collected approximately $500 more than they spent while the Republicans came out some $6000 in the black.

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5 The Detroit News, November 28, 1962, p. 2-C.

6 Ibid.
CHAPTER FOUR

After the key campaign personnel had been chosen, things began to happen in the rapid, well-organized way that was to characterize the Romney campaign.

The first major step was to lease the entire sixth floor of the Detroit Industrial Building, one of the prominent office buildings in downtown Detroit. This done, each major staff member, previously mentioned, began to set up his or her "department" and to choose personnel and facilities according to their needs. This included the selection of secretaries, research assistants, receptionists, telephone switchboard operators, drivers, various necessary office personnel, and the purchase or rental of various office supplies and equipment. A major task at this time was the design, selection, and purchase of the standard accouterments of campaigning, including Romney buttons, bumper stickers, hats, lapel and tie pins, tracts and pamphlets, and other related items.

During this early period, detailed plans were laid covering the entire campaign period, including policy decisions on advertising and publicity methods; how and when the state would be covered and areas of concentration. Speech and other public appearance policies were formulated and these events were scheduled, for the most part, months in advance.

Every two weeks during the campaign, a confidential schedule was distributed to key members of the staff. This schedule was
compiled under the direction of Phil Pittenger and contained an hour-by-hour, day-by-day schedule of the activities of the campaign. In many ways, this schedule was the key to the smoothness of the campaign, as it allowed all key people to know just what was taking place at any given moment. The schedule was of especial value to Romney himself, as it contained pertinent information about each situation he would encounter throughout the day's activities. Thus he would know how many people to expect at a rally or a picnic, what their backgrounds were, who the key people were he was to encounter, their political persuasion and significance, where meals and rest periods had been arranged, and exact times of all functions, including estimated travel times and routes.

As the campaign progressed, Mrs. Romney's role in it increased. Her itinerary became similar, although not as heavy as that of her husband, and a similar schedule was published for her.

The advance men handled the momentous task of arranging all the details of these schedules. Under the direction of Phil Pittenger, this group of six to eight men would telephone, write, visit, time, arrange, and then evaluate all situations well in advance of Romney's visits so there would be little time wasted by mistakes, waiting, and other problems arising from lack of coordination. These men did a tremendous job of seeing to it that all the right people were at the proper places at the proper times; that newspapers and other media were informed of schedules, and events; that literature, microphones, and other supplies were available when needed; and that people were available to pass out literature and to perform other necessary functions at all appearances.

Early in the campaign, Romney established a private headquarters
in downtown Detroit at the Pick Fort Shelby Hotel, which is located a few blocks from the Industrial Building. This was used for high-level strategy sessions, important conferences of staff personnel and others, and for Romney's daily rest and study periods when he was in the Detroit area.

The campaign staff resembled a well-oiled, capable machine by the time the nominating petitions were filed June 18, 1962.¹ Both candidates waited until the day before the deadline to file their petitions with the Secretary of State.

Governor Swainson, accompanied by his wife Alice, arrived at 9 a.m. with a petition containing 50,000 signatures from all 83 counties.

George Romney, accompanied by his wife Lenore and their son Mitt, arrived at 9:30. Romney's petition contained a record number of 70,000 signatures.

Both candidates were well over the minimum statutory requirements. Swainson needed 17,539 signatures and Romney needed 14,542. These figures represent one percent of the vote cast for democratic and Republican candidates for Secretary of State in the last statewide election (1960).²

Both Romney and Swainson were unopposed in the primary. Although it was originally thought that both candidates would have opposition, at filing time no other candidates had materialized.

The candidates for other statewide offices were many and campaigns were lively. Two offices are particularly notable, those of Lieutenant Governor and Congressman-at-Large.

²Ibid.
The Democratic candidate for Lieutenant Governor was the incumbent, T. John Lesinski, who was unopposed in the primary. Competing for the Republican spot on the ticket was Clarence A. Reid, a 69 year-old, 277-pound political veteran. Reid, a former Lieutenant Governor (1952-54),\(^3\) is a political enigma in Michigan. His political assets seem to consist of his ample frame, a high pitched squeaky voice, a lot of friends made from many years as a lawyer and politician,\(^4\) and the fact that he gets votes. Reid's two opponents for the Republican nomination for Lieutenant Governor were John H. Stahlin, a 48 year-old manufacturing company president and a former state senator (4 years); and Rockwell T. Gust Jr., a 38 year-old, self-styled conservative and a militant Barry Goldwater fan.\(^5\) Both Stahlin and Gust were well organized and fought extremely hard to be Romney's running mate. Stahlin had six full-time staff members, and Gust had ten. Reid had none and usually spent his mornings in his Detroit law office. What little campaigning he did was done in the afternoons and evenings. Asked why he was running for office, Reid stated simply, "I like the work."

The Congressman-at-Large race shaped up as a contest between Republican Alvin M. Bentley and Democrat Neil Staebler. Both were unopposed in the primary. The failure of the Legislature to reapportion during the last session made necessary the statewide at-large election.

Bentley, a 43 year-old vice president of a broadcasting corporation, has served as a U. S. Foreign Service officer, a Congressional

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\(^3\)This was the last time a Republican held the office in the state.

\(^4\)He was a State Senator for ten years and has represented many union officials in legal actions.

\(^5\)The Detroit Free Press, July 30, 1962, p. 2B.
Representative, and as a delegate to the recent Constitutional Convention, and has had many years of business experience in Michigan.

Staebler, 56, is a realtor and land developer and has held positions in retail petroleum, distributing, and retail coal sales. He has served on presidential commissions and as a government consultant under presidents Roosevelt, Truman, and Kennedy.  

An interesting aspect of the primary campaign was the number of Republicans seeking lesser local offices who used the Romney charisma as a vehicle in their own campaigns. Such phrases as "My friend, George Romney" and "The unbeatable team, Romney and ________," were common throughout the campaign. In addition to this, portions of photographs were clipped or otherwise remanufactured to show the candidate in a very personal relationship with George Romney.

The actual campaign aspects of the primary election will be considered in the total context of the general campaign, so only the results will be considered in this chapter. The final tally in the primary election, which was held August 7, 1962, gave George Romney a 4-3 margin over Governor Swainson in what shaped up to be little more than a popularity contest. Romney's votes totaled 446,398 while Swainson's totaled 318,396.  

In the Lieutenant Governor race, Clarence Reid did it again, winning by a comfortable margin over Stahlin and Gust who finished in that order.

This election served more as an indicator of the relative

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6The Detroit News, August 1, 1962, p. 1-F.
7Ibid., August 5, 1962, p. 1.
9Ibid. The final count was Reid 194,567; Stahlin, 121,049; and Gust, 104,767.
strength of the gubernatorial candidates, showing areas needing more attention and indicating public opinion on various issues. Other conclusions that could be drawn from the election include the demonstration of a surprising amount of dissatisfaction among the outstate voters with the legislature.\textsuperscript{10} Many of the "Old Guard," both Democrats and Republicans, were replaced by younger and more liberal individuals. A large number of these new faces on the Michigan political scene were those who recently received their political baptism as delegates to the Constitutional Convention.

Romney drew nearly 350,000 of his votes from the outstate areas of the state. This was seventy-one percent of the vote outside of Wayne County. His Wayne County percentage was just over thirty-five.\textsuperscript{11} This outstate support was probably due in part at least to Romney's stand in the Constitutional Convention on reapportionment.\textsuperscript{12} These facts which indicated strong support from outstate voters, were major factors in Romney's decision to concentrate his campaign efforts in Wayne County and greater Detroit.

Although most pre-election prognoses predicted a record vote in the primary of over one million votes, the final total was somewhat less than 850,000.\textsuperscript{13}

Romney, as well as Swainson, discounted the significance of the primary results as not necessarily giving a thorough picture of

\textsuperscript{10}\textit{The Detroit Free Press}, August 9, 1962, p. 6-A.

\textsuperscript{11}\textit{The Detroit News}, August 9, 1962, pp. 1, 15-A.

\textsuperscript{12}Romney had strongly opposed the straight population basis for apportionment, which would have greatly reduced outstate representation in the legislature.

\textsuperscript{13}\textit{The Deseret News}, August 8, 1962, p. 1.
political conditions and voter preference in the state. The fact that there were many offices, notably the gubernatorial contest, where the candidates were unopposed in the primary, probably accounted for the voter turnout being less than was expected.
CHAPTER FIVE

ROMNEY VOLUNTEERS

Early in the campaign, an organization was instituted which played an extremely significant role in the enlistment of "grass roots" support for the Romney candidacy. This was the Romney Volunteers. Entirely separate from the Romney for Governor staff and the Republican party organizations, the Volunteers was organized to utilize the talents of independent, inactive Republicans, who were not working with any segment of their party; independents who supported Romney; and of Democrats who did not want to give up their party loyalties, but who nevertheless wanted to support and work for Romney's election. The Volunteers rented a large portion of the fifth floor of the Industrial Building in Detroit, just one floor below the one occupied by the Romney staff. Little conflict was experienced between the Volunteers and the regular Republican and campaign organizations, and in nearly all cases the Volunteers worked to supplement these other organizations.

Dr. John T. Dempsey, professor of political science at the University of Michigan (Dearborn Center) served as state chairman of the Romney Volunteers. Dr. Dempsey, a Detroit native, is a World War II veteran who, in addition to membership in many political science associations, has worked extensively in educational television and television news broadcasting. A long time Democrat, he was formerly legislative assistant to Senator Thomas Hennings of Missouri and he also served as legislative assistant to Representative Stewart Udall of Arizona. The
executive director of the state organization of Romney Volunteers during the campaign was Miss Hilary Whittaker. Miss Whittaker, also a native Detroiter, received her B.A. from Vassar College and her M.A. from Wayne State University. She has also studied under a Ford Foundation grant for television specialization. For the three years preceding the campaign she was a director of American Red Cross Centers in Morocco and France. She has worked as an international news correspondent and as an international coordinator of Red Cross activities. In addition, she has worked extensively in publicity and recreational activities for New York City and has had considerable experience in the field of advertising. For five years she worked on the television staff of Wayne State University where she produced public service and adult educational TV programs as well as issuing news releases and writing feature stories for local and national publications. She has also taught classes in publicity and script writing. Under the primary direction of Miss Whittaker and Dr. Dempsey, the Volunteers was organized, staffed, and functioned throughout the campaign.

