

Epilogue: Ugly Roots

Race, Emotion, and the Rise of the Modern Republican Party in Alabama and the South

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FOR ALMOST A century after the Civil War, the Republican Party existed only on the periphery of southern society and its polity. The vast majority of white southerners viewed Republicans with the most intense dislike and suspicion—a revulsion so deep and so abiding that it is impossible to state it too strongly. Southerners considered white Republicans an especially abhorrent lot, ranking them just above the freed blacks they occasionally tolerated as political partners. Some even regarded white Republicans, both the native scalawag sort and the northern carpetbag variety, as the actual inferiors—socially, politically, and morally—of the South's large black population. As William Faulkner would write decades later, the South's past never died; in fact, it wasn't even the past.¹ Nowhere was this observation more telling than in the region's persistent bedevilment by the memory of war and Reconstruction—a twin recollection of the most intimate violation—both attributable, ultimately, to the despised Republican Party.

All of this eventually changed, of course. Today when we speak of the “Solid South,” we no longer speak of the Solid *Democratic* South. Today, and for the last couple of decades, the “Solid South” means the Solid *Republican* South—at least in terms of presidential elections and, increasingly, in down-ticket races as well. The South is the place where we are able to see most clearly the GOP's rise from its leprous origins, through respectability and competitiveness, to ascendance and, finally, to ever-growing dominance. Yet the trauma of civil war and Republican reconstruction cannot be overstated. It left the South with a seething

hatred and fear of everything Republican, black, federal, and liberal—a burning memory that, it is not too much to write, was consuming and all-pervading in politics and society. For the next seven decades, the “Solid South” was almost completely and exclusively Democratic in its politics and in its political and associated moral culture. Anything even remotely connected with the Republican Party was anathema in the South, indelibly associated with the traumatic, caricatured, and largely inaccurate collective memory of corrupt and incompetent “black rule,” backed by the bristling bayonets of an invading army of northern, federal aggression.² From Redemption onward, Republican candidates, including national presidential candidates, received only a handful of votes in the southern states. That is, until, the election of 1928.

From 1865 to 1928 this was the Democratic Party, the “Solid Democratic South,” sometimes referred to by its proper name in places like Alabama: the “Conservative and Democratic Party.” During these years there were several sporadic, and not inconsequential, challenges to the Solid South—Republicans, independents of various stripes, and finally the Populists of the 1890s.³ But in the latter part of that decade, southern whites of all kinds—Bourbon Democrats and Independents—agreed on the overriding goal of white supremacy, Jim Crow, and a whites-only politics.⁴ In Alabama, whites of various political persuasions—separated mainly by economic issues—temporarily subsumed them to disfranchise blacks in the state's new 1901 constitution, and they made certain that blacks stayed excluded by legislating an all-white Democratic primary into effect the next year and purging the Republican Party of black participation. Contrary to much of the traditional writing on this subject, many plain whites actually supported the disfranchisement of blacks. Hill-country representatives such as J. Thomas “Cotton Tom” Heflin of Chambers County favored suffrage restriction because, as he put it, “I believe as truly as I believe that I am standing here, that God almighty intended the negro to be the servant of the white man.” Thomas L. Bulger, a representative of the hill-country whites of Tallapoosa County, admitted that “What we would like to do in this county, more than any other two things, is to disfranchise the darkeys and educate the white children.” “The plain English of it,” according to William H. Denson, a leading representative of Alabama's plain hill-country whites in Etowah County, “is to eliminate the negro from the ballot box. . . . The rejection of the unfit is going on.” “And in that step,” he vowed, “I give my heart and my hand and trust to the God that made us to preserve the supremacy of the white race.”⁵

In Alabama, whites of various strains on economic issues were of

virtually one mind on race. The major sticking point in disfranchisement was whether whites of plain origins would also be caught up in the net of black disfranchisement. In the closing moments of the nineteenth century and the opening ones of the twentieth, many whites of all stations joined together to doom black voters in Alabama until the 1960s. It was the most notable occurrence yet of using race as a glue to bond whites of differing economic and cultural outlooks into common cause, and as such it constituted the first germ of the modern Republican Party—at least in Alabama.

The 1928 presidential election foreshadowed future political developments by making crystal clear the power of the race issue in southern politics.⁶ A large number of white southern Democrats, furious over the choice of New York governor Al Smith to bear the national party standard, bolted the party of their fathers and committed the serious heresy of lending their support to a Republican, Herbert Hoover. In the 1928 South, though, these rebels could not yet afford to call themselves “Republicans” without consigning themselves to the furthest outreaches of society—and truth be told they were more anti-Democrats than actual Republicans as the GOP was constituted in the 1920s. So they took the euphemism “Hoovercrats.” Yet their support of the Republican candidate marked the closest presidential election up until that time in the South. A “wet,” Irish-Catholic product of Tammany Hall and, most importantly, a relative liberal on the race question, Alfred Emmanuel Smith was the physical embodiment of everything the white South found repugnant. In this election, the Outer South states of Tennessee, Texas, North Carolina, Virginia, and Florida registered a distinct crack in the Solid South by casting a majority of their votes for the Republican.⁷ Still, just over half of Alabama’s white Democrats held their noses and voted for Smith because they believed the Democratic Party in the South, regardless of one particular candidate, to be the most important guardian of white supremacy and the racial status quo ever conceived.

Alcohol, Catholicism, urbanization, and ethnic purity were all major issues in the 1928 election. But in Alabama and the Deep South, race eclipsed every other issue as both sides attempted to out-race-bait the other in what amounted to an extremely bitter “political” civil war. In Alabama a strong coalition of Klan-Republican-Prohibitionist bolters opposed Smith’s candidacy by employing the most ruthless methods, circulating broadsheets to every corner of the state charging the Democrat with having to pander to “Harlem negroes” to be elected. Various titles were used, none of them subtle: “Al Smith, the Negro Bootlicker,” “Al Smith, the Negro Lover,” “Nigger, Nigger, Nigger,” “Smith’s Negro

Babies,” “Tammany and the Negro,” and “More Nigger.” Klan rallies designed for the whole family lynched Al Smith dummies—replete with hanging, throat-slashing, and spurting fake blood—and promised to lynch the New Yorker, come November, “with good Christian votes.” Loyalist Democrats fought back by invoking the emotional specter of Reconstruction drummed into every southern schoolboy and -girl by the age of ten. The caricature, which relied on the canted texts of the “Dunning School” of Reconstruction historiography, was replete with corruption, “ignorant” black rule, Yankee and federal oppression, and dire threats to white womanhood. “We have a white man’s government in Alabama, and we are going to keep it unless federal bayonets again tear our heritage from us,” Congressman George Huddleston, an economic progressive, broadcast in opposing Herbert Hoover. Future Alabama governor Frank M. Dixon warned that the Republican’s election would reconstitute the Reconstruction era’s “Negro rule” and again bring “down the heels of the ex-slaves on the throats of Southern men and women.” Another future governor, Benjamin Meek Miller, bragged that “no nigger” had helped to nominate Al Smith at the Democratic National Convention but rather “900 Anglo Saxons.” Former governor Bill Brandon raised himself from his sickbed long enough to warn of “negro domination . . . the perils of Republican misrule . . . [and] the slimy trail of the carpetbagger” should the GOP candidate prevail in Alabama. An Alabama woman, distraught at having to practice integration at Herbert Hoover’s Commerce Department in Washington, said, “Think of [it,] a Secretary of Commerce having to stoop to niggers . . . [and] nigger politicians . . . to win. I wonder how Mr. Hoover would like to have the women of his family use the same toilet that colored people use.” The woman confided that she and other southern white women in Washington had a pet name for the black employees at the Commerce Department: “Hoover’s Chocolates . . . [and] we all wish we could make him eat them.” Perhaps the most dramatic moment came when Alabama’s oligarchs imported the notorious Theodore “the Man” Bilbo from Mississippi to plead their cause before a record Birmingham crowd. “The Republican Party of the North is the negro Party of the South,” Bilbo told the Alabama audience as a contingent of Confederate veterans dramatically ringed the stage. “It is [the] Republican ‘nigger’ organization of Alabama. . . . And [i]f you . . . desert to the Negro Republican Party you will live to regret it. . . . [T]here will be blood spilled—the blood of your children, some of them yet unborn.”⁸

As the standard-bearer for the Democratic Party, Smith eventually carried Alabama—but only by the slimmest of margins. In fact, quite a

few veteran observers of Alabama politics were convinced that vote fraud on a large scale in the Black Belt—a place renowned for voting irregularities—was the only reason Smith even carried the state.

To a remarkable degree, the 1928 election represented a fierce family split among white southerners over the best way to preserve white supremacy. Although both sides agreed on the ultimate aim of preserving white supremacy in the South, they disagreed bitterly over how to achieve that result. The bolters chose the Republican Party but, out of deference to (and wise recognition of) the region's Reconstruction memory, called themselves Hoovercrats. Alabama's Loyalists, despite their serious misgivings, decided to remain inside the Democratic tent. During the years leading up to and including the campaign, the state's Hoovercrats and nascent Republicans operated in close physical and spiritual proximity to the state's powerful Ku Klux Klan, as well as the forces most clearly identified with Prohibition, religious fundamentalism, traditional family values, nativism, xenophobia, religious, ethnic, and racial intolerance, and conventional white, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant notions of morality—enforced at the end of a whip or a gun, if necessary. In essence, for Alabama, the 1920s KKK provided a second major germ of modern Republicanism. It is likely that it did so in much of the greater South as well. By contrast, the Loyalists were more cosmopolitan, mostly business conservatives, concerned with preserving their favorable political and economic position, and not as likely to get worked up over issues like alcohol, Catholics, Jews, immigrants, or conventional forms of morality. Yet both factions were ultraconservative on the race issue. While the Loyalists were determined opponents of the Klan, they fought the order as a *political* adversary and as an unobtrusive police force against racial change—one that threatened to dry up northern capital investment and bring down an unwanted federal invasion and real racial change on the heads of racially conservative white southerners.⁹ The Loyalists shared an interest—indeed an obsession—with their fledgling Republican or Hoovercrat challengers in maintaining white supremacy. The raucous 1928 episode made clear that if the two sides could ever be glued together using race or some equally emotional adhesive, the product of such a union would be invincible in the Deep South. As shocking and, perhaps, overheated as it might initially seem, there is no way around the conclusion that a critically important part of the Republican appeal in the modern South may accurately be termed “neo-Kluxism.”

“Neo-Kluxism” denotes a focus redux on racial, cultural, ethnic, moral, religious, and even gender-relations homogeneity that bears

striking parallels with the Ku Klux Klan of the 1920s and 1940s. That is, the “second KKK” and its 1940s incarnation posed as the self-conscious preservers of home and hearth in the South, a concept constituted by the interaction of several fundamental building blocks of conservative (read: predominant) southern culture: white supremacy, Anglo-Saxon, evangelical Protestantism, “dry,” patriarchal, traditional family values, religious, ethnic, moral, and social conservatism, ethnic purity, and nativism, patriotism, and “100 percent Americanism.” The 1940s version did a very similar thing, with the exception of being poorer and more working class in membership than middle class, and having that fact reflected in its deemphasis on mainline Protestantism for more fringe, Pentecostal, charismatic, Church of God, and Holiness church support. The main adversaries of the KKK in Alabama and the South from 1915 through the 1960s were the “best people,” persons variously referred to as the “Bourbons,” “Redeemers,” “bosses,” “planter-industrialist clique,” the “Big Mule/Black Belt coalition,” and so forth. In 1928 they made up the ranks of Loyalist Democracy, but in 1948 they made up the Dixiecrats in alliance with the KKK. Their concerns were primarily white supremacy, economic conservatism, low taxes, fiscal retrenchment, malapportionment, “laissez-faire” defined as government support for business in the form of corporate welfare, subsidies, low-interest loans, low corporate and property taxation, weak or non-existent unionism, inadequate spending on social services, and the preservation of a strict hierarchical and socially, economically, and politically stratified society—in short, “Bourbon values” or, as historian Numan V. Bartley has termed it, “neo-Bourbonism.”¹⁰ In Alabama, the marriage of neo-Kluxism and neo-Bourbonism—with a courtship that began around 1936 and continued through the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s—eventually produced the offspring of the modern GOP. Most critically, the shared primary value of white supremacy—and anti-federalism both racial and economic—provided the essential glue for the union. It acted to bind the rigid ethnic, religious, moral, and social conservatism of neo-Kluxism with the intense economic conservatism of neo-Bourbonism in the modern South.

The realization among neo-Bourbons and neo-Kluxers that they had to bury their factional class squabbles and wed in order to preserve white supremacy and laissez-faire became clearer as they perceived that the national Democratic Party could no longer be their home. Both elements had to find a new home, something different from the national Democratic Party, because it became clearer day by day through the 1940s and beyond that they could no longer call themselves “Demo-

crats" and still adhere to white supremacy and anti-federalism—which was *the* priority value for both. In response, they pooled their resources, first to bolt and then to build a new party—a new, viable southern GOP—in order to protect white supremacy and home rule, since it was clear that the national Democratic Party was no longer going to do so. Republican ascendance in Alabama was based on protecting white, Anglo-Saxon, native-born, male-dominated, evangelical Protestant, family values, and “patriotic” society—or strict, and even exclusionary, ethnic, religious, and social conservatism. But the ascendant GOP also stood for the Bourbon economic values of old. The critical glue—the secret of the marriage—that kept the two groups welded together was composed of race and the “Reconstruction Syndrome.” It was a preoccupation and fixation with preserving white supremacy and an allegiance to the hallowed anti-federal values of the syndrome—anti-liberal, anti-outsider/foreigner, and anti-Yankee. The union was possible because both the neo-Kluxist and the neo-Bourbon strains put race and the maintenance of white supremacy at the very pinnacle of their values and priorities—and because race and the manipulation of racial fears free of federal meddling was the Bourbons’ most reliable weapon to keep plain whites and blacks divided in order to preserve a privileged class status. The result for the modern GOP in Alabama was an absolutely unbeatable—even unassailable—combination of values, mores, and issues which are even today virtually irresistible to the majority of southern whites. These are values that are held very dear, which many white southerners perceive as having “made this country great,” and which many accurately charge the national Democratic Party with having moved away from since the 1940s.

In recent decades, race (in the form of civil rights, voting rights, “law and order,” busing, affirmative action, and welfare) has been increasingly supplemented by a myriad of other factors that constitute a “politics of emotion”: religion, morality, family values, abortion, homosexuality, school prayer, display of the Ten Commandments, the Confederate battle flag, and gun control. As white supremacy alone once did for Bourbon Democracy, these issues, together with a more muted race issue, work to keep lower- and working-class Republicans—most captivated by the social, ethnic, religious, and moral proscriptions of neo-Kluxism—contentedly and often unwittingly supporting the neo-Bourbon program of economic conservatism. Perhaps most maddening to many liberals, mass emotional support was often purchased with the cheap coin of nothing more than neo-Bourbon lip service or symbolic displays for the most divisive issues of social conservatism.

During the Great Depression, events moved southern Democrats ever further away from the national party. In 1936 a watershed of sorts was reached when, for the first time, African Americans voted for the party of Roosevelt in greater numbers than the party of Lincoln. Liberal New Deal policies that appealed to blacks, Jews, Catholics, immigrants, labor unionists, and the working poor increasingly alienated the white, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant, rural, Democratic South. For a time, the extraordinary exigencies associated with the unprecedented economic crisis of the Great Depression muted southern white discontent with the increasing liberalism of the national Democratic Party. Alabama’s—and the South’s—allegiance and receptivity to economic liberalism was predominantly exceptional and expedient, an extraordinary temporary measure to gain relief, income, and survival during an emergency that was by its very nature abnormal, ephemeral, exceptional, and fleeting. It did not contradict the region’s essential conservatism in a lasting or fundamental way. More, though, the increasingly obvious racial liberalism of First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt and the New Dealers surrounding her worked as a powerful corrosive against the southern New Deal coalition of farmers, unionists, the poor, and rural whites, like those of North Alabama, grateful for TVA electricity.

In 1938, simmering tensions boiled over as southern congressmen released a ten-point “Conservative Manifesto” detailing their unhappiness with Franklin Roosevelt’s New Deal—despite the South’s receipt of considerable federal monies from New Deal programs. One frustrated white southerner accurately, if crudely, summed up increasing discontent with the national Democratic Party under FDR: “You ask any nigger in the street who’s the greatest man in the world. Nine out of ten will tell you Franklin Roosevelt. That’s why I think he’s so dangerous.”¹¹

The exigencies of World War II only exacerbated southern racial tensions, with women and blacks taking the places of white males in the workplace and with southern customs finding themselves under increasing challenge by an influx of non-southerners into Dixie. Franklin Roosevelt’s institution of a Fair Employment Practices Committee (FEPC) and Harry Truman’s Executive Order 1088, desegregating the armed forces, shook southern racial conventions to the core. While white southerners damned the new Democratic racial liberalism and clung steadfastly to Jim Crow, actual racial integration was practiced long before *Brown* in southern workplaces and even in the “cradle of the Confederacy,” at federal installations such as Montgomery’s Maxwell Air Force Base. Enforcement of FEPC nondiscrimination directives re-

sulted in a race riot in Mobile's shipyards and serious unrest in other places across Alabama. Crisis was reached in 1948 after President Truman released a four-point civil rights package: proposals for federal legislation outlawing lynching, segregation, and the poll tax and for making the FEPC permanent. Long-suffering southern Democrats again bolted the party of their fathers, meeting first in Jackson, Mississippi, and then Birmingham, Alabama, to found a new political party: the States' Rights Democrats, or "Dixiecrats." Although the Dixiecrat revolt eventually "failed" in the sense that Harry Truman won the 1948 election, and the revolt did not spread significantly beyond the former Confederate states, the disaffected southerners did carry Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, and South Carolina—with their all-important electoral votes—and polled over a million votes in the popular election. More importantly, the Dixiecrat revolt crystallized and *politicized* southern Democratic disenchantment with the national party—principally over the intertwined issues of race and federal power—and, in effect, baptized the Republican Party into viability in southern environs. For years now, assorted Republicans have denied the Dixiecrat tie with their modern party as something that smacks of ugly racial animus, but in the frank words of a Democrat-turned-Republican who ought to know (former GOP congressman and senatorial and gubernatorial candidate James E. Martin of Alabama), "The nucleus of the Republican Party was in '48."¹²

The union that had only been hinted at in the bolt of 1928 actually occurred in 1948 as Alabama's Big Mule/Black Belt alliance of wealthy planters and industrialists merged with the KKK in the Dixiecrat movement. Disenchantment had grown steadily during the New Deal years, especially after the historic 1936 departure of blacks from the party of Lincoln. Wartime racial liberalism under the Truman administration had only made things worse, according to most of the white South. At Birmingham's Municipal Auditorium in July 1948, all of the *laissez-faire*, anti-federal, economic conservatism of the planter-industrialist clique was present along with the religious and moral narrowness of the KKK. Racial conservatism and opposition to civil rights served as the irresistible glue that bound them together. In the late 1940s a KKK that again terrorized Alabamians for infringements of traditional moral conformity locked arms with a Dixiecrat ally. But the Dixiecrats also featured the Bourbon variety of strident economic conservatism. Even the split between the Dixiecrats and their Loyalist adversaries was, again, more an argument over means than ends. Both groups rejected Truman's civil rights initiatives, and both disparaged the growing leftward

drift on race manifested by the national Democratic Party and the administrations of Franklin Roosevelt and Harry Truman. The Dixiecrats advocated resistance to civil rights by bolting the Democratic Party; the Loyalists urged opposition by fighting civil rights within the party, where they could rely on patronage, deal making, and congressional seniority. The Dixiecrat episode amounted to the third germ of the modern Republican Party in the South.

