

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY

THESE ARE THE STAKES

Campaign Rhetoric and Framing in Presidential Elections
Posed as Referendums on War and Peace

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Michael Stubel

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Capstone Advisor: Leonard Steinhorn, School of Communication
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My grandfathers, James Caven and Harry Stubel, served this nation during the Second World War. They made it home. This is for all of those, over the course of American history, who did not have the same fortune.

“That fighting instinct in man is the instinct of the tiger; and we find through the ages that that instinct, whether in democracy or empire, or among individuals, has had full play.”

British Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin
Disarmament Speech before the House of Commons
July 23, 1923

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Abstract

Countless candidates for the presidency have articulated one set of intentions on the campaign trail, only to execute an entirely different array of policies once they reach the Oval Office. However, the consequences of this reality are magnified when matters of war and peace are close at hand.

In fusing presidential history, campaign framing strategy, and political decision-making in times of turbulent world affairs, the following scholarship aims to elicit patterns from presidential elections and the resulting influence on war and peace. The paper examines the campaign advertisements, rhetoric, and slogans of a core group of presidential nominees (all eventual victors) who sought to portray their opponents as unstable, threatening, dangerous, or simply untrustworthy in regards to national security. In contrast, each victor painted himself as the safe and mainstream choice. They wanted to be viewed as the known quantity in an uncertain world. Such stark distinctions helped to construct powerful frames from which the average voter viewed the election.

The project centers on four quadrennial elections (1916, 1964, 1968, and 2008) that either immediately preceded, or occurred during, America's active engagement in armed conflict(s). Although two of the campaigns (1968 and 2008) are firmly implanted in our collective political psyche, the two others (1916 and 1964) are often overshadowed.

Introduction

Five miles south of American University, across the Potomac River from the Lincoln Memorial, sits more than six hundred serene acres of land tucked between a maze of roadways. The grass slopes steadily upward to a columned mansion on the hillside. Below, stretched out as far as the eye can see, are more than 300,000 marble headstones in perfectly aligned rows. A place well-suited for silent reflection, Arlington National Cemetery is home to some of America's most decorated war dead. A walk among the gravestones serves as a stark reminder that in death, as in life, those that rest here, no matter their background, were equals in their bravery and sacrifice.

The cemetery offers a searing glimpse of the gravity behind the decision to wage war in a democracy, which remains an enduring strain on the American presidency. Beginning with George Washington, executives have held in their hands the lives of millions of service members. Yet in the United States, unlike in many other countries, the power vested in the commander in chief is transferred by way of the ballot box. At a number of pivotal moments in our history, in fact, a president has won a second term in the midst of a war in which the nation's engagement commenced on his watch. The successful reelections of James Madison (1812) during the War of 1812, Abraham Lincoln (1864) during the Civil War, and Franklin Roosevelt (1944) during World War II stand out. Whether right or wrong, the country endorsed the war policies of these presidents, signaling to the incumbent leader that he could see the conflict through to its end.

Madison, Lincoln, and Roosevelt are left largely untarnished in our historical memory because of what followed the wars each oversaw. In Madison's America, there was a sense of euphoria and nationalistic pride in the aftermath of the decisive battle at New Orleans in 1815.

The Union's victory in the Civil War marked the end of slavery and the rise of Republican politics. The White House of Roosevelt and Harry Truman carried the nation to a clear triumph over the Axis powers, ushering the United States to a period of dominance in the Western world. Each case included a period of post-war consensus and collective purpose. Such clarity was absent from the wartime realities that emerged after the 1916, 1964, 1968, and 2008 presidential elections. In Northern Europe, Vietnam, and Afghanistan, America found herself in wars she had not yet electorally sanctioned or wished to escalate. Most confounding was the fact that the presidents taking these actions had campaigned against military buildup and confrontation. Voters had chosen four men, all of whom had distinct contradictions: Woodrow Wilson, Lyndon Johnson, Richard Nixon, and Barack Obama.

The 1916 and 1964 elections featured incumbents (Woodrow Wilson and Lyndon Johnson) who were quietly affiliating their administrations with foreign conflicts. Wilson had steadily increased aid to the British-led Allied forces prior to his nation's official entry into the war. Johnson's addition of military advisers to Vietnam in the fledgling years of his presidency was a sign of America's growing role in Southeast Asia. But these truths stand in astonishing disparity with both candidates' political maneuvering. Wilson won on the assumption that peace, at least for America, would prevail. His supporters trumpeted his "he kept us out of war" rallying cry. The president's handlers dismissed his opponent, Supreme Court Justice Charles Evans Hughes, as unprepared for the world's stage.¹ Johnson, on the other hand, benefited from both general disinterest and a lack of knowledge during the 1964 campaign of his hidden buildup in Vietnam. At the same time, he was presenting himself as the stately candidate, the White House

¹ Robert North Roberts and Scott John Hammond, *Encyclopedia of Presidential Campaigns, Slogans, Issues, and Platforms* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2004), p. 73-74.

derided the Republican candidate, Barry Goldwater, as a right wing ideologue eager to get his hands on the nuclear arsenal.²

The 1968 and 2008 contests were open seat affairs in which the victor inherited deeply divisive and unpopular wars. Richard Nixon, campaigning against conditions in Vietnam, positioned himself as the peace candidate. He talked vaguely of a secret plan to bring the war to an honorable conclusion. He did his best to force Vice President Hubert Humphrey, the Democratic candidate, to embrace the missteps of President Johnson.³ Nixon's later escalation of the war, no doubt, was not what the electorate had interpreted as his "secret plan." The 2008 campaign presents another complicated tale. Candidate Obama's rise to power rested on his well-known anti-war stance. He had long questioned the wisdom of the Iraq War and, later, the viability of the 2007 "surge" of troops. His campaign dialed back the unilateral and blatantly patriotic tone of the previous administration. Obama insisted that his Republican opponent, Senator John McCain, would only offer more of the same, including an underlying itch to confront Iran militarily. Despite keeping his promise to end combat operations in Iraq, Obama implemented a bold escalation plan for Afghanistan, increased drone missile attacks in Pakistan, and extended the nation's campaign against terrorist groups to places like Yemen.⁴

At the forefront will be a discussion of the politics and personal pressures faced by each man related to warfare. It goes without saying that circumstances differed, but all four presidents pursued existing military ties or extended commitments already set in motion by the preceding administration. In essence, the objective is an attempt to uncover how the four candidates used tumultuous world affairs as a way to elevate their White House bids. Campaign messages and

² Roberts and Hammond, p. 99.

³ Roberts and Hammond, p. 102.

⁴ Baker, Peter, "Obama's War Over Terror," *The New York Times*, 4 Jan. 2010, Web, 24 Sept. 2010, <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/01/17/magazine/17Terror-t.html>, p. 8.

communication strategies play an outsized role in this narrative. Finally, the paper would be lacking if it did not touch on an example in which portraying an opponent's worldview as outside of the mainstream failed to capture the electorate. President Jimmy Carter hoped to frame Ronald Reagan as a radical unknown in 1980. Reagan's victory was evidence that multiple factors had conspired to weaken Carter's portrayal.

Questions

1. What lasting parallels are evident in the experiences of Wilson, Johnson, Nixon, and Obama?
2. What lasting parallels are evident in the experiences of their opponents: Hughes, Goldwater, Humphrey, and McCain?
3. How much did overt manipulation of the public's sensitivity toward matters of national security drive each candidate's campaign?

Literature Review

The Incumbent Races

Election of 1916

On November 2, 1916, *The New York Times* printed an advertisement that expressed the supposed differences between the reelection ticket of President Woodrow Wilson and that of his Republican rival, Supreme Court Justice Charles Evans Hughes. The ad, although not eye-catching, provided readers with a stark choice: "If you want honorable Peace and continued Prosperity, VOTE FOR WILSON. If you want war and all its horrors, VOTE THE HUGHES-ROOSEVELT TICKET."⁵ "Roosevelt" was a reference to former President Theodore Roosevelt, the progressive firebrand and foreign policy hardliner. After finishing second in the popular vote

⁵ Display Ad 3 – No Title, *New York Times (1857-1922)*, Nov. 2, 1916, ProQuest Historical Newspapers, *The New York Times (1851-2006)*, p. 3.

as a third-party candidate in 1912, Roosevelt had given up the thought of another insurgent candidacy and had backed Hughes.⁶ Still, something was amiss with the advertisement's statement—former senator and Vice President Charles W. Fairbanks was Hughes' running mate.⁷ That a mainstream newspaper would print an ad suggesting otherwise, only days before the election, was a testament to the Wilson campaign's desire to tie Hughes to the unpredictable Roosevelt.

The paramount question looming over the 1916 election was what the United States would do about the war raging in Europe. American lives and property were being threatened on the high seas. Despite persistent calls for greater action, there was a sense of hesitancy because "the great melting pot had not completed its melting."⁸ Many American families had close ties to one or both of the warring factions, with 1910 census figures showing that one in every seven citizens were foreign-born (the highest mark of the 20th century).⁹ Feelings of attachment and partial allegiance to the old country ran so deep that neither party risked alienating certain ethnic groups with bold stands on the conflict.¹⁰ President Wilson did his best to remain impartial. He did not heavily prepare once the war broke out because he associated preparedness with taking sides. "We never shall have a large standing army," Wilson declared, pledging that he would "not turn America into a military camp."¹¹

However, news from the war zone altered Wilson's views on planning and engagement. German submarines torpedoed and sank the *Lusitania*, a British ocean liner, off the coast of

⁶ Roberts and Hammond, p. 72-73.

⁷ "1916 Presidential General Election Results," Dave Leip's Atlas of U.S. Presidential Elections, <http://uselectionatlas.org/RESULTS/national.php?year=1916>.

⁸ Lovell, S.D., *The Presidential Election of 1916* (Southern Illinois University Press, 1980), p. 5.

⁹ "Nativity of the Population and Place of Birth of the Native Population: 1850 to 1990," *U.S. Census Bureau Home Page*, 9 Mar. 1999, Web, 31 Oct. 2010, <http://www.census.gov/population/www/documentation/twps0029/tab01.html>.

¹⁰ Lovell, p. 5.

¹¹ Lovell, p. 6.

Ireland in May 1915. More than 100 Americans died in the tragedy.¹² Anti-German sentiment intensified immediately. With care, the president bolstered military defenses and aligned the country with the Allied forces, but he was torn between those who thought his measures to expand the standing army were wrong and those who felt he was not doing enough.¹³ According to Paul F. Boller, author of *Presidential Campaigns: From George Washington to George W. Bush*, Wilson did not “intend for foreign affairs to get involved in politics; he wanted to center his campaign for reelection in 1916 on Progressivism and ‘Americanism.’”¹⁴ Wary of the division of patriotic loyalties that was known as hyphenism, Wilson evoked unity and common American ideals ahead of the Democratic national convention.¹⁵

Standing before his party’s delegates in St. Louis in June 1916, the president outlined his goals for the country in its growing role as a world power. His audience was underwhelmed by Wilson’s theme.¹⁶ Former New York Governor Martin H. Glynn, the convention’s temporary chairman and keynoter, did not similarly disappoint. Addressing the delegates, he insisted that the avoidance of war was the campaign’s critical issue. Glynn pointed to Wilson’s adherence to neutrality as “the traditional policy of America.” He cited historical precedents of efforts of presidents to keep the peace, even in cases where the nation’s honor was at stake. “After each citation he would affirm, ‘But we didn’t go to war!’” The crowd went wild, begging for more. Glynn concluded his speech petitioning that the nation fight only “when Reason primes the rifle, when Honor draws the sword, when Justice breathes a blessing on the standards they uphold.”¹⁷

¹² “PBS Online - Lost Liners – Lusitania,” *PBS: Public Broadcasting Service*, Web, 01 Nov. 2010, <http://www.pbs.org/lostliners/lusitania.html>.