The Romney Volunteers operated in this manner. The Central Committee, headquartered at Detroit, divided the state into "communities." A community, by Romney Volunteer definition, is any geographical area which the activity of a particular Volunteer unit would encompass. A particular "community" would vary from one or more counties in a rural area to a ward or portion of a ward in a major urban area. This designation was flexible and was worked out in co-operation with central headquarters in Detroit.

A typical local organization of Romney Volunteers came into existence in the following manner. Interested people made themselves known by various means, such as by referral or by personally
volunteering, and were then designated as an area chairman. These were generally people of recognized community leadership and ability (but never partisan leadership). As soon as contact with this particular individual was made, he (or she) then received a set of booklets from the Romney Volunteer headquarters in Detroit which supplied the chairman-designate with all information, manuals, publications, instructions, etc., necessary to begin activities. This information generally included activities necessary for coordination with other chapters, contact with George Romney and his campaign staff, information about the Romney campaign, scheduled appearances with Romney and other major campaign activities of importance as well as channels of assistance and other helps available for special problems.

The area chairman was responsible for establishing the Organizing or Steering Committee. To assist him, he would choose a vice chairman who was usually a leading woman in the community (if the chairman was a man). Ladies were encouraged and given positions of leadership whenever possible as they generally did a large share of the work. In addition to the chairman and vice chairman, the Steering Committee was composed of five other persons with proven leadership ability in the community who were chosen to be the heads of the five key committees: Publicity, Activities, Membership, Headquarters, and Finance. These seven persons then met together and selected people from all important segments of the community including church groups, service clubs, ethnic and minority groups and many other persons of this nature, and invited them to an organization meeting. The Steering Committee, composed of these seven persons became a permanent advisory committee to the volunteer organization.

At the organization meeting, chapter officers would be
elected and a chapter name would be chosen (e.g. the Romney Volunteers of the 19th Postal District). A timetable would be established which included planning for membership drives, organizing special days such as "Romney Bumper Sticker Day," finding and setting up headquarters space, and holding of coffee caucuses. It was usually planned that the chapter should open and maintain headquarters in a convenient public location from sometime in September right up to election day.

Each special activity, such as "Bumper Sticker Day," undertaken by the chapter was under the direction of a special committee composed of as many people as possible. This way a maximum number of people were able to participate in the campaign and thus to identify themselves solidly with Romney.

The two main activities of the chapters were (1) publicity, and (2) person to person contact. These goals were accomplished through the various committees. The first of these was the Publicity Committee whose activities centered around keeping the newspapers, radio, and television stations aware of chapter activities, especially those of local interest. Whenever possible, personal contact was made with local editors of newspapers and other media encouraging their support of Romney. A letter writing force was enlisted to write letters of commendation to newspapers and other media who gave Romney favorable publicity and to criticize any unfavorable articles. Romney buttons, handouts, and other materials were all made available by the chapter. A speaker's bureau was established which took advantage of every opportunity to tell the Romney story to interested groups by providing an articulate and convincing speaker. The chapter worked in cooperation with local party headquarters in buying time and space in newspapers, radio, television, and other media.
The Activities Committee was responsible for person to person contact—to get as many individuals as possible contacted and asked to vote for Romney (and whenever possible, work with the Volunteer committee). Some of the means employed by this committee were public rallies, coffee caucuses, neighbor to neighbor canvassing, telephone campaigns, free baby sitters, poll watchers, voter checkoffs, and transportation to the polls on election day. These activities proved to be extremely effective in enlisting "grass roots" support and in getting out the vote on election day.

The Membership Committee had the specific responsibility of seeing that new people were contacted throughout the life of the chapter, both individually and through various groups to which they belonged, such as veteran's, women's, youth, labor, ethnic, business, professional, and fraternal organizations. For teenagers, dances and similar events were scheduled to bring them in contact with the organization and to have them participate in the campaign. As the campaign progressed, many other ingenious ways of recruiting members were developed.

The Headquarters Committee was in charge of maintaining and staffing the chapter headquarters. This included the keeping of a membership file and other necessary records, handling and mailing of supplies, supplying information, and seeing that each volunteer was assigned a specific, meaningful task.

The Finance Committee was in charge of collecting all money, budgeting funds, and keeping track of expenditures. Each chapter was theoretically self supporting, providing its own funds by donations or by selling membership cards or by both of these methods.¹

¹ The chapters were self-supporting except for a small "seed fund" provided by central headquarters at the time the chapter was organized and other funds from time to time necessary to cover emergencies.
The membership cost was optional and was determined by each individual chapter. The treasurer was generally the head of the Finance Committee and was charged with the responsibility of keeping accurate financial records. This included opening a bank account in the name of the chapter, setting up books which were available for regular audit, providing a system for approval of bills to be paid, and issuing receipts for all contributions.

Other activities of each chapter included the "Ten for Romney" program which theoretically provided for each new member to bring in ten more new ones, and for each of these ten to bring in ten more. In this manner, each local chapter would grow rapidly, and the entire organization would thus mushroom into a large and effective body. Although not all new members brought in ten more, many did, and some brought in many more than ten. The result was plenty of members and lots of support for all chapter activities.

"The Undecided Voter" program was a novel idea. When a person who was contacted stated he was undecided as to how he would vote, his name was taken and the reasons for his indecision were noted. His name was then forwarded to Romney Volunteer headquarters. Shortly after this he would receive a personal letter, individually written and signed by Romney explaining his position in relation to the areas in which the individual was undecided and asking for his support.

Another activity undertaken by the Romney Volunteers, along with the Romney for Governor staff, was the distribution of Romney's personal voter questionnaires which asked the voter to write his opinions on certain political issues and problems in the state and to mail these to George Romney. Days were set aside by each chapter for this activity, and these questionnaires were distributed door to
door, on windshields, in parking lots, on street corners, and in various places of business.

The voter questionnaires, introduced by Romney in June of 1962, were one of the many "unorthodox" facets of his campaign. The questionnaire consisted of a legal sized paper, asking at the top, "Will you spend 4 minutes--and 4 cents--to improve the State of Michigan?" Following this was a short personal message outlining Romney's belief that the citizens of Michigan are aware of its problems and have valuable opinions that can aid in their solution. After this message there followed a list of ten statements which outlined some of Romney's basic political beliefs and gave the voter a chance to indicate whether he agreed, disagreed, or was undecided about that particular idea. These questions covered the majority of the problems then currently at issue in Michigan state government, for example, solution of the unemployment problem, special interest domination of government, constitutional reform, government indebtedness and the tax problem. At the bottom was a space for the voter to place his name and address, but he was diplomatically informed that this was not necessary if he did not care to include it. On the back was space for additional comments on any area about which the voter might care to express himself. The questionnaire could then be folded and mailed to Romney campaign headquarters in Detroit.

Although many of the questionnaires were not filled out and returned, a surprisingly high number were, and these generally demonstrated that the sender had put a considerable amount of thought and effort into his answers. Three out of every four questionnaires returned included personal notes from the senders. Many people attached checks and offered to work as volunteers in the campaign.
Very few were critical of Romney himself, although many were critical of the then current governmental setup in Lansing.\textsuperscript{2}

As the campaign progressed, the return rate of the questionnaires increased, and in late September, of an average of 340 pieces of mail reaching campaign headquarters each day, nearly 200 were voter questionnaires.\textsuperscript{3}

Romney's staff made concise and current compilations of questionnaire results and used these extensively in determining policy pronouncements and in writing campaign literature. Romney himself noted carefully the comments on the questionnaires and alluded to them frequently in his public pronouncements.

Each questionnaire received a personal reply from Romney staff personnel which answered questions, clarified issues, and expressed thanks for the opinions expressed.\textsuperscript{4}

Romney and his staff personnel explained that the questionnaire served at least two extremely significant functions. First, they made contact with individual voters and let them know of Romney's political opinions and of his philosophy concerning the importance of individual voter opinion, and second, they gave Romney and his staff a greater and more adequate measure of the type and character of voter opinion within the state.

\textsuperscript{2}The Detroit News, September 30, 1962, p. 8-B.

\textsuperscript{3}Ibid., August 5, 1962, p. 22-A.

\textsuperscript{4}Those with return addresses.
The first Republican gubernatorial candidate in Michigan to make a concentrated effort to attract the Negro vote was George Romney. Charles M. Tucker Jr., a Negro, was a Romney staff member who had the specific assignment of dealing with the civil rights issue. "Charlee," as he became known to Romney staff members, was admirably qualified to fill this position. Only thirty years old at the time of the campaign, he is a Detroit native, a graduate of Wayne State University (Business, Advertising, and Marketing) and has been employed as an account executive with an advertising and public relations firm. He is a former editor of various weekly Negro newspapers and was, at the time of the campaign, manager of the Pontiac Michigan Office of Associate Brokers Investment Company Incorporated (real estate and mortgages), and is owner of Tucker Modernization Company (a construction firm). He was president of the Oakland County NAACP for two years and vice president of the Michigan NAACP chapter for two years. He has worked closely with most of the Negro press in Michigan and during the campaign was city editor of the Detroit Tribune, Detroit's leading Negro newspaper.