Loyalist Alabama Democrats made clear that they would fight Truman's civil rights package within the regular Democratic Party—through the seniority and committee system in the House and Senate, and by filibuster if necessary—a tack that had served them well repeatedly in thwarting prior attempts at federal anti-lynching statutes. The Loyalists routinely emphasized that they "agree[d] in principle" with the States' Righters but parted ways on the question of methods. Some, such as former state attorney general A. A. Carmichael, explained his loyalism by stating that the Dixiecrat revolt would only let the "carpetbagger, nigger-loving Republicans" benefit—underscoring that in 1948 Alabama Democratic loyalism was a far cry from racial liberalism. Loyalist forces included the chastened Tom Heflin and racial "liberals" such as George Wallace of Barbour County. Even in 1948, calling Wallace a liberal on racial matters was dubious at best. The "Little Judge" had remained behind in Philadelphia after the infamous Alabama and Mississippi delegate walkout at the Democratic National Convention. That and other early acts earned the young Wallace a reputation for liberalism more deserved on the economic front than the racial. It is not as clearly recalled that Wallace stayed behind in order to place Senator Richard B. Russell's name into nomination for president. He nominated the Georgian (with apologies to William Jennings Bryan) by vowing that Russell was the man to see that "the South shall not be crucified on the cross of civil rights."¹³

Dixiecrats in Alabama were capable of being just as blunt. Attorney and prominent politico Horace C. Wilkinson swore that he would "rather die fighting for states' rights than live on Truman boulevard in a Nigger heaven." While former governor Frank M. Dixon and perennial state Democratic chair Gessner T. McCorvey usually managed a more restrained posture in public, preferring to speak of states' rights as a high constitutional and philosophical issue, in private they let their hair down. "It may be that the time has come for us to see established in the South a great big mongrel brotherhood of mixed races," Dixon told a local judge, "but I don't think so." "As a cosmopolitan and a church man," he confided to another close friend, "I can justify, in

theory, racial amalgamation. [But] as a Southern man with the normal human dislike of foreigners . . . I doubt my ability to put Christian charity into practice. . . . The progeny of a cornfield ape blackened with the successive sons of Africa and Alabama, mated with a swamp gorilla from the Louisiana rice fields [is supposed to have] promise as great as the sons of the great American families. . . . But I prefer to keep my faith." For his part, McCorvey could barely conceal his delight when he got hold of a "corking good glossy picture" of a black St. Louis attorney at the Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia. Letting Dixon in on his plan to surreptitiously distribute the photo throughout the state in order to boost the Alabama Dixiecrat cause, McCorvey gushed: "I don't think I ever saw a human being whose picture more closely resembled a gorilla."¹⁴

In the states' rights stronghold of Alabama, intraparty strife preoccupied Democrats in the critical years after the Dixiecrat revolt, as the state's Republican Party fought to emerge as a viable player for the first time.¹⁵ In 1954 and 1958 the Alabama GOP took a long stride toward that goal when disaffected Dixiecrat leader and newspaper publisher Thomas Abernethy joined the Republicans and ran two very successful campaigns for governor, principally by exploiting the race issue. Not one to sugarcoat political issues, Abernethy asked Alabamians point-blank "whether the NAACP or the people are to run Alabama."¹⁶ Perennial gubernatorial candidate and arch-racist Rear Admiral John G. Crommelin allied with the Republican Party, and States' Rights leader Ludie Abernethy (the wife of Thomas Abernethy) became a major player and national committeewoman in the suddenly vital GOP.¹⁷ In Alabama, leading conservative Democrats left the party of their fathers in growing numbers. Horace Hall's *Dothan Eagle*, a conservative Democratic newspaper since its founding, was so incensed over the national Democratic Party's pursuit of civil rights legislation that it converted to Republicanism. In 1952 the *Montgomery Advertiser*, known as the venerable "old Grandma" in Alabama, announced with much fanfare that its 1948 bolt to the States' Rights cause had not been sufficient. It endorsed a Republican for the first time since it began publishing newspapers, back in 1826. A slew of Dixiecrat notables, representing thousands of other whites in the state, turned to the Republican Party—at least in national elections.¹⁸ Sidney Smyer, Frank P. Samford, John Temple Graves II, Wallace Malone, Laurie Battle, Ed O'Neal, H. M. Abercrombie, Sam M. Johnston, Asa Young, Joseph G. Burns, Ross Diamond Jr., Donald Comer, Winton Blount, Hubert Baughn, and W. H. Albritton all entered the Republican column—and took with them

thousands.¹⁹ The Albrittons, an influential family of Covington County attorneys, were actually so prominent in party politics that they furnished state electors for the Dixiecrats in 1948 and for the Republican ticket in 1956. Race and local control of race relations remained the prime mover. "We have all been disturbed about our school situation," patriarch W. H. Albritton confided to Frank Dixon, "the great threat of 'Federal Aid' which would result in the totalitarian State domination of the mind of America. We have been seeking some way to finance private schools or segregated school systems and leave education in the hands of the people of the various States free from Federal control." "It is simply insane," Albritton felt, "to seek 'Federal Aid' with the ensuing 'Federal control.' The remedy . . . the way to stop 'Federal control,' is to retain and channel [tax] funds into our local school systems and private institutions rather than send it to Washington."²⁰

But perhaps the most important Dixiecrat move to the Republican column was that of Gessner McCorvey. For McCorvey, the conversion was especially painful because it ran diametrically opposite to his well-cultivated persona as the actual embodiment of Democratic protection of white supremacy. The powerful Mobile attorney served four separate terms as chairman of the state Democratic Executive Committee and in 1948 personally oversaw the capture of the party's machinery for the States' Rights ticket. During the midst of the Dixiecrat campaign, an angry McCorvey had ordered one newspaper editor to "Please get it out of your head that I am a Republican or a Republican sympathizer. I was just brought up to believe that voting a Republican ticket was something that was not done by Southern white men." Yet by 1952, McCorvey had defected to the Republican Party. A few major States' Righters—Horace Wilkinson, Bruce Henderson, and Bull Connor in Alabama and Lester Maddox in Georgia—stayed in the Democratic Party, but most of these holdouts increasingly drifted toward third-party "Independent" Democracy. Former Alabama governor Frank Dixon remained tight-lipped about his personal voting record after 1948. Still, Dixon's personal correspondence reveals that he helped organize speakers for the White Citizens' Council while he flirted with Republicanism and recommended the organization of local Republican committees in Alabama, and he allowed that "a good many" Alabama Dixiecrats "of my political belief" were leaving the Democratic Party for the ranks of the GOP. Louisiana boss Leander Perez, a States' Rights ally who operated closely with Alabama's leading Dixiecrats, also switched to the Republican Party and was, characteristically, more direct in public about his rationale and revulsion for the racial situation.

"Do you know what the Negro is?" Perez asked a journalist. "Animals right out of the jungle. Passion. Welfare. Easy life. That's the Negro. And if you don't know that, you're naïve." He traced the civil rights movement back to Franklin Roosevelt and the Democratic Party and "all those Jews who were supposed to have been cremated at Buchenwald and Dachau but weren't, and Roosevelt allowed two million of them illegal entry into our country."²¹

After 1952, the Republican Party increasingly began to appear as the logical home for whites in the Deep South, regardless of their class or social rank. The party was formed largely on the basis of being "the" preserver of white supremacy, combined with a large dose of anti-federal government sentiment. The combination appealed powerfully to former Dixiecrats (both the old KKK type and the wealthier planter-industrialist type), segregationist Loyalist Democrats, new suburban white voters, and economic and social conservatives of all kinds. Modern Republican strength is sometimes laid to the cohesiveness and growth of the GOP-dominated "suburbs." It should be recalled here that in the South, as elsewhere, the "suburbs" often means lily-white affluence galvanized by white flight after the *Brown* decision. The "suburbs" also means upper-class in-migrants to the South who often brought with them an affinity for business and a profound distaste for federal intervention in economic matters, unless it came in the form of government subsidies or tax exemptions. This selective laissez-faire of the new migrants jelled nicely with the traditional, more principally race-centered anti-federalism of their new southern home.

Here, at last, was a party that could accommodate all kinds of white southerners under the single umbrella of white supremacy and antipathy to the federal government. While the national Democratic Party has often been thought of as an umbrella party of divergent interests held under one tent, actually the modern Republican Party in places like Alabama was, in many ways, the umbrella party of whites. In the GOP, whites of varying social rank took cover under the canopy of white supremacy and segregation during the most violent civil rights storms of the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s. When they emerged from the thunder and lightning, they came out Republicans.

In 1957, the nascent GOP received a serious but temporary setback across the South from President Dwight Eisenhower's enforcement of the U.S. Supreme Court's racial integration order at Little Rock. Far from indicating that a "New South" was emerging, southern distress over Little Rock, and its brief disgust with national Republicanism, demonstrated very clearly that the white South had not moved . . . the na-

tional parties had. In a rather fundamental way, the white South had not changed since 1860—despite the hullabaloo made over a "New South" by boosters, Yankee investors, and, in fact, historians. While some took the visual appearance of a white southern partisan movement—from Democrat to Republican—to be a political sea change, such a "move" was really just a trick played on the eyes of wistful observers. In actuality, the major *parties* moved on race. *Politically and ideologically*, white southerners remained standing very still.²²

Growing receptivity among southern whites for the GOP, after Harry Truman's assaults, was almost killed in its infancy at Little Rock. To Republicans, the confrontation in Arkansas demonstrated just how ephemeral white southern allegiance could be if a political party failed to protect the tabernacle of white supremacy or states' rights—a lesson not lost on those most influential in Republican Party councils. Even if national GOP officials were wont to forget that race had "brung them to the dance" in the South, former Dixiecrats like Ludie Abernethy were not bashful about reminding their new party brethren of this cold reality. Mrs. Abernethy denounced Ike's use of federal troops, whom she compared to "Hitler's Gestapo," and warned that "millions of persons" in the South, distressed over Democratic liberalism, had turned to the Republicans for racial conservatism, and wanted and fully expected "restoration of a government that would be constitutional as well as clean."²³ Still, despite Little Rock, these years mostly saw mounting white disaffection with the national Democratic Party's increasingly clear racial liberalism.

Even when the disillusionment of Republicans over Little Rock led to an exit from the GOP, the absence was often temporary. Racially conservative white southerners could flirt with third-party movements, but ultimately they had nowhere else to go besides the Republican Party. The odyssey of W. T. Witt of Birmingham was exemplary. "When the Democrat[ic] Party, beginning with Roosevelt, began to lean toward the Communists," Witt explained, "I left it" for the Republican Party. A local GOP activist, Witt accepted election shortly after Little Rock to the presidency of the Jefferson County Republican Club, the most populous county in the state. He "thanked the members for having elected me . . . and then stated to them that I was not only resigning . . . the club but also was renouncing the Republican Party." "When the 'pottage eaters' sold Mr. Eisenhower a 'mess' and he sent soldiers to Little Rock to place bayonets in white girls' backs to force them to carry out a Russian-type decree sponsored by the NAACP, he cleaned the slate of all the gains the Republican Party has made since the Civil War,"

Witt declared. "Now a more suitable name . . . would be the 'Stupid Party.' Can't you envision Khrushchev & Co. holding up their vodka before gulping it down and praising the President's . . . 'civil rights'?" Despite the obvious sincerity and emotion in his conversion statement, within a short time Witt returned to the Republican fold.²⁴

The 1960s phase of the civil rights movement led, not coincidentally, to the clear coming-of-age of the Republican Party in the South as white southern Democrats tried desperately—and in many cases vainly—to disassociate themselves from the national Democratic Party and its civil rights program.²⁵ In 1962, high-profile Republican convert James E. Martin ran a breathlessly close race against longtime incumbent Democratic senator Lister Hill. A North Alabama oil man, Martin eagerly cashed in on southern white resentment against John and Robert Kennedy's support of the Freedom Riders and other civil rights initiatives—most notably the revisited Reconstruction nightmare of using federal marshals in Montgomery and federal troops to integrate the University of Mississippi—sins of such proportion that the Kennedys have still not been forgiven in the South. After JFK's assassination, southern white hostility shifted to Bobby Kennedy, Lyndon Johnson, and Hubert Humphrey, who had made himself unforgettable in the South by delivering a strong call for civil rights legislation at the critical 1948 Democratic National Convention.²⁶ In Alabama, GOP chief John Grenier, who would soon serve as national director of the Republican Party, effectively capitalized on white racial insecurities to build momentum for his party and for Barry Goldwater. Later, Grenier admitted that "we were aware not only of the liberal attitudes on race that Lyndon Johnson . . . promoted . . . were foreign to Southerners, but his liberal economic scheme of giving away everything to appease the small black minority was ridiculous in the minds of most Southerners."²⁷ Running as an extreme right-wing Republican presidential candidate, Goldwater swept the Deep South in 1964 as Jim Martin and other Republican segregationists rode his coattails to victory in Alabama's congressional and state elections. Some Republicans were hoping the race issue would actually carry him further. One California Goldwater leader was so confident that he crudely prophesied, "the nigger issue will put him in the White House." In the South, perhaps nothing summed up the Goldwater campaign so much as his famous admission that the Republican Party was "not going to get the Negro vote as a bloc in 1964 or 1968, so we ought to go hunting where the ducks are."²⁸

It is significant not only that Goldwater swept the Deep South but also that that is about all he swept. In addition to his home state of

Arizona, Goldwater prevailed in only five other states: Alabama, Mississippi, Georgia, Louisiana, and South Carolina—with the exception of Georgia the same states won by Dixiecrat presidential candidate Strom Thurmond in 1948. In Alabama, Goldwater won sixty-three of sixty-seven counties. In the only four all-black precincts in the state he garnered less than 2 percent of the vote. His coattails swept in five Republicans out of Alabama's seven allotted U.S. congressmen: Jim Martin (who would go on to make dramatically close race-based runs for governor and U.S. senator), William Dickinson, John Buchanan, Glenn Andrews, and Jack Edwards.²⁹

Once it became clear that the racial liberalism of FDR and Harry Truman would be continued by the national Democratic Party, huge numbers of conservative southern whites reconciled themselves to leaving the party for good. No longer could the fight against the national Democratic Party's racial liberalism be contained within the party tent—or even by mounting an independent movement as in 1928 and 1948. As he signed the 1964 Civil Rights Bill into law, Lyndon Johnson—a son of the Texas soil intimately aware of the power of race in southern politics—clearly understood this. No sooner had he signed the act than he slumped forward, took his head in his hands, and told his press secretary: "I've just given the South to the Republicans for a generation."³⁰

While it is true that a slightly higher percentage of Republicans than Democrats in the House and Senate actually voted for the Civil Rights Act, the law was indelibly and accurately associated in the public mind with John Kennedy, Lyndon Johnson, Hubert Humphrey, and even Harry Truman—Democrats all.³¹ The reason, it seems almost unnecessary to explain, why the total Democratic percentage of support for the bill was lower than the Republican percentage is that the South—as it had for decades where anti-lynching and civil rights measures were concerned—voted as a bloc against the bill.³² Conservative southern Democrats in both houses—then in the throes of conversion to the modern GOP *precisely because* of Democratic advocacy for civil rights—voted as a unit against the measure. Far from indicating some kind of modern Democratic hostility to the cause of civil rights, congressional Democratic opposition to the bill was yet another in a long line of conservative southern Democratic rearguard actions against civil rights, racial equality, federal anti-lynching laws, and the like—in effect, against racial modernity. In a very real way, it was the last hurrah for the conservative Democratic South on a congressional level, a conservative bloc that would eventually be replaced by the conservative Republican

South. By the same token, it was the last hurrah for the old-guard, racially liberal northern wing of the Republican Party—the Dirksens, the Romneys, the Rockefellers—who were about to see themselves thrust into political exile within their own party by a conservative purge of the GOP at the 1964 national convention in Miami. Recent attempts by right-wing radio and television pundits to cast this congressional opposition to the 1964 Civil Rights Act as evidence of some kind of latent Democratic hostility to racial equality stems from either the most staggering ignorance of history or the most cynical manipulation of context to distort the reality of present-day politics.³³ Either way, it is historically irresponsible and a disservice to legitimate historical inquiry.

A fairer present-day recognition from the Right of the lead role the Democratic Party took during the civil rights movement, and even a kind of covetousness of the present-day Democratic stranglehold on black votes, usually emanates from the northern wing of latter-day Republicanism or from a young GOP generation in the South. Neither group, generally, has a particularly solid grasp on the political/economic nature of the GOP's historical ascendance in the South: how Republican economic conservatism replaced Bourbon Democratic economic conservatism in the South only because the GOP was able to get on the "right side" of race and thereby win the votes of masses of plain southern whites who otherwise would have had little incentive to vote the GOP label. Thus in 2003 a senior editorial page writer at the *Wall Street Journal* could fervently recommend that George W. Bush "lead his Party on race" and actually provide an outline of how to do so. "For starters," Republicans "should work to retire the Southern strategy. Don't make excuses for it. Don't euphemize it. Say it was wrong and now it's over. End the pit stops at Bob Jones University, the strained defenses of the Confederate flag, the coded references to states' rights." In giving credit to the Democratic Party for their "stalwart behavior during the civil rights movement," the same writer laments that the Democrats have become the "default Party for minorities" and urges Bush the Younger to exploit the considerable "racial capital" he allegedly gained with blacks for his "forthright" handling of the Trent Lott imbroglio to make inroads on the dismal 8 percent of the black vote that Bush gained in the 2000 presidential election—"to make his Party more amenable to minorities and especially blacks."³⁴

During the Second Reconstruction, Democratic identification with civil rights and voting rights made it clear that the party could no longer be the home for whites in Alabama. As the First Reconstruction created the Solid Democratic South, the Second Reconstruction has vir-

tually created a Solid Republican South. In retrospect, George Wallace's brand of independent politics was only a pit stop for thousands of white Alabama Democrats who were then on their way to a more permanent home in the Republican Party. To be sure, the trajectory of many States' Righters to the GOP was fraught with fits and starts, and sometimes detours. Many former Dixiecrats split their tickets—voting Republican in national elections, but continuing to vote as, and think of themselves as, Democrats in local and state elections—at least for a time. "I am a life-long Democrat," explained one, "who takes pride in having never voted for a Democratic President." Many of these same individuals—disgusted with the national Democratic Party's racial and economic liberalism—its "drift toward socialism"—participated in George Wallace's independent movement as a rest stop on the way to a more permanent home in the GOP. "People will ease their way into the Republican Party by way of the American Independents," a confident John Mitchell put it in 1970. "We'll get two-thirds to three-fourths of the Wallace vote in nineteen seventy-two." Mitchell, who served as Richard Nixon's attorney general, knew a thing or two firsthand about the South, being married to outspoken Alabama native Martha Mitchell. A close student of the States' Rights movement in Alabama concurred that the Dixiecrats were "a halfway house along the road to Republicanism."³⁵

As Dan T. Carter realized in his magisterial work on George Wallace, the Alabama governor was immensely important to the emergence of the modern GOP in the South, and across the nation.³⁶ Yet Wallace was not an originator or a pioneer. Instead he was the ultimate practitioner, the embodiment and articulator of the racial and anti-federal politics and intolerant rhetoric originated by many others before him—notably the Dixiecrats of the 1940s. As such, Wallacism was the fourth germ of modern southern Republicanism.