¹³ Lovell, p. 6.

¹⁴ Boller, Paul F., *Presidential Campaigns: From George Washington to George W. Bush* (Oxford University Press, 2004), p. 202.

¹⁵ Lovell, p. 60.

¹⁶ Roberts and Hammond, p. 73.

¹⁷ Lovell, p. 55.

The convention's rhetoric, coupled with a powerful bloc of anti-war Western senators, pushed the "he kept us out of war" slogan into the platform.¹⁸

In contrast, Wilson despised the idea of resting "the most important phase of his recent record on the naïve generality that he had kept the country out of war (and the implication that he would continue to do so)." There is evidence that the president opposed the phrase altogether, refusing to use it personally. Secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels remembered Wilson saying, "I can't keep the country out of war. They talk of me as though I were a god. Any little German lieutenant can push us into the war at any time by some calculated outrage." Of course, Wilson's outlook on foreign affairs was far more complex than either his Democratic allies or Republican adversaries recognized. Less glamorous areas of the platform shed light on the president's first proposals for what later became the League of Nations. Lost in the excitement over the Glynn appearance was a line in the "International Relations" section of the platform: America must "assist the world in securing settled peace and justice."¹⁹

If Wilson's predicament was a juggling act, the Republican nominee Charles Evans Hughes' was a three-ring circus. The former New York governor and Supreme Court justice was not a hawk on the war issue, but partisan necessity led to hedging.²⁰ Party leaders were increasingly supportive of action against Germany, despite the Republican tradition for strict neutrality. Hughes remained largely silent, not wanting to offend German-Americans put off by Wilson's false neutrality. No matter Hughes' deft politicking, it appeared as though the majority of Americans approved of Wilson keeping the country out of the war. On what ground could Hughes stand?²¹ Fully aware of his plight, Democrats seized on Hughes' supposed "hyphenate"

¹⁸ Lovell, p. 56.

¹⁹ Lovell, p. 56.

²⁰ Roberts and Hammond, p.73.

²¹ Lovell, p. 64.

support, tying him to the National German-American Alliance. The ever-sensational *New York World* depicted him, donning a German helmet, standing with the Kaiser.²² Rumors proliferated of a secret pact between Hughes and the German-American Alliance. Wilson did not protest when groups backed by the Democratic National Committee spread reports that Hughes had agreed to bend to German will in regards to the war.²³ But perhaps Hughes' greatest obstacle to the presidency came from within his own party.

There was no mistaking it: Theodore Roosevelt was a hawk hungry for immediate war against Germany. He relentlessly lambasted Wilson for not protecting the nation's maritime interests in the North Atlantic.²⁴ "Mr. Wilson has not only been too proud to fight, but has been too proud to prepare," Roosevelt said, mocking the president's leadership.²⁵ Many presidential candidates would love to have a fierce surrogate like Roosevelt. For Hughes, Roosevelt's words produced only trouble. In an August 30, 1916 article on the campaign, the *Times* focused on the Democratic volleys aimed at Roosevelt. Missouri Sen. James A. Reed accused Hughes of being "...in complete accord with a man [Roosevelt] who refers in coarse language to the President as a 'mollycoddle,' a man of 'weasel words...'" Reed asserted that Roosevelt viewed war as an obligation and that the former president demanded universal military service.²⁶ On Election Day, November 7, a massive DNC advertisement ran in the *Times*, with its largest font reserved for the war issue. The bottom line read: "If you want War and Panic, Vote for Hughes with Roosevelt. IF YOU WANT PEACE WITH HONOR, vote for Wilson."²⁷

²² Lovell, p. 65.

²³ Lovell, p. 66.

²⁴ Roberts and Hammond, p. 73.

²⁵ Lovell, p. 150.

²⁶ "SEES WAR IF HUGHES WINS..." *New York Times (1857-1922)*, 30 Aug. 1916, ProQuest Historical Newspapers The New York Times (1851 - 2007), ProQuest. Web. 3 Oct. 2010.

²⁷ Display Ad 3 – No Title, *New York Times (1857-1922)*, Nov. 7, 1916, ProQuest Historical Newspapers, *The New York Times* (1851-2006).

Hughes was cursed with an unlucky fate, one which saddled him with the support of a man whose trademark had become his hawkish attitude toward the European war.²⁸ The reoccurring Democratic theme of Roosevelt as an extremist and a jingoist was hampering Hughes' credibility. Moreover, as was the case with Wilson and the issue of neutrality, the image of Hughes in cahoots with a warmonger was not representative of his true stance. Campaigning in Seattle, Washington on August 15, Hughes read aloud the clause from the Democratic platform of 1912 promising to protect American citizens in all parts of the world. Hughes endorsed the idea, saying, "...I believe in making it real. I do not think that in making it real we should encounter the danger of war."²⁹ In Lincoln, Nebraska on October 14, Hughes responded to the assertion, made by Wilson Vice President Thomas R. Marshall, that a vote for the Republican meant war. "Who wants war? I don't want war," Hughes assured the crowd, "Nobody who knows anything of the wastes and horrors of the struggle of arms wants war."³⁰

Domestic concerns dominated the early phases of the general election. Progressivism, social legislation, labor relations, tariffs, and currency debates held center stage.³¹ As November drew closer, Democratic campaign leaders turned more and more to the use of "vote-catching" phrases to galvanize peace voters. The infamous "he kept us out of war" slogan graced billboards throughout the country.³² On leaflets and handbills in the West, mothers were told that Wilson had "saved their sons and their husbands from unrighteous battlefields." One full-page ad on November 4 reminded men that they were happily alive and working, rather than fighting and

²⁸ Lovell, p.181.

²⁹ Special to The New York Times, "HUGHES WOULD WAGE WAR UNFLINCHINGLY..." *New York Times* (1857-1922) 16 Aug. 1916, ProQuest Historical Newspapers The New York Times (1851 - 2007), ProQuest. Web. 3 Oct. 2010.

³⁰ Special to The New York Times, "HUGHES DENIES HIS POLICY MEANS WAR..." *New York Times* (1857-1922), 15 Oct. 1916, ProQuest Historical Newspapers The New York Times (1851 - 2007), ProQuest. Web. 3 Oct. 2010.

³¹ Lovell, p. 90.

³² Lovell, p. 98.

cannon fodder.³³ Once hesitant to stake his reelection bid on the war issue, Wilson was apparently more comfortable with the idea in a speech at his summer home, Shadow Lawn, in New Jersey on September 30. “There is only one choice against peace and that is war,” Wilson proclaimed, going on to say that the success of the Republican Party would draw the nation “...into the embroilments of the European War.”³⁴ The prophetic author S.D. Lovell, in his final summation in *The Presidential Election of 1916*, noted that one can point to Wilson’s reelection campaign as “a model for others to follow in selling their political product within the setting of a troubled world.”³⁵

Election of 1964

NBC’s *Monday Night at the Movies* series was in its second year when it aired the historical epic *David and Bathsheba* on September 7, 1964. One would be hard-pressed, however, to find someone who remembers much about the film itself. During a commercial break, a Democratic campaign advertisement in support of President Lyndon Johnson appeared on the screen. What followed remains one of the most controversial ads in American political history. With no introduction or preface, a young girl was shown in a sprawling meadow, plucking the petals from a flower and counting her progress. She numbered as children often do, repeating digits and placing some out of proper order. When she reached “nine,” an authoritative and even menacing voice began a deliberate countdown to zero. As the voice approached zero, the camera zoomed toward the girl’s face, finally dissolving from her eye to an engrossing mushroom cloud. Johnson’s voice was then heard, God-like in its entrance at such a tense moment in the ad: “These are the stakes: To make a world in which all of God’s children can live, or to go into the darkness. We must either love each other, or we must die.” A male narrator

³³ Boller, p. 205.

³⁴ Lovell, p. 108.

³⁵ Lovell, p. 89.

concluded that voters should cast their ballots for President Johnson because the stakes were too high for them to stay home.³⁶

The reaction to the “Daisy” or “Peace Little Girl” ad, which was pulled after only one spot, was intense. The Republican National Committee protested, claiming that the ad implied that the Republican presidential candidate, Sen. Barry Goldwater of Arizona, was a “reckless man” and that Johnson was a “careful man.” The White House could not have described their intentions any clearer. Johnson special assistant Bill Moyers remembered the president in an “excited state” on the night the ad aired. Moyers said that the White House switchboard was lighting up, with most calls coming from people applauding the commercial.³⁷ After a few minutes of reflection, Johnson proclaimed, “I guess it did what we goddamned set out to do...”³⁸ In fact, despite negative retorts from some in the political class, the media’s use of the ad in subsequent news broadcasts cemented the images in voters’ minds. Knowing that the October 1962 Cuban missile crisis was still a fearful memory for the public, the Johnson campaign was quite willing to draw attention to Goldwater’s puzzling comments on nuclear arms and warfare.³⁹

Like Wilson nearly a half-century earlier, Johnson had hoped to avoid a major foreign conflict that could compromise his agenda and electoral prospects. Years after he had left the White House, Johnson admitted that he knew that war had acted like a cancer in the greatest periods of domestic reform: the Spanish-American War had suppressed a growing populist spirit; World War I had stifled Wilson’s New Freedom platform; World War II had marked the end of Roosevelt’s New Deal. Johnson worried that if a war broke out in Vietnam, conservatives in

³⁶ “Commercials - 1964 - Peace Little Girl (Daisy),” *The Living Room Candidate*, Web. 10 Oct. 2010, <http://www.livingroomcandidate.org/commercials/1964/peace-little-girl-daisy>.

³⁷ Jamieson, Kathleen Hall, *Packaging the Presidency: a History and Criticism of Presidential Campaign Advertising*, 3rd ed, New York: Oxford University Press, 1984, p. 200.

³⁸ Small, Melvin, *At the Water's Edge: American Politics and the Vietnam War*, Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2005, p. 28.

³⁹ Roberts and Hammond, p. 165.