"Charlee" explained his basic goal as that of "making the Negro voters aware" of Romney. He stated that in the past the unions and the Democrats have cultivated the Negro vote in Michigan while the Republicans have not. The Negro voters in Michigan have traditionally
identified with the Democratic party which generally has accepted them as party members but has expended little effort to help them beyond the minimum necessary to hold their vote. Tucker estimated the maximum change of the Negro vote he expected to achieve was about two and one half per cent to vote for Romney who otherwise would have voted for Swainson.

His methods included submission of press releases to the Negro press and to the regular media. He made sure all media were informed of all Romney activities in the civil rights area and that all these activities were properly covered by the press. This included both seeing that enough was done and also that it was not overdone (for example, too many Romney pictures with Negroes could have an adverse effect on the white voters).

Background research was done by Tucker on the Negro organizations to which Romney spoke so that he was thoroughly apprised of the environment in which he found himself in any contact with Negroes and their organizations.

Tucker felt his job included the strategic use of "color" under the proper circumstances. He attempted to develop an identification of the Negro with Romney. This was done in various ways, such as by letting Romney be seen with the right percentage of colored people at the proper times. A good example of this was use of the Romney girls, blue-uniformed girls who were at all major Romney appearances, passing out literature and adding to the appearance of the gathering. If the gathering was to be all white, the girls would be all white; if it was likely to be mixed, the girls would be mixed in about the right proportions; if it was to be a colored gathering, most of the Romney girls would be colored. In addition to the Romney girls, other colored
Romney staffers were at strategic places and times with Romney when this was needed. An example of this was provided by Tucker himself who showed up at the fairgrounds in Detroit on Labor Day. Asked by Romney, "What are you doing here, Charlee?", Tucker replied, "I thought I might be able to add a little 'color.'" He afterwards told the author, "My only regret was that I wasn't bigger and blacker."

One of Tucker's activities was to provide organization at the "grass roots" level among the Negroes. As much as was possible, he set up Romney campaign organizations among Negro voters. His biggest problem here was to keep ineffective, self-appointed, Negro leaders happy and still to get past them with effective organization to the common voter. In the past, Tucker stated, these "figureheads" felt that their personal glory was paramount and tried to achieve same with a minimum amount of effort.

Occasionally Tucker would set up outlines for some speeches to colored groups with which Romney was not familiar. Romney, however, generally wrote his own speeches and seldom used a prepared text.¹

Soliciting opportunities for Romney to speak to selected Negro groups was included in Tucker's responsibilities. Many groups were willing to have Romney speak, some out of sincere interest and some for purposes of ridicule. Tucker tried to select and schedule only the ones having the most value to Romney. As with other areas, scheduling was the top problem.

The author attended a number of these Negro meetings. Typical was a Monday evening church meeting in the heart of the Negro section. As Romney staff members, our party was received courteously and

¹Later in the campaign, as the pace quickened and issues multiplied, Romney relied more on prepared speeches.
politely, albeit apprehensively, by the numerous Negro clergy. Romney received much the same type of reception, cool, but polite. The audience mirrored the attitude of the clergy. Romney’s speeches to this type of audience left something to be desired.²

In summing up, "Charlee" said he felt his job was to "sell his product, 'Romney,' to the Negro voter" and he employed all means at his disposal to do so.

Besides Tucker, there were three other Negroes on Romney’s staff. One, a married woman in her late twenties, was a receptionist, and the other two were young fellows who worked in various clerk and assistant capacities. In addition to these members of the permanent staff at the Industrial Building in Detroit, there were hundreds of Negroes working in a voluntary capacity in connection with the various voluntary organizations, such as the Romney Volunteers.

Surprisingly enough, although the Negro is denied the priesthood in the Latter-day Saint Church, this fact was never used by the Democrats as a campaign issue. The factors behind this are obscure, although it can be partially explained by the fact that Governor Swainson is a former member of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. At the outset of the campaign, both Governor Swainson and Mr. Romney issued statements that religion would not be an issue in the campaign.

In the earliest stages of the campaign, Romney was asked on several occasions to explain the Mormon position on the Negro. He replied by asking that the voters examine his personal record on civil

²Romney always seemed to reflect the mood of his audience and was at his best before positive audiences whose support he could feel.
rights and that he personally, and not the Mormon Church, was on trial. He steadfastly refused to discuss this issue at greater length and as the campaign progressed, questions of this nature were asked less and less frequently. When this question was raised in the later stages of the campaign, Romney or his aides would merely state that his position was a matter of public record and available to those who were interested.

Only once was a public charge made against Romney on the Negro issue. On this occasion a Negro minister made a public statement in which he charged that Romney would not be fit to serve in public office because of the beliefs of his religion pertaining to the Negro people. His charge was given little publicity, but was picked up by one Democratic candidate for a lesser office and used in a speech. The minister was at once soundly criticized by his colleagues, and the candidate was immediately attacked by members of his own party. As a consequence of these criticisms, little more was said. There were a few small recurrences of this issue on various occasions throughout the remainder of the campaign, but they seemed to attract little popular support.

In the final election Romney was able to show in many predominately Negro areas a considerable gain over previous Republican

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3 His personal record as a fighter for civil rights throughout the years is extremely impressive. He has worked actively for integration of Detroit City Schools and served on numerous committees in support of civil rights action, including the Citizen's Housing and Planning Council, The Detroit Victory Council, and the Board of Directors of the United Negro College Fund. Romney actively supported the Fair Employment Practices Act of 1955 in Michigan, and he played a significant role in the incorporation of the model civil rights provisions of the state's new constitution.

4 The Detroit News, October 19, 1962, p. 11-B.
candidates in these areas. It appears that Romney's efforts to swing a portion of the Negro vote met with at least the degree of success which was anticipated, and in spite of the obvious handicap of his religion, Romney was able to make a better showing among Michigan's Negroes than had any former Republican gubernatorial candidate.

\[\text{Ibid., November 19, 1962, p. 7-B. Ibid., November 7, 1962, p. 10-B. These results are representative of a few predominately Negro areas in Detroit, showing Romney's gain in 1962 over Nixon's percentage in 1960. Detroit's 1st ward, Nixon, 22.8, Romney, 30.2; 9th ward, Nixon, 16.5, Romney, 22.7; 19th ward, Nixon, 21.1, Romney 27.4. Romney's statewide gain among all Negroes was probably somewhat less than these figures would indicate.}\]
CHAPTER SEVEN

ISSUES AND EVENTS

During the course of the campaign, several issues arose and assumed an importance all out of proportion to their ultimate significance. Romney's bout with the conservative wing of the Republican party was one such issue.

Since his entrance into active political life, Romney had always expressed his opinions on political issues with almost disarming candor. His expressions concerning the right-wing elements of the Republican party were no exception to this rule.

When it became known that Richard Durant, vice-chairman of the Fourteenth District of the Republican party in Wayne County was an active member of the John Birch Society, Romney staked his political image on the issue and publicly asked Durant to resign his post. This was a direct contradiction of past Republican policy in such cases and was against the counsel of not a few leading state Republicans. In the past, the party had almost universally ignored such situations, feeling that party unity should be paramount and should be maintained at all costs.

Upon Durant's refusal to resign, Romney characteristically took the direct approach. He arranged a meeting with Durant, which took place on Thursday, July 26, 1962. Unable to reach an agreement, another meeting was held the same evening. As Romney was unable to attend the evening meeting, he was represented by John Feikens, former
Federal Judge and Republican State Chairman, and Wilbur M. Brucker, former Secretary of the Army. This meeting lasted until 1:30 a.m. Friday morning. Still unable to reach an agreement, Durant finally announced he would resign if he could choose his successor. As Romney would not consider his demand, a breakfast meeting of the Republican party members of Detroit's exclusive Grosse Point was called.¹

The lakeside breakfast was held outdoors on the morning of July 28, in the beautiful surroundings characteristic of the Fourteenth District, which was known to include many of Michigan's wealthiest and most influential families. In Romney's speech to this gathering, he asked that Durant resign in the interest of party unity, making the point that many independent and democratic voters would not vote for a candidate representing a party who fellowshipped such groups as the John Birch Society. In closing his speech, Romney dramatically placed his own personal political future on the line by stating, "If delegates from this district re-elect this man, they will have repudiated me."²

Durant, who stood passively on the sidelines smoking a pipe while Romney denounced him, spoke briefly after Romney. He made no direct mention of his requested resignation, but spoke instead of party unity, and he re-emphasized his support of Romney as the GOP standard bearer in 1962.³

No mention was made of district chairman Stanley A. Baldwin, but it was known that he was a Durant supporter and would probably step down if Durant did. It was common knowledge that Durant, though vice-chairman, was the de facto leader of the District.⁴ The matter

²The Detroit Free Press, July 29, 1962, p. 3-A.
was solved when Durant ran for re-election, but was defeated in the District Party convention election on August 15.

The political significance of this action on Romney's part was assessed by the editors of The Detroit News, who commented that his action had "the ring of leadership" and demonstrated that "he can match words with action." The editors concluded that as a result of this action, Romney had "grown 10 feet tall" as Republican candidate for governor of Michigan.5

Another issue that flared up and assumed gigantic proportions for a short time, was the reapportionment "crisis" which during the earlier stages of the campaign threatened to upset the election schedule and for a time had the prospects of being one of the major issues in the 1962 elections in Michigan.