Made respectable and competitive by its effective use of the race issue, the Alabama GOP spent the remainder of the 1960s trying to find a way not to be "out-niggered" by Alabama's most formidable politician, perennial governor, and third-party candidate for president.³⁷ Wallace's masterful use of the race issue to own the governor's mansion and use it as a springboard for presidential runs in 1964, 1968, 1972, and 1976 amounted to a major challenge to the Republican Party's ability to compete for the hearts and minds of conservative white Alabamians perpetually transfixed by the race issue.

There is little question that Wallace himself, one of the most astute students of southern politics around, fully realized the debt Republi-

cans eventually owed him for their strength in his native region. "It sounds like to me, when I hear all this talk," he said years later, "that the Republicans have stolen a lot of their thoughts and their words and their principles from George Wallace. You know, I should have copyrighted all of my speeches. If I had, the Republicans in Alabama, throughout the South, and all over the nation would be paying me hundreds of thousands of dollars. They owe everything they have to my kind of Democratic thinking." Master conservative Republican strategist Kevin Phillips cheerfully corroborated Wallace's claim, seeing it as a good thing for the modern Republican Party—in both a regional and a national sense. After noting that four of the five 1968 Wallace states had gone Goldwater Republican in 1964, Phillips explained that Richard Nixon's candidacy confirmed that "the GOP [w]as the ascending Party of the local white majority" and that Wallace's American Independent Party was merely "a way station" for "some longtime Republicans, but the great majority were conservative Democrats who have been moving—and should continue to move—towards the GOP." Wallace, the GOP's leading political strategist chortled, had "principally won those in motion between a Democratic past and a Republican future."³⁸ Those most in the know about how things worked politically in the South agreed. Howard "Bo" Callaway, a Democratic Georgia governor-turned-Republican who served as Richard Nixon's southern director during the 1968 presidential campaign, concurred: "The ideas expressed by George Wallace are the ideas a great many Republicans espouse."³⁹

In Alabama, Hubert Baughn was the perfect exemplar—the physical embodiment and manifestation—of the thesis that the modern Republican Party owes the largest part of its dominance in the South to the successful appropriation of the race issue and white supremacy away from the old conservative Democratic Party that owned the "Solid South." Baughn served as the publisher and editor of *Alabama Magazine: News Digest of the Deep South* and, later, *South: The News Magazine of Dixie*, from the magazine's inception in 1936 until his retirement in the 1970s. Both versions of the magazine were arguably the most passionate, outspoken, and consistently accurate indices of conservative white sentiment in Alabama and the South. Both were bankrolled by Alabama's Big Mule/Black Belt coalition—the planter-industrialist alliance that dominated state politics from Redemption in 1874 to the mid-1960s.⁴⁰ More importantly, the Big Mule/Black Belt coalition was solidly Democratic from 1874 on. They represented the Loyalist side of the equation during the heated 1928 Hoovercrat "bolt." During the 1930s,

though, increasing unhappiness with Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal, relative racial liberalism, and other, less important matters led to rumblings among the privileged. During the World War II crisis, the coalition grew increasingly disillusioned with Roosevelt's FEPC and later with Harry Truman's desegregation orders. The break came in 1948 as the planter-industrialist coalition (and its mouthpiece *Alabama*) occupied the vanguard in the Dixiecrat exodus from the national Democratic Party. Baughn patched up old feuds with plain-white tribunes like Horace Wilkinson as the Birmingham political boss abandoned class pursuits to help planter-industrialist stalwarts Gessner McCorvey and Frank Dixon lead Alabama's States' Rights insurgency—making the "Heart of Dixie" one of the best-organized and -financed of the Dixiecrat states. Baughn's and *Alabama's* editorial and content policies reflected these changes at every point, as the most conservative southern Democrats were pushed into the arms of alternative political parties by the national Democratic Party's increasingly obvious racial liberalism. In Alabama, with Harry Truman kept off the ballot by Dixiecrat machinations at the state level, Strom Thurmond polled 80 percent in 1948. But by 1950 the state's Democratic Loyalists had recaptured control of the party machinery, effectively snuffing out the possibility of another intraparty revolt in 1952.

During the early 1950s, Alabama's planters and industrialists furnished the most prominent members of a rapidly expanding Republican Party. The emerging GOP, so long the unwanted stepchild of southern politics, accommodated the disillusionment over race of the expatriate white conservatives leaving Alabama's Democratic Party by eagerly catering to their white supremacist beliefs. It was at this critical point that the modern Republican Party chose its course. Once the national Democratic Party decided to support the cause of civil rights for African Americans, the Republican Party could have followed suit. The route was still a possibility. While history often seems inevitable in retrospect, at the time decisions occur and courses are followed, they are chosen, not preordained.

The GOP could have followed the Democratic lead in sponsoring a Second Reconstruction. After all, the Republican Party did have a proud civil rights heritage. Abraham Lincoln had been a Republican. The party's northern old guard had among it the most liberal politicians on race to be found anywhere in the country. But instead the Republican brass in Alabama welcomed Thomas Abernethy with open arms. In fact, they threw open the party with undisguised jubilation that Abernethy's decision to run for governor on a Republican ticket would finally trans-

form Alabama's GOP into a "real" party—a force to be reckoned with. This is significant because Abernethy was not just any Democrat or even any *Dixiecrat*. He was firmly embedded in the minds of black Alabamians as one of the causes—correctly or not—for Klan-related bombing violence on Birmingham's "Dynamite Hill." Just one day before a bomb exploded at a black physician's house in the contested Smithfield district, Abernethy had unleashed a particularly blistering tirade against civil rights, broadcast across Alabama by statewide radio hookup. Alabama's Republicans followed up on the Abernethy conversion coup by having the national GOP chairman visit Birmingham and issue a formal invitation to Dixiecrats to join the GOP because we "both stand in opposition to the Socialist Democratic Party of the Truman Administration." In 1956, state Republican chairman Claude Vardaman was even more direct. "You can go home and tell your people," he told disgruntled Democrats, "that if they are interested in preserving segregation in Alabama, then their man is Dwight D. Eisenhower."⁴¹

During the 1960s, George Wallace realized that the success of his fledgling Independent movement depended on the perception that there was no discernible difference between the two major parties. To this end, he repeated his mantra that there "wasn't a dime's worth of difference" between the two parties.⁴² Would that it were so. As it was, the modern Republican Party in Alabama chose the racist path of white supremacy. At the very same time that the national Democratic Party estranged white Alabama Democrats over civil rights and the role of the federal government, the Republican Party made a choice. It endorsed racism, advertised its commitment to white supremacy, and did its best to attract disaffected Democrats by billing itself as the party opposed to civil rights. In Alabama, Republicans built their party by endorsing civil rights resistance, exploiting racial tensions, and doing all they could to fill the yawning void left by the old conservative Democratic Party. The GOP did everything it could to convince Alabama voters that it—the new national Democratic Party—was the real guardian of white supremacy and segregation.

To be sure, there was significant variation on the race question among the Democrats who converted to the GOP. Not all, by a long shot, were race-baiters the stripe of Thomas Abernethy or Jim Martin. Many were segregationists of a more moderate variety. There is also no question that the Alabama Democratic Party during this time continued to harbor some states' rights enthusiasts that were every bit the peers of Democrat expatriates on the race issue. Even more, old-guard northern Republicans like Nelson Rockefeller, George Romney, Everett

Dirksen, Jacob Javits, and the Ripon Society represented much more liberal thinking on the race issue. Still, what *was* centrally important is that the liberal wing of the Republican Party lost its power struggle with the conservatives, punctuated by the 1964 nomination of Barry Goldwater (orchestrated in large part by Alabama GOP chieftain John Grenier). Even more important is that in Alabama the Republican Party made the choice to use the race issue to build a viable, and eventually dominant, modern party at the very time the Democratic Party was losing ground in the South due to its identification with the national Democratic Party's racial liberalism. The Republican racial offensive also made it increasingly difficult for "Alabama Democrats"—who claimed they were conservative on race—to keep themselves divorced in the popular mind from the racially liberal national Democratic Party. Many—Armistead Selden, Laurie Battle, Don Collins, and a host of others—constantly on the defensive over race, and realizing the futility of their cause, eventually crossed over to become Republicans.⁴³

Tragically, it was this choice—the same essential choice that George Wallace made in 1958 to "out-nigger" the competition—that the Alabama GOP made on which to build their modern party.⁴⁴ Wallace's choice was made to his permanent ignominy. The unfortunate Republican choice, while made to the party's electoral advantage in places like Alabama, was also made to its everlasting discredit.

As the invigorated state Republican Party broadcast its determination to be Alabama's guardian of the temple of white supremacy—and as the state Democratic Party fought a losing battle against being associated with the racially liberal policies of Harry Truman, Hubert Humphrey, Adlai Stevenson, Estes Kefauver, and other national Democrats—Alabama's Big Mules and Black Belt planters increasingly populated the ranks of the new GOP. Hubert Baughn and *Alabama Magazine* accurately reflected this watershed—first as "Solid South" Democrats, then Dixiecrats, then Eisenhower Democrats who voted Republican in national elections, and increasingly as "independent" Democrats of the George Wallace stripe, and, finally, as Republicans (and proud of it!) who made up the ranks of the new Republican Party so accurately and prophetically described by Kevin Phillips. Baughn's editorials—as acidic and, at times, openly racist as they could be—were not important in and of themselves.⁴⁵ They were not even that significant as indices of Baughn's thought. The editorials were important because they represented, for three and a half decades, the deepest hopes, fears, plans, and beliefs of the powerful industrial, banking, insurance, and utility interests that paid the freight.⁴⁶ This new majority, of which Baughn and his

magazine were a stalwart part, was the new Solid *Republican* South upon whose back the national Republican majority eventually emerged during the 1980s.

Disaffected Democrats responded in droves by turning to a Republican Party that courted them principally on the basis of white supremacy. Race was more often than not the primary consideration in their conversion. "When you vote for President Johnson," explained one, "you will vote to mix the races" and for the "Communist rights program. . . . The President's acts are making the Democratic Party the negro Party." Lyndon Johnson "understand us" southerners so well, another wrote bitterly, that "he helped . . . railroad the satanic 'civil rights act of 1964' through. Such thinking is exactly why the Democratic Party is controlled by socialists now." A rural preacher who vehemently opposed civil rights reacted angrily to public charges of being a "turn-coat Democrat" for supporting Republican candidates. "It is rather ridiculous," he spat, "to accuse anyone of trying to tear down that [the Democratic Party] which has already been torn down by a crowd of wild-eyed, fuzzy-minded politicians who are trying to brainwash the American public."⁴⁷

While some have written that the South changed *politically*, no such fundamental change occurred. A new party label was adopted for many, but essential conservative ideology on race and the federal government stayed the same for the white South. In fact, many white southerners defended their defection from the Democratic Party—then and today—as, in reality, no defection at all. A common proverb, with more than a seedling of truth, sprang up throughout the region: "I didn't leave the Democratic Party. The Democratic Party left me." Few articulated the defensive creed as well as Don Collins, an Alabama state legislator who formally, dramatically, and publicly switched parties in 1966. "I campaigned as a conservative or Southern Democrat . . . an old-fashioned Democrat," Collins informed a standing-room-only meeting of both houses of the state legislature as he issued a formal statement of principles of conversion. "My thinking was accepted, and my thinking has not changed. I have not changed. While I have not changed, and while the people of Alabama have not changed, the political philosophy of the national Democratic Party has changed and has left me an orphan." The following month Collins confidently predicted that the "semantical, or name-only, conversion of our friends who think and act Republican, yet from habit, call themselves Democrats" would be easy. "We will not have to ask them to turn away from established habits, actions, and customs," he explained. "We only have to convert our friends in

name only from . . . Democrat to Republican. Most Southerners are *already* Republican—but they don't know it."⁴⁸

During the late 1960s and early 1970s, Richard Nixon's masterful use of a "Southern Strategy," designed to appeal subtly to southern white insecurities on race without appearing too bluntly racist, led to the Republican consolidation of the South that Ronald Reagan and George Bush the Elder enjoyed, as predicted by Kevin Phillips. A national Republican ascendance built upon a solid Republican South disenchanted with the national Democratic Party's racial liberalism was precisely laid out and predicted by the legendary GOP strategist in *The Emerging Republican Majority*, which became, in effect, the bible of the "Southern Strategy." Phillips based his calculations and projections, as hauntingly accurate as a Nostradamus quatrain was supposed to be, on large-scale demographic shifts that favored the conservative Sunbelt of the West and South as opposed to shrinking liberal population centers in the old industrial Northeast. "Substantial Negro support is not necessary to national Republican victory," Phillips concluded bluntly. "The GOP can build a winning coalition without Negro votes." In a particularly Machiavellian passage, Phillips recommended that, although Republicans did not need black votes, the GOP should actually work to maintain black voting rights in the South because of the salutary effect it would have in pushing angry white southerners further into the arms of the GOP. "Far from contrary to GOP interests," Phillips explained, continued black voting "is essential if Southern conservatives are to be pressured into switching to the Republican Party—for Negroes are beginning to seize control of the national Democratic Party." In a less guarded moment, Phillips distilled his strategy down to a simple, if disturbing, formula: "Who hates whom: 'That is the secret.'" "The trick," as one close student of the strategy has written, "was to use the emotional issues of culture and race to achieve what . . . John Mitchell had"—more euphemistically—"called a 'positive polarization' of American politics."⁴⁹

Phillips's analysis found itself echoed in several other best-selling political treatises of the time that forecast the demise of the Democratic Party, principally Kirkpatrick Sale's *The Power Shift* and Richard M. Scammon and Ben J. Wattenberg's *The Real Majority*. While still in galley form, the latter became must reading in the Nixon White House and apparently played a role in his administration's conceptualization of the "Silent Majority." First recommended to Nixon by a young speechwriter named Patrick J. Buchanan, *The Real Majority* echoed right-wing criticism of the Democratic Party, but from the perspective of two

Democratic journalists. They, like the party's conservative critics, reasoned that the Democrats had erred fatally in allowing themselves to be sucked into becoming not only the party of blacks, due to its championing of civil rights, but also the party of a whole host of other un-American undesirables: women libbers pushing for abortion rights and the Equal Rights Amendment, homosexuals, Latino and other new and poverty-stricken immigrants, the urban poor, welfare dependents, war-protesting students in the streets, and Americans opposed to compulsory school prayer. They dubbed the subject "The Social Issue" and reasoned that Democrats were on the losing end of it.⁵⁰

In 1988, George H. W. Bush's advisers, Lee Atwater and Roger Ailes, would cynically employ the infamous Willie Horton issue to sink Democratic candidate Michael Dukakis and provide the quintessential Republican demonstration of race to carry Dixie and use the South as the most reliable bedrock of national GOP strength.⁵¹ But actually, John Mitchell, Richard Nixon, Pat Buchanan, Kevin Phillips, and Lee Atwater finished what had been started much earlier by the South Carolina tandem of Strom Thurmond and Harry Dent: building Republican dominance in the South on the foundation of white supremacy and racism, and using that solid southern bedrock of GOP dominance as the launching point for the emergence of a national Republican majority. The idea that Barry Goldwater had started the "Southern Strategy" was so much "bullshit," according to Richard Nixon. Nixon saw Eisenhower, whom he had served as vice-president in 1952 and 1956, as the real pioneer of the "Southern Strategy" and believed that Goldwater had actually blundered in 1964 by being too transparent on race. By appealing to the "foam-at-the-mouth segregationists," Nixon reasoned, Goldwater had "won the wrong [southern] states"—Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, South Carolina, and Georgia—and in the process alienated much of the rest of the country. Nixon and his advisers were after a much more subtle racial appeal. They "scrupulously avoided explicit references to race" in developing a "racial policy conservative enough to entice the South from Wallace, but not so radical as to repel the . . . 'swing states' of California, Ohio, Illinois, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey." Harry Dent advised Nixon to "follow [Kevin] Phillips' plan" but to "disavow it publicly." Nixon ordered chief aide-de-camp H. R. Halderman to "use Phillips . . . study his strategy . . . go for Poles, Italians, Irish . . . learn to understand the Silent Majority . . . don't go for Jews & Blacks."⁵² Since that time, Ronald Reagan, George Bush, Newt Gingrich, and Bush the Younger have to a great extent been the beneficiaries of a

strategy that has appealed well to white voters, favorable population shifts, and a consequent Republican majority ascendance.

Much of Reagan's appeal in the South was, without question, racial. Reagan won his southern spurs in 1964 as one of Goldwater's most ardent supporters, making him a political darling in Dixie. In his 1976 run for the Republican presidential nomination, Reagan cultivated white racial resentments by railing against "welfare queens" and assuring voters that they were justifiably outraged when "some strapping young buck" ahead of them in the grocery store paid for his T-bone steaks with food stamps. In 1980, Reagan's handlers chose Neshoba County, Mississippi—site of the infamous slaying of civil rights workers Goodman, Chaney, and Schwerner—to kick off his presidential campaign by making the call for "states' rights" in a section where it was pregnant with meaning. Strom Thurmond lined up behind the Californian, and Klan groups throughout the South rushed to endorse him. As he listened to notorious racist J. B. Stoner rail outside of Atlanta, one white voter summed up southern support for Reagan based on race. "I'm not a member of the Klan . . . [or] that National States' Rights Party," he said, "but some of the things that Mr. Stoner says I know are right." "I don't consider myself a racist," the voter explained. "I'm for black people having their rights . . . but I'm also for white people having a few rights too. . . . For one, [Stoner] says the black people are getting more rights than the white people . . . and that's right; they get more welfare, food stamps, and the law's on their side. . . . [Y]ou see 'em riding down the road in a Cadillac full of children and you know they're going to pick up their welfare check, and you know it isn't right. It just isn't right." "The Democratic government of Lyndon Johnson and Jimmy Carter turned everything over to the blacks," he said, "they spend my tax money for welfare and food stamps. . . . Well, I'm sick of all that. Back in the sixties and early seventies I voted for George Wallace for President whenever I had the chance. . . . I'll vote for Ronald Reagan for President because I think he wants to . . . give some of the government back to the white people. I guess it's just about that simple."⁵³ In 1980 Reagan won every state in the South except for Jimmy Carter's home state. In 1984 he won them all—even Georgia.⁵⁴

Recent Republican success in the South has been based largely on the party's being seen as the protectors of "angry white men," the white, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant majority, patriotism, and religion.⁵⁵ The most important element in this unbeatable combination in the South was the Republican capture of the mantle of white supremacy from the Demo-

cratic Party during the Second Reconstruction. Along with this mantle came the related scepter of opposition to the federal government and its nefarious intervention. This fit perfectly into the traditional Republican stance on economic issues. The GOP in the South was able to use its opposition to federal intrusion on race matters as a foundation to include opposition to federal intrusion on a host of other fronts: prayer in public schools, taxes, business regulation, workplace safety laws, environmental regulation, mandated equal rights for women, and what they referred to as the “creeping socialism” of Medicare, Medicaid, and welfare.⁵⁶ Race issues, of course, remained centrally important, and were expressed in opposition to crime, busing, affirmative action, welfare, and other issues amenable to coded reference. But race was used as the glue to stick on other issues that had anti-federal government potential—more class-oriented and traditional economically conservative issues: Republican opposition to taxes, environmental protections, worker safety, labor unions, mandated gender equity, and the programs of the New Frontier and Great Society “Welfare State.”