Congress would use it as an excuse to upend his Great Society programs.⁴⁰ Even so, Johnson had sent more than 4,000 U.S. “personnel” to Vietnam in July. Fortunately for the president, a majority of Americans polled during the 1964 primary season said that they were paying little attention to matters in Southeast Asia. Johnson wished to keep them uninterested. “I don’t want headlines about some accident in Vietnam,” he told his aides.⁴¹ Ironically, Goldwater supported Johnson’s bombing raid in response to the Gulf of Tonkin incident between a U.S. destroyer and North Vietnamese torpedo boats in August 1964. This fact effectively removed the nation’s expanding role in the region from the political debate.⁴²

Early on, Democrats succeeded in molding an image of Goldwater as a man who could not be trusted with the lives of the American people. Johnson was framed “as the man above petty politics, always willing to talk sense to the voters.”⁴³ If Johnson was the safe and known quantity, who and what was Barry Goldwater? If the Democrats were running on “Prosperity, Harmony, and Peace,” what could the Republicans possibly campaign on?⁴⁴ Goldwater once dreamed of a potential battle with John Kennedy, viewing the president as an opponent willing to crisscross the country debating the issues. The two would present a stark contrast between the conservative and liberal philosophies. Because of the friendship the pair had developed in the Senate, Goldwater was crushed by Kennedy’s assassination. Left to face Johnson, Goldwater knew he was dealing with a more “bare-knuckle foe.” In addition, the Johnson candidacy would likely limit Republican plans to conquer the South.⁴⁵ Nonetheless, Goldwater’s rise represented the ascendancy of the Republican Party’s conservative wing. Those who had long detested

⁴⁰ Small, p. 23.

⁴¹ Small, p. 25.

⁴² Small, p. 30.

⁴³ Faber, Harold, *The Road to the White House: The Story of the 1964 Election*, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1965, p. 152.

⁴⁴ Small, p. 27.

⁴⁵ White, Theodore H, *The Making of the President, 1964*, New York: Atheneum Publishers, 1965, p. 95.

expanding federal power and social welfare programs found their hero in Goldwater. A fervent anti-Communist and critic of the nuclear test ban treaty, Goldwater was not shy to speak his mind or point out what he saw as flaws in Johnson's foreign policy.⁴⁶

At July's Republican National Convention in San Francisco, Goldwater tagged Democrats with a legacy of failure. He pointed to the shame of the Berlin Wall, the Bay of Pigs invasion, the Vietnam entanglement, and the fraying NATO alliance as examples of weak leadership from his opponent's party.⁴⁷ In his acceptance speech, Goldwater tried to expose Johnson's escalation in Vietnam:

It has been during Democratic years that we have weakly stumbled into conflict—timidly refusing to draw our own lines against aggression—deceitfully refusing to tell even our own people of our full participation—and tragically letting our finest men die on battlefields unmarked by purpose, pride or prospect of victory.⁴⁸

But the speech's defining moment came when the candidate addressed the accusation that he was outside of the mainstream. Goldwater affirmed that "extremism in the defense of liberty is not a vice," reminding his audience too "that moderation in the pursuit of justice is no virtue."⁴⁹ The statement came to define his campaign and solidify the view among voters that Goldwater was a political ideologue looking to challenge the established order. It did not help Goldwater that he had a troubling history of verbal gaffes on nuclear weapons and the war.

In October 1963, before the onset of the Republican primaries, Goldwater had seemingly backed the use of atomic weapons by NATO "commanders." He was besieged by withering condemnations, but stood his ground. Goldwater insisted that he was misquoted, and that he

⁴⁶ Roberts and Hammond, p. 98.

⁴⁷ Friedenberg, Robert V, *Notable Speeches in Contemporary Presidential Campaigns*, Westport, CT: Praeger, 2002, p. 95.

⁴⁸ Friedenberg, p. 99.

⁴⁹ Friedenberg, p. 97.

actually had said “commander,” not commanders. He pointed out that the supreme commander of NATO forces had such atomic power at his disposal since the Eisenhower years.⁵⁰ In May 1964, Goldwater made an appearance on ABC’s *Issues and Answers*, the network’s public affairs news program. Questioned about the prosecution of the conflict in Vietnam, he dismissed all of the battle plans that had been used to that point. Instead, Goldwater turned to “defoliation of the forests by low-yield atomic weapons” as the optimal solution. By removing the foliage, he argued, you would remove the enemy’s cover. Goldwater later amended his comments, saying that he was discussing a hypothetical situation.⁵¹ For Democrats, Goldwater’s words left enough ambiguity for a generous supply of campaign attacks. Some lines were simply too easy to pass up. “Let’s lob one into the men’s room of the Kremlin,” Goldwater recommended at one point. Taken as a whole, the erratic statements reinforced one another.⁵²

President Johnson believed that a Goldwater victory would jeopardize national security and destabilize international affairs. Moyers advised Johnson on how to communicate this conviction to the public: “We must make him ridiculous and a little scary...trigger happy, a bomb thrower, a radical.”⁵³ In an effort to capitalize on Goldwater’s questionable statements, Democrats flooded voters with books, leaflets, pamphlets, and newspaper advertisements casting the Republican as “ignorant, ill-informed, and irresponsible.” Bumper stickers like “Goldwater for Halloween” and “Vote for Goldwater and Go to War” multiplied.⁵⁴ The October 1964 issue of the magazine *Fact* ran the results of a survey that had asked more than 12,000 psychiatrists and social workers if Goldwater was psychologically fit for the presidency. Of the nearly 2,500 who responded, 49 percent answered “no.” None of the respondents had ever examined

⁵⁰ Jamieson, p. 177-178.

⁵¹ Jamieson, p. 178.

⁵² Jamieson, p. 178-179.

⁵³ Small, p. 27.

⁵⁴ Boller, p. 311.

Goldwater.⁵⁵ In conversations captured on his White House tapes, Johnson sought to advance the idea of Goldwater as an extremist. Speaking to columnist Drew Pearson on September 5, the president said that Republicans “got nothing really, except the Klan and the kooks.”⁵⁶ On September 21, speaking to C. Richard West of *The Dallas Morning News*, Johnson called Goldwater a “nervous”, “impulsive”, and “childish” man. “He’s not a stable person,” the president said, “I think I’m stable.”⁵⁷

In Vietnam, Johnson was trying desperately to hold the middle ground between withdraw and escalation. In private, he and his closest advisers conceded that they would soon need some escalation to stave off a collapse of the South Vietnamese army. National Security Advisor McGeorge Bundy urged Johnson to indicate as much to the public. “We do not want the record to suggest even remotely that we campaigned on peace in order to start a war in November,” Bundy chillingly told the president.⁵⁸ Johnson refused to acknowledge this contradiction during the campaign. Cliff Carter, the White House’s liaison to the DNC, called the choice between peace and war the biggest issue of the election. He believed that most people wanted to know whose hand was “next to that nuclear panic button.” Carter argued that Johnson would epitomize responsibility in high office.⁵⁹ To that end, the president’s television advertisements, including “Merely Another Weapon,” “Our President,” and “Ice Cream,” highlighted his steady hand in contrast to Goldwater’s position on nuclear weapons and testing (see pages 51-52).

Democrats continued their assault on Goldwater, with the president increasing his time on the campaign trail. “The only real issue in this campaign...is who can best keep the peace. In the

⁵⁵ Jamieson, p. 203.

⁵⁶ Johnson, Lyndon B. and Michael R. Beschloss, ed., *Reaching for Glory: Lyndon Johnson's Secret White House Tapes, 1964-1965*, New York: Simon & Schuster, 2001, p. 34.

⁵⁷ Johnson and Beschloss, p. 39-40.

⁵⁸ Logevall, Fredrik, *Choosing War: The Lost Chance for Peace and the Escalation of War in Vietnam*, Berkeley: University of California, 1999, p. 237.

⁵⁹ Faber, p. 153.

nuclear age, the president doesn't get a second chance to make a second guess," Johnson warned, "If he mashes the button—that is that..."⁶⁰ Touring through New Hampshire on September 28, Johnson alleged that Goldwater wanted to carry the war to North Vietnam. "Before I start dropping bombs around the country, I would want to think about the consequences of getting American boys into a war with 700 million Chinese," Johnson said.⁶¹ In Akron, Ohio in late October, the president implied that Goldwater subscribed to a foreign policy of "bluster and bluff and belligerence." Johnson stated that the world's hopes for peace would vanish if they were left to a man who had "no faith in the possibility of lasting agreements" and who readily predicted war.⁶² There was little doubt that voters accepted Johnson's rhetoric as truth. A Harris Poll published in September found that Americans viewed Johnson, by a three-to-one margin, as more likely to keep the country out of war. When asked who would better handle a sudden world crisis, respondents chose Johnson, 73 percent to 27 percent. Respondents also answered Johnson, 72 percent to 28 percent, when asked who would work harder for world peace.⁶³

One of Bob Hope's best quips to U.S. troops in Southeast Asia centered on the irony of the 1964 election and the war that ensued in its wake: "They said that if you supported Goldwater, America would end up in Vietnam. 'I forgot to take the Goldwater sticker off my car, and here I am.'"⁶⁴ The Pentagon Papers, a top-secret Defense Department history of U.S. engagement in Southeast Asia, later revealed that the first of numerous investigations "into the feasibility of going big in Vietnam" began in January 1964. The president had grown fond of Walt Rostow, head of the State Department's Policy Planning Staff, who recommended the

⁶⁰ Boller, p. 313.

⁶¹ Faber, p. 213.

⁶² Faber, p. 248.

⁶³ Harris, Louis 1964, The Washington Post Co. "Johnson's Wide Lead Reflects Confidence in Foreign Policy..." *The Washington Post, Times Herald (1959-1973)* 14 Sep. 1964, ProQuest Historical Newspapers The Washington Post (1877 - 1994), ProQuest. Web. 14 Oct. 2010.

⁶⁴ Perlstein, Rick, *Nixonland: The Rise of a President and the Fracturing of America*, New York: Scribner, 2008, p. 12.

systematic bombing of North Vietnam as early as the summer of 1964.⁶⁵ Less than a year after Johnson's resounding victory at the polls, the troop presence was nearing 200,000 in South Vietnam.

The Open Seat Races

Election of 1968

The decisive result of the 1964 presidential election was supposed to usher in a period of liberal consensus led by President Johnson. Though, by the time the next general election kicked off in the summer of 1968, America was deeply divided on the war, civil rights, counterculture, crime, and the achievements of the Great Society. In the aftermath of the psychological defeat that was the Tet Offensive, Johnson bowed out of the race with many Americans questioning the credibility of his administration. Meanwhile, Martin Luther King Jr. and Sen. Robert Kennedy, a Democratic presidential candidate, were slain only two months apart. Into the chaos stepped a familiar, albeit perplexing, figure: former Vice President Richard Nixon.⁶⁶ Disgraced and discarded on the heels of his excruciating defeats in the 1960 presidential election and the 1962 California gubernatorial election, Nixon's brand was wounded. Yet, in 1968, the same circumstances that proved catastrophic to Johnson and his Democratic coalition conspired to produce a Nixon rebirth. Having spent the preceding years quietly campaigning and raising money for Republican congressional candidates, Nixon was ready to inherit the GOP's "most acceptable candidate" status. He had learned an important lesson from his first run for the White House: limit unscripted campaign events and television appearances—say little more than your

⁶⁵ Ford, Harold P, "Thoughts Engendered by Robert McNamara's In Retrospect," *Central Intelligence Agency*, Center for the Study of Intelligence, CSI Publications, Studies in Intelligence, Web. 10 Nov. 2010, <https://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/csi-publications/csistudies/studies/96unclass/ford.htm#rft12>.