The "crisis" which erupted in mid-July, less than three weeks before the August 7 primary elections, had its beginning almost three years before with a suit filed December 7, 1959, in the State Supreme Court by August Scholle, AFL-CIO president. In this suit, Scholle charged that he was being denied "equal protection of the law" as an individual residing in Oakland County, one of the state's most densely populated counties. The basis of his contention was that his vote in electing State Senators was not equal in weight to those of voters residing in the more rural areas of the state.6

Mr. Scholle was represented throughout this litigation by Ted Sachs, a Detroit lawyer specializing in labor law. Sachs was described in a newspaper article as being "a quiet 43-year old legal genius."7

5Ibid., July 28, 1962, p. 4-A.
6The Detroit Free Press, July 18, 1962, pp. 1, 2-A.
7The Detroit News, July 22, 1962, p. 3-A.
It was Sachs, searching through relatively obscure Federal court decisions on civil rights and equal protection matters, who first discovered the possibility of pressing a legal suit based on the equal protection clause of the fourteenth amendment to the United States Constitution.

In June of 1960, Scholle's suit was heard by the State Supreme Court, who in a split decision ruled against him. Scholle immediately took the case to the United States Supreme Court. After some consideration and review, the United States Supreme Court sent the case back to the State Supreme Court for review.

The State Court did not act on this suit until July 18, 1962, when it ruled that the current districting system was unconstitutional. In this ruling, the Court called off the August 7 primary elections for the State Senate and directed the legislature to draw up thirty-two districts of equal population. The Court further directed that if the legislature did not reapportion the Senate by August 20, its seats would be filled by an at-large election under the jurisdiction of the Court. In this case, the Court-directed Primary would then be held September 11.\(^8\)

The districting system rejected by the court in this action was adopted in the November 1952 election where the voters rejected an amendment sponsored by the AFL-CIO and approved an amendment sponsored by the rural areas of the state. The amendment sponsored by the labor unions wanted population to be the sole guide to voting power. The outstate communities wanted area to be a determining factor also, and their amendment won. This amendment increased the number of districts by two making thirty-four Senators the new permanent number.

\(^{8}\)Ibid., July 18, 1962, p. 1.
authorized by the constitution.⁹

Upon this ruling of the court, the legislature began to take steps to implement the court's directive. However, they also took steps to have the ruling appealed to the United States Supreme Court. In late July, a delegation of four Michigan Republican State Senators flew to Littleton, New Hampshire to present their appeal to United States Supreme Court Justice Potter Stewart, who was there on vacation and was given authority to make an interim decision, as the Supreme Court was not then in session.¹⁰

Justice Stewart granted a delay of the Michigan Supreme Court ruling. This ruling temporarily set aside all effects of the state court directive, restored the August 7 primary, and in effect, allowed the Senate to be re-elected under the old districting plan. This ruling was not a reversal of the Michigan court decision, but as Justice Stewart stated, the "logical course of action" to stop hasty and ill-defined action before the United States Supreme Court could have time to make a decision on the merits of the case.¹¹ The decision was interpreted throughout the state of Michigan as a temporary victory for the Republicans.

Immediately after Justice Stewart's decision, the GOP leaders of the state began a move to have the Senate redistricting issue placed on the November ballot and passed on by the voters of the state. For this to be possible, however, the Republicans would have required, in addition to their own, a minimum of eighteen Democratic votes in

⁹The Detroit Free Press, July 19, 1962, p. 4-A.

¹⁰The Detroit News, July 26, 1962, p. 4-B.

the House. They already had enough votes in the Senate. Under the provisions of the constitution at that time, a two-thirds vote of both chambers was required to have a provision placed on the ballot. Because of Democratic opposition to this plan, the project was abandoned and remained a dead issue throughout the rest of the campaign.

The issue was further complicated by the adoption of the new constitution, which provided a new formula to be used in apportionment of the legislature. This new formula was based on population-area formulas for both the House and Senate. At this writing, the new provisions have not been challenged in a court of law.

A third issue that bobbed its head up periodically during the campaign was a many-headed monster known as Michigan's tax structure. For many years, the legislature had patched up the state's taxing system with hundreds of statutory amendments and revisions, most of the expedient, "temporary," wait-for-a-more-opportune-time variety, nearly all of which became permanent parts of the system. The entire structure was grossly unfair because it taxed various segments of the population to a much greater extent than others, and caused numerous problems of interpretation and application of the complicated provisions. The circumstance that finally brought to a head the real inadequacy of Michigan's tax structure was the fiscal crisis of 1959 in which the state suffered an unparallel deficit of 95.5 million dollars in the General Fund during the fiscal year ending June 20.\footnote{Citizens for Michigan, A Program For Michigan Tax Reform, (Institute of Public Administration, University of Michigan, 1961), p. 1.}

To meet this crisis, the legislature made three temporary moves which provided stop-gap relief. The first was the liquidation of the
Veteran's Trust Fund which produced about 40 million dollars and helped to reduce the General Fund deficit to 64 million dollars by the end of the next fiscal year ending June 30, 1960. The second move was the imposition of certain temporary taxes which produced about 50 million dollars in revenue and which were allowed to expire June 30, 1961. The third measure was an increase in the state sales tax from three percent to four percent effective January 1, 1961. In spite of these measures, the state General Fund deficit was back up to 71.7 million dollars by June 30, 1961.\(^{13}\)

To try to arrive at a solution for this problem, a sub-committee of the Taxation Committee of Citizens for Michigan made a detailed study of Michigan's tax structure. Some of the conclusions they arrived at were: first, that Michigan's tax structure was failing to achieve a reasonable degree of equity in the distribution of the tax burden throughout the various segments of the state population. For example, Michigan's business taxes, including the Business Activities Tax,\(^{14}\) were among the highest in the nation and caused Michigan business and industrial taxes to be far out of proportion with other segments of the taxpaying community. Another segment of the community which the committee felt was being overtaxed was the low income groups. This was mostly by means of sales, property, excise, and other "nuisance" taxes.\(^{15}\)

The second conclusion at which the committee arrived was that many inequitable and harmful abuses were arising from the right of

\(^{13}\)Ibid., pp. 1, 2.

\(^{14}\)Michigan was the only state in the union to have this particular tax.

\(^{15}\)A Program For Michigan Tax Reform, pp. 2, 3.
certain local communities to levy flat-rate income taxes. For example, persons working in one community and residing in another found themselves paying taxes to support the community in which they worked and either being exempt in their own community or required to pay a double tax, one in each community.16

Aside from the direct fiscal problems caused by the tax structure, two other side results were obvious: (1) new business and industry were discouraged from settling in Michigan because of the high taxes and unfamiliar taxing means, and (2) there was a continual series of debates, legislation and counter-legislation, intercity battles, etc. over the various and often conflicting tax structures.

The flat-rate income tax issue came to a head during the campaign when Representative John T. Bowman, a Democrat from Macomb County, introduced a bill into the state House of Representatives which would have prevented Detroit from levying a one percent income tax on non-residents working in Detroit.17 The bill passed the House and the Senate but was vetoed by Governor Swainson.

This action caused Swainson some unpopularity among the non-Detroiterers working in the city. After the election, some Democratic apologists blamed the "Bowman Bill" for Swainson's defeat.18 In early July, the constitutionality of this non-resident tax levied by Detroit was challenged in Wayne County Circuit Court. Judge Neal Fitzgerald ruled that the tax was constitutional.19

16Ibid.
17The Detroit News, November 8, 1962, p. 8-C.
18Ibid., November 18, 1962, p. 11-B.
Although no further action came either on the Bowman Bill or on the planned appeal of Judge Fitzgerald's ruling during the campaign, the tax issue still remained as one of the more important issues. In almost every discussion conducted by either Romney or Swainson, where questions from the public were allowed, the Bowman Bill or the tax issue would be raised.

Early in the campaign Romney stated his position as being in favor of "complete spending reform as well as complete tax reform" for the state. He further stated that if an income tax were clearly necessary to "provide a more equitable and adequate tax structure" for the state, he would be in favor of it. \(^{20}\) With this answer, he managed to avoid a direct stand on the city income tax issue, which was probably the best position he could have taken.

Under the new constitution, which was adopted by the voters in April, 1963, the legislature was given the power to levy a flat-rate income tax, (but not a graduated income tax), either at the state or local level. There had previously been some question as to whether or not the legislature could levy a graduated income tax. \(^{21}\)

The program recommended by the Taxation Committee of CFM in 1961 included the following measures: (1) state wide adoption of a flat-rate personal income tax under which taxable income would be defined approximately as it is for Federal income tax purposes, (2) a corporation income tax, similarly patterned after the Federal tax, and employing the same rate as the personal income tax, (3) repeal of the Business Activities Tax, (4) exemption of tangible personal property.

\(^{20}\)The Detroit News, June 16, 1962, p. 7-A.

\(^{21}\)Michigan Challenge, June 1962, p. 28.
from local property tax, (5) restoration of the temporary taxes which expired June 30, 1961, and (6) development of a method for uniform assessment for real property. The committee felt that a program involving these basic areas would do much to improve Michigan's sagging tax structure. No further action, however, was taken on this problem during the period of the campaign.

22A Program For Michigan Tax Reform, pp. 4, 5.

23In late 1963, Governor Romney did succeed in getting a program introduced into the legislature similar to the one outlined by the Tax Committee of CFM, but it was defeated by the legislature.
CHAPTER EIGHT

OPPOSITION STRATEGY

As a direct result of the fourteen-year Democratic dominance of Michigan's major state elective offices, the Democratic nominee was virtually assured of being elected. This resulted in a considerable amount of intra-party rivalry and occasionally a real battle inside the party to see who would get the party's nomination.

This situation took a direct about-face in the 1962 elections. Governor Swainson was unopposed in the primary, as were the majority of the Democratic candidates for major offices around the state. One Detroit newspaper analyst described the situation in this manner.

The threatened loss of lease on the governor's office after 14 years has Michigan Democrats reaching for antidotes. Outbreaks of disunity are being treated with such long proven counter irritants as "Don't rock the boat" and "Don't change horses in the middle of the stream."