While the modern GOP agenda has been cast (and often received) as, on its surface, having very little to do with race, in actuality its major issues were grounded very firmly on the issue.⁵⁷ Recent practitioners of the “Southern Strategy” have heeded well the words of the strategy’s original architects: to make “obvious but not too blunt appeals to race” that would be clear to white southerners but not crude enough to alienate the rest of the country—and, of course, to deny that such a strategy even existed if charged with it. Historian Dewey W. Grantham described Nixon’s approach as “a wide-ranging campaign to exploit the racial fears and prejudices of white Americans, particularly in the South . . . despite . . . lip service . . . paid to racial justice.” For example, Nixon “made effective use of the highly emotional issue of busing”; he “tried hard to appeal to white segregationist sentiment in the Southern states.” “It was a cynical strategy,” journalists Reg Murphy and Hal Gulliver agreed, “this catering in subtle ways to the segregationist leanings of Southern voters—yet pretending with high rhetoric that the real aim was simply to treat the South fairly, to let it become part of the nation again.”⁵⁸

Messages on taxes, guns, religion, patriotism, conventional gender roles, abortion, “family values,” and “big government spending” are all undergirded by the race issue to make them particularly attractive in the South.⁵⁹ For example, opposition to taxes was not simply opposition on a philosophical level. The tax issue was tied to the issue of “federal programs,” which to many white southerners meant taxpayer-supported federal programs to benefit “lazy” black Americans. Gun con-

trol and crime were also skillfully tied to racial conservatism. Guns became synonymous with personal protection against a grasping federal government that could and would ram unwelcome legislation down the throats of the people, as well as personal protection against criminals, associated so closely and for so long in the white mind with African Americans. Abortion and morality have also long had a racial lining to them in the popular consciousness.⁶⁰

In Alabama, Republicans at all levels fought hard to overcome the Reconstruction stigma attached to their party label and to sell the modern GOP as the new party of white supremacy. Jim Martin railed about federal invasions and states’ rights at every opportunity. Bill Dickinson filled the pages of the *Congressional Record* with attempts to discredit black voting rights by charging that interracial sex had occurred between the Montgomery-to-Selma marchers and thus invalidated their whole cause. In the late 1960s, Dickinson proposed a constitutional amendment to subject federal judges to a six-year review so as to exercise “some control” of the judiciary and defended Vice-President Spiro Agnew as misunderstood due to biased attacks from a “liberal media.”⁶¹ John Buchanan, a Baptist minister and U.S. congressman eventually unseated for being too moderate, damned the civil rights work of Martin Luther King Jr. and federal government interference in southern race relations “presided over by a vast, all-powerful bureaucracy in Washington.”⁶² Hubert Baughn’s editorials in *Alabama* (and later *South*) not so subtly tied the civil rights cause to the concept of a primitive race of subhumans undeserving of basic civil or political rights. The editorials, and indeed even what passed for “news” text, routinely condemned the “savagery” of the civil rights movement, its “drumbeaters” and “gun-wielding savages” working for “uncivilized rights.”⁶³ Assorted Republicans, disgusted with the Democratic Party’s racial liberalism, branded civil rights protests as “unChristian,” “treason,” “Congo-like outbreaks,” and “Demon-strations” that ran counter to the laws of God and man. One relatively new Republican, a Baptist preacher, energetically deplored the “civil rights hypocrites . . . hell raisers [and] Black savage revolutionaries” who had crammed such “bitter medicine . . . down the throats of decent law-respecting people in the South.”⁶⁴

Virtually any fruit of the civil rights movement received like treatment from the new Republican activists—damned as both heresy and treason in an approach that increasingly blurred the lines between church and state. To those most disgusted with the national Democrats’ racial liberalism, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was “satanic.” Voting

rights was a “blunder” that allowed “illiterates to vote by a mere ‘touch of the pen.’” School integration was the “ultimate folly” that led to the closing of perfectly good schools simply “in order to satisfy the idiotic, egotistical and unreasonable whims of starry-eyed ‘pseudo-intellectuals.’”⁶⁵ Guidelines on nondiscrimination in education from the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare were the orders of a federal “gestapo” that had the “odor of the carpetbagger” all over them.⁶⁶ The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) was a “big stick that the federal government place[d] at the hands of zealots. . . . [A]nytime a civil rights group or a Washington commission dedicated to the Negro’s uplift by law or bayonet seeks a scapegoat—the South gets it. . . . [E]very time a Negro is turned down for a job . . . [the EEOC] drag[s] in the race question.” The Great Society programs of Lyndon Johnson were a “Satanic Tyranny insidiously creeping over our nation and our family.” “The only way to get out,” a disgusted southerner advised, is to “get back to God.”⁶⁷ “You cannot pour a half gallon into a half-pint,” another Republican complained about the civil rights laws. “Neither can we create responsible citizens out of a rabble of savages barely removed from the jungle.”⁶⁸ Liberal U.S. Supreme Court decisions were to blame, concluded another angry Republican, the kind that “have convinced an immature negro race, church and labor officials that they and their children are immune to local . . . laws.”⁶⁹ GOP congressman John Buchanan provided representative Republican resentment against the Civil Rights Act of 1966 as the “latest . . . pet legislation of the Liberal Establishment . . . in fact more uncivil than civil.” “Every section of this nation cries in dismay that this freedom-strangling legislation is not conducive to civic harmony and welfare,” Buchanan complained. “Its compulsive nature would further regiment our nation. . . . The House was stampeded into consideration of [it] . . . under threats of ethnic revolution.” What we really need, the Republican congressman preached, “is legislation to deal firmly with the agitators, demonstrators, commentators and mobsters who create strife and arouse racial hatred.”⁷⁰ Conservative Democrats like Armistead Selden tried desperately to hang on by deploring the Civil Rights Act of 1966 as “the latest in . . . a long line of federal force bills [and] . . . civil agitation.” Like many others, Selden eventually gave up and joined the GOP.⁷¹

Martin Luther King served as a lightning rod for modern Republican outrage over civil rights, often buttressed with righteous religious indignation. Just several decades later, in a new Republican South, “compassionate conservatism” would dictate ritualistic and public homage

to the memory and dream of “Dr. King”—especially once a year, in January, on Martin Luther King Day. But such was hardly the case during the growing pains of the modern GOP. Disaffected Democrats, in transition to the Republican standard over race, denounced King in the most bitter terms that melded the political and the religious as “Mahatma Martin” and a “false prophet . . . in league with the devil.”⁷² Recent converts to the Republican Party damned King as “Martin Lucifer King” and mourned his “un-American phony civil rights and anti-Vietnam jackassery” as they deplored liberalism as one big conglomeration of racial anarchy and un-American, communistic war protest.⁷³ The pages of *South* cursed King as “Martin Luther King Cong . . . that preacher-agitator [from] . . . Atlanta . . . a ruthless agitator . . . a menace to law and order . . . [and] an avaricious . . . advocate of ill will.” His followers were “outright Communists, bleeding hearts and political opportunists.”⁷⁴ Baptist congressman John Buchanan blamed the rise of crime in America on “men like Dr. Martin Luther King and his insidious doctrine.”⁷⁵ In 1966, upon seeing that Alabama voters had to pick between segregationist Democrat Lurleen (Mrs. George) Wallace and segregationist Republican Jim Martin—and that Georgians were also to choose between two segregationists, Democrat Lester Maddox and Republican Bo Callaway—Hubert Baughn rejoiced: “it would appear that Mahatma King and his disciples are all registered up with no place to go.”⁷⁶

At the end of the turbulent 1960s the *Alabama Independent*, mouthpiece of the Independent way station for transient Democrats on their way to the GOP, explained clearly how, in the South, race was the engine that drove the modern Republican Party:

The Republican Party was just another dirty word since the days of Reconstruction . . . [until] the Communist traitors stealthily took over grandpa’s old Democratic Party. When we finally awoke . . . we got mad, real mad . . . we even voted Republican. . . . [T]he younger generation . . . even join[ed] the Republican Party . . . [Republicans] went into office on this new wave of rebellion against the old “Liberal Establishment,” which in the South, had taken the form of the old Democratic Party . . . [while] the country [had gone to] . . . the “One Worlders,” Fabian Socialists and Communists into whose slimy hands it had fallen. . . . “One Worlders” . . . beg[an] their campaign of hate promoted by the mass news media against the White Christians in the South . . . the “Bible Belt” . . . conjur[ing] up an image of the typical White Southerner;

"nigger hating" . . . "rednecks" "bigots." . . . Their weapon? Naturally, the "Civil Rights" Movement . . . Nazi-type legislation . . . the festering sore of rebellion against all decency known as the "Civil Rights Movement" . . . the race-baiting "Civil Rights Movement" . . . the Communist-inspired "Civil Rights Movement!"⁷⁷

Central to this politics and to the success of the GOP in the South was the Republican capture of the race issue away from the Democratic Party.⁷⁸ As long as George Wallace existed as a viable factor, GOP cooption of the race issue could never be complete—neither could their eclipse of the Democratic Party. Once Wallace was gone from the national scene (ca. 1972) and the liberalism of the national Democratic Party allowed the southern GOP to capture the race issue, the GOP was in the driver's seat in the South, at least in national elections. Once the national Democratic Party became identified with racial liberalism—first with Roosevelt and Truman, but decisively with the Kennedy brothers, Lyndon Johnson, and Hubert Humphrey—the Democratic Party in the South was put on the defensive and had to fight an increasingly rearguard action, especially when the leading Democrat and leading politician in the state, George Wallace, was clearly anything but in concert with the national Democratic Party, especially on the race issue.

And make no mistake, in Alabama the racial foundation has been in place for the Republican Party for some time now. In recent years the racial-political divide has become so stark that it is virtually accepted as common knowledge for many in the state. In much of the popular consciousness, the party split is first and foremost a racial split: the Democratic Party is the "party of blacks" and the Republican Party is the "party of whites."⁷⁹ On a street corner in Mobile, a white native—startled to learn that the white woman with whom she is conversing is a Democrat—blurts out: "My, I've never met a white person who voted for a Democrat!" At a tennis club in the hills of North Alabama, a local Republican activist is shocked to learn that a club member is also a Democrat. "You're a Democrat?" he asks her. "Be serious now. You're white, you can't be a Democrat." Across the state, candidates for political office bruise their heads against what can only be called a "color ceiling." White Democrats find the going especially rough. "I can't tell you how many [white] people came up to me during the campaign," a recent candidate for state office recounted, "and said, 'But you're white. How can you be a Democrat?' And I said, 'But I am!'" Other white Democratic candidates confirm the experience.⁸⁰

From the Republican perspective, this polarization is not only real but a good thing. It is true that the state is not completely dominated by the GOP quite yet and that the racial split is not total. Patronage, family tradition, local dynamics, a few stubborn white liberals, and even the persistence of such a thing as a conservative "Alabama Democrat"—if the image is effectively conveyed—still exist and still preserve some Democratic allegiance and split tickets, especially at the county courthouse and state legislature. If a single, winning issue is ridden hard enough, combined with a mass black turnout—as in the 1998 "education lottery" gubernatorial race—Democratic victory on the state level is still possible. But this is a shrinking phenomenon.

In sum, the racial split has served the Alabama GOP well. State Republican Party chairman Marty Connors recently reported that Republicans own nearly three-quarters (and growing) of all political posts in the state, and, he gleefully predicted, soon "the Democrats" will have nothing to fight over except "the money of the plaintiff attorneys, [the] affection of labor leaders (not rank and file), Joe Reed and his ADC [the black Alabama Democratic Conference] . . . minority [voters] . . . and a handful of aging college professors." After explaining that the Republican primary was growing and growing, and the Democratic primary was becoming smaller and *blacker*, Connors unwittingly revealed much about his ideal definition of "Alabama" by gloating, "So, the democrat primary is looking less and less like Alabama . . . and ours is looking more and more."⁸¹

With the foundation of the race issue firmly in place, southern Republicans have been able to draw upon the powerful tradition in the South of evangelical religion, fundamentalist values, traditional family values, "100 percent Americanism" conformity, and super-patriotism to round out their newly ascendant "politics of emotion." To a large extent, Republican success in the South has been predicated on the party's ability to articulate these issues in such a simplistic way as to blur shades of gray and subsume any semblance of complexity.⁸² As the national Democratic Party supported the civil rights movement, the modern GOP increasingly profited in the South. And while the *ideology* of the old "Reconstruction Syndrome"—with its prohibitions against racial equality, liberalism, Yankee activism, and a grasping federal government—remained compelling in the 1960s (perhaps more so than ever), the *language* of the syndrome grew increasingly inappropriate to a Republican-dominated South. Because the Reconstruction Syndrome had arisen in response to Abraham Lincoln and, later, Radical Republican sponsorship of abolition, black suffrage, and the First Re-

construction, the language of the syndrome was filled with unflattering references to rascally “carpetbaggers” and scoundrelly “scalawags”—Republicans all—as the chief villains in the South’s ongoing morality play. Growing Republican success in the 1960s South, however, rendered this language ill-suited, although the hallowed ideas it represented had never been more powerful. The answer was the morphing of the Reconstruction Syndrome into a politics of emotion. Same ideas, different lexicon—with a Republican twist of religion and morality thrown into the mix.⁸³

The result has been a maximum resonance with southern sensibilities on what may be called the “Holy Trinity” of southern politics: God, country, and race. It is a simple language, devoid of complexity, that all white southerners, regardless of class, education, or knowledge of specific issues, can parrot—indeed, had been accustomed to speaking for so long, only with a conservative Democratic accent. In the southern GOP’s new emotional language, the modern Democratic Party came to be understood as the party of undesirables: “niggers, queers, and atheists.”⁸⁴ Gone was any distinction between protesting an unjust war in Vietnam and being unpatriotic—even treasonous. Erased was any difference between tolerating alternative lifestyles, believing that gay Americans should have civil liberties, and desiring the eradication of the traditional family and wanting to see everyone in America become a homosexual. Lost was any realization that those who stand against compulsory prayer in schools do not, by definition, hate God and want to erode the Judeo-Christian ethic and end Western civilization itself. Some of them might happen to be religious (Christians, in fact), value religious freedom and pluralism, and believe that a separation of church and state is worth preserving. Obliterated was any distinction between those who believe in a woman’s right to choose and the advocacy of abortion as a common contraceptive. Glossed over was any cognizance that advocates of background checks and bans on assault weapons may not be at all interested in the complete abolition of firearms from the country. Buried were any differences between those who favored spending on Social Security, Medicare, and other social programs and Socialists—or worse yet, Communists—unpatriotic, subversive traitors all, bent on the overthrow of the Republic.⁸⁵ The politics of guilt by association and the slippery slope have seldom enjoyed more potency than in the modern Republican South since 1948.

And more, it is important to realize that little of this has been by accident. Republican-style racial politics have taken powerful hold in Dixie, but not without considerable effort. In 1964, Alabama Republican

chieftain John Grenier apparently sent an army of operatives throughout the small towns of the South—to cafeterias, barbershops, laundromats, hair salons, and the like—to talk up how voting for a Democrat would mean the racial apocalypse, and how voting for Republicans like Barry Goldwater was the South’s only salvation. The Republican moles studiously avoided making public appearances or giving newspaper interviews, instead sowing rumors that the Democratic fair-employment law would mean laying off white millworkers and that the public accommodations measure would mean small-town shops and businesses overrun with black customers. The efforts continued even after George Wallace dropped out of the race, resulting in small towns throughout the South being in a very “ugly mood” when representatives of the Johnson-Humphrey ticket arrived to campaign.⁸⁶

Weighing the career of H. Lee Atwater, the modern GOP’s ultimate strategist and campaign activist, makes this point very clear. Some have credited, or debited as the case may be, Atwater for being the creator of negative campaigning in American politics. But, like George Wallace, Atwater was not an originator or a pioneer, only the most influential and seminal of American political strategists in the modern era. A South Carolina native, Atwater was a neo-Confederate student of Sun Tzu, Niccolo Machiavelli, and several Confederate generals who learned his racial politics at the knee of fellow South Carolinians Strom Thurmond and Harry Dent, and who ended leaving his legacy to protégés who today number among the GOP’s top strategists: Mary Matalin, Tucker Eskew, and Karl Rove. Manic, obsessive, and a remarkably charismatic individual, Atwater had a passion for junk food, distance running, Tabasco sauce, and playing the guitar. He poured his considerable talent and energy into manipulating perceptions over reality, emotion over thought, and preying on the most divisive and intense passions he could arouse in the electorate—and was unapologetic about doing so. “Republicans in the South could not win elections by talking about issues,” he forthrightly acknowledged. “You had to make the case that the other candidate was a bad guy.” And nobody did this better than Atwater. Doing field research on what he affectionately called “swing voters,” Atwater concentrated on feelings and negative images, as he frequented bars, Waffle Houses, and massage parlors to find out what the masses wanted to hear and to make politics “more consumer driven, in touch with the customer/voter.” For Atwater and the new Republican politics, it was all about perception over reality, and using mass media to manipulate those perceptions. “It’s not what happens to us that matters,” Atwater concluded according to his empathetic

biographer, "it's how we *interpret* what happens to us. The interpretation establishes an attitude, which can then be catered to emotionally. Therefore, the political goal was to get in front of the interpretation—mental crowd control: *When we want your opinion, we'll give it to you!*" Perception, Atwater believed, was far stronger than reality. A master at using impressionistic images and symbols, he was steadfast in his belief that once a perception was established, it "can't be busted up even with opinion changes on specific issues that my opponent might accomplish."⁸⁷

Central in all of this was a fairly low estimation of the political instincts and acumen of the average voter, Atwater's critical "swing voters." According to Atwater's biographer, the "average voter could absorb only a limited amount of information about his candidate, Lee thought, and should never be bewildered with specifics. The average voter was kind of slow, actually—would perceive facts as ideas. . . . So you could throw fact after fact at a voter . . . who might never be able to connect the dots." "The National Enquirer readership is the exact voter I'm talking about," Atwater quipped. "I've learned a lot about politics simply by going to wrestling matches." As Atwater saw his job in 1988, he had to push George H. W. Bush's candidacy by "tap[ping] voters' emotions instead of their brains" by finding the one "specific example, the outrageous abuse, the easy-to-digest tale that made listeners *feel*—usually repulsion—rather than *think*." Enter Willie Horton. Later, on his cancer deathbed at the age of forty, Atwater apologized for the infamous ad (Harry Dent would insist that he had *repented* rather than apologized)—and, to a degree, turned his back on the whole way of doing politics that he had lifted to an art form as chairman of the national Republican Party. "I do think that we can end strident personality campaigning," he wrote to one of the earliest southern Democratic victims of his style, "and that we can change the nature of American politics and make it geometrically more positive than it has been the last few years simply by cutting a lot of the bullshit, getting sincere, honest solutions to critical problems, and not insulting the American electorate." Unfortunately, it appears that Atwater's ultimate legacy was the opposite of this late wish. One of his earlier prognostications was far more accurate: that the GOP would consolidate its power in the South as "the first step in the process of building a national Republican majority . . . by the year 2000."⁸⁸