⁶⁶ Roberts and Hammond, p. 100-101.

central message. The “new” Nixon model was designed to emit a cool, reserved, dignified, and statesmanlike aura.⁶⁷

In November 1966, Sen. Stuart Symington (D) of Missouri, reflecting on Nixon’s campaign success in the midterm elections, remarked, “In 1968 Nixon will murder us. He will become the biggest dove of all times. There has never been a man in American public life that could turn so fast on a dime.”⁶⁸ For his entire political life, Nixon was known as the partisan attacker with an extensive record of accusing his foes of treason or communist loyalties. Whether through humility or pure manipulation, Nixon’s revamped image was constructed around the perception that he had matured and was able to lead the nation in “perilous times.”⁶⁹ A reminder of the world’s dangers came in August 1968 when the Soviet Union invaded and occupied Czechoslovakia. Nixon associate and CBS Television President Frank Shakespeare tried to convince other campaign staffers that the Russians could not be trusted and that Americans were naïve when it came to communism. “But people recognize...and they’re finally starting to care,” he noted, “that Nixon is not as likely to be shoved around by those bastards as HHH [Hubert Horatio Humphrey]. And that’s one more reason we’re going to win. Because we can get that point across.”⁷⁰ One way in which Nixon intended to get the point across was through television, on a battlefield he had lost to Kennedy in 1960.

Rick Perlstein, author of *Nixonland*, wrote that, in 1964, Johnson had campaigned telling bedtime stories: “that the sixties were scary, Barry Goldwater was scary, and that a vote for Johnson banished the monster under the bed.” Nixon, Perlstein said, told an identical story, only

⁶⁷ Friedenberg, p. 124.

⁶⁸ Small, p. 74.

⁶⁹ Friedenberg, p. 128.

⁷⁰ McGinniss, Joe, *The Selling of the President, 1968*, New York: Trident Press, 1969, p. 58.

with the terms reversed: that a Democratic victory would hasten the apocalypse.⁷¹ The campaign's signature slogan, "This Time Vote Like Your Whole World Depended On It," was well-suited for the year's turbulent atmosphere.⁷² One of Nixon's most powerful campaign ads was "Vietnam," a solemn highlight reel of raging gun battles, burning villages, crying Vietnamese, and fallen American soldiers. Over the sound of a sinister drumbeat, Nixon argued that the nation's military, economic, and diplomatic power was being used ineffectively. For all of the time and sacrifice devoted to the conflict, there was still no end in sight. Nixon urged the American people "to turn to new leadership, not tied to the policies and mistakes of the past." He pledged that he would bring about "an honorable end to the war in Vietnam." The ad's final scene showed a soldier who had the word "LOVE" written on the brim of his helmet.⁷³

Spoken or unspoken, Vietnam was a consistent theme in Nixon's television ads. "Decisions" asked voters to think hard before choosing the next commander-in-chief. "Who is the one man who has the experience and qualifications to lead America in these troubled, dangerous times? Nixon's the one." Photos of the war's anguish flashed across the screen.⁷⁴ The ad's outlook and tone were very similar to those of Johnson's 1964 "Our President" spot, except that Nixon was not a sitting president with the benefit of the Oval Office as his backdrop. But with Johnson essentially impotent and another Kennedy brother dead, who was in charge in America? Nixon was determined to take up the mantle of leadership. If elected, he vowed to "de-Americanize" the war, speaking broadly about slowing combat operations, withdrawing troops, and conducting negotiations. At the same time he advocated for continual pressure on the enemy and remaining true to South Vietnam, Nixon shifted the U.S. objective from victory to an

⁷¹ Perlstein, p. 349-350.

⁷² Roberts and Hammond, p. 102.

⁷³ "Commercials - 1968 - Vietnam," *The Living Room Candidate*, Web. 10 Oct. 2010, <http://www.livingroomcandidate.org/commercials/1968/vietnam>.

⁷⁴ "Commercials - 1968 - Decisions," *The Living Room Candidate*, Web. 10 Oct. 2010, <http://www.livingroomcandidate.org/commercials/1968/decisions>.

“honorable peace.”⁷⁵ He dropped hints that he had a secret plan to end the war, as if he was already in a position to dictate such terms. The public, entrusting their hopes for peace to Nixon, agreed with him when he said: “Those who have had a chance for another four years and could not produce peace should not be given another chance.”⁷⁶

Nixon mastered the art of ambiguity on Vietnam. He constantly assured his audiences that he would end the war and “win the peace in the Pacific.” No one, save Nixon, could turn a quagmire into an honorable departure.⁷⁷ Voters who believed that there was a difference in the ability of the two major candidates to avoid an expanded war supported Nixon to Vice President Humphrey two to one.⁷⁸ In the campaign’s shadow, Johnson administration officials were hard at work trying to fashion a peace accord in Paris. Nixon knew that a sudden end to the war would undercut his appeal and boost his opponent’s chances. Naturally, however, Nixon had promised to say nothing that would weaken the ongoing negotiations. He was the peace candidate, after all. In the political trenches, the truth was far more complex. What Nixon did or did not know about the following story remains unclear, but there was no questioning the presence of meddling in the peace talks.

Anna Chennault, co-chair of the Women for Nixon-Agnew Committee, had for several months been in contact with South Vietnam’s ambassador to the U.S., Bui Diem. History is left to speculate whether or not she was an authorized liaison or a partisan trickster acting on her own. Regardless, the South Vietnamese officials treated her as a link to the Nixon campaign. According to conversations acquired by Johnson’s secret monitoring of the summit’s progress, Chennault insisted that Diem’s government hold out for a better deal after the November

⁷⁵ Buell, Emmett H., and Lee Sigelman, *Attack Politics: Negativity in Presidential Campaigns Since 1960*, Lawrence, Kan.: University of Kansas, 2008, p. 115.

⁷⁶ Perlstein, p. 350.

⁷⁷ Page, Benjamin I., and Richard A. Brody, “Policy Voting and the Electoral Process: The Vietnam War Issue,” *The American Political Science Review* 66.3 (1972): JSTOR, Web. 29 Sept. 2010, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1957489>.

⁷⁸ Perlstein, p. 350.

election. She suggested that only Nixon would increase military support to South Vietnam. The proposed peace deal had brought Humphrey to within single digits of Nixon on the eve of the election. A worried Nixon aide, Pat Buchanan, admitted, “By Sunday night [before the election], I thought we were finished.” When the deal collapsed, South Vietnamese Vice President Nguyen Cao Ky said eerily, “By holding out we deprived the Democrats of their election victory.” Johnson was beside himself with rage, confident that Nixon had engaged in sabotage and treason. Humphrey, notified of the situation and given the option to go public, refused to press the matter because he did not believe that Nixon had approved of the contact and questioned the legality of the methods used to gather the information.⁷⁹ Such was the luck of Richard Nixon in 1968.

Politically cornered for the majority of the fall campaign, Humphrey did not have the same good fortune as his opponent. Like Charles Evans Hughes before him, Humphrey was representing a party deeply divided between hawks and doves. The rift was on full display at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago in August. With many of the delegates still loyal to Robert Kennedy or anti-war Sen. Eugene McCarthy of Minnesota, there was an underlying sentiment that Humphrey was the beneficiary of the questionable tactics of Chicago Mayor Richard J. Daley, his police force, and the men of the smoke-filled rooms. As vice president, Humphrey would have opened himself to charges of hypocrisy if he had criticized the administration’s war policy. Norman Sherman, Humphrey’s press secretary, said that while the vice president was initially a dove on Vietnam, he ultimately became a hawk and adamantly supported Johnson. When Humphrey visited India, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi told him that she had to outwardly oppose the war and appear anti-American. “But in fact,” Gandhi expressed to him in private, “there is this yellow peril that is going to come across my border.” Returning to

⁷⁹ Small, p. 121-122.

his room, Sherman remembered Humphrey saying, “That’s the damnedest thing I have ever heard! If she thinks we have to be in Vietnam...we are going to stay in Vietnam if I have anything to do about it.”⁸⁰

Unable to draw closer in the polls, Humphrey began to heed the advice of his advisers and look for ways to deviate from the president’s position. Max Kampelman, an aide and political strategist, implored Humphrey to resign the vice presidency. “Free yourself from the perception that you are speaking the government’s voice part of the time, and the campaign’s voice the rest of the time,” Kampelman said.⁸¹ Humphrey finally met with Johnson in July, asking the president if he could distance himself from the party’s line on the bombing campaign. Johnson rejected the proposition outright, giving it little thought.⁸² He cautioned Humphrey that he would accuse the vice president of irresponsibility if the order was disobeyed.⁸³ Although Humphrey did not want to obstruct a possible peace accord, he understood that gaining the support of the doves in the Democratic base would be crucial against Nixon.⁸⁴ Appearing in Salt Lake City, Utah on September 30, Humphrey pledged that he would halt the bombing in exchange for North Vietnam’s commitment to restoring the demilitarized zone between their country and South Vietnam.⁸⁵ A month later, citing the progress of the peace talks, Johnson announced to the nation that he had ended the bombardment. Humphrey was poised to pass Nixon in the polls, but the peace deal vanished.

Eight days before the election, Nixon gave voters one more reminder that the Democratic Party was the party of disorder. “Convention” was one of a number of Nixon collage ads

⁸⁰ Thompson, Kenneth W., ed, *Lessons from Defeated Presidential Candidates*, Lanham: University of America, 1994, p. 140-141.

⁸¹ Thompson, p. 144-145.

⁸² Small, p. 112.

⁸³ Sieg, Kent G, “The 1968 Presidential Election and Peace in Vietnam,” *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 26.4 (1996): 1062-1080, JSTOR, Web. 22 Oct. 2010, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27551671>, p. 1064.

⁸⁴ Small, p. 112.

⁸⁵ Sieg, p. 1067.

featuring still photographs, jarring music, and minimal narration. This particular ad had no narration, displaying only images of Vietnam, riots, and poverty mixed between scenes of the chaotic Democratic convention. The one constant was the image of a smiling Humphrey, his head appearing to split in three at the ad's conclusion.⁸⁶

Election of 2008

On October 2, 2002, as the administration of President George W. Bush steered the country toward an invasion of Iraq, then-Illinois State Sen. Barack Obama stood before a crowd gathered in Chicago's Federal Plaza. The anti-war demonstration offered Obama a chance to publicly renounce the aggressive rhetoric coming from the White House. He argued that war with Iraq would be "dumb" and "rash," based not on "reason" and "principle," but on "passion" and "politics." "I know that even a successful war against Iraq will require a U.S. occupation of undetermined length, at undetermined cost, with undetermined consequences," Obama calculated.⁸⁷ Little more than four years later, Obama used his consistent opposition to the war as one inspiration for his presidential campaign. In his February 2007 kickoff speech, he referred to the war as a "tragic mistake," insisting that it was time to let the Iraqis know that America's commitment was not unending. Iraq's best hope for peace, Obama believed, was through reconciliation between the Sunni and Shiites sects.⁸⁸ Obama's strong stance on the war set him apart from other Democratic candidates during the 2008 primaries; his chief rival, former first lady and then-New York Sen. Hillary Clinton, had voted in favor of a 2002 resolution

⁸⁶ "Commercials - 1968 - Convention," *The Living Room Candidate*, Web. 10 Oct. 2010, <http://www.livingroomcandidate.org/commercials/1968/convention>.

⁸⁷ Obama, Barack, "Remarks of Illinois State Sen. Barack Obama Against Going to War with Iraq," *Organizing for America* | *BarackObama.com*, Web. 10 Nov. 2010, http://www.barackobama.com/2002/10/02/remarks_of_illinois_state_sen.php.