At times the prescription of party leaders becomes more potent, containing some of the ingredients of "Peace at any price."\(^1\)

From time to time throughout the campaign Swainson and other Democratic leaders indicated to the press their concern with such statements as, "This is the hardest fought campaign in years," we are "neck and neck," and toward the end of the campaign Swainson stated, "I am campaigning as hard as I know how."

The Democratic concern over this situation was reflected in their considerable emphasis on the "getting out the vote" aspects of

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\(^1\) The Detroit News, June 24, 1962, p. 7-B.
the campaign. This was particularly evident in the month preceding the final registration date of October 8. Swainson emphasized this in his speeches by saying such things as, "If you aren't registered by October 8th, I don't want to talk to you on October 9th." An intensive drive was also launched to "officially enroll" people into the Democratic party. This included rallies, voter registration drives, neighborhood coffee caucuses, and emphasis on registration in campaign literature. One pamphlet in particular, done in simple cartoon style, contained an entry blank and instructions on how to join the Democratic Party. This strategy was based on the theory that there are more Democrats in Michigan; and therefore, if they would all vote, the Democrats should win.

Some of the basic issues emphasized by the Democrats in their literature and in their campaign pronouncements were: (1) Swainson's fight to keep Michigan government on an even keel in the face of the "obstructionist" Republican-dominated legislature, (2) a personal campaign against Romney in an effort to belittle his past accomplishments and to demonstrate the "inconsistencies" of his position on various issues, and (3) the "party loyalty" approach, which was used extensively. Swainson made numerous references to the fact that he was a "Democrat and proud of it." He made certain that all his campaign literature labeled him as a loyal Democrat. On the other hand, Romney did not identify himself as a Republican on any campaign literature, and often stated, "I am a citizen first and a Republican second." Many of Swainson's speeches alluded to the fact that Romney was "ashamed of his party."

This emphasis of party by Swainson and de-emphasis by Romney was carried on throughout the campaign. Swainson supporters published

\[2\] Ibid., September 30, 1962, p. 8-8.
a series of pamphlets entitled, "Governor Swainson's fight for . . ." jobs, tax justice, civil rights, schools, senior citizens, etc.
Each of these pamphlets had the same basic format, beginning with "What Governor Swainson has done . . ." Following this would be a listing of the efforts of Swainson in the particular area named.
Below this was listed "what the Republican controlled legislature did . . .," and then was listed the actions the legislature had taken to "obstruct" Swainson's actions. The emphasis of these series of pamphlets was to point out the problems Governor Swainson had had in getting his programs approved by a legislature dominated by the "Old Guard" Republicans. This problem with the legislature was a real one, as Romney was to find out during his term as governor. The Democrats were attempting to place a "guilt by association" label on Romney as a member of the same party as those causing the problems in Lansing.

One set of pamphlets put out by the Democrats was illustrated with a caricature of an exceedingly obese elephant representing the GOP in various poses, such as mashing down the capitol building, squashing the taxpayer, and otherwise causing havoc with the state. Another pamphlet widely distributed was a pictorial history of the life of John B. Swainson, showing him as a high school football player (captain of the team), as an Eagle Scout, as a family man, and with President Kennedy looking . . . "forward, fighting for progress and the welfare of all the people." There was also a picture of him in his World War II soldier uniform, and here it is mentioned that he was severely wounded in November 1944 while on a night patrol in France. Little mention was made during the campaign of the fact that this wound resulted in the loss of both legs below the knees, although his "personal courage" was mentioned throughout.
Much was made of the fact that Romney had once made a $100 contribution to Americans for Constitutional Action (ACA), an extremist right-wing group. Romney admitted he had made the contribution and said he had done it as a "favor to a friend." He further stated that he had no connection with the group.  

It was obvious to even a casual observer that the Democratic-controlled labor unions formed the "grass roots" organization of the Democratic campaigns. Most rallies, speeches, and other Democratic political meetings were held in union halls. Many candidates for lesser offices on the Democratic ticket set up their headquarters in union halls. Union meetings and membership rosters were used to recruit volunteer workers to help with virtually all Democratic campaigns for office.

Swainson's campaign headquarters in the Book Building in Detroit consisted of a two-room suite on the second floor and, as near as could be observed, was staffed by only two women. When the author visited there, he wandered around picking up campaign literature and looked questioningly at everyone who looked like they might possibly work there. He was totally ignored, and after about twenty minutes decided to leave. One leading Republican leader said the Book Building headquarters was a "front" to give the appearance that there was a campaign organization other than the labor union organization. This accusation may not be entirely justified, but it was obvious that most Democratic campaign agendas, including Swainson's, were built around facilities and audiences provided by the various labor unions.

Early in the campaign it was reported that President Kennedy

3Ibid., September 26, 1962, p. 18-B.
would come to Michigan, probably in October, to address a $1000 a plate "brunch" to help the Democratic cause in the state. The idea was severely criticized by Michigan Republicans and was abruptly vetoed by the White House.\(^4\)

President Kennedy, however, did play an important part in the campaign. The President arrived in Michigan on Friday, October 5, 1962, and made a whirlwind tour, making speeches throughout the state. The following is representative of the content of Mr. Kennedy's speeches and indicates the nature of his tour:

This is not a nonpolitical trip. It is a political trip in the sense that we have come here to Michigan in order to talk to the Democrats of this state who on many occasions, both in this state and in the country, have stood up for progress.

And that is why we are back in Michigan tonight, to join you in a campaign to re-elect a distinguished governor who has been carrying the banner in this state formerly borne by the present assistant secretary of state for Africa, Soapy Williams.\(^5\)

The President's visit, which was timed to be just before the registration deadline of October 8, was, according to party spokesmen, basically an attempt to "get out the Party vote."\(^6\) After Mr. Kennedy returned to Washington, White House sources reported that the President's swing through Michigan had convinced him that Romney had an excellent chance of winning the election.\(^7\)

In addition to President Kennedy, national Democratic figures, described by Romney as a "federally organized rescue squad," traveled to Michigan during the latter part of the campaign.\(^8\) Included in this

\(^5\)Ibid., October 6, 1962, pp. 1, 2-A.
\(^6\)Ibid., October 8, 1962, p. 4-A.
\(^7\)Ibid., October 10, 1962.
\(^8\)Ibid., October 21, 1962, p. 14-B.
group were Vice President Johnson, former President Truman, Secretary of Commerce Luther Hodges, former Governor G. Mennen Williams, three other cabinet members, two U. S. Senators, and Democratic National Chairman John M. Bailey. These visits marked a change of emphasis in the Democratic approach to the campaign. During the earlier stages of the campaign, the Democratic pronouncements centered around criticism of Republicans and the minimizing of Romney's accomplishments. After these visits, the emphasis seemed to shift to a positive identification with the national Democratic party, which was then enjoying a healthy national image.

Romney's staff, when asked if they were going to counter by bringing in national figures on the Republican scene, stated that this approach demonstrated the concern the Democrats had about victory and said that to call in national figures would demonstrate a "lack of confidence." Concerning this, Romney made the statement, "We'd better get leadership in this state that doesn't need to rely on a dozen coattails in order to get re-elected." Many newspaper editorials pooh-poohed this "coattail" approach along with the fact that Swainson, in the later stages of the campaign, began to adopt many of the federal benefits of the Democratic administration as pertinent Michigan campaign issues.

Although the Cuban crisis prevented President Kennedy from making a scheduled return visit to Michigan, the Democrats seized upon this as an opportunity to emphasize their "don't change parties

9 Ibid.
10 Ibid., October 3, 1962, p. 10-B.
in the middle of a crisis” approach, and numerous photographs were circulated throughout the later stages of the campaign showing Swainson and other Democratic candidates with the President. These photographs were accompanied by literature emphasizing the need for state unity with the national party in power, especially during a time of crisis. It did appear to most political observers that the Democrats felt they were running slow and were attempting to borrow some mileage from the Democratic party’s national image.
CHAPTER NINE

THE TURNING POINT

When Romney decided to run for the governorship of Michigan, he realized the odds were against him. One of the big obstacles he knew he would have to overcome was the traditional Democratic orientation of most labor union members. He realized he could not be elected without convincing a substantial number of these union members to cross party lines and to vote for him.

Symbolic of labor opposition to Romney's candidacy, was August (Gus) Scholle, President of Michigan's 650,000 member AFL-CIO, who played a significant role in the campaign. An extremely outspoken individual, he made his opinion heard on almost every significant issue throughout the campaign.

Scholle, 58, has served as a labor leader in Michigan since 1937 when he was appointed regional director for the CIO by John L. Lewis. He was elected president of the Michigan CIO council in 1940 and upon the 1958 merger he became president of the AFL-CIO in Michigan.¹ Most Michigan political analysts hold Scholle to be largely responsible for the "grass roots" political organization of the Democratic party in Michigan, which is for all practical purposes one and the same with the labor union organization.

When the news leaked out that Romney had fasted for a 24-hour

period and prayed before making his final decision to run, Gus's comment was that Romney was a pious faker who was trying to give the impression that he had a "pipeline to God."² For this comment, Scholle was soundly denounced by church groups throughout Michigan and was even criticized by UAW and other labor union officials.

The author spent an hour in a personal interview with Scholle which was highlighted by many four letter words of common street vernacular. During our discussion, Scholle made many statements concerning his political feelings and ideas, such as "George Romney is a compulsive liar who lies when the truth would serve him better," and, "George Romney is a glory-hog who is running for political office just to satisfy his own ego." Our discussion ran the gamut of political issues in Michigan, and Scholle was always informed as to the elements involved in each issue, and had very definite opinions concerning each. It was difficult, however, to escape the feeling that he had allowed his own political prejudices to cloud considerably his perspective in objectively analyzing the issues. One person close to him expressed it this way: "If Gus could keep his mouth shut a little more, he would do us all a lot more good."