With the base of racism taken from Dixie's old conservative Democrats and planted firmly in the soil of a new Republican South, the

southern GOP has been able to make itself invincible by fusing together different strains of traditional southern culture and values: white supremacy, anti-federalism, xenophobia, anti-liberalism, laissez-faire economics, religious fundamentalism, traditional gender roles, super-patriotism, isolationism and jingoism, traditional moral conformity, and so forth. The party's strategists have been able to fuse these elements onto the central adhesive of race. This, of course, was a central part of the 1920s Klan program, so popular in the South, the Midwest, and the West, and so fundamental to the 1928 Hoovercrat bolt on behalf of the GOP. In modern terms, the southern GOP has translated it into issues such as opposition to anything or anyone that challenged or differed from traditional American and family values, and has done so in a way that frequently strains the limits of logical connection.⁸⁹ Calls for respect for people being called African Americans, Native Americans, Asian Americans, and the like were not seen as a celebration of diverse heritage and cultural pluralism but rather as a threat to the dominant white, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant culture, as politically correct hyphenated Americanism run amok. The proposed Equal Rights Amendment, women's rights, feminism, and gender equity was not seen as an equity and justice issue but as a threat to traditional gender roles and family values based, in part, on the Bible. Global peacekeeping missions and the United Nations were targeted, as in the 1920s heyday of the KKK, as evidence of an international "one-world" conspiracy and a threat to American sovereignty and ethnic purity. Much of the recent anti-French and anti-UN feeling over the 2003 Iraq War would have warmed the hearts of Barry Goldwater's John Birch supporters, once derided along with their candidate as "extremist." Insistence on conformity with traditional moral values, the pro-life position, and general Bible thumping and flag waving became synonymous with the preservation of traditional American values and an increasing impatience with any form of religious, ethnic, or cultural pluralism. While values such as these may not play well back in Peoria, they play every evening to sold-out crowds in Dixie. Kevin Phillips had put it this way back in 1968: "[John] Wayne may sound bad to people in New York, but he sounds great to the schmucks we're trying to reach through John Wayne. The people down there along the Yahoo Belt."⁹⁰ The resemblances between the program of "100 percent Americanism" of the 1920s KKK (including its infatuation with white supremacy and moral conformity) and the "neo-Kluxism" of the modern GOP are more than merely striking—they are family cousins. And it was no accident that

in 1928 the Klan-backed Hoovercrat movement nearly took Alabama for the Republican Party, and might have were it not for widespread fraud and irregularities in the Black Belt.

As the internet and cable television have revolutionized media, it has grown even easier to cater to the desire for simplicity in our lives—even in our politics. The proliferation of cable channels, AM stations, and internet websites has, paradoxically, contributed to a growing political isolation wherein citizens are capable of becoming media consumers who pick and choose a menu of ideas—seemingly legitimate because of their existence as “published” media—that serve instead to reinforce existing prejudices and partial understandings while insulating the consumer from annoying information that might contradict deeply held prior views. Along with the proliferation has come a steady drumbeat from the political Right about the unreliability and “liberal” bias of mainstream media. Faced by this relentless assault, venues of traditional media have shown signs of succumbing to the “Limbaugh Effect.” Horrified at the thought of being criticized as “the liberal media,” these outlets have gone out of their way to make time and space for the most extreme faces associated with what was previously considered the Far Right.⁹¹ The entry of the Religious Right into politics further dichotomized modern political discourse, granting it almost the tenor of a millennial struggle between good and evil, righteousness and wickedness, with clear lines drawn between virtue and wickedness. In such a worldview, almost no tactic was placed off limits in the waging and winning of a political holy war.

The price of simplicity, though, is considerable. As our culture has grown more complex and fast-paced, people have less and less time, money, interest, energy, educational expertise, or even inclination to study political issues on their own. In such a culture, many people want their politics simple—“fast-food politics” to go. They just do not have the time for, or interest in, complexity and nuance. In the South, the modern Republican Party has mastered the art of giving the people what they want, simple issues with clear-cut heroes and villains: people who love life versus baby-killers; believers versus the godless; patriots versus traitors and evildoers; responsible taxpayers versus lazy parasites and “welfare queens.”⁹²

Today, many Republicans, in the South and elsewhere, would bristle with indignation at the suggestion that the modern emergence of their party, particularly in the South, has been based largely on racial and other forms of intolerance. Many would not consider themselves racists in a personal sense—and many certainly are not. Still, the lines of con-

tinuity that stretch from the disfranchisement movement and the second KKK to the modern GOP are clear—at least in Alabama. And the line from the GOP co-option of the race issue away from the Democratic Party is also clear. Without the race issue, the GOP was not a serious factor in southern politics. With it—fortified by other emotional and moral issues—the party is dominant.

On August 1, 2000, Condoleezza Rice ascended the dais at the Republican National Convention in Philadelphia. A forty-two-year-old African American woman and the former provost of Stanford University, Rice appeared as a well-known authority on foreign-policy issues and a rumored cabinet member should Republican candidate George W. Bush win the presidency. More importantly, she was present at the convention to speak as a young, intelligent, articulate black woman—a native of Birmingham, Alabama, no less—whose presence and Republican convictions were on display to persuade African American voters to leave the Democratic Party to which they had been overwhelmingly faithful since 1936. Rice’s appearance at the Republican convention—along with those of General Colin Powell, George P. Bush (the Hispanic son of Florida governor Jeb Bush), and Chaka Khan and other minority singers and entertainers—was a thinly veiled attempt to convince minorities to vote Republican, to accept the warmer, fuzzier, inclusive Republican rhetoric of “compassionate conservatism,” “Leave No Child Behind,” and “uniter not divider” put forth by George W. Bush and his handlers.⁹³ Rice explained her allegiance to the GOP in terms of her Alabama roots. Her father, she told the convention—and, by extension, the country—had been denied the right to vote in 1952 Alabama by Democrats. Ever since, Rice said, she had looked to the Republican Party for inclusion.⁹⁴ Her message was clear: millions of African Americans should now look to the GOP for meaningful political participation as well.

Rice’s exposition, while partially accurate in a technical sense, could not have amounted to a more perverse distortion of reality. Southern white Democrats, like the very registrars who had disfranchised her father and other blacks in 1952 Alabama, also left the Democratic Party—first in trickles in 1948, then in droves during the 1950s and 1960s—to form the heart, soul, and much of the sinew and flesh of the new Republican majority in the former Confederate states. Moreover, the new Solid *Republican* South—in which a Democrat (unless he was named George Wallace) found it increasingly difficult to win election, also made up the strongest part of the emerging Republican majority

across America outlined so prophetically by conservative politico Kevin Phillips.

In fact, the Republican Party in places like Rice's home state of Alabama had been politically anemic from Reconstruction until 1952, identified in the popular consciousness as the "party of Lincoln" that had enabled—with the assistance of federal bayonets—incompetent blacks and corrupt carpetbaggers and scalawags to put the prostrate South through nine circles of hell. Not until the "bolt" of 1928 and, to a far greater extent, the "Dixiecrat" revolt of 1948 did the Republican Party learn how to play the politics of race. As the national Democratic Party became increasingly identified with the racial liberalism and civil rights initiatives of John and Robert Kennedy, Lyndon Johnson, and Hubert Humphrey, the southern GOP capitalized on white backlash. Once it claimed the mantle of the "party of white supremacy," the Republican Party was on its way to dominance in the South. One by one, high-profile conservative southern Democrats repudiated their party and embraced the GOP—conversions that represented thousands of rank-and-file Democrats moving to the Republican Party: Strom Thurmond and Albert Watson in South Carolina, Tom Abernethy, Jim Martin, and Jabo Waggoner in Alabama, Jesse Helms in North Carolina, Trent Lott in Mississippi, Leander Perez and David Duke in Louisiana, Phil Gram in Texas, Bo Callaway in Georgia, and many others. By the 1990s, even George Wallace considered himself a Republican.⁹⁵ Harry Dent and Richard Nixon's subtly racist "Southern Strategy" and Lee Atwater's cynical use of race on behalf of Ronald Reagan and George Bush were wildly successful in Dixie. Republican presidential candidates, for example, have grown stronger and stronger in Condi Rice's Alabama ever since 1952—the year Democratic registrars did not allow her father to vote.⁹⁶ In recent elections, Republicans have failed miserably with black voters in Dixie yet won an overwhelming percentage of the white vote. In 1984 only 12 percent of white Alabamians voted for Democratic presidential candidate Walter Mondale, while 88 percent went for Ronald Reagan. Black percentages in Alabama were exactly the opposite. In 1988, George Bush got 70 percent of Alabama's white vote; Democrat Michael Dukakis received 78 percent of the state's black vote. In 1992 and 1996, respectively, Bill Clinton received 85 and 92 percent of the state's black vote. Alabama's racial divide in electoral politics has only sharpened in recent years. In the 2000 election, Al Gore won a virtually impossible 98 percent of Alabama's black vote, while George W. Bush won almost 80 percent of the state's white vote.⁹⁷ The strongest Gore county in the United States was located in Alabama's Black Belt.⁹⁸

At a national level, Republican opposition to integration, busing, affirmative action, crime, welfare, slave reparations, bans on racial profiling, and, in some instances, even an apology for slavery, and many other issues—as well as the prominence of famously intolerant Republicans the stripe of Jerry Falwell, Pat Robertson, Pat Buchanan, Strom Thurmond, Jesse Helms, Bob Barr, Newt Gingrich, David Duke, John Ashcroft, Dick Armey, and Tom DeLay, not to mention Rush Limbaugh and an army of national and local imitators—have kept Republicans and their defense of white supremacy foremost in the minds of both white southerners and black voters. The Trent Lott fiasco was merely the loudest and most recent to do so—and the one with the most serious potential repercussions for costing the GOP any shot at the exponentially growing Latino minority vote.⁹⁹ In the past eleven presidential elections, over four decades' worth, Alabama has gone for the regular Democratic presidential candidate only one time. That was in 1976 (and it was reasonably close) when a neighboring Georgia boy headed the Democratic ticket.¹⁰⁰

There is much to suggest that modern Republican dominance of the South—and, by extension, the nation—has been built on the back of white supremacy, racism, and emotional intolerance. In fact, modern Republican dominance in Alabama—and by inference the South, and by further inference the nation—appears to have been built upon a firm but very ugly foundation, the ultimate kind of white flight in reaction to the civil rights movement. In Alabama there are spiritual and direct links to the disfranchisement constitution of 1901, the Ku Klux Klan of the 1920s, the Dixiecrats of 1948, and the Wallacism of the 1960s. Disfranchisement, the KKK, Dixiecrats, and George Wallace—as unfortunate as it is, these are among the most elemental building blocks of the modern Republican Party in the South—in some respects, they are more important than any others. The maintenance of white supremacy has been the ultimate determinant of the character of the "Solid South" politically. Stated another way: whichever party managed to capture the race issue—to defend white supremacy ("out-nigger" the other party, in Wallace's crude phrasing)—would control the South. Ultimately, it is within this important context that the civil rights struggles which roiled in the 1940s and 1950s South should be understood.

Southern politics is not now—nor has it ever been, predominantly—about politics. It's about culture. This is the great irony of southern politics (and increasingly about American politics as well): that most people in the South are fueled by *cultural* dictates, not *political* ones.

This thesis has found expression in various ways over the decades: the power of the “Reconstruction Syndrome,” the salience of a “politics of emotion,” the resonance of “God and country” issues, the portability of the “New Racism,” the continued strength of a race-based and morality-based political and social conformity, the relevance of a “fast-food politics,” and the perpetual power of perception over reality. At root, despite their differences in emphasis and in time period, all of these things are about culture: what is the predominant culture in the South, and what is presented by its elite as the dominant culture. Race has long served as the vital core for this cultural orthodoxy, but the outer layers are cultural in their essence as well—prevailing regional orthodoxies on class, gender and sex, religion, war, patriotism, jingoism, morality, nativism and xenophobia, taxes, and the federal government.

In such a polity, cultural IQ matters much more than knowledge about actual policies or matters of governance. For the bulk of the citizenry, knowledge of what constitutes the “southern way of life” is enough to know how to stand on civil rights. Cognizance of what comprises regional mores on religion, not constitutional requisites, is sufficient for voters to form a position on school prayer or display of the Ten Commandments—and to demand elected officials to do the same.¹⁰¹ For the Lee Atwaters of the world it is enough to know how people *perceive* candidates and character rather than any correlation with actual reality or the electorate’s knowledge of a real issue. In the white, male, rural, working-class culture of the new important voting cadre of “NASCAR Dads,” it is enough to perceive that voting for Democrats is “for wooses” and that the Democrats are somehow “out of control.”¹⁰² No actual knowledge about a specific policy, or how what was once Goldwater-era extremism has been converted into present-day mainstream conservatism, need be necessary.¹⁰³

At root this state of affairs reveals an ugly but important truth about much of our democracy in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. It makes plain that once the two major political parties stopped being Tweedledum and Tweedledee on race, once one of the major parties actually tried to make the country live up to part of its founding creed of “equal rights for all,” it doomed itself to electoral defeat and, according to some, increasing irrelevance. The ascendance of “The Social Issue,” as Scammon and Wattenberg dubbed it, did not bespeak the essential wisdom of the electorate. On the contrary, it revealed a fundamental and difficult truth about much of white America—perhaps a majority. Both white ethnic northerners and white southerners were a lot more

comfortable with a racially, ethnically, and sexually exclusive polity, society, and economy—even those whites who do not partake in a significant way in the economic rewards associated with this status quo—than in striving toward a genuinely inclusive America. This truth reveals that “the people”—far from comprising a wise and moderating influence in politics—have too often been, especially once mass media and modern religion caught up to the elite rhetoric, ever susceptible to a demagogy that preys on their most primal and irrational fears, jealousies, prejudices, and emotions. As a country and as a people, we have not been the better for it.

gitimacy” by proclaiming “here’s Jimmy’s stand” on race relations; “He adheres to Southern racial tradition. [He] was born in, reared in, lives in, and expects to die in Cobb County, Georgia.” B-29ers-for-Carmichael Club, WSB Radio broadcast, July 5, 1946, transcript, accession no. Draft APR.1993.20.uc-M84-20/49b and 46a, GGDP (third quote).

103. In an interview shortly after the election, Carmichael confided that his capitulation on the county-unit system—he personally regarded it as evil and undemocratic—rendered him unsuitable to be governor. See James V. Carmichael interview, July 23, 1947, for “Who Runs Georgia,” unpublished manuscript, Transcript Series B, GGDP.

104. *Augusta Chronicle*, April 13, 1946, 1–2, April 14, 1946, 7.

105. In Savannah, where black veterans helped an upstart reformist coalition of white veterans defeat the corrupt John Bouhan machine, the CPL fulfilled African American demands to improve services to black neighborhoods, appoint a Negro Advisory Committee, and hire black police officers. Racial conservatism in the CPL, however moderate compared to other administrations in the South, nonetheless soon caused a rupture in the relationship between CPL mayor John Kennedy and the new Negro Advisory Committee. Black war veteran W. W. Law, a supporter of the CPL and member of the committee, resigned when Mayor Kennedy refused to allow integrated lines for viewing the traveling Freedom Train exhibit. See W. W. Law interview; *Savannah Evening Press*, May 27, 1947, 2; *Savannah Tribune*, November 28, 1946, 1 and 8, February 6, 1947, 1 and 7; *Savannah Morning News*, October 27, 1946, 4; and *Savannah Herald*, February 6, 1947, 1 and 8.

106. See Harold P. Henderson and Gary L. Roberts, eds., *Georgia Governors in an Age of Change: From Ellis Arnall to George Busby* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1988); and Bartley, *Creation of Modern Georgia*.

EPILOGUE

1. See, e.g., the (Birmingham) *Alabama Independent*, July 10, 1969, 7. Of course, pockets of Republican strength existed in the South—most notably in the mountain Republican strongholds that overlapped with pro-Union sentiment during the Civil War: east Tennessee, western North Carolina, northwest Georgia, north Alabama, and northeast Mississippi. See Alexander P. Lamis, *The Two-Party South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984). The famous quote is from Faulkner’s *Requiem for a Nun*.

2. For discussions of this prevailing view of Reconstruction, see Paul M. Gaston, *The New South Creed: A Study in Southern Mythmaking* (New York: Knopf, 1970), 130–31; Gaines M. Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy: Defeat, the Lost Cause, and the Emergence of the New South, 1865–1913* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987); and virtually anything by Fred Arthur Bailey, such as “Free Speech and the ‘Lost Cause’ in the Old Dominion,” *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 103 (April 1995): 237–66. For the enduring importance of the Civil War in southern history, see, e.g., Susan-Mary Grant and Peter J. Parish, eds., *Legacy of Disunion: The Enduring Significance of the American Civil War* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2003); David R. Goldfield, *Still Fighting*

the Civil War: The American South and the Civil War (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2002); and David W. Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, Harvard, 2001).

3. Due to time and space constraints, I am glossing over some very important history here, which has been documented and its significance explained in a number of works, not the least of which are C. Vann Woodward, *Origins of the New South, 1877–1913* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1951); and Edward L. Ayers, *The Promise of the New South: Life after Reconstruction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992). Other works should be consulted. On Alabama, alone, see Michael W. Fitzgerald, *The Union League Movement in the Deep South: Politics and Agricultural Change during Reconstruction* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1989); Sheldon Hackney, *Populism to Progressivism in Alabama* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969); William Warren Rogers Sr., *The One-Gallused Rebellion: Agrarianism in Alabama, 1865–1896* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1970); Samuel L. Webb, *Two-Party Politics in the One-Party South: Alabama’s Hill Country, 1874–1920* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1997); Daniel Letwin, *The Challenge of Interracial Unionism: Alabama Coal Miners, 1878–1921* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998); and Brian Kelly, *Race, Class, and Power in the Alabama Coalfields, 1908–21* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2001). Southwide, see Michael Hyman, *The Anti-Redeemers: Hill Country Political Dissenters in the Lower South from Redemption to Populism* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1990); and, more recently, Michael Perman, *Struggle for Mastery: Disfranchisement in the South, 1888–1908* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001). See also the excellent recent state studies: Jane Elizabeth Dailey, *Before Jim Crow: The Politics of Race in Postemancipation Virginia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000); and Stephen Kantrowitz, *Ben Tillman and the Reconstruction of White Supremacy* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000). The literature on the Populist movement is vast. At the very least, the following should be consulted: Lawrence Goodwyn, *The Populist Moment: A Short History of the Agrarian Revolt in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978); Bruce M. Palmer, “Man Over Money”: *The Southern Populist Critique of American Capitalism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980); and Barton C. Shaw, *The Wool-Hat Boys: Georgia’s Populist Party* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1984).