⁸⁸ Obama, "Full Text of Senator Barack Obama's Announcement for President," http://www.barackobama.com/2007/02/10/remarks_of_senator_barack_obam_11.php.

authorizing the use of force against Iraq. Before the economic crisis arose in the fall of 2008, the unpopular war was a central issue in the general election campaign.

Obviously, an examination of the 2008 presidential campaign and the subsequent actions of President Obama cannot yet accompany the narrative woven by the 1916, 1964, and 1968 elections. As he nears the halfway point of his first term, Obama's war policies are evolving and the politics influencing his decisions are shifting. Nevertheless, existing evidence does permit a study of Obama's campaign portrayal of his opponent, Republican Sen. John McCain, and the president's inability to reconcile his image as an anti-war candidate with his escalation of the war in Afghanistan. Of course, no one can deny that the man who had not wavered in his disdain for the Iraq invasion fulfilled at least one campaign promise in 2010: the last U.S. combat soldiers departed on August 19.⁸⁹ On August 31, in a televised address from the Oval Office, Obama formally declared U.S. combat operations over.⁹⁰ In the face of his best efforts, though, the "war president" label haunts Obama, as nearly 1,000 troops have died under his command.⁹¹ How did he, a keen student of American history, get to this point? How did General David Petraeus, a favorite of Bush and a man Obama had once berated at Senate hearings on the Iraq surge, become such a necessary cog in the White House's new direction in Afghanistan?

In Derry, New Hampshire on January 3, 2008, McCain cut off a questioner asking about the Bush administration's rumored plan to station troops in Iraq for 50 years. "Make it a hundred," McCain retorted. To put the possibility of a permanent troop contingent in Iraq into perspective, the senator evoked the extended deployment of U.S. personnel to Germany and

⁸⁹ Londoño Ernesto, "Operation Iraqi Freedom Ends as Last Combat Soldiers Leave Baghdad," *The Washington Post*, 19 Aug. 2010, Web. 05 Nov. 2010, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/08/18/AR2010081805644.html?sid=ST2010081805662>.

⁹⁰ Kornblut, Anne E, "Obama Declares That Combat In Iraq Is over," *The Washington Post*, 31 Aug. 2010, Web. 05 Nov. 2010, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/08/31/AR2010083104496.html>.

⁹¹ *ICasualties: Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom Casualties*, Web. 15 Nov. 2010, <http://icasualties.org/>.

South Korea. McCain clarified his point, saying he was content with a long-term presence “as long as Americans are not being injured or wounded or killed.” Clinton and Obama seized on McCain’s remarks in an attempt to tie him to the politically toxic President Bush. Susan Rice, then a senior foreign policy advisor to Obama, highlighted McCain’s 100-year comment as proof of the Republican’s desire to distract voters from more pressing international problems. At a Lancaster, Pennsylvania town hall meeting on March 31, Obama reminded his audience that McCain wanted “to continue a war in Iraq perhaps as long as 100 years.”⁹² In April, the DNC broadcast an ad focused on McCain’s comments, mixing the Derry town hall exchange with violent scenes from Iraq, including car bombings and burning oil fields. “If all he offers is more of the same, is John McCain the right choice for America’s future?” The ad recounted the war’s toll—five years, \$500 billion, and 4,000 American war dead to that point—and concluded with a picture of President Bush with his arm around a smiling McCain.⁹³

The most telling moments in the candidates’ spat over issues of war and peace occurred during two of the presidential debates. During one verbal clash in the first debate at the University of Mississippi on September 26, McCain accused Obama of loosely calling for attacks in Pakistan. Obama countered his opponent’s charge, stipulating that he would, if he were president, strike at high-level Al-Qaeda targets inside of Pakistan if the Pakistani government was “unable or unwilling to act.” Obama’s clarification was an attempt to offset McCain’s implication that presidential candidates should be more prudent in what they say. Going further, Obama admonished McCain for his past off-color remarks, from threatening “extinction for

⁹² Dobbs, Michael, “McCain’s ‘100-year War’ - Fact Checker,” *Blog Directory (The Washington Post)*, 2 Apr. 2008, Web. 19 Nov. 2010, http://blog.washingtonpost.com/fact-checker/2008/04/mccains_100year_war.html.

⁹³ Phillips, Kate, “D.N.C. Advertisement: McCain’s ‘100 Years’ in Iraq,” *Politics and Government - The Caucus Blog - The New York Times*, 27 Apr. 2008, Web. 22 Nov. 2010, <http://thecaucus.blogs.nytimes.com/2008/04/27/dnc-ad-mccains-100-years-in-iraq/>.

North Korea” to singing “songs about bombing Iran.”⁹⁴ Continuing with this critique in the second debate at Tennessee’s Belmont University on October 7, Obama dismissed Republican claims that he was “green behind the ears” on national security, pointing out that McCain was neither “somber” nor “responsible” on defense matters: “This is the person who, after we had—we hadn’t even finished Afghanistan, where he said, ‘Next up, Baghdad.’”⁹⁵ When McCain said that Obama had been wrong about the 2007 surge of troops to Iraq, Obama questioned the credibility of McCain’s original support for a war with a country that was not involved in the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on the U.S.⁹⁶

In November 2008, Director of National Intelligence Mike McConnell arrived in Chicago to meet with then-President-elect Obama for the victor’s first intelligence briefing. Due to security precautions, McConnell barred Obama’s top campaign deputies and transition aides from the meeting. Author Bob Woodward observed that “the transition from campaigning to governing—with all its frustrations—was delivering another surprise.”⁹⁷ At the inauguration, Obama reiterated his promise “to responsibly leave Iraq to its people and forge a hard-earned peace in Afghanistan.”⁹⁸ How to forge a peace from the chaos of a broken country and an emboldened insurgency was another matter. That Obama had an eye on reviving America’s role in Afghanistan should have come as no surprise to his supporters swept up by his anti-war stance in regard to Iraq. In his aforementioned 2002 speech in Chicago, Obama had beseeched Bush to “finish the fight with [Osama] Bin Laden and Al-Qaeda.”⁹⁹ As the Democratic presidential

⁹⁴ “Obama Knocks McCain’s ‘Bomb, Bomb’ Iran Moment,” *YouTube*, HuffPolitics’s Channel, 26 Sept. 2008, Web. 21 Nov. 2010, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BpiDZW04vQQ>.

⁹⁵ “Obama Plays the ‘McCain as Hothead’ Card,” *YouTube*, TPMtv’s Channel, 7 Oct. 2008, Web. 21 Nov. 2010, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3qJu_bkX4SU&feature=related.

⁹⁶ “Obama: I Don’t Understand... Your Faulty Foreign Policy,” *YouTube*, TPMtv’s Channel, 7 Oct. 2008, Web. 21 Nov. 2010, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DT0b_baBxFE&feature=channel.

⁹⁷ Woodward, Bob, *Obama’s Wars*, New York: Simon and Schuster, 2010, p. 1-2.

⁹⁸ Woodward, p. 75.

⁹⁹ Obama, “Remarks of Illinois State Sen. Barack Obama Against Going to War with Iraq.”

nominee, Obama signaled his intention to oversee a major review of the military's AfPak (Afghanistan and Pakistan) strategy and did not reject the notion of troop increases. Today, his administration is largely behind the idea that U.S. forces will remain in Afghanistan until at least the end of 2014.¹⁰⁰ Obama has kept or expanded more than a dozen of Bush's most controversial intelligence orders, providing the "legal basis for the Central Intelligence Agency's (CIA) worldwide covert operations."¹⁰¹

In private conversations during the 2008 campaign, Bush predicted that if a Democrat won, he or she would fill the role of Dwight Eisenhower to his Harry Truman. President Eisenhower often criticized Truman's Cold War policies on the campaign trail, but adopted many of the Democrat's strategies after taking office. Banking on the endurance of this historical pattern, Bush expected that his successor would uphold most of the policies he had pursued after the 9/11 attacks.¹⁰² Rhetorically and symbolically, Obama has proved Bush wrong; operationally, he has proved the former president right. Within days of taking office, Obama banned the use of torture in interrogations and set a January 2010 deadline for the closure of the military prison at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba (the deadline passed without action and the prison retains its function). To the former constitutional law professor, "...refinements in language and policy strengthened the moral argument for war." Obama retired the "global war on terror" phrase employed by Bush, not wanting to overstate Al-Qaeda's power.¹⁰³ The president rejected Bush's black and white outlook, one marked by swagger and a persistent drive to group the threat of Islamic

¹⁰⁰ Bumiller, Elisabeth, "U.S. Tweaks Message on Troops in Afghanistan," *The New York Times*. 10 Nov. 2010. Web. 21 Nov. 2010. <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/11/11/world/asia/11military.html>.

¹⁰¹ Luxenberg, Steve, "Bob Woodward Book Details Obama Battles with Advisers over Exit Plan for Afghan War," *The Washington Post*, 22 Sept. 2010, Web. 27 Sept. 2010, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/09/21/AR2010092106706.html?sid=ST2010092106707>, p. 2.

¹⁰² Baker, p. 6.

¹⁰³ Wilson Scott, "One Year Later: How Obama Has Learned to Become a Wartime Commander in Chief," *The Washington Post*, 19 Jan. 2010, Web. 27 Sept. 2010, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/01/18/AR2010011803594.html?hpid=topnews&sid=ST2010011803658>, p. 2.

extremism with Nazism or Communism. Obama's deliberate and methodical approach to the AfPak strategy review was his acknowledgment of the shades of gray that come with any weighty policy decision. In reshaping the war effort, he searched for a flexible "blend of force and intellect." There was no need to blow the situation out of proportion or elevate the standing of the terrorists.¹⁰⁴

While the orderly deliberations over a way forward in Afghanistan played into Obama's image as a measured and serious leader, he exercised the nation's military power as frequently as Bush had in the last years of his administration. In February 2009, months prior to the launch of his comprehensive strategy review, Obama signed off on a plan for 17,000 additional troops in Afghanistan. He dramatically increased covert operations, doubling the number of drones in the Pakistani border area and deploying military aides to the volatile countries of Somalia and Yemen.¹⁰⁵ According to data collected by the New America Foundation, the CIA carried out more "targeted assassinations" in Obama's first year in office than it had during Bush's entire presidency.¹⁰⁶ Publicly, Obama officials downplay the parallels between the president's war policies and those of his predecessor. Michael Hayden, who served as CIA director from 2006 to 2009, believes that the ever-changing circumstances of war forced Obama to protect the framework created by Bush.¹⁰⁷ On December 1, 2009, Obama traveled to the United States Military Academy at West Point to mark the conclusion of his team's strategy review and announce the outline of a new policy. Backing the influx of 30,000 more troops, Obama reflected on the horrors of war and lamented the job of having to put Americans in harm's way. But, by saying that he would keep pressure on Al-Qaeda, "secure key population centers," and empower

¹⁰⁴ Baker, p. 2.

¹⁰⁵ Wilson, p. 1.

¹⁰⁶ Baker, p. 8.