"Gus," as he is generally called, is known for his "low boiling point" and his ability to toss insults at whoever opposes him. As an example of this, in a political debate on reapportionment, which was broadcast over television between Romney and Scholle, the latter became so livid with rage that at one point Romney who still remained unruffled, sagely advised, "Calm down, Gus." This so delighted spectators and reporters that it was given national coverage.³

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Typical of charges made by Scholle throughout the campaign was his charge made in early June, that Republican executives at Chrysler Corporation had "forced" each employee to contribute two dollars per thousand dollars of their salary to the Republican party fund. This was denied by Lynn Townsend, Chrysler president, and later in the campaign it was brought out that many Democratic contributions were solicited in just this manner.4

Throughout the campaign, Scholle's pronouncements were always available. It almost seemed that when political reporters were a little low on news, they would run to Gus with a quote from Romney or some other Republican, just to get one of his almost-famous remarks on the subject. Concerning this, one reporter had this to say, "The only trouble with quoting Gus is that you can only print about a tenth of what he says." As the campaign progressed, Scholle's remarks seemed to lose their novelty, and even members of his own party paid less and less attention to him. Later on in the campaign he received extensive publicity only when he was called down by another labor leader or a fellow Democrat.

Walter Reuther, president of the powerful United Auto Workers of Michigan, was another figure of prominence in the campaign. Not as colorful as Scholle, he confined his public pronouncements to a minimum and generally made well-thought out statements of his and his unions' position.

Reuther had worked closely with Romney when Romney was president of American Motors, and both had expressed feelings of mutual respect and confidence in the abilities of the other on many occasions preceding the campaign. Upon the occasion of Romney's announcement

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of his profit-sharing program at American Motors, Reuther had stated that it was the most significant and historic collective-bargaining agreement ever signed in the United States."

During the campaign, however, Reuther did use the occasion of political speeches and reporter interviews to criticize Romney and the Republicans. Typical of Reuther's criticisms was the following, taken from one of his speeches: "If Romney is elected he will become the prisoner of a bunch of 18th century politicians," referring to the then current Michigan legislature. On this same theme, Reuther predicted that "GOP reactionary diehards will make hamburger out of Romney's white horse before he gets the saddle off." Indirectly referring to his former praise of Romney's inauguration of collective bargaining at American Motors, Reuther stated that Romney was a "naive politician" and would have done better to stick to collective bargaining as president of AMC.

The UAW president also praised the Democratic administration in many speeches and continued to refer to those "obstructionist Republicans who, like Senator Barry Goldwater, want to repeal the 20th Century." It is interesting to note the form Reuther's criticism took during the campaign, as he seldom, if ever, criticized Romney as an individual, but only criticized his going into politics and his identification with the Republican party.

In addition to these leaders, the unions themselves were

6The Detroit News, November 2, 1962, p. 10-A.
7Ibid.
8Ibid.
deeply involved in Michigan politics. The powerful Committee on Political Education of the AFL-CIO (COPE) had actively supported political "education" in behalf of Democratic candidates for many years. COPE was in the 1962 campaign in a big way. Every union member was contacted in behalf of Democratic candidates through the very efficient and well-defined organization COPE had built up in Michigan through the years. Republican candidates for public office had come to accept this situation as a political fact of life and had usually considered organized labor as politically unfertile ground in which to sow their campaign efforts.

George Romney, characteristically not willing to accept tradition as binding on him, set out to invade the active stronghold of labor and to stimulate a political awakening among the unions. He began by making illusions in his speeches to labor dominance of the Democratic party along with industry's domination of the Republican party—both of which he denounced as unhealthy. These remarks led to the Democratic-labor charge that Romney had referred to them as a "disease." 9

In order to meet the labor union members, feel their political pulse, and try to enlist their support, Romney made numerous visits to industrial plant gates, many at 5 to 6 a.m. in the morning, to shake hands with union members as they were changing shifts. He made speeches at lunch breaks in plants, took tours of many industrial complexes, talked with the workers as they worked, debated with those who wanted to debate with him, and in short, took every opportunity he could to get his message to the union members.

9Ibid., June 4, 1962, p. 4-A.
When it was announced that the Labor Day celebration to be held at the State Fairgrounds in Detroit would include speeches from most of the major Democratic candidates for state offices, including Governor Swainson, Romney immediately asked for equal time. He was informed by union officials that this was a private affair and that the schedule of events had already been made up and no time would be available for him to speak. Romney exploited this refusal to good advantage in his public statements. This caused the unions and the Democrats to suffer a considerable amount of unfavorable publicity.

Romney showed up at the Labor Day celebration, along with members of his staff and some Romney Girls. He listened politely to the speeches, talked with those who wanted to talk with him, both Democrats and Republicans, and generally let his presence be known. As newsmen and others became aware that Romney was in attendance, he gathered a considerable group of people following in his wake as he moved from place to place during the day. The publicity he received from this was of inestimable value and marked the turning point in Romney's efforts to crack the union barrier.

Shortly after this Labor Day experience, some of the braver Labor Union officials, such as those of Detroit's Carpenter's Local Union 983 and UAW Local 155, took positive action to give Romney a chance to be heard. Both of these Unions sent formal invitations to Romney headquarters asking him to address their Local meetings.\textsuperscript{10} Once the barrier had been breached, the invitations began to pour in. "The political curtain is beginning to crack" was Romney's description of the situation. From this point in the campaign until the

\textsuperscript{10}Ibid., October 10, 1962, p. 1.
election, many unions continued to bid for a place in the crowded camp­aign schedule.

Romney's appeal to the union members was centered around his basic theme of "government by the citizens," not domination by powerful special interest groups. He urged the union members to look at all the issues and not to be influenced by "pressures" from either direction. He promised, after the election, to look into the necessity of passing laws to assure Negroes and other minority groups an equal opportunity for apprenticeship training from labor unions. He attacked union leaders as being "afraid to let their membership even look at any candi­date except the one they favor." 12

Some of the invitations ended up being attempts to force Romney to debate with the "enemy" on its own grounds and in its own territory. On several occasions he was met at union halls by sound trucks playing Democratic or union songs and broadcasting Democratic campaign slogans. There were usually Swainson supporters there, passing out literature. Invariably Romney had to deal with hecklers at these meetings. For example, as he arrived at one Local, he was immediately surrounded by hecklers shouting questions at him. As a rule, Romney was able to trade shout for shout with anyone, as in this instance when he replied to their questions by saying, "You really don't want to hear my answers, you just want to ridicule me," and later, "You know all the questions; you're good parrots--you're perfect stooges." The newspapers delighted in reporting these "noisy exchanges" and "shouting contests." 13 They gave maximum coverage to such incidents as the following when a man refused to

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11 Ibid., November 1, 1962, p. 11-C.
12 Ibid., November 2, 1962, p. 10-A.
13 Ibid.
shake hands with Romney. Upon the refusal Romney asked, "You mean your partisanship is so serious that we can't be friendly and shake hands?" "That's right," the man said. "You lie too much." "Now look," Romney replied. "I have done more to stimulate jobs in Michigan during the last two years than any other man. You have a closed mind. You have a bitter attitude." "That's right," the man said and walked away.14

A number of union officials who supported Romney found themselves in awkward and even untenable positions. Warren Creekmore, president of the 500-plus member UAW Local 280 at Continental Motors Corporation, became incensed by the distribution of handbills placing him strongly in favor of Swainson. He said the handbills were supplied by the International Union and distributed by the Local COPE organization without his authorization. One pamphlet, above the printed signatures of Local officers including Creekmore, stated that all members of the Local were Democrats and supported Swainson. Another pamphlet, charging that Romney would support legislation to stop unemployment compensation for employees idled by a strike in a supplier plant, was put out in Creekmore's name.

"I don't believe that UAW International officers have any right to tell a member how to vote," said Creekmore. "People should have a right to think and vote for themselves."15

Although "still a Democrat," Creekmore announced that he was an active worker in the Romney Volunteers. A few weeks later he announced that he was resigning his post as Union president because "I was forced to choose between the political dictates of the

14 Ibid., November 1, 1962, p. 11-C.
15 Ibid., October 12, 1962.
International Union and the dictates of my own conscience." He further stated that his position as Union president would force him to sign checks authorizing funds for COPE workers to engage in activities not in sympathy with his own political views. His action prompted some 300 post cards and letters and numerous phone calls in support of his position.16

After Creekmore's action, it became a little more respectable for Democrats to come out in support of Romney. The Romney Volunteers reported that hundreds of labor union members were working actively in its various chapters, and the author was able to interview a large number of union members who were working actively for Romney's election, or who at least had decided to vote for him. During the later stages of the campaign, it was not at all unusual for a large number of people to come up to Romney each day to tell him that they had never voted for a Republican in their lives, but now they were going to vote for him. It would seem Romney's assault on the labor stronghold had been a success. The turning point had been reached. It was downhill from now on.

16Ibid., October 24, 1962, p. 8-B.
Four face-to-face clashes, three before television cameras, formed an important part of the Romney-Swainson campaign. It is estimated that approximately two to three million persons saw one or more of the debates in person, watched them on television, or heard them on the radio.

The first debate was held before the Economic Club of Detroit in Detroit's famed Cobo Hall on Monday evening, October 8, 1962. This debate was not televised and lasted for one hour. It was heard live by 2,300 persons and broadcast over Detroit radio stations WWJ and WJR, and the opening statements were printed in The Detroit News and The Detroit Free Press.¹

The second debate occurred the following evening, October 9, and originated at WWJ-TV, Channel 4, in Detroit. This debate, as did the rest of the television debates, lasted only one-half hour and was carried in Detroit on both Channel 2, WJBK-TV, and Channel 7, WXYZ-TV, from 7:00 to 7:30 p.m. Outstate TV stations that carried the debates include WJIM (Lansing), WMSB (Lansing-Jackson), WOOD (Grand Rapids), WNEM (Bay City), WTOM (Cheboygan), and WPBM (Traverse City).