4. This, above all, is the lesson that may be taken from Malcolm Cook McMillan’s classic *Constitutional Development in Alabama, 1798–1901: A Study in Politics, Sectionalism, and the Negro* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1955). On the more general subject of disfranchisement, see also J. Morgan Kousser, *The Shaping of Southern Politics: Suffrage Restriction and the Establishment of the One-Party South, 1880–1910* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974); and Perman, *Struggle for Mastery*.

5. McMillan, *Constitutional Development in Alabama*; Allen W. Jones, “Political Reforms of the Progressive Era,” *Alabama Review* 21 (July 1968): 173–94; *Official Proceedings of the Constitutional Convention of the State of Alabama, May 21st 1901 to Sept. 3, 1901* (Wetumpka, Ala.: Wetumpka Printing Co., 1940), 3:2841 (Heflin quote) and 3:3377 (Bulger quote); *Minutes of the Democratic State*

Convention, March 29, 1899, 23, 25–27 (Denson quote). Alabama's privileged Redeemers made no secret of the fact that they also meant to disfranchise blacks in the 1901 Alabama Constitution. John B. Knox, Anniston industrialist and former chair of the state Democratic Executive Committee, explained that "There is a difference . . . between the uneducated white man and the ignorant Negro. There is in the white man an inherited capacity for government, which is totally wanting in the Negro. . . . The Negro . . . is descended from a race lowest in intelligence and moral perceptions of all the races of men." *Official Proceedings, 1901*, 1:12. Future U.S. senator Captain Frank S. White agreed that "We have disfranchised the African in the past by doubtful methods, but in the future we will disfranchise [him] by law. The cancer that has been eating upon the body politic . . . must be taken away." *Minutes of the Democratic State Convention*, April 25, 1900, 5, Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery [hereafter cited as ADAH].

6. The years between 1901 and 1928, while eventful and interesting in their own right, are beyond the scope of this part of the essay. The focus of this portion is to look at highlights of white voter cooperation in Alabama and the South across class and party lines—two of the most notable of which occurred in 1901 and 1928.

7. V. O. Key Jr., *Southern Politics in State and Nation* (1949; reprint, Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1984), 317.

8. Glenn Feldman, *Politics, Society, and the Klan in Alabama, 1915–1949* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1999), 185 (broadsheet quotes); Huddleston to Hammill, October 4, 1928 (quote), box 210, folder: Birmingham City Commission, Alabama Governors Papers, Benjamin Meek Miller, ADAH; Anonymous to Coleman A. Blease, c. 1928 (Commerce Department quote), box 5, folder 14, William Brockman Bankhead Papers, ADAH. Other quotes in *Birmingham News*, November 4–6, 1928, and Hugh D. Reagen, "Race as a Factor in the Presidential Election of 1928 in Alabama," *Alabama Review* 30 (Fall 1993): 6–7, 12–17. *Birmingham News*, November 5–6, 1928 (Bilbo quote). For the anti-Smith Klan rally, see *New York Times*, July 8, 1928, 2. The Alabama KKK fought Smith's election by impugning his moral character as a "negro lover" for associating too closely with African Americans: "Although Al Smith's skin may be white, his heart is as black as that of any African that roams the jungles. . . . Smith was raised with the negroes. He lived with the negroes. He moves and associates with the negroes now. He eats with the negroes. Therefore we cannot say that he is the equal of the negro because the negro is better than he is. Any white man that makes the negro his equal is not as good as the negro." *Alabama Ku Klux Klan Newsletter*, September 1928, Oliver Day Street Papers, ADAH.

9. Feldman, *Politics, Society, and the Klan*, chaps. 9 and 10; Glenn Feldman, *From Demagogue to Dixiecrat: Horace Wilkinson and the Politics of Race* (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1995), 87–98. For example, Rev. Bob Jones Sr., a Baptist minister, spoke throughout Alabama on behalf of Klan-backed political candidates and to Klan dens during the 1920s. His speeches were often laced with nativism, jingoism, and anti-Catholicism. After the rise of the Religious Right in the 1980s, the university he founded in Tennessee and then South Carolina—Bob Jones University—became a pilgrimage site for aspiring Republi-

can presidential candidates. During the 2000 presidential campaign, the background of the university's founder, along with the more recent racial and sexual-orientation policies of the school, became a national issue. See Feldman, *Politics, Society, and the Klan*, 38, 40, 65–66, 131, 170, 175, 182; *Mobile Register*, February 25, 2000; *Washington Post*, February 18, 2000; *Huntsville (Ala.) Times*, February 16, 2000; Rives Moore, "The Interfaith Alliance," "News Release," February 18, 2000; Libby Quaid, "Democrats Swipe at Ashcroft over Bob Jones Visit," *Associated Press*, February 22, 2000; Robert A. George, "Bush's Missed Opportunity," *Salon.com*, February 22, 2000; John Leo, "The Company He Keeps," *U.S. News and World Report*, March 6, 2000; Janelle Carter, "Democrats in Congress Seek Condemnation of Bob Jones U.," *Associated Press*, February 29, 2000; Reg Henry, "Watch Out for a School Named Bob," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, March 14, 2000; Jay Reeves, "Book Links Founder of Bob Jones U. with Alabama Klan," *Associated Press*, March 18, 2000; Libby Quaid, "Democrats Seizing on Bob Jones Issue," *Associated Press*, April 14, 2000; and Juliet Eilperin and Hanna Rosin, "Bob Jones: A Magnet School for Controversy," *Washington Post*, February 25, 2000. The differences between "pragmatic" and "principled" opposition are outlined in Feldman, *Politics, Society, and the Klan*, 8–9, 226–27, 326–27.

10. I use the term "neo-Bourbon" here in essentially the same sense that Numan V. Bartley described in *The Rise of Massive Resistance: Race and Politics in the South during the 1950s* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1969), 17–20.

11. Anthony J. Badger, *The New Deal: The Depression Years, 1933–40* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1989), 271 (quote). Growing southern white disenchantment with FDR and the national Democratic Party's racial liberalism oozed out in many forms—some of it official, like the "Conservative Manifesto," others more extreme. "[A] darkey drives the Donkey now," lamented Ku Klux Klansmen when the 1936 campaign revealed the defection of black voters from the Republican to the Democratic Party. "The Negro Goes Democratic," *Kourier Magazine* 12 (August 1936): 20. KKK political cartoons featured Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt singing: "You kiss the niggers and I'll kiss the Jews. And we'll stay in the White House as long as we choose." Wyn Craig Wade, *The Fiery Cross: The Ku Klux Klan in America* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987), 259, 275.

12. *Birmingham News*, July 12, 1998, 1A.

13. Harry Mell Ayers to Lister Hill, August 10, 1948 (first quote), box 367, folder 32, J. Lister Hill Papers, Special Collections Department, University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa; *Birmingham News*, September 2, 1948 (Carmichael); *Birmingham News*, July 15, 1948 (Wallace).

14. *Birmingham News*, March 22, 1948 (Wilkinson); William D. Barnard, "Race, Class, and Party: Frank M. Dixon and the Dixiecrat Revolt of 1948 in Alabama," in *The Public Life of Frank M. Dixon: Sketches and Speeches* (Montgomery: ADAH Historical Series no. 18, 1979), 78–79 (first Dixon quote); Dixon to Hall Jr., November 1944 (second Dixon quote), in Grover C. Hall Jr. Papers, ADAH; McCorvey to Dixon, August 21, 1948, Alabama Governors Papers, Frank M. Dixon, ADAH [hereafter cited as Dixon Papers].

15. As Kari Frederickson and others have made clear, the movement of Dixiecrats to the Republican Party was not immediate or wholesale. See Frederickson,

The Dixiecrat Revolt and the End of the Solid South, 1932–1968 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 228–38. Also see Paul Maxwell Smith, “Loyalists and States’ Righters in the Democratic Party of Alabama, 1949–1954” (unpublished M.A. thesis, Auburn University, 1966), 94; and George Brown Tindall, *The Disruption of the Solid South* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1972), 3–5, 51–72.

16. Miscellaneous clippings, box 12, folder 12, “Republicans,” Series IV, Charles E. Dobbins Papers, Auburn University Archives, Auburn, Alabama; *Montgomery Advertiser*, December 4, 1952; *Birmingham Post-Herald*, May 26, 1956. Talladega Daily Home, November 2, 1954 (Abernethy quote), in James Lamar Sledge III, “The Alabama Republican Party, 1865–1978” (Ph.D. diss., Auburn University, 1998), 160.

17. Miscellaneous clippings, box 12, folder 12, “Republicans,” Series IV, Dobbins Papers.

18. For the conversion of the *Dothan Eagle*, see *Birmingham News*, July 15, 1948; for that of the *Montgomery Advertiser*, see Feldman, *From Demagogue to Dixiecrat*, 168. Dixiecrats moved to the GOP, conceding that they had “never voted the Republican ticket” before but were now because “there is only one way out for the South . . . to present demands to these left-wingers who are running the national Democratic Party and unless those demands are met to tell them goodbye. I am sick and tired of the South being kicked around.” Bradley to Shepperd, December 12, 1957, box 2, folder 24, Dixon Papers.

19. Citations for moves of prominent Alabama Dixiecrats to the GOP: Graves discussed in *Alabama: The News Magazine of Dixie*, March 25, 1949, 8–11; Battle in *Alabama*, December 24, 1948, 6–7; Smyer in *Birmingham Post-Herald*, February 23, 1966; McCorvey, Comer, Malone, and Blount mentioned in Frederickson, *Dixiecrat Revolt*, 228; Abernethy, Comer, O’Neal, Malone, Abercrombie, Johnston, Young, McCorvey, Burns, Diamond, Battle, and “many other States’ Rights officeholders and officials,” including two state Democratic Executive Committee members from the First District and a whole raft of Montgomery Dixiecrats who called themselves “Jeffersonian Democrats,” then “Eisenhower Democrats,” before moving officially into the GOP, are mentioned in Smith, “Loyalists and States’ Righters,” 91–92, 93 (quote), 97–101, 103–4, 106.

20. W. H. Albritton to Dixon, March 6, 1959, box 2, folder 17, Dixon Papers. See also *Birmingham Post-Herald*, May 26, 1956.

21. McCorvey to editor, *Roanoke Leader*, October 9, 1948, Alabama Governors Papers, James E. Folsom, ADAH. On McCorvey’s defection to the GOP see Dixon to E. H. Ramsey, December 9, 1954, box 3, folder 25, Dixon Papers. On Dixon, see Dixon to E. H. Ramsey, December 9, 1954 (quote), box 3, folder 25, *ibid.* See also Dixon to E. H. Ramsey, August 7, 1952, box 3, folder 25, and August 19, 1963, box 3, folder 17, and Dixon to Governor Marvin Griffin, September 17, 1957, box 3, folder 8, all in *ibid.* Wilkinson and Henderson mentioned in Smith, “Loyalists and States’ Righters,” 91. *Baton Rouge State-Times*, April 3, 1965 (first Perez quote); *Kansas City Star*, January 26, 1964 (second Perez quote). Both quotes in Glen Jeansonne, *Leander Perez: Boss of the Delta* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1977), xv, see also 193–94, 331–34. Perez also served for a time as George Wallace’s point man in Louisiana. See *South*, January 1968, 18.

22. I discussed this point previously: “White Southerners as a whole have yet to change. There is not yet a ‘New South’ in this respect. What changed were the names of the national parties that were willing to cater to Southern views on race and white supremacy—from the Democrats, to the Dixiecrats and States’ Rights Democrats, to the Republican Party in more recent years. In the checkered evolution of the national parties on the race issue, the only truly consistent posture has been that adopted by the Southern white conservative voter. In short, the parties changed their positions; the white South has not. . . . The key point is that it has been the parties that changed over the years, not Southern voters. White Southerners can still be won over by conservative patriotic posturing and appeals (albeit more subtle than before) to the seemingly primordial fear of the African American.” *From Demagogue to Dixiecrat*, 194 and 195.

23. *Birmingham News*, September 14, 1958.

24. W. T. Witt to editor, *South*, January 13, 1958, 4 (quote); W. T. Witt to editor, *South*, September 28, 1964, 4.

25. Although Democratic officeholders such as John Kennedy have been criticized regularly for being timid, late, and not completely on board the modern civil rights movement, the risks they took and the prices they paid for supporting the movement—however late and incomplete—were real. For criticism of presidential timidity and federal hesitancy and reluctance, see Armstead L. Robinson and Patricia Sullivan, “Introduction: Reassessing the History of the Civil Rights Movement,” 3–4; Julian Bond, “The Politics of Civil Rights History,” 8–9; and August Meier, “Epilogue: Toward a Synthesis of Civil Rights History,” 217, all three in *New Directions in Civil Rights Studies*, ed. Robinson and Sullivan (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1991); Steven F. Lawson, “Freedom Then, Freedom Now: The Historiography of the Civil Rights Movement,” *American Historical Review* 96 (April 1991): 470; and Steven F. Lawson and Charles Payne, *Debating the Civil Rights Movement, 1945–1968* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman and Littlefield, 2000). For the clear identification of the Democratic Party with the Second Reconstruction and civil rights, see Thomas Byrne Esdall and Mary D. Esdall, *Chain Reaction: The Impact of Race, Rights, and Taxes on American Politics* (1991; New York: Norton, 1992), 5, 7–9, 10, 12, 20, 32–37, esp. 35, and 215.

26. Conversations with JW, Tupelo, Mississippi, September 12, 2003 (on Kennedy liberalism). As mayor of Minneapolis, Humphrey had indelibly identified himself with the cause of civil rights by delivering a fiery oration on behalf of the Truman program at the 1948 Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia: “I ask the Democratic Party to march down the high road of progressive democracy. I ask this Convention to say in unmistakable terms that we proudly hail and will courageously support our President and leader, Harry Truman, in his great fight for civil rights.” And later, at a critical point in the adoption of a civil rights plank: “There will be no hedging, and there will be no watering down. . . . There are those who say to you—we are rushing this issue of civil rights. I say we are a hundred and seventy-two years late. The time has arrived for the Democratic Party to get out of the shadow of states’ rights and walk forthrightly into the bright sunshine of human rights.” Frederickson, *Dixiecrat Revolt*, 118–19, 129.

27. *Nation*, February 1965, in Wayne Greenhaw, *Elephants in the Cottonfields: Ronald Reagan and the New Republican South* (New York: Macmillan, 1982), 57. Grenier obviously meant only white southerners when referring to “Southerners.”

28. Rick Perlstein, *Before the Storm: Barry Goldwater and the Unmaking of the American Consensus* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2001), 374 (Goldwater supporter). The famous “duck” quote can be found in many places, e.g., Fred J. Cook, *Barry Goldwater: Extremist of the Right* (New York: Grove Press, 1964), 155–56.

29. Jack Bass and Walter DeVries agreed that the 1964 election clearly demonstrated that “In Alabama, Republican development was tied to the politics of race.” *The Transformation of Southern Politics: Social Change and Political Consequence since 1945* (New York: Basic Books, 1976), 78. Election results reported in Sledge, “The Alabama Republican Party,” 221–22.

30. Jake Tapper, “Democratic Bigots,” *Salon.com*, July 17, 2000; Paul Begala, “Banana Republicans,” *MSNBC.com/news*, November 13, 2000, 4.

31. See note 25 above.

32. Numan V. Bartley, *The New South, 1945–1980* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1995), 339.

33. On the significance of the conservative purge of the northern liberal wing of the GOP at the 1964 Republican National Convention in Miami, see Jonathan Soffer’s review of Rick Perlstein’s *Before the Storm* on H-NET (July 2001). Representative right-wing media venues where the Democratic record on civil rights is distorted are myriad. See Sean Hannity, *Let Freedom Ring: Winning the War of Liberty over Liberalism* (New York: Regan Books, 2002); Rush Limbaugh, “Strom Thurmond and Dixiecrats Were Democrats,” December 13, 2002, “Bill Clinton’s Racist Roots,” November 8, 2001, and “Republicans Passed the Civil Rights Act,” August 17, 2000, all on www.rushlimbaugh.com; Thomas Sowell, “Lott, Race, and Hypocrisy: Parts I and II,” www.jewishworldreview.com and www.NewsAndOpinion.com, December 17 and 18, 2002; Betty Boatman, “The Trent Lotts of the Left,” *San Francisco Bay Area Independent Media Center*, www.indymedia.org, January 6, 2003, “Robert Byrd—The Democrats’ Lott,” www.NewsMax.com, December 29, 2002, and “White House Wannabe Edwards Has Ex-Klansman for Mentor,” www.NewsMax.com, January 2, 2003.

34. Jason L. Riley, “President Bush Needs to Lead His Party on Race,” *Wall Street Journal*, January 16, 2003, A12.

35. *South*, April 1966, 38 (first quote); Dan T. Carter, *From George Wallace to Newt Gingrich: Race in the Conservative Counterrevolution, 1963–1994* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1996), 44 (Mitchell quote); Smith, “Loyalists and States’ Righters,” v (third quote).

36. Dan T. Carter, *The Politics of Rage: George Wallace, the Origins of the New Conservatism, and the Transformation of American Politics* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1995); and Carter, *From George Wallace to Newt Gingrich*.

37. The original source for Wallace’s infamous promise is Marshal Frady, *Wallace*, 2nd ed. (New York: New American Library, 1976), 127. Through a succession of interviews with Wallace confidantes, Dan Carter has since substantiated that Wallace did, indeed, make the remark. See *The Politics of Rage*, 96.

38. “You can sure tell they’ve listened to me, can’t you?” said Wallace about southern Republicans in an August 1981 interview. Interview cited in Greenhaw, *Elephants in the Cottonfields*, 97 (all Wallace quotes). Kevin P. Phillips, *The Emerging Republican Majority* (New York: Anchor Books, 1970), 462–63.

39. Reg Murphy and Hal Gulliver, *The Southern Strategy* (New York: Scribner, 1971), 1.

40. *Alabama: The News Magazine of the South and South: The News Magazine of Dixie, 1936–1973*.

41. Emory O. Jackson to Thurgood Marshall, April 13, 1950, and Arthur D. Shores to Thurgood Marshall, April 12, 1951, both in part 5, reels 19 and 20, Papers of the NAACP, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.; *Birmingham Post-Herald*, February 11, 1952 (national chair’s quote); *Birmingham News*, October 10, 1956 (Vardaman). See also Sledge, “The Alabama Republican Party,” 148, 164.

42. The Wallace quote can be found in many places; see, e.g., Greenhaw, *Elephants in the Cottonfields*, 78.

43. Don Collins’s 1966 conversion was especially poignant. See *ibid.*, 89–97, where Collins is quoted at length.

44. Recent GOP claims of inclusiveness and receptivity to minorities would be amusing, based on the party’s pedigree of exclusion in the South, were the results of this exclusion not so tragic. For such claims see Dave Boyer and Andrew Cain, “Democrats Are Edgy as Bush Woos Blacks: Seek to Blunt His Message to NAACP,” *Washington Times*, July 12, 2000; and Tapper, “Democratic Bigots.”