¹⁰⁷ Baker, p. 6.

local Afghan leaders, Obama endorsed a surge plan strikingly similar to the one he had opposed for Iraq in 2007.¹⁰⁸ Three years after eyeing the rise of General Petraeus and his counterinsurgency doctrine with caution and suspicion, Obama employed Petraeus as his field commander in Afghanistan.

The Norwegian Nobel Committee raised international eyebrows when it awarded the 2009 Nobel Peace Prize to Obama, citing his work in diplomatic relations. Although surprised by the choice, the president commemorated the occasion with a Rose Garden appearance. Obama said that “we have to confront the world as we know it today” and that he was “the commander in chief of a country that’s responsible for ending a war and working in another theater to confront a ruthless adversary that directly threatens the American people and our allies.” Later that same afternoon, Obama convened his national security cabinet to continue discussions over whether or not to expand the war in Afghanistan.¹⁰⁹ The day captured the contradictions and complexities of the White House’s foreign policy. The Vietnam War figures heavily in the minds of the president and his closest advisers. On a Sunday morning during the AfPak review, Vice President Joe Biden, a skeptic of deeper engagement, hurried to the White House to make a final plea for a pared back and narrowly defined mission. Biden worried that a major escalation would doom the administration and lock the U.S. into another Vietnam.¹¹⁰ From the outset of the Obama presidency, veteran Democrats, mindful of the trials of Johnson and his Great Society initiatives, were concerned that a “novice commander in chief” would bow to the request of his

¹⁰⁸ “Obama’s Afghan Policy Speech at West Point,” *Blog Directory (The Washington Post)*, 01 Dec. 2009, Web. 21 Nov. 2010, <http://voices.washingtonpost.com/44/2009/12/obamas-afghan-policy-speech-at.html>.

¹⁰⁹ Wilson, Scott, “Nobel for Obama Brings Praise, Ire,” *The Washington Post*, 10 Oct. 2009, Web. 16 Nov. 2010, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/10/09/AR2009100900914.html>.

¹¹⁰ Luxenberg, p. 3.

generals “at the expense of his wide-ranging domestic reform agenda.” Rising costs of war could derail important energy, financial, health care, and jobs legislation.¹¹¹

An Exception: Election of 1980

Battered by low economic growth, high inflation, and periodic energy shortages in the late 1970s, President Jimmy Carter started the 1980 campaign season in a weakened position. Moreover, he had to fend off a formidable nomination challenge from Massachusetts Sen. Ted Kennedy and weather accusations that his administration was feckless in the face of the embarrassing Iran hostage crisis. In the general election, Carter faced off against Republican Ronald Reagan, the former California governor and a lightning rod of the polarized 1960s. At the center of the White House’s campaign strategy was the portrayal of Reagan as a right wing radical in the mold of Barry Goldwater. Carter emphasized his peacemaking credentials to distinguish himself from Reagan, who the president framed as a reckless hawk hungry for more defense spending and nuclear arms.¹¹² In television ads borrowed from the playbook of Johnson’s 1964 campaign, “Carter attempted to raise fears that Reagan would be a warmonger.” Carter failed where Johnson had succeeded, however, because Reagan did not supply the same level of foolhardy and uncompromising rhetoric as Goldwater had in 1964. In fact, Reagan fashioned a telegenic image based on his “cool and confident manner, exemplified by his nonchalant ‘there you go again’ response to Carter’s debate volleys.”¹¹³ The 1980 campaign represents a break from the pattern formed by the 1916, 1964, 1968, and 2008 elections, in which the candidates running on peace and blasting their opponents as dangerous alternatives were victorious.

¹¹¹ Wilson Scott, “One Year Later: How Obama Has Learned to Become a Wartime Commander in Chief,” p. 3.

¹¹² Roberts and Hammond, p. 107-108.

¹¹³ “Commercials – 1980,” *The Living Room Candidate*, Web. 14 Nov. 2010, <http://www.livingroomcandidate.org/commercials/1980>.

In Carter's "Streetgov" commercial, California voters voiced their doubts about Reagan and his attitudes on foreign policy. A man in Los Angeles scoffed at the thought of the former governor—full of his "ill-informed, shoot-from-the-hip" comments—leading a Middle East peace accord or negotiating a nuclear arms pact. In San Francisco, one man said that he would not want Reagan leading the country for any period of time. A woman concluded that Reagan would have "gotten us into war...by this time," whereas Carter had prevented such an occurrence. "I think it's a big risk to have Reagan as President. Reagan, Reagan scares me. He really scares me," added another man.¹¹⁴ In "Peace," Carter honored the "ancient relationship between making war and preserving the peace," calling himself both a military man and a man of peace (see page 52).¹¹⁵ For his part, Reagan capitalized on Carter's perceived weakness, blaming the president for troubles in Afghanistan, East Africa, and Iran. Reagan also spoke of world peace, but from the perspective of peace through strength; he called for new, optimistic leadership and a devotion to the "forces of freedom" to thwart the world's tyrants. Cutting off the charge that he was not committed to arms reduction, Reagan stated his true intentions in one of his campaign's most effective ads: "I have repeatedly said in this campaign that I will sit down with the Soviet Union for as long as it takes to negotiate a balanced and equitable arms limitation agreement, designed to improve the prospects for peace."¹¹⁶

Analysis and Discussion

Over the course of American history, countless elections for the White House have been decided by fear—fear of immigration, fear of economic change, or fear of the unknown.

Presidential contests often hinge on the ability of one candidate to offer a vision in which he

¹¹⁴ "Commercials - 1980 - Streetgov," *The Living Room Candidate*, Web. 14 Nov. 2010, <http://www.livingroomcandidate.org/commercials/1980/Streetgov>.

¹¹⁵ "Commercials - 1980 - Peace (Democrat)," *The Living Room Candidate*, Web. 14 Nov. 2010, <http://www.livingroomcandidate.org/commercials/1980/peace-democrat>.

¹¹⁶ "Commercials - 1980 - Peace (Republican)," *The Living Room Candidate*, Web. 14 Nov. 2010, <http://www.livingroomcandidate.org/commercials/1980/peace-republican>.

would act as the people's protector against turmoil and uncertainty. The exploitation of public anxiety and fear over impending or ongoing war endures as the most infamous political tactic in presidential campaigns. The act of waging war in a democracy has always offered its share of complexities, but the unique experience of America is particularly fascinating. Ours is one of the only nations in human history to conduct relatively free elections in wartime. Therefore, there is ample room for a deeper discussion of how pivotal presidential elections were transformed into referendums on war and peace. In campaign advertisements, rhetoric, and slogans, the four victors under discussion strove to paint a line between their commitment to peace and their opponent's supposed desire for war and instability. If nothing else, the preceding literature review reveals that in politics, as in war, there are no tidy decisions. The divide between war and peace is never clear, as much as Wilson, Johnson, Nixon, and Obama tried to make it appear. The Hughes, Goldwater, Humphrey, and McCain candidacies tell a story of men sunk by their own missteps and by circumstances outside of their control.

In rounding out the war and peace theme, two other elections present intriguing corollaries. The 1940 contest between President Franklin Roosevelt and Republican challenger Wendell Willkie would have been a valuable case study had it not been for the fact that Willkie portrayed Roosevelt as the war candidate. Willkie, unlike Hughes in 1916, claimed the peace label for the Republican Party from the outset of the campaign. He implied that Roosevelt wanted to invest the U.S. in another European war, pointing to the president's military aid to Britain as evidence. When, in September 1940, Roosevelt established the Destroyers for Bases Agreement with the British, Willkie increased his anti-war rhetoric and grew into an isolationist. His audiences became alarmed when the shrill Willkie predicted "wooden crosses for sons and brothers and sweethearts" if Roosevelt won a third term. Initially, the president ignored Willkie's

rhetoric and reassured the public that he would not lead the country into war. To advisors nervous about Willkie's strength and the success of his anti-war stance, Roosevelt instructed that a "direct attack on the United States was not a 'foreign' war, remarking, 'of course we'll fight if we're attacked.'"¹¹⁷ That attack came a year later, on December 7, 1941. There is no conclusive evidence that Roosevelt had advance knowledge of Japan's intentions in the South Pacific or that the president had any war plans prepared before he won a third term in November 1940.

The 2004 election between President Bush and Massachusetts Sen. John Kerry, the Democratic candidate, had some parallels with the 1964 and 1968 contests. With the memory of the 9/11 attacks close at hand, Bush focused on national security and his role as a decisive leader against terrorism. Even though the U.S. had invaded Iraq the previous March and the Persian Gulf state was slowly deteriorating, only 17 percent of National Election Survey (NES) respondents listed Iraq as the most important issue in 2004. A resounding 43 percent of respondents cited terrorism as the top issue. Bush prevailed among these voters by a 70 to 29 percent margin.¹¹⁸ Such a large gap is reminiscent of Johnson's performance among those voters looking for a candidate who would keep the country out of war and Nixon's wide support among voters who made their selection based on what candidate they perceived could end the war in Vietnam. As Johnson and Nixon had done against Goldwater and Humphrey, respectively, Bush described Kerry as an untrustworthy choice in dangerous times. The key difference was that Johnson portrayed Goldwater as so unstable that his election would increase the chance of war. Bush played up Kerry's perceived lack of steadiness by accusing the Democrat of "flip-flopping" on Iraq and other national security issues. To those Americans who valued steadiness, Bush's contention that Kerry was a risky choice was a powerful theme.

¹¹⁷ Roberts and Hammond, p. 87-88.

¹¹⁸ Klinkner, Philip A., "Mr. Bush's War: Foreign Policy in the 2004 Election," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 36.2 (2006): JSTOR, Web. 28 Nov. 2010, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27552219>, p. 284.

The strongest link between the two incumbent cases, 1916 and 1964, was the role of Wilson and Goldwater as cynical peace candidates. Both presidents excelled as dissemblers, hiding behind a veil of peace and stability. Both men planned for war while demonizing their opponent as a warmonger. Both benefitted from a prosperous economy and a vigorous progressive spirit, a dynamic that delivered groundbreaking legislative successes to each administration.¹¹⁹ Although the feeling of betrayal was rampant among progressives once World War I and the Vietnam War soured, America's role in defeating the Central Powers in 1918 salved any outrage against Wilson's hypocrisy. Where he did misread the public was in thinking that Americans accepted an international leadership role (centered around the League of Nations) because of the nation's victorious involvement in the war. It was as if voters accepted his action in taking the country to war, but rejected his subsequent grandiosity as a violation of his earlier promise to not go to war. Wilson's personal statements on the events of the 1916 convention and the "he kept us out of war" slogan lead one to believe that he despised the thought of running on a peace platform when U.S. involvement in Europe seemed inevitable. By late summer and early fall, Wilson had warmed to the attack strategies designed by his campaign and outside surrogates. He was more open about his criticism of Hughes and willing to trot out the threat of war if Republicans controlled the levers of power.