The third debate occurred on Wednesday, October 17, at 7 p.m. and originated from WXYZ-TV in Detroit. The fourth debate occurred on

¹The Detroit News, October 9, 1962, pp. 1, 11-C.
Friday, October 26, and originated from WJBK, the third Detroit television station. 2

Ground rules for the television debates called for a four-minute opening statement by each candidate, a fourteen minute question and answer period conducted by the television station's news director, and two minutes each for summary or rebuttal. 3

The first debate at the "Wives' Night" of the Detroit Economic Club was the first head-on clash of the campaign. In this encounter, each opponent was allowed a fifteen minute opening speech followed by five minutes of rebuttal time; after which, time was allowed for questions from the floor. Following the question period, each candidate was then given two minutes to summarize his position.

Swainson, recognizing that his audience was pro-Romney and pro-business, aimed more to those who were listening in on radio or who would read his comments in the newspapers. 4 He began his remarks in this first debate by citing his record and the campaign promises he had kept in spite of the opposition of "big business" and its Republican lobbyists. He credited "my Democratic administration" with the accomplishments he cited and blamed a "Republican wrecking crew" in the legislature and among the lobbies for the failures he mentioned.

Romney countered with the charge that the legislature had opposed Swainson's programs because they would have led to greater dangers, such as more unemployment, and said voters "should not be fooled" by Swainson's claims of progress, as most of them, such as a recent drop in

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2Ibid., October 7, 1962, pp. 1, 15-A.

3Ibid.

4Ibid., October 9, 1962, pp. 11-C, 1.
unemployment, could be traced to the "compact car revolution," and other successes traceable to business and not to the policies of the Democratic administration in Lansing. He then spoke of the need for less "partisanship" and more "citizenship action" as the basis for a solution of Michigan's problems.\(^5\)

It was obvious that Romney was the favorite from the start. His speech was interrupted by applause six times while Swainson received only polite applause at the end of his speech and received adverse comments and some catcalls during the speech. Although neither candidate claimed victory, spokesmen for both sides stated they thought the debate had gone favorably. Some, however, felt that both had been too polite and had really clashed on but few specific issues.

The second debate the following evening (the first over television) consisted of the same basic issues condensed into the space of a half hour. Both candidates seemed tense and nervous, especially before, but also occasionally during the debate; both became more heated than they had the evening before and both held press conferences following the debate in an attempt to strengthen their position. Viewers interviewed expressed varied reactions, but most indicated they still supported the candidate they had formerly supported, although some few indicated they had switched sides.\(^6\)

The third encounter was marked by a more relaxed, easy manner and presentation by both candidates. Each was more confident of his

\(^5\)Ibid.

\(^6\)Ibid., October 10, 1962, pp. 1, 10-A, 12-B.
position, his facts, and his ability to present himself to the television audience. In this debate, Romney charged that one of the state's most crying needs was the replacement of "one-sided, special interest, Gus Scholle government with independent public officials." Swainson denied this charge, stating that the Democrats "enjoy labor support" but do not have "labor control." He went on to cite his record and quote statistics to support his statements.

Romney cited the condition of the state when Swainson took office two years before by alluding to the unemployment problem, "the money mess," rising taxes, and bitter partisanship. He went on to say these problems had not been solved, but had, in fact, increased in their scope. Swainson countered this by saying his opponent had no platform, no program, and his political record had been a "flop." The fourth and last of the debates, only ten days before election day, was influenced tremendously by the Cuban crisis. Swainson took the position that the voters should stick with him and the "Democratic team of experience that backs President Kennedy 100 per cent" on foreign and domestic programs. Romney countered this by saying, "We must strengthen Michigan so Michigan can strengthen the nation." He then added that the state "has a growing internal crisis produced by political bickering."

In the first minute of his two minute closing statement, Swainson referred to President Kennedy by name seven times, reiterating the theme he had adopted for the night, which was called by reporters, a

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7 Ibid., October 18, 1962, pp. 1, 15-A.
8 Ibid., p. 16-D.
9 Ibid., October 27, 1962, pp. 1, 3-A.
"don't change government in the middle of a crisis" approach. Romney countered with his "time for a change" theme. The other issues of their final debate were similar to those of the other debates.

In addition to the four face-to-face encounters between Swainson and Romney, another event of similar nature took place which achieved considerable publicity and possibly had a significant effect on the campaign.

It all started when UAW radio-television commentator Guy Nunn interviewed Governor Swainson on his union-sponsored television show, "Telescope," over CKLW-TV in Windsor, Ontario, Canada (just across the Detroit river from Detroit). Romney asked for equal time and offered to pay the cost of the air time. Romney stipulated he would be available to tape the show at 10 a.m. Saturday morning in keeping with his policy of not campaigning on Sunday.

Nunn agreed to Romney's conditions and said he was "delighted to accept" Romney's request. The show was scheduled for presentation on Sunday, September 23, at 8 p.m.

Two days after Nunn's acceptance of his offer, Romney wrote him a letter and again offered to pay for the air time stating that he felt it was "neither moral nor right" that UAW workers should be "arbitrarily taxed" to pay the cost of "broadcasting political opinions" which may not necessarily reflect their own thinking. In this letter, Romney enclosed a check for the cost of the air time of the broadcast. What was to be done with the money after Nunn received it, however, was Nunn's "business" and his "responsibility." Nunn promptly sent


11 Ibid., September 20, 1962, pp. 1, 4-A.
the check back to Romney who sent it to Walter Reuther, president of the UAW, who forwarded it to the American Heritage Foundation.  

This action cleared the way for the actual "interview," which took place as scheduled. This "interview" took on all the appearances of a free-for-all which newsmen described as "the best fight of the campaign." The discussion started out hot, but soon got hotter. Both men constantly interrupted each other, sometimes pointing fingers, sometimes shouting. Romney's original purpose had been to correct a list of nineteen "distortions" which he said had been presented by Nunn and Swainson in the preceding program. He was only able to present a few of these, no one is sure just how many.

After the program, Romney burst into the foyer and angrily told newsmen he resented the "technique" of being "asked so many questions with so many distortions that you are not expected to clear them up." Romney then smiled at the crowd, waved good-by to them, and left.  

Reaction to the program was varied. Editorial and reader comment in the newspapers seemed to indicate Romney had at least come out even, if not ahead.

It is difficult to assess the effect of these "debates" on the election. From the beginning, Romney staff personnel were apprehensive over Romney's television "personality" and attempted to hold his television appearances to a minimum. Romney, however, projected a much more positive image than was expected. On the other hand, many felt Swainson's warmth and personality, which live audiences could feel, did

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14 *Ibid.*, September 27, 1962, p. 8-D.
not come through too well on TV. The debates served at least the minimal function of acquainting more people with the candidates and their personalities. It is the author's assessment of the situation that Romney's television appearances had a significant positive effect in the ultimate success of the campaign.

Only one scientific election poll on the 1962 Michigan gubernatorial race was conducted. This was The Detroit News poll, which was prepared and conducted by Market Opinion Research Company. The analysis articles accompanying each poll were written by the President of Market Opinion Research, Richard W. Oudersluys. For the fourteen years preceding the 1962 elections, this poll had never failed to name the winners in a Michigan final election.\(^\text{15}\)

During the course of the campaign, four polls were conducted by this group. The research for the polls was done statewide, and the results were compiled from twenty-seven categories into which the people interviewed were divided. These categories included place of residence, sex, marital status, ethnic group represented, income group, age group, and occupational group.\(^\text{16}\)

The first poll, the results of which were published on September 5, showed that if the election were held at that time, Romney would receive 50.0 per cent of the vote and Swainson would receive 48.8 per cent. The rest of the percentage either went to James Sim, the Socialist-Labor candidate, or was undecided.\(^\text{17}\)

The second poll, results of which were published September 30,

\(^\text{15}\)Ibid., September 22, 1962, p. 1.

\(^\text{16}\)Ibid., September 30, 1962, p. 1.

\(^\text{17}\)Ibid.
showed that Romney had dropped to 49.7 per cent and Swainson had risen to 49.5 per cent. This was the closest of the four polls, and was Romney's lowest percentage and Swainson's highest. Romney's heaviest loss during this period was a 9.3 per cent drop among Wayne County's skilled labor group. During the same period, Swainson gained 8.4 per cent among this group. In this poll, Romney gained some percentage points outstate and some among foreign-born voters.  

In the third poll, published October 21, Romney was up to 52 per cent of the vote while Swainson had slipped to 47.3 per cent. In this poll, Romney's most significant gains came among skilled labor and the 21-29 year age group. This poll was conducted after the first Swainson-Romney television debate and after the Romney-Guy Nunn "interview." Other significant gains reflected in this poll included 3.6 per cent gain in the Negro vote and a smaller gain among foreign-born groups. This poll contained the highest margin of leadership Romney held in the four polls taken.  

In the fourth and final poll, the results of which were published November 4, 1962, just two days before the election, Romney had slipped to 50.9 per cent and Swainson was up to 48.4 per cent. This poll reflected a significant gain for Romney in outstate urban areas, while he lost most of his former percentage gains among skilled workers. At this report, however, he had picked up some additional strength in rural areas. This figure proved to be the most accurate in predicting the final outcome as Romney's 80,000 vote margin proved to be

18 Ibid.  
just less than 3 per cent of the total vote. In the other statewide
contests, the poll picked only three out of five correctly. The two
Republicans picked to win were not elected. 21

It is difficult to determine whether or not the polls had any
real significance in the campaign. For instance, both candidates,
upon being confronted with the poll results, merely stated that the
polls indicated what they had known all along, that it was going to be
a close race and that they should work harder. It was felt, however,
by many that the polls' advantage and significance lay in pointing out
weak areas to which more effort should be directed. 22 Both candidates
undoubtedly gained some valuable information from the polls that helped
them to pinpoint areas where more effort was needed.