45. See note 63 below and its subject matter in the text.

46. Week after week, *Alabama’s* and *South’s* corporate contributors were the state’s leading banks, corporations, insurance companies, and utilities, among them Alabama Power Company, Vulcan Life, Blount Brothers Construction, City Federal Savings and Loan, U.S. Pipe and Foundry, First National Banks across the state, Founders Life Insurance, Protective Life, Harbert Construction, Molton, Allen and White Real Estate, Hayes International, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama (medical insurance), Southern United Life, American Materials and Supply, Federated Investments, Great Southern Investment, The Life Insurance Company of America, and Alexander City Manufacturing. See, e.g., *South*, January 1966 and February 1966; the lead editorial in the latter issue bordered on prescribing a eugenics program to deal with America’s race problem and the “welfare state.”

47. E. E. Williams to editor, *South*, September 28, 1964, 4 (first quote); Walter Masterson to editor, *South*, October 12, 1964, 4 (second quote); Fred Peters to editor, *South*, September 28, 1964, 4 (third quote). Many others extremely distraught over racial liberalism turned to the Republican Party. See, e.g., Frank Morrissey to editor, *South*, August 3–17, 1964, 4; and John Troutman to editor, *South*, September 28, 1964, 4. On Peters’s religious background, see Fred Peters to editor, *South*, May 25, 1964, 4, and September 14, 1964, 4.

48. Proverb quoted in Tim Baer oral interview by Melody P. Izard, December 27, 2001, 2–3, Birmingham, Alabama, interview in possession of the author. Baer is currently the state director of the Alabama GOP. Still, even Don Collins

could become confused by the trajectory of the parties and come to state occasionally, albeit inaccurately, that the South—as represented by southern white voters—was changing. “I do believe that Alabama and the South are changing,” Collins predicted, “and that we will see a new day for Republicanism and that day is now.” Greenhaw, *Elephants in the Cottonfields*, 92 (first Collins quote), 95 (second Collins quote), 94 (third Collins quote).

49. Phillips, *The Emerging Republican Majority*, 461–74. George Brown Tindall dismissed Phillips’s book as one of a recent spate of “wonders . . . major creations [that] have rolled off the psephological assembly lines . . . a nine-days’ wonder . . . emerged from a shallow perspective . . . that perfectly illustrated the hazards of prophecy.” *Disruption of the Solid South*, 3 and 5. Phillips’s quote about the GOP not needing “Negro votes,” 468, and about GOP support for black voting rights, 464. Phillips on his formula and Carter’s analysis in *From George Wallace to Newt Gingrich*, 43. Reg Murphy and Hal Gulliver also prematurely wrote off the power of the plan in *The Southern Strategy*, 269–73, and even erringly prophesied that “a future Southern Strategy would demand their [black voters’] inclusion,” 225.

50. Kirkpatrick Sale, *Power Shift: The Rise of the Southern Rim and Its Challenge to the Eastern Establishment* (New York: Random House, 1975); Richard M. Scammon and Ben J. Wattenberg, *The Real Majority* (1970; New York: Primus, 1992); Esdall and Esdall, *Chain Reaction*, echoes this interpretation.

51. Lee Atwater gave a deathbed confession expressing remorse for using the race issue so blatantly to sink Dukakis’s candidacy. Atwater confessed that his, GOP ad man Roger Ailes’s (the later head of Fox News’ “fair and balanced”), and Jim Baker III’s use of the Willie Horton ad was an effort to “strip the bark off the little bastard.” According to Atwater, they wanted to make “Willie Horton . . . his [Dukakis’s] running mate.” Quoted in John Brady, *Bad Boy: The Life and Politics of Lee Atwater* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1997), 182 and 316.

52. Transcript of Richard Nixon interview by Herbert Parmet, November 16, 1988 (first quote), in possession of Dan T. Carter, quoted in Carter, *From George Wallace to Newt Gingrich*, 27; Harry Dent to Richard Nixon, October 13, 1969 (second quote), box 2, Harry Dent Files, Richard Nixon Presidential Materials, National Archives [hereafter cited as NA], College Park, Maryland; H. R. Haldeman Notes, January 8, 1970 (third quote), box 41, H. R. Haldeman Papers, Nixon Presidential Materials, NA. Dent, Haldeman, and other quotes in D. T. Carter, *From George Wallace to Newt Gingrich*, 28, 44.

53. On the racial aspects of Reagan’s support, see D. T. Carter, *From George Wallace to Newt Gingrich*, 55–59, 64 (Reagan quote); and Greenhaw, *Elephants in the Cotton Fields*, 11–14, 180–87, 252; Begala, “Banana Republicans” (states’ rights quote); *Miami Herald*, October 1980, quoted in Greenhaw, *Elephants in the Cotton Fields*, 187 (voter’s quote); see also 182–83, 233. See also chap. 9 of Esdall and Esdall, *Chain Reaction*, 172–97.

54. Election results in William J. Cooper Jr. and Thomas E. Terrill, *The American South: A History* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1991), 2:52.

55. GOP appeals to angry white males in South have been so successful largely because these voters saw the gains of blacks, women, and other minorities in “zero-sum terms,” i.e., that a gain for blacks, women, and other minori-

ties could only come at their own expense. They didn’t see the 1960s as “opening up” society in a positive way, as the government helping to facilitate opportunity and access for minorities. They saw the 1960s as fostering a “liberal culture” of entitlement and dependency for minorities which cost them, because they understood improvements for minorities occurring only at their expense—not a “rising tide lifts all boats” but as “a rising tide for them means we’re sinking,” e.g., affirmative action, the eradication of discrimination in workplace hiring and promotion. General zero-sum theory as economic thought about behavior is laid out in Lester C. Thurow, *The Zero-Sum Society: Distribution and the Possibilities for Economic Change* (New York: Basic Books, 1980). Esdall and Esdall recognized the zero-sum character of the issue in *Chain Reaction*, 9.

56. Bill Leavell, “Crying Towel,” *South*, March 1966, 20 (quote). References to the Democratic Party’s program as being “socialistic or even Communistic” became common during the 1960s. Republican congressman William L. Dickinson criticized one Great Society program as “all-out welfare statism. . . . There can be nothing more socialistic or even Communistic. . . . This country, built upon individual enterprise, cannot survive by glorifying the incompetents, the ignorant and the shiftless.” *South*, March 1966, 3. For similar denouncements see *South*, November 1966, 3; and Frank Morrissey to editor, *South*, May 1966, 4.

57. On this important point, see Esdall and Esdall, *Chain Reaction*, 19, 27, 28.

58. Cooper and Terrill, *The American South*, 2:750 (first quote); Dewey W. Grantham, *The Life and Death of the Solid South: A Political History* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1988), 178–79; Murphy and Gulliver, *The Southern Strategy*, 3.

59. Michael Hill, arch-conservative president of the neo-Confederate “League of the South,” celebrated the red-blue divergence in the “fly-over states” of the 2000 presidential election and contrasted Bush and Gore voters on a host of issues—prominent among them “programs for minority [read: black] ‘victim’ groups.” Hill pegged the “Bush constituency” as being “mainly made up of white European stock that favors gun ownership, Christian morality, less government, fewer programs for minority ‘victim’ groups, and a strict interpretation of the Constitution” versus a Gore constituency that favors “gun control, big government, more programs, high taxes, the normalization of deviant behavior, a secular notion of human rights, and a very loose construction of [the] . . . Constitution.” Dr. J. Michael Hill, “Election 2000: Time for a Divorce between Madonna and Merle,” www.dixienet.org, January 24, 2001.

60. Race is fundamentally tied to the major tenets of the modern Republican agenda—even when it seems to be completely unrelated—and is therefore so salient and powerful, especially in the South. After all, race has long resonated with the majority of white southerners. These basic connections were formed in the fiery cauldron of southern politics from the late 1940s through the 1960s. The modern GOP agenda is made up of seven major planks: (1) opposition to taxes, (2) pro-religion (especially evangelical religion and “traditional family values”), (3) pro-guns, (4) anti-Communism, (5) super-patriotism, (6) opposition to the federal government, and (7) opposition to women’s rights and gay rights.

(1) Taxes: much of the opposition to increased taxes rests upon (a) an unhappiness with being taxed by the federal government to redistribute income to “unworthy, inferior human beings,” i.e., “no-good, lazy,” stereotypical blacks, “welfare queens,” chronically dependent on the state and liberal, big-government programs of the Democratic New Deal, Fair Deal, New Frontier, and Great Society, etc.; and (b) taxation for these government programs, which disproportionately benefit undeserving and lazy blacks, is tied to and painfully reminiscent of an overreaching federal government that invaded the South twice, the second time to compel compliance with civil rights laws and desegregation in an intransigent South clinging to “massive resistance” and its notions of states’ rights. (For good examples of this type of anti-tax sentiment, see *South*, February 1965, 26, March 1965, 9, and January 1965, 30.)

(2) Pro-religion, “traditional family values,” the “moral character” issue, and the rise of the Christian Right: (a) Martin Luther King Jr., although a member of the cloth, was seen by many civil right opponents as the personification of evil, a perversion of religion, as “Martin Lucifer King”—a notion tied, of course, to the conviction that God had ordained segregation and opposed civil rights, and hence the “movement” itself was tied to godlessness and was an abomination; (b) the civil rights movement was a Communist plot in which Jews were using blacks as their stooges to overthrow the United States; (c) the Supreme Court’s 1962 school prayer decision was seen as just one more way in which the federal government, as with civil rights, was forcibly imposing alien ideas and a foreign will on a recalcitrant South. As with the civil rights movement and desegregation, only immorality and moral decay would follow; (d) the civil rights movement was rife with immorality between the races, miscegenation, and black promiscuity and profligacy, e.g., on the march from Selma to Montgomery. (For good examples of these beliefs, see Dennis J. Davis to editor, *South*, February 1965, 4, and *South*, August 1965, 4 [Martin “Lucifer” King quote], and Feldman, *Politics, Society, and the Klan* and *From Demagogue to Dixiecrat*.)

(3) Crime: “law and order” was a major issue during the 1960s and was related to attempts to limit and license gun ownership in order to deal with (a) black criminals who were supposed to be congenitally immoral and predisposed to crime (“scientific racism”), as a race, as well as with an (b) overreaching, tyrannical central government that was dominated by a Democratic Party catering to northern liberals and the black vote and imposing its will on race and civil rights on a resistant South as it had during the First Reconstruction. (For good examples, see the Thurman Sensing column in *South*, March 1965, 27, and *South*, May 13, 1963, 3, on the NRA.)

(4) Communism and patriotism: (a) this was a well-established, old theme from the KKK days of conspiracy theories of Communist Jews using black stooges to take over the South and America; (b) there were a few members of the civil rights movement, as with unions, who had flirted with communism or did have actual Communist ties; (c) the federal government, now in the hands of the liberal, northern-dominated national Democratic Party, was “on the Socialistic road” (*South*, January 1965, 3, and February 1966, 4) and “drifting toward Socialism” through its expansion of taxation and government social programs, most of which benefited undeserving and inferior blacks. And, after all, govern-

ment programs sponsored by the Democratic Party equaled socialism, and socialism equaled communism, in essence. By a kind of “transitive law of politics,” the Democratic Party was tantamount to communism and, thus, treason. The 1998 impeachment charges against President Clinton, with frequent mention of treason charges, were not original, but rather reminiscent of this 1960s theme earlier targeted at Supreme Court justices William O’Douglas (Democrat) and Earl Warren (liberal Republican) by the John Birch Society. (Good examples: *South*, March 1965, 3, H. W. Stokes to editor, *South*, March 1965, 4, *South*, editorial, January 1965, 3, Cress Joiner to editor, *South*, February 1965, 4, Chet Schwarzkopf to editor, *South*, October 1965, 4.)

(5) Super-patriotism: (a) this point was closely linked to the point about communism, the federal government, and the Democratic Party, in some way, suspected of being in league with forces that wanted to overthrow America—Socialists and Communists; (b) the civil rights movement was fundamentally un-American and unpatriotic, riddled with Communists who wanted to make trouble for the United States during a time of war, also supported by the Democrats; (c) protest against the Vietnam War (also identified with Democrats such as Robert Kennedy and Hubert Humphrey) and Eugene McCarthy was thought of as a form of disloyalty, unpatriotic, even treasonous behavior—criticizing government policy during wartime. Moreover, in parts of the public mind the civil rights movement, with its protests on behalf of blacks, was indelibly linked with the war protests through street protests, student demonstrations in Mississippi “Freedom Summer,” and anti-Vietnam protests; (d) liberalism itself, with its emphasis on solving problems instead of celebrating the country’s virtues, was often thought of as essentially unpatriotic and disloyal.

(6) Federal government: (a) thought of as out of control, socialistic, an unconstitutional tool of white liberals and black civil rights activists, a gravy train for unworthy blacks, tyrannical in stomping on states’ rights to compel the white South to do things on race it did not want to do, taking taxes to support programs for undeserving blacks; and (b) is tied to gun control because of the need to have arms in the hands of ordinary citizens to oppose a Leviathan-like federal government. (Frank Morrissey to editor, *South*, January 1965, 4, Hal Steadman to editor, *South*, January 1965, 4, welfare specifically mentioned in *South*, February 1965, 30.)

(7) Women’s rights and gay rights: (a) are immoral because God put males in charge of the household, and both usurp the institution of marriage on which society was based; (b) are tied to civil rights because the women’s liberation movement got a huge boost in Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; (c) like the civil rights movement, they are immoral because they are tied to abortion rights and sexual deviance. Democrats favor expanded women’s rights and advocate civil liberties for homosexuals, and abortion had long been tied in the popular mind with unwed black teens.

These seven central issues of modern southern Republicanism—not only predicated on race but also tied to the original “Reconstruction Syndrome” and the Second Reconstruction to result in a “politics of emotion” of modern southern Republicanism—have helped mightily in leading to modern GOP control over the South.

61. William L. Dickinson to editor, *South*, March 1967, 4 (quote), and November 1969, 4.

62. John H. Buchanan Jr. to editor, *South*, January 1966, 21.

63. *South*, August 1969, 22 (first quote), March 1965, 3 (second quote), August 31, 1964, 3 (third quote), 15 (fourth quote).

64. Doris J. Davis to editor, *South*, February 1965, 4 (first and second quotes); Rev. Fred A. Peters to editor, *South*, September 1966, 4 (third quote); Frank Morrissey to editor, *South*, September 14, 1964, 4 (fourth quote); Peters to editor, *South*, September 1969, 4 (fifth quote).

65. Walter Masterson to editor, *South*, October 12, 1964, 4 (first quote); G. V. Timmons to editor, *South*, September 1969, 4 (second and fourth quotes); *South*, January 1969, 3 (third quote).

66. *South*, April 1966, 3 (first quote), 34 (second quote).

67. *South*, May 1967, 3 (first quote); Norman L. Hall to editor, *South*, October 1967, 4 (second quote).

68. Chet Schwarzkopf to editor, *South*, October 1965, 4. Schwarzkopf's turn to Republicanism was succinctly expressed by his reasoning that "for over a generation America has been weakened by an era of dough-headed lunacy, nurtured by irresponsible liberals, shrilling do-gooders, Communist-line troublemakers, beatniks, college revolutionaries, limp-rag demonstrators and other[s] . . . who have appeared sadly in need of a good old-fashioned flogging. . . . Dewey-eyed liberalism appears to have failed. . . . The hour is upon us to advance into an era of common sense."

69. C. C. McLean, M.D., to editor, *South*, March 1966, 4.

70. John H. Buchanan Jr. to editor, *South*, August 1966, 4.

71. Armistead Selden to editor, *South*, August 1966, 4. Selden also damned the federal government's "so-called" education "guidelines" and called for less "federal control over local schools." Selden to editor, *South*, June 1967, 4.

72. Gordon Ellis to editor, *South*, February 1966, 4 (first quote). The "Mahatma" comparison was also a favorite of Hubert Baughn's; see "Major Squirm," *South*, October 1966, 22. C. M. Cason Sr. to editor, *South*, August 1965, 4 (second quote). In 2003, e.g., President George W. Bush paid ritualistic homage to King, calling him a "great American" and praising the "the power of his words, [and] the clarity of his vision," while declaring that "there's more to do." "Bush: More to Do to Attain King's Dream," *Associated Press*, January 20, 2003. Yet within the same fortnight, Bush masterfully combined the yin and the yang of "compassionate conservatism" by overseeing a behind-the-scenes removal of Trent Lott as Senate Majority Leader, while publicly proclaiming neutrality, in order to stop the bleeding in Republican ranks over Lott's racially insensitive remarks and to appease a right wing long disenchanted with Lott's feeble leadership on conservative issues. During the same week as his King remarks, Bush publicly denied that Lott's comments had hurt the GOP, refused to apologize for them (either himself or as the head of the Republican Party), renominated Charles Pickering, a controversial Lott protégé who had failed to win confirmation to the Fifth Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals from a Democratic-controlled Senate in 2002 because of disturbing racial parts of his judicial record, and, in a historic move, directly interposed his administration against affirmative-action "quotas" in a

Michigan case before the U.S. Supreme Court. See Jim VandeHei, "Lott Says Bush Aides Undermine Bid to Stay," *Washington Post*, December 19, 2002; Gail Russell Chaddock, "GOP Right Long Frustrated with Lott," *Christian Science Monitor*, December 19, 2002; "Bush: Iraq Attack Would 'Cripple' Economy" (for denial of any damage to GOP from Lott remarks), *Associated Press*, January 1, 2003; Mike Allen, "Bush Plans No Apology over Lott Remarks," *Washington Post*, January 12, 2003; "The Revenge of Trent Lott" (on Pickering), *New York Times*, January 9, 2003; Cynthia Tucker, "Bush Wants to Elevate Judge with Suspect Past" and "Bush's Attack on 'Quotas' Conveniently Ignores the Facts," both in *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, January 11 and 23, 2003, respectively; Neil A. Lewis, "President Faults Race Preferences as Admission Tool," *New York Times*, January 16, 2003; and Nicholas D. Kristof, "A Boy and His Benefits," *New York Times*, January 24, 2003. On the conservative appropriation of King as a symbol of respectability and even alleged racial conservatism, see Paul M. Gaston, "Missing Martin," *Facing South: A Progressive Southern News Report*, August 28, 2003 (Atlanta: Institute for Southern Studies and *Southern Exposure* magazine), www.southernstudies.org.

73. Fred Morrissey to editor, *South*, December 1966, 4 (first quote); Fred Peters to editor, *South*, May 1967, 4 (second quote).

74. *South*, December 1966, 13 (first quote), March 1968, 22 (second quote), March 1965, 3 (third quote).

75. John H. Buchanan Jr. to editor, *South*, September 1966, 4.

76. *South*, October 1966, 22.

77. *Alabama Independent*, July 10, 1969, 7.