Likewise, Johnson evolved from wanting to stay above the fray to expressing his horror at the prospect of a Goldwater presidency. The paradox of the 1964 political landscape is the most perplexing of any examined in this study. In the opening months of 1964, Johnson relied on the advice of a selected group of hawkish aides to enlarge America's footprint in Vietnam, despite the fact that he was well aware of the strain war placed on domestic initiatives. The first investigations into the feasibility of a large troop presence in Southeast Asia took place well

¹¹⁹ Thompson, p. 4, 18-19.

before the election. All the while, the president used the specter of nuclear annihilation to undermine his opponent. Since Goldwater provided Democrats with an endless supply of erratic and troublesome statements on nuclear arms and war, Johnson's work required minimal heavy lifting. His television ads, especially the "Daisy" and "Ice Cream" spots, were chilling testaments to how far one candidate could go in portraying an opponent in a radical and reckless light. In retrospect, it is not unfair to say that, in his heart, Johnson believed that Goldwater was trigger happy and, if granted access to the full arsenal of America's military power, would endanger national security and geopolitical peace.

In a departure from the Wilson model, Johnson's peace approach focused on his leadership stability. Vital to this point is a reminder that Johnson cast himself not as the candidate who would avoid an escalation of the Vietnam conflict, but as the candidate who would not get the country into a nuclear standoff or a larger war with the Soviet Union and China. Trust was Johnson's ultimate weapon against Goldwater; the American people could trust his administration, Johnson argued, to reduce the threat of nuclear war and to take care of business in Vietnam without a protracted commitment. Plausible is the theory that Johnson and his aides could not have known how cumbersome the Vietnam mission would become. Perhaps the administration viewed Vietnam as a Southeast Asian version of Guatemala or Iran, where CIA-backed coups in the 1950s toppled elected regimes that were seen as threats to American economic and military interests. Johnson may have deduced that Vietnam, at its worst, would be similar to the Korean War; at least the latter succeeded in repelling the invasion of South Korea by communist North Korea. The truth about the lack of a national conversation on Vietnam during the 1964 election is probably darker: Johnson purposely obscured the military buildup because he knew that a troop escalation would be unpopular with voters.

The principal connection between the two open seat races, 1968 and 2008, was the ability of Nixon and Obama, two candidates with fundamentally divergent political instincts and personal stories, to frame themselves as steady and statesmanlike leaders destined for the White House. Nixon pointed to the international relationships he had cultivated as vice president to convince voters of his appeal in a turbulent world. Obama traveled abroad to speak to a teeming European audience on the NATO alliance and the importance of diplomacy. Both men vowed to correct the mistakes of the past and help the country heal after years of polarization. Both men came to embody the public's hope to end unpopular wars and withdraw troops from combat. For Nixon, Vietnam was a rope with which he tied Humphrey to Johnson. As was Hughes' predicament in 1916, Humphrey was left to navigate a minefield of competing pressures within his party, complicated by his own conflicting views on the war. By insinuating that he could light the path toward ending the war without inviting dishonor, Nixon offered a "de-Americanized" war that maintained pressure on the enemy. For Obama, Iraq was a rope with which he tied McCain to Bush. Like Goldwater, McCain was the victim of his own erratic statements and an overriding public perception that the Arizona senator was outside of the mainstream. Obama pledged to withdraw troops and declare an end to America's combat operations in Iraq. He too promised to maintain pressure on the enemy—only he meant in Afghanistan, not in Iraq.

Where Wilson, Johnson, and Nixon had essentially deceived the American people, Obama's electoral rhetoric and subsequent actions as president were relatively transparent. His is a story not of blatant dissembling, but of a personal struggle over the vision of peace versus the tug of war. Where Nixon was cunning and willing to say or do whatever it took to win (including possible treason), Obama was honest about his intentions in Afghanistan. From the start of his national political career, he ridiculed the Bush administration for neglecting the war in

Afghanistan and letting Bin Laden and his Al-Qaeda operatives roam free in Pakistan. As Election Day 2008 drew closer, Obama did not back down from the chance of a troop escalation in Afghanistan. Hoping to evade Johnson's fate upon taking office, the president grappled with his unsavory options on the nine-year war as he tried to push major domestic legislation through Congress. From the president's perspective, ending the Iraq War was good policy and smart politics. He also knew that a proposal for the war in Afghanistan that included drastic troop increases would be something he could hardly sidestep. In many Washington circles, war is the default option. Pressure from congressional Republicans, a healthy number of congressional Democrats, Pentagon officials, and the White House's field commanders heavily influenced Obama's recommendation for a substantial surge in Afghanistan. Rather than risk talk of weakness and appeasement, Obama opted to get his hands dirty, continuing the counterterrorism operations of the Bush era. One is left to wonder if Obama was fully prepared to take on the daunting job of being president during wartime. One also speculates on whether or not he will regret his course of action in the years to come. Or could he already be experiencing the pangs of remorse?

Conclusion

The evolution of the war and peace theme in presidential elections is the product of multiple factors. Changes in mass mediums and communication strategies are part of the story. The campaigns of Wilson, Hughes, Roosevelt, and Willkie relied on newspaper space and radio broadcasts to get their messages across to voters. Ads, cartoons, and information segments granted platforms for campaigns looking to frame issues and paint stark contrasts between candidates. With television's rise in the 1950s and 1960s, the power of moving images forever altered presidential elections. The role television ads played in the 1964 and 1968 elections was

immeasurable. Ironically, there were no televised presidential debates in the lead-up to either election. But the involvement of televised images in shaping the war and peace issue was not in doubt. A decade later, Reagan's firm and unflappable image was bolstered by his performance in the presidential debates of 1980. Thus, television reinforced the lingering perception that Carter was weak, deflating the president's credibility to attack Reagan. In recent years, the proliferation of internet news and social media sites became a key factor in the 2004 and 2008 elections. Every campaign stop, television appearance, and sound bite is filtered by both sides of the ideological spectrum for the sake of political correctness and fact-checking. What was once acceptable and commonplace in campaigns is no longer effective in today's high-tech climate. Gone are the days when one would see brazen political ads in mainstream sources like *The New York Times*, as was the case with Wilson's literature in 1916 (see page 50). Partisan advertising is alive and well, but it is typically more nuanced and covert.

There is no one historical model for running these war and peace campaigns. There is an underlying narrative, but the individual circumstances and personal stories of each president and the actions of his administration are critical. Over and over again in men such as Wilson, Johnson, Nixon, and Obama, America has chosen presidents torn by deep contradictions. Each president displayed strong and steady characteristics and each strove to deliver on the promise of peace. Each proclaimed their ability to act as America's protector and each demonized their opponents as warmongers. Their deception, evasion, and personal struggles defined their elections and the wars in which each engaged in or escalated. The unforgiving tide of history has a tendency to upend the greatest and shrewdest of leaders. Woodrow Wilson, Lyndon Johnson, Richard Nixon, and Barack Obama learned this lesson all too well.

APPENDIX

Selected Newspaper Clippings

The New York Times, August 16, 1916

HUGHES WOULD WAGE WAR UNFLINCHINGLY

**Would Not Hesitate, He Says,
When Necessary to Protect
American Lives and Property.**

HIS SPEECHES CRITICISED

**Candidate Should Be More Con-
structive and Less Abusive of
Wilson, Washington
State Leaders Say.**

Special to The New York Times.

SEATTLE, Wash., Aug. 15.—Campaigning today in the Roosevelt strongholds of the State of Washington, Charles E. Hughes preached the doctrine of firmness in the nation's foreign policy, even to the length of going to war, to see that the lives and property of American citizens were respected by other countries.

Reading from the Democratic platform of 1912, the clause promising protection to American citizens in all parts of the world, he said: "That is good doctrine, and I believe in making it real. I do not think that in making it real we should encounter the danger of war. I would not shrink if we did in performing our obvious duty."

Mr. Hughes supplemented his bellicose talk with another attack on the Democratic Party. He was willing to stake his judicial reputation he said, on the statement that the so-called "dumping clause" would prove ineffective, and he heaped ridicule on the Administration for its position on the tariff, for its diplomatic service, and for what he called its inefficiency in government.

The nominee talked today in sections where the people wanted to know by definite statement just what constructive policies he proposed, and what he hoped to accomplish for the country if elected President. Leaders he consulted, first in Tacoma and later in Seattle, told him this and offered a thousand suggestions about the way to handle the situation. A newspaper at Tacoma sounded the warning that Mr. Hughes was on inspection and that the people would pass judgment. The addresses by Mr. Hughes, however, except for the warlike declaration quoted, clung closely to the line he selected for his earlier utterances.

The crowds today were the largest encountered on the trip—not so large as those which Theodore Roosevelt addressed in 1912, but of a size that was impressive. The applause was generous. In the great stadium at Tacoma, where he talked in the afternoon, about 15,000 persons turned out to greet the candidate. Seattle's streets were thronged, and the Arena, where the ad-

Dissatisfied With His Speeches.

At Tacoma Mr. Hughes was introduced by Samuel A. Perkins, old-line Republican and member of the Executive Committee of the Republican National Committee. There were 100 Republicans and Progressives on the platform. In this section as in every other he has visited, Mr. Hughes avoided anything that might tend to political entanglement. He didn't arouse any great enthusiasm among the old-line leaders by his attitude, which was a matter of much comment here and in Tacoma.

The attack on the Wilson administration was received with mingled laughter and applause, but, if the Republican leaders are to be believed, it did not go far enough to satisfy all of the voters. The New York Times correspondent was told that the people were tired of hearing Mr. Hughes abuse the Wilson administration, and wanted to know in words of one syllable just what he intended to do.

"The addresses made by Mr. Hughes so far," said one Seattle Republican, "are far from what we expected. We looked for a more judicial summing up of the situation and a calm and deliberate statement of what Mr. Hughes would do to make conditions in the country better. Roosevelt might have satisfied the people with such talks, but Roosevelt can make such talks better than Mr. Hughes. We like Mr. Hughes and are going to vote for him, but we want to hear talk of a different kind."

In Tacoma the same story was heard. A man who is running for office on the Republican ticket, and who said Mr. Hughes would get 70 per cent. of the entire vote in the State, said that the people of Washington were looking for a more definite program from him rather than mere assaults on the Wilson Administration.

In Seattle tonight the first member of the Reception Committee met by the TIMES reporter offered his views with the greatest freedom.

"There is a lot of talk here," he said, "about the people being disappointed with the addresses which Mr. Hughes has made. They are getting tired of hearing him hammer and hammer at the Wilson Administration and want to hear more about himself. They want something more definite than general statements about upholding American honor and giving a good business administration. They are not interested so much either in being told that all citizens are human beings and should be treated as such. They want to know what he is going to do about it in so many words."

Uneasy Over His Independence.

Next in importance is the talk among the Republican old-line leaders about the addresses Mr. Hughes has made, in which he said he would put friends, party, and partisan expediency aside to serve his country. They admit that such talk sounds good when coming from the average political orator, but they say that when coming from Mr. Hughes it has a deeper meaning, because the leaders are satisfied that he means just what he says. They don't

Continued on Page 2

know just how much good it would do the country, but they do know what it would do to them. The method adopted by Mr. Hughes, that of treating leaders the same as any other citizens, has made a deep impression upon the organization.

Under the surface the campaign is not moving as enthusiastically as it might because of this situation. The old-line leaders who come out to join the tour party hang around for a time, get little or no satisfaction of the kind they want, and then mingle with the crowd or talk over their troubles with their friends.

In addition, a number of the leaders in this section are not greatly pleased with the stand Mr. Hughes has taken in regard to woman suffrage. They are frankly afraid of the opposition of the "wets," not in Washington, where prohibition is in force, but in other States, such as Illinois and New York. Washington went "dry" soon after suffrage was granted to the women.