21 Ibid.
22 Ibid., October 22, 1962, p. 12-A.
CHAPTER ELEVEN

AFTER THE ELECTION

At 4:05 a.m., November 7, 1962, Governor John B. Swainson sent George Romney a telegram conceding defeat.¹ The final vote figures showed that Romney received 1,419,046 votes while Swainson received 1,340,549. This was a slim victory margin for Romney of 78,497 votes or just under three per cent of the total votes cast.²

Romney's election marked the end of the fourteen-year Democratic reign in the state capitol by two Democratic governors, G. Mennen (Soapy) Williams, who served six terms, and John B. Swainson, who served one term.

The victory was a personal one for Romney, and not for his party, as no other Republican candidate for state administrative office was elected. This was evidence of the success of his determination to wage his campaign as an individual and a citizen, and not as a Republican. The election gave Romney a completely Democratic "Cabinet."³

Governor Swainson picked up most of his strength in Detroit where the AFL-CIO organization was concentrated and where his Negro support went virtually unchallenged. Detroit gave Swainson 412,042

¹The Detroit News, November 7, 1962, pp. 1, 10-B.
²Ibid., p. 1.
³Ibid. The "Cabinet" so called, was the seven administrative officers who serve with the governor; Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of State, State Treasurer, Auditor General, Attorney General, Superintendent of Public Instruction, and Highway Commissioner.
votes and Romney 205,170. This was roughly a 67 per cent plurality for Swainson. In Detroit's suburbs, however, Swainson's vote was far less than expected. He dropped considerably from his 1960 figures in both Wayne and Macomb Counties and he lost Monroe County. This poor showing in the suburbs was blamed by many analysts on Swainson's veto of the Bowman Bill which would have prevented suburban residents working in Detroit from paying a city income tax.

Swainson also lost the Upper Peninsula which had been one of former Governor Williams' strongholds. Swainson's loss here was blamed on his support of the redistricting court order, his snubbing of the Upper Peninsula State Fair, and general neglect of his political fences in that area.

Much of Romney's slim margin probably came from his campaign to win the labor vote. Romney was the first Republican candidate since big labor organized Michigan to attract any amount of labor support. Many labor leaders and some labor organizations, as well as a substantial number of rank-and-file union members broke away from the Democratic party and voted for Romney. In Detroit's suburbs, Romney won almost as many labor votes as Swainson, and penetrated significantly into the traditional Democratic margins in Detroit and Wayne County. The newspapers delighted in reporting the fact that UAW president Walter Reuther, and AFL-CIO president, Gus Scholle, were "silent" about the results of the election. However, a meeting of the AFL-CIO's Committee On Political Education (COPE) was immediately scheduled to meet on November 27 at Lansing to study the dilemma to be faced by

4 Ibid.

5 Ibid., November 7, 1962, p. 8-A.
labor with Romney as governor.  

Romney also made significant inroads into the Negro vote although a majority of the Negroes still voted as they traditionally have for the Democrats. Selected returns from thirteen key Detroit Negro areas indicated that Romney obtained between 22 and 25 per cent of the Negro vote in upper middle income Negro residential areas. Swainson still carried the middle and lower income Negro districts.

It seems evident that Romney's original analysis of the situation was correct, that he could win if he could make significant penetrations into the labor and Negro votes. There is also some evidence, but no possibility of obtaining conclusive figures, to indicate that many ethnic and special interest groups, who traditionally vote Democratic, switched in some measure and voted for Romney.

Following a brief vacation in California and the West, Romney settled down to the business of preparing for his inauguration as Governor on January 1, 1963. His first action was to appoint several of his close campaign aides to interim positions to work with Democratic officials to assure an orderly transition of government. In this effort he received full co-operation from Governor Swainson.

Romney immediately called a meeting of his Democratic Administrative Board to help map plans for their administration. Romney and his staff were given office space near the Capitol and from there Romney began to hold meetings with leaders in all areas throughout the state. He began at once the all important study of the budget which was to be submitted within ten days of his inauguration. The

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6Ibid.

7Ibid., p. 10-B.
new Governor also had approximately eighty to one hundred jobs to fill in the early stages of his term. In this he continued his non-partisan approach and pledged that he would choose the best man for the job regardless of the person's political affiliation. He set up what he called a "3-C" policy on appointments—"competence, character, and capacity." This policy was discouraging to many old line Republicans but reassuring to Democrats.8

Romney met the challenge of an all-Democratic Administrative Board head-on. He invited the Democrats to his Inaugural Ball celebration to be held New Year's Eve.9 The Democrats, however, rejected this invitation and held their own celebration.10

In his personal affairs, Romney immediately resigned as vice chairman of the board of directors of American Motors Corporation, which was a position which had been created for him when he decided to run for governor.11 He also placed his 104,000 shares of AMC stock12 in the hands of a bank trustee who, he stated, "will manage and administer" his stock interests to "permit no diversion of my attention from the office to which I have been elected."13 His only other business position was a directorship of Douglas Aircraft Corporation, which he also resigned.

Another of Romney's actions was to resign as President of the Detroit Stake of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.


9In the past the Democratic and Republican state officials have always held separate celebrations.


12Ibid., p. 2-A. It was estimated his stock was worth about $1,800,000 at then current market prices.

Other positions about which he did not take immediate action included his position on the business advisory board of Wayne State University and his national directorship of the Round Table of Catholics, Jews, and Protestants.\textsuperscript{14}

His opponent, Governor Swainson, still remained as the leader of the Democratic party in Michigan. At first Swainson said he had "no plans" as to his future, but later he announced that he would return to private law practice in Detroit.\textsuperscript{15}

Although a detailed analysis of Romney's first year as Governor is beyond the scope of this study, it is worth our while to make a few pertinent observations. The period since Romney's inauguration has seen the adoption by the people of a new constitution with model provisions in many areas. The legislative session in 1963 was the most productive in many years. The budget was balanced, new provisions were passed to strengthen economic expansion, more effective mental health programs were passed, measures were taken to assure Detroit being nominated as a possible site for the 1964 Olympics, and a new progressive construction safety bill was passed. Michigan ended the fiscal year 1963 with a budget surplus of more than $40 million. There has been noticeable improvement in labor-management relations, evidencing enlightened self-interest on the part of both industry and workers. In many ways Michigan is now becoming known as a problem solving state instead of a "problem" state.\textsuperscript{16}

In spite of the healthy financial status of the state, Governor

\textsuperscript{14}\textit{The Detroit News}, November 15, 1962, p. 2-A.

\textsuperscript{15}\textit{Ibid.}, December 2, 1962, p. 9-D.

\textsuperscript{16}\textit{The Deseret News}, July 12, 1963, p. 18-A
Romney determined to overhaul the badly lopsided tax structure of Michigan. To accomplish this he prepared a top-to-bottom tax revision program which included a personal income tax and removed much of the unfair tax burden from the lower income groups. This program was designed to shift a larger percentage of the tax burden to the middle and upper income classes, pillars of the Republican party. The total program was not designed to increase revenue, but merely to distribute the burden more equitably.\(^{17}\) The opposition to this proposal which Romney received from industry and from the Republican-dominated legislature was natural and expected. During the 1963 legislative session, Romney did not succeed in getting this program enacted into law. It is almost certain he will try again.

\(^{17}\)Ibid., September 23, 1963, p. 2-A.
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GEORGE ROMNEY AND THE MICHIGAN Gubernatorial Campaign - 1962

An Abstract of
A Thesis
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Department of Political Science
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In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

by
Richard C. Fuller
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ABSTRACT

Politics in Michigan had been on a low plane for a number of years. The troubles were many and their roots could be found deep in the structure of the state's government.

In April of 1959, the sagging governmental structure gave way to the extent that the state was unable to meet its payroll. The result was the much publicized "Payless Pay Day" which attracted national and international interest.

Seeing that their elected officials were seemingly powerless to correct even the basic flaws in Michigan's government, many of the state's leading business and industrial leaders decided to apply their considerable talents to improving their state government. George Romney, then president of American Motors, was one of these citizens.

The efforts of these men culminated in the formation of a citizen's action group known as Citizen's for Michigan, which immediately divided itself into committees to study all important phases of Michigan's political structure. George Romney, as chairman of CFM, played a leading role in these activities.

CFM's first major effort was its co-operation with other civic groups throughout the state in getting the constitution amended to allow the calling of a Constitutional Convention to revise and update that document.

Romney ran for and was elected a delegate to this convention which began its work in October of 1961. When the 144 delegates
completed their deliberations in May of 1962, they had developed an entirely new document capable of meeting the needs of a growing, ever-expanding economic and political complex. This constitution was subsequently adopted by the voters of Michigan in an election held in April of 1963.

His political appetite whetted by the Constitutional Convention, George Romney sensed that his experience and background had almost inadvertently prepared him to be an ideal candidate for the governorship of Michigan. After a thorough investigation, coupled with prayerful consideration, Romney announced he would be a candidate.

His opponent was the incumbent, John B. Swainson, who had all the resources of the Democratic-labor coalition at his command. This coalition had successfully kept a Democrat in Lansing for fourteen years.

The heart of the campaign is the story of how George Romney, the "nice guy turned politician" individually attacked and made significant inroads into all areas of Democratic voter strength. Without doubt the most significant of these areas was organized labor itself, which Romney attacked head-on and persistently hammered at the bunkers of opposition until he was able to make, first one slight penetration, then another, then a more significant one, until he had whole unions, along with their leaders, or sometimes in spite of their leaders, working for his election.

Romney's victory was a personal one, but also, and perhaps more important, it was a victory for morality and honesty in politics. George Romney has taken the current adage, "nice guys finish last" and made it "nice guys finish first."