78. During the 1960s the South underwent almost a kind of collective obsessive-compulsive disorder in its polity and society—principally over the race issue. The experience allowed all seven of the issues discussed in note 60 to become very real to white southerners, through the power of perception, and to eventually provide for the ascendance of the southern GOP in the South in the place of the once all-powerful conservative Democratic Party. See note 85. An obsessive-compulsive disorder is precisely that: obsessive. It begins with a single thought that has some splinter of rationality, but through a never-ending process of obsessive worry, anxiety, and preoccupation it blows up into irrational thoughts and conclusions. The thoughts that make it up are invasive—they pop up all the time and in all areas of one's life. And, perhaps most importantly, they hang their hat on one nail, which is real, although usually very isolated and insignificant in reality. Yet, through continuous obsession over that issue and tying everything to it, the thought is extrapolated to the nth degree. The result is an irrational conclusion that bears very little relation to the original premise or rational thought. Such conclusions were extremely detrimental to the health of the Democratic Party, especially in the South. All white southerners needed was one example—no matter how isolated or unrepresentative—of a bad or outdated tax, or of tax revenue being "wasted," to conclude, after enough obsessing, that federal taxes were a form of tyranny, that Democrats favored such tyrannical rule by an overreaching central power, and that such taxation was a usurpation of the U.S. Constitution. Objections to mandatory school prayer led, through enough obsessing, to the conclusion that Democrats and liberals were

godless—the kiss of death in the religious South. Defense of due process and other constitutional protections against search and seizure, after enough fixating, became the conclusion that Democrats “coddled” crime and favored criminals over law enforcement. Legislation mandating background checks and waiting periods for the purchase of firearms, through enough worrying, became translated into the conclusion that Democrats favored the confiscation of all firearms in America in order to facilitate a “federal gestapo” that could break down doors at will. Any previous flirtation with the Communist Party by a current liberal became, through the obsession process, the same as Democrats being unpatriotic, suspect, treasonous, and disloyal. Protest of Vietnam or any unjust or controversial war became the same as treason and infidelity on the part of all liberals. Advocacy of rights for women and tolerance of homosexuals and other minorities, through enough anxiety, resulted in a conclusion that Democrats actually favored the eradication of the institution of the family and the decline of Western civilization itself. For examples of the label “Reconstruction II” being pinned on the modern civil rights movement, see *South*, May 1965, 5; Frank Morrissey to editor, *South*, September 1965, 29; *South*, May 1965, 5–6. For the “ungodly encroachment” of the federal government, a favorite of the Dixiecrats, see Feldman, *From Demagogue to Dixiecrat*, 136. And for “all-powerful central government” see *South* editorial, January 1965, 3.

79. Racial identification with the parties is a point also made in Esdall and Esdall, *Chain Reaction*, 259–60 and 270–71.

80. The Mobile Democrat was originally a Pennsylvania native. JLK to author (e-mail), January 11, 2002 (Mobile quote); author to ELB (e-mail), January 11, 2002 (North Alabama quote), confirmed in conversation, January 11, 2002; Carol Ann Vaughn to author (e-mails), January 8 and 17, 2002; anonymous to author (e-mail), January 13, 2002 (third quote).

81. Marty Connors, “The Sea Change of Alabama Primary Politics,” *AlaGOP.org*, November 2, 2001 (first quote); Marty Connors, interview by Melody P. Izard, Birmingham, Alabama, December 18, 2001, 4 (second quote).

82. On black/white media depictions and sound bites with no sensitivity to complexity, see Sheldon Hackney, *The Politics of Presidential Appointment: A Memoir of the Culture War* (Montgomery: NewSouth Books, 2002). In fact, among some right-wing radio types, the alleged liberal inability to reduce complex issues down to simple black-and-white, often misleading and moralistic terms is actually lampooned as a “weakness” that should ensure conservative dominance in talk radio for some time to come. See Leonard J. Pitts Jr., “Just What We Need: More On-Air Yahoos,” *Miami Herald*, February 24, 2003, 1B.

83. On the “New Racism,” see note 9 of the Prologue to this volume.

84. “Why don’t you leave the niggers behind and come join us?” was the invitation proffered to two white Democratic political scientists in the mid-1980s by a friendly South Carolina Republican. Earl Black and Merle Black, *Politics and Society in the South* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1987), 313. Modern Republican appeals in the South have more often been couched in terms that have been described as a “more genteel type of racism” (*ibid.*, 288). Donald S. Strong outlined this kind of subtle Republican racism in “Further Reflections on Southern Politics,” *Journal of Politics* 33 (May 1971): 254. Reg Mur-

phy and Hal Gulliver described the Republican approach as “a sort of reasonable button-down-collar country club” racism and a “button-down-collar downtown segregationist” view in *The Southern Strategy*, 48 and 25.

85. Arch-conservative Michael Hill praised the Bush “majority of common folks who still revere ‘God, Guts, and Guns.’” He also described this common majority of “white European stock” as favoring “Christian morality” and “fewer programs for minority ‘victim’ rights” while contrasting them with an AI “Gore constituency [of] . . . elites and their various minority clients” that favored “more programs, high taxes, [and] the normalization of deviant behavior” [read: homosexuality]. Hill, “Election 2000.” One depressed union leader distilled general labor frustrations by describing his fruitless efforts to convince rank-and-file Alabama workers to vote Democratic as running into a concrete wall of Republican allegiance, due to what he termed “The Three G’s: God, Guns, and Gays.” Comment at “Politics 2001 Workshop,” Alabama AFL-CIO State Convention, Mobile, Alabama, October 30, 2001. On people being opposed to public school prayer because “they hate God so much,” from conversations with JW, Tupelo, Mississippi, September 13, 2003.

86. On Grenier, see Ralph McGill to Lyndon Johnson, September 30, 1964 (quote), and Johnson to McGill, October 5, 1964, both in White House Correspondence Files, box 84, folder PL 2, Lyndon Johnson Presidential Library and Museum, Austin, Texas.

87. Brady, *Bad Boy*, 70 (Atwater quote), 147 (second quote, Atwater), 147–48 (third quote, Brady), and 148 (fourth quote, Atwater). See also, e.g., xvi, 153, and 158 for places to tap into voters’ minds, xvii and 38–39 for ties to Mary Matalin and Karl Rove, and 69 for affection for the Confederacy.

88. Brady, *Bad Boy*, 148 (first, second, and fourth quotes), xvi (on Dent), 153 (second part of third quote, Atwater) 298 (fifth quote, Atwater) and xi (sixth quote, Atwater). Esdall and Esdall, *Chain Reaction*, 145 (first part of third quote, Atwater); see also 144 and 220–23.

89. See note 78. With all of these examples, perception outweighs reality—so much so that it may be said, in the end, that perception *is* reality—or might as well be. Because the vast majority of native white southerners view the liberal questioning of Vietnam as “unpatriotic,” then liberals *are* unpatriotic in the minds of these southerners—and no amount of logic, reasoning, or rational disputation is likely to change that perception. In this kind of unassailable, impregnable strength, then, perception actually becomes reality—because in real-life politics that is how these liberals are approached, as unpatriotic. It is similar with immorality. Many native white southerners view liberals as immoral and godless because of the school prayer controversy or tolerance of the gay lifestyle and advocacy of civil rights and medical insurance for homosexuals, so much so that this perception—that citizens who oppose compulsory prayer in schools, or the posting of the Ten Commandments in public places, or prayer before a high-school football game, must therefore hate God and not be religious—is so strong that it determines how the vast majority of native white southerners view and actually treat liberals. It is their reality, and no amount of rational disputation, or explanation about the constitutional separation of church and state, or trying to point out the difference between “toleration” of gays as human beings

with basic human and civil rights is categorically different from wanting all households to be gay, or an opposition to the family as a basic and important institution in society, makes the least bit of difference, because the efficacy of emotion is so overwhelming. This is so because of the emotional southern personality. The South and the “politics of emotion” are a perfect fit. Once the GOP adopted the emotional strategy, it quickly became apparent that the match between the South and the GOP was made in heaven. The southern penchant for emotionalism exacerbates southern patriotism, conservatism, religiosity, etc. This is really not new. Southern politics have longed turned on the emotional issue of race, and once upon a time, when the conservative Democratic Party specialized in defending white supremacy, the quintessential emotional issue, the Democratic Party owned the South. When the Republican Party was able to take the race issue away from the Democratic Party, because of the national Democratic Party—and add other emotional issues to their arsenal—they also took the South. As long as the Republican Party maintains its grip on race and “God and country” issues, it will most likely own the South. With the South as a bedrock, national Republican strategists built a national Republican majority. Without race, there would be no Republican Party in the South. There never was before. And without the “Solid Republican South,” there would be no Republican majority in America. George W. Bush, Florida or no, would probably not be in the White House. For many liberal Democrats, the ultimate frustration is that noble virtues such as morality, patriotism, religion, and so forth have been appropriated and employed in an emotional way to lend unquestioning support (seen as God-ordained, moral, and patriotic) for a raft of conservative Republican economic and social policies that have little to do with these original virtues. Esdall and Esdall, *Chain Reaction*, 71 and 215, realize that perceptions play a role in politics, but they describe the process as one of inevitable blurring of distinctions rather than the fruit of the purposeful manipulation of emotions and images.

90. On second thought, Peoria might not be such a good example. As was made evident by the ubiquitous red-and-blue electoral college maps shown on every television station during the 2000 Bush-Gore electoral dispute, the Republicans swept the “fly-over country” of the South, West, and Midwest, while Democratic strength was constricted to the industrial Northeast and several large population centers along the Atlantic and Pacific Coasts. Phillips quoted in Joe McGinnis, *The Selling of the President, 1968* (New York: Trident Press, 1969), 125.

91. For example, Ann Coulter received a full page in *Time* magazine to push her best-selling book, *Treason: Liberal Treachery from the Cold War to the War on Terrorism* (New York: Crown Forum, 2003), a book dedicated to the rehabilitation of Joseph McCarthy and to the thesis that Democrats are, and always have been, dangerous traitors to the country. See “Ten Questions for Ann Coulter,” *Time*, July 14, 2003, 8. According to Coulter, the “myth of ‘McCarthyism’ is the greatest Orwellian fraud of our times. Liberals are fanatical liars, then as now. . . . [McCarthyism] is sheer liberal hobgoblinism. Liberals weren’t hiding under the bed during the McCarthy era. They were systematically undermining the nation’s ability to defend itself. . . . Liberals denounced McCarthy because

they were afraid of getting caught, so they fought like animals to hide their own collaboration with a regime as evil as the Nazis.” Ann Coulter, “I Dare Call it Treason,” June 26, 2003; see also “We Don’t Care, Liberals,” June 5, 2003, both syndicated columns on *Townhall.com*. For a more rational and coherent view that takes stock of Coulter’s many factual errors and distortions from a nonpartisan perspective, see Brendan Nyhan, “Screed: With Treason, Ann Coulter Once Again Defines a New Low in America’s Political Debate,” *Spinsanity.org*, June 30, 2003. For a sample of the drumbeat about alleged liberal bias in the mainstream media, see Patrick J. Buchanan, “Is Liberal Media Bias a Myth?” *Townhall.com*, June 16, 2003. Right-wing radio talk-show host Michael Savage was given a weekend cable television show on MSNBC in March 2003. Four months later he was fired for telling an unidentified caller on the air that he was a “sodomite” who “should only get AIDS and die, you pig. How’s that? Why don’t you see if you can sue me, you pig? You got nothing better [to do] than to put me down, you piece of garbage? You have got nothing to do today, go eat a sausage and choke on it.” Savage then asked for a different caller who “didn’t have a nice night in the bathhouse who’s angry at me today.” David Bauder, “MSNBC Fires Savage for Anti-Gay Remarks,” *Associated Press, Miami Herald*, July 7, 2003. On a somewhat milder level, former Florida congressman Joe Scarborough has a show on MSNBC, and Laura Ingraham has moved seamlessly between MSNBC and Fox News.

92. On GOP media and technology proficiency, see Esdall and Esdall, *Chain Reaction*, 10–11. For examples of this kind of dichotomy, see notes 59 and 85. The upshot of the modern GOP use of a “politics of emotion” in the South has been very similar to how the old Bourbon Democrats once used the “Reconstruction Syndrome.” The result, to a large extent, has been that, because of these emotional issues, unsuspecting common white folk have voted with the GOP with little or no clue as to—or inclination to learn—the underlying Republican economic agenda that has unstintingly favored the country’s most privileged individuals and corporations. See also note 82.

93. On the orchestrated effort to include minorities at the GOP convention, see *Los Angeles Times*, July 30, 2000. This was not the first time the GOP used black entertainers at its national convention to portray an image of inclusiveness. In 1984, Lee Atwater approved the idea of having Ray Charles and his black female backup singers perform at that summer’s convention to send “the proper message: No racists here, thank you.” Brady, *Bad Boy*, 183. Actually, “compassionate conservatism” was introduced, explained, and first discussed as a strategic concept by one of the fathers of the “Southern Strategy,” Harry S. Dent of South Carolina. See Harry S. Dent, *The Prodigal South Returns to Power* (New York: Wiley, 1978), 299.

94. For Rice’s speech, see *New York Times*, August 2, 2000. On George W. Bush’s speech to the NAACP—the first by a Republican since his father’s in 1988—see Boyer and Cain, “Democrats Are Edgy.” Rice’s speech at the Republican National Convention seems to have been part of a coordinated strategy to woo black voters to the GOP by “reminding . . . [them] that there have been plenty of friendly Republicans since [Abraham] Lincoln,” such as Dwight Eisenhower and Everett Dirksen of Illinois, “as well as Democrats like” Lester Mad-

dox and George Wallace. In the three weeks leading up to the convention, George W. Bush and Republican National Committee (RNC) chairman Jim Nicholson made the pitch to the NAACP's national convention, with Nicholson actually arguing that "it's the Democrats—not Republicans—who should be reluctant to come before this . . . organization." Black Oklahoma representative J. C. Watts and former RNC chair Haley Barbour made the same argument on CNN's *Crossfire*, and another black Republican, Cherylyn Harley, deputy RNC press secretary and author of Nicholson's NAACP speech, repeatedly argued the same line. "It's absurd for a Republican to claim that the modern Republican Party of the year 2000 has done more for blacks than Democrats. That's outrageous," historian Douglas Brinkley correctly responded. "That's playing historical games." Congressman Watts's father, a lifelong black southerner, furnished his own plain-folk response to his son: "A black man voting for a Republican is like a chicken voting for Colonel Sanders." Jake Tapper, "Democratic Bigots" (above quotes). See also John H. McWhorter, "Uncivil Rights Activists," *Wall Street Journal*, December 11, 2001.

95. *Birmingham News*, July 12, 1998, 1A. Wallace had actually sent a personal envoy, segregationist Republican congressman Jim Martin of Alabama, to approach Barry Goldwater about Wallace running as the vice-presidential candidate on the 1964 Republican ticket. "It must be apparent to a one-eyed niggah who can't see good outa his other eye," Wallace had said, "that me and Goldwater would be a winning ticket. We'd have the South locked up, then him and me could concentrate on the industrial states of the North and win." Wallace quoted in D. T. Carter, *The Politics of Rage*, 220.

96. Actually, voter registration in Alabama is not conducted through political parties, so the Democratic Party per se did not turn Rice's father away from the polls. But, by all chances, the actual voting registrars who did were, in 1952, conservative Democrats.

97. I would like to thank Professor Patrick J. Cotter of the Department of Political Science, University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, and Southern Opinion Research for making these figures available to me.

98. In a September 2003 state referendum, Alabama's Republican governor Bob Riley went off the reservation to propose a record \$1.2 billion tax hike that would have more fairly distributed the tax burden in a state routinely recognized as having the most malformed tax system in America. Moreover, Riley campaigned vigorously for the plan as a religious and moral duty to "the least of those among us." The package would have targeted Alabama's woefully undertaxed corporations, utilities, and large landholding farm and timber interests while lessening the burden on lower- and working-class families; it resulted in a campaign against the plan that had a definite racial subtext. Alabama's Republican Party—from its state chairman to its state and county executive committees—repudiated Riley and his plan, even importing former House power Dick Armey of Texas to stump against it. Conservative radio talk-show host Russ Fine even recommended that Riley be expelled from the Republican Party. In the end, Alabama's electorate crushed the plan in a 68 percent–32 percent vote that had clear racial meaning. Riley's plan prevailed in only thirteen of Alabama's sixty-seven counties, all of them in the heavily African American

Black Belt. Whites, especially the blue-collar and middle-class variety, voted heavily against the plan, with the rural, white North Alabama counties that had supplied Riley with the strongest support in his 2002 Republican gubernatorial race going most heavily against the tax plan. *Birmingham News*, September 10, 2003.

99. Trent Lott served an apprenticeship under "fanatical segregationist Democrat" William Colmer, a Mississippi congressman, joined the Sons of Confederate Veterans, and actively worked to keep James Meredith from racially integrating the University of Mississippi. In a 1984 interview with neo-Confederate *Southern Partisan* magazine, Lott bragged that "the spirit of Jeff Davis lives in the 1984 Republican platform" and condemned the fact that Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday had been set aside as a national holiday. Meanwhile, Bill Clinton was pegged by modern racial conservatives as a president for blacks, a traitor—"Oreo turned inside out." Black novelist Toni Morrison evaluated Clinton's racial sensitivity as a positive. He was, she declared, "America's first black liberal President." Joe Conason, "Why Lott and Barr Hate Clinton," *Salon.com*, December 22, 1998 (above quotes). Elsewhere, Morrison deemed Clinton "our first black President. Blacker than any actual black person who could ever be elected in our children's lifetime." Ellis Cose, "Getting Ready for the Fire This Time," *Newsweek*, January 22, 2001, 29 (Morrison quote). See also Alicia Montgomery, "Ashcroft Whistles Dixie," *Salon.com*, January 3, 2001. For references on the Trent Lott controversy, see note 72 above.

100. In 1976, Jimmy Carter won in Alabama over Republican Gerald Ford by 56 percent to 43 percent. John L. Moore, ed., *Congressional Quarterly's Guide to U.S. Elections*, 3rd ed. (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Inc., 1994), 464.

101. Over 75 percent of Alabamians supported state supreme court chief justice Roy Moore's recent display of a 5,300-pound granite statue in the Rotunda of the state judicial building. Bill Rankin, "Alabama's Pryor Breaks Faith with Stand on Commandments," *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, August 31, 2003. See also Kyle Whitmire, "Rock of Rages Revisited," *Birmingham Weekly*, August 21–28, 2003, 4; and "Alabama Baptists Endorse Commandments But Not Roy Moore," www.newsmax.com, November 21, 2003. For sentiment expecting elected officials to follow popular opinions on the matter, regardless of superior federal court orders or constitutional mandates, see Lionel Ledbetter, Adamsville, to editor, *Birmingham News*, December 9, 2003, 8A, and also Mary Orndorff, "Aderholt Renews Push for Commandments Bill," *Birmingham News*, September 5, 2003, 1C, 2C.

102. Quotations from a Democratic aide to North Carolina senator John Edwards and Virginia governor Mark Warner in Mara Liason, "Democrats Seek to Fire Up 'NASCAR Dad' Vote," on "Morning Edition," *NPR.org*, September 19, 2003 (first quote); Scott Shepard, "GOP Owns the Votes of 'NASCAR Dads,'" *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, August 31, 2003 (Dennis Hurley).

103. For an example of how the bar of mainstream conservatism has moved far to the right over the past few decades, see Nixon conservatism described as "liberal" by today's standards in Matthew Miller, "Something to Talk About," *New York Times*, September 4, 2003.