Mr. Hughes made his principal address today at Tacoma. The crowd was a study in types, people flocked from city, farm, and lumber camp to see the nominee. In front of the platform were thirteen aged men with ear trumpets. They sat stolid throughout most of the meeting, although now and then some one of them would applause. The meeting was opened by a vocal solo, "Let Me as a Soldier Die."

This section of Washington is interested deeply in the tariff because of its lumber industry and Mr. Hughes devoted much of his address to that topic.

"My friends, if we are to succeed in competition with Europe," he said, "we must wisely and intelligently apply the Republican doctrine of protection to American enterprise. Our opponents do not believe in that doctrine. They never have believed in it."

"We have in the present Revenue bill a provision called the 'anti-dumping clause,' which reflects the dread of our opponents of that which is very sure to follow the ending of the European war and the return of the men now in the trenches to production. They said:

"We will protect American industry.' How do they go about it? The anti-dumping section is full of words. I have had some experience in dealing with statutes, and if that statute works it will be a tremendous surprise."

Mr. Hughes said the bill had a proviso attached "so big, and its jaws so enormous, that it practically swallowed that act."

The bill, he said, proved the bad faith of the Democratic party in regard to the tariff, as with proper protection for industry it would not be necessary.

The New York Times, August 30, 1916

SEES WAR IF HUGHES WINS.

Senator Reed Says President's Defeat Will Mean Notice to World.

WASHINGTON, Aug. 29.—Reviewing the record of the Democratic Administration, Senator Reed of Missouri told the Senate today that the Republican Party demanded a change, which, if granted by the people, would mean the precipitation of America into war and the undoing of national prosperity, built up by industrial, commercial and banking reforms during the term of President Wilson.

"If Mr. Hughes is to be elected to the Presidency," said Senator Reed, "then

it is notice to all the world that America has repudiated Wilson's policy for the Roosevelt-Hughes policy of war."

Senator Reed referred to Mr. Hughes's criticisms of the Administration policy and reviewed the utterances of Mr. Roosevelt since the war. He declared Mr. Hughes "in complete accord with a man who has persistently insisted we should have intervened against Germany when she invaded Belgium; in complete accord with a man who refers in coarse language to the President as a 'mollycoddle,' a man of 'weasel words'; in complete accord with a man who falsely asserts that we were bound by treaty to engage in the conflict against Germany; in complete accord with a man who demands universal military service and war preparation upon a scale not hitherto dreamed of."

Senator Reed invited the country to "explore that delightful country," which he said Mr. Hughes had characterized as a "Fool's Paradise." The Missouri Senator then gave figures to show that bank deposits increased in President Wilson's first three years 29.5 per cent., or \$5,985,464,675; that bank resources increased 37.6 per cent., or \$7,699,400,000, and that resources reached an aggregate of \$28,320,395,000.

"The actual increase under Wilson," Senator Reed said, "was nearly four times as great as under Roosevelt, and almost three times as great as under Taft."

HUGHES DENIES HIS POLICY MEANS WAR

Calls Democratic Assertion Preposterous and Says Firmness Would Insure Peace.

SPEAKS AT BRYAN'S HOME

And Alludes to Ex-Secretary's Alleged Lusitania Assurances to Dumba—Tour of "Corn Belt."

Special to The New York Times.

LINCOLN, Neb., Oct. 14. — Speaking here tonight in the home town of William J. Bryan, one-time Secretary of State in the Wilson Administration, Charles E. Hughes charged that what he called the policies of weakness and vacillation of which Messrs. Wilson and Bryan were the chief exponents, were the very things which, most of all, were likely to plunge this country into war. The doctrine of firmness which he stood for, Mr. Hughes said, marked the true path to peace.

The Republican nominee came to Nebraska faced by the charge spread broadcast that the success of the Republican Party would mean war. Such a charge, he said, was fit only for blind men. The country, he asserted, need never fear war if it stood firmly for its just rights; it need fear war only if by diplomatic misconduct and miserable weakness it permitted itself to face a situation where strife was inevitable.

An indirect reference to Mr. Bryan and the charge that he told the Austrian Ambassador that this Government did not mean what it said by the terms "strict accountability" was made in these words.

"It is no use deluding other nations with regard to our attitude or enabling them to suppose that we are not firm in what we say. That is a very serious situation. Firmness commands respect when it is firmness in respect to rights that are recognized and established or that would be recognized and established if firmly maintained. It is a mistake to suppose that throughout the world maintenance of known rights, with the sanction of force behind them, means war. It does not: it means peace, it means security. If you say in advance that you won't protect American citizens, you invite disaster to American citizens. If you say that you will protect them and that it is understood they will have the security to which they are entitled, the Great American nation will have the respect which it deserves to enjoy."

Answers Mr. Marshall.

Directing his attention to assertions made by Vice President Marshall, Mr. Hughes continued:

"I have heard that someone has been going through the State saying that a vote for me meant a vote for war. Did you ever hear a more preposterous proposition to present to men? Our friends on the other side seem to think that everybody who disagrees with them wants war. Well, that would be a very cheerful way for a blind man to consider the situation. Who wants war? I don't want war. Nobody who knows anything of the wastes and horrors of the struggle of arms wants war."

"I am a man of peace. I have been spending my life in maintaining peace. I desire to promote international peace. I do not desire war. I do not desire petty wars. I do not desire war in Mexico to satisfy a personal vindictiveness against a disliked ruler. I believe

in correct policies. They will keep us out of war. The sort of thing we have been having will not keep us out of war. It will embroil us in difficulty. It will embroil us in difficulty in Mexico."

"Do not talk to me about a policy of peace in the face of a record like that. I believe in peace maintained with honor and self-respect. I believe in peace in a world where we desire the friendship of all and all desire the friendship of this nation, a peace which recognizes and maintains the dignity of American citizenship."

"We have no situation in which responsible and careful conduct could not easily keep us out of war. Let us consult together to develop the instrumentalities of peace. Let us have our State Department, our diplomatic agencies, every means that we can develop in the interests of peaceful intercourse and the maintenance of our dignity among the nations. We deserve the respect of the world; we can have it. All we need is to secure our just rights and not to be misunderstood when we state them. That is the path of disaster that invites insult, that brings trouble, and sooner or later, with that edging up and edging up to see how much we will stand, the last step will have been taken and we will be embroiled. It is better to have it understood at the beginning, and then we will have peace and honor."



Assails Policy Toward Huerta.

Mr. Hughes further assailed President Wilson's policies in Mexico and took occasion to answer the assertion by the President that this country was ready to fight in a just cause. Referring to the President's attitude toward Huerta, he exclaimed:

"Was that a policy of peace? Is the alternative to that a policy of war? That was nothing but a threat of war. It is said that we are willing to fight for a just cause; that we are willing to fight for something that stirs the blood; that we are willing to fight for some great, noble purpose. Was this a great, noble purpose? Was this a great cause? Was this a defensible attitude?"

"I stand here to say—and I challenge contradiction—that that threat to make war upon that individual (Huerta) and to use whatever force was adequate to put him out of the Government, which, whether we recognized it or not, others had recognized, was utterly indefensible in law or in morals."

The Adamson Eight-Hour bill also was taken up by Mr. Hughes, and he referred to it as "gold brick legislation, sham and pretense." If the Executive stood firm, he said, against the rule of force as represented in the Adamson bill the American people would stand behind him, and "no group of labor or capital will wreak vengeance on the American people thus represented by a director of the moral forces of public opinion."

"You, of course, are not deceived by the remarks that are made by our opponents as to our present prosperity," Mr. Hughes said later in his speech. "You might as well talk to a drunken man of the bliss of intoxication. It is not a healthy condition, for we are under a very abnormal stimulus in this country. The country cannot live on that sort of a stimulus very long."

Found the Farmers Contented.

Mr. Hughes campaigned today in the "corn belt," where the Republican leaders were anxious that he place before the farmers a full exposition of his attitude on the peace issue. He found that the issue of war against peace had been made a big one by the Democrats. The farmers appeared to be prosperous and contented. They were demonstrative, however, when Mr. Hughes talked of the maintenance of American rights and coupled it with his belief as to the best manner in which to keep this country out of war.

The nominee found here that there was deep interest in local political conditions, an interest which perhaps overshadowed the national campaign. The prohibition issue is one of the features of the State fight. Indications are that the situation is very close, with the Democrats slightly in the lead.

During the day Mr. Hughes appeared at Falls City, Beatrice, Fairbury, and York, with the night address at Lincoln. He found large and attentive audiences at all of the stops. The Republican leaders, including Mr. Johnson, the nominee for Senator, say they will carry the State, but they are not making any flowery predictions.

Mr. Hughes will remain at the Lincoln Hotel until early Monday morning, when he will continue his tour of Nebraska with a night meeting at Omaha.

The New York Times, November 2, 1916

ADVERTISEMENT.

Ruck says:

**If you want honorable
Peace and continued
Prosperity
VOTE FOR WILSON**

**If you want war and all its
horrors
VOTE THE
HUGHES-ROOSEVELT
TICKET**

The New York Times, November 7, 1916

ADVERTISEMENT. ADVERTISEMENT. ADVERTISEMENT.

Re-elect Wilson To-day!

TO MEN WHO THINK!

For weeks your intelligence has been insulted by false statements contained in page advertisements paid for by the Republican National Committee and by members of the Republican Old Guard who waxed fat under a Republican tariff that worked all the time for their Republican pocketbooks and against yours.

These high priests of special privilege are trying to make you forget.

They want you to forget that they themselves were responsible for the Republican panics, the inevitable results of years under Republican tariffs—the panics of 1873, 1893, 1903, 1907, and 1913.

They want you to forget the want, the misery, the despair caused by these Republican panics!

They want you to forget the strikes and lockouts at Homestead, at Paterson, at Lawrence, at Fall River, at Cripple Creek, at Wilkesbarre under Republican rule.

They want you to forget the days when Republican tariffs worked with machine-like precision, when men and women who longed to do right were driven to acts of desperation in order to keep body and soul together.

Or---If You Will Remember---

They hope by talking of business disaster and unemployment to make you afraid to vote as your conscience and common sense dictate—FOR PRESIDENT WILSON.

But facts knock their misstatements cold.

If there was the slightest danger of a business let-up following the return of peace,

Would Henry Ford, a Republican and head of an industry employing 45,000 men, be supporting President Wilson?

Would George F. Johnson and H. B. Endicott, of The Endicott-Johnson Company, Republicans and owners of the largest shoe manufactory in the world, be supporting President Wilson?

Would Isador Jacobs, Independent and President of the California Canneries Company, the largest concern of its kind in America, be supporting President Wilson?

Would F. D. Underwood, Republican and President of the Erie Railroad, be supporting President Wilson?

Would Thomas A. Edison, Republican, the world's greatest inventor and employer of thousands of men, be supporting President Wilson?

Would the Iron Age, in its November, 1916, issue, say:

"The pig iron market of the past two weeks is practically without a parallel in the experience of present-day producers. The advances are unprecedented, in being due, not to a clamorous demand for iron for quick shipment, as in all previous excited markets, but to a simultaneous effort of buyers to cover far forward requirements—in many cases through the second half of 1917."

**If you want War and Panics,
Vote for Hughes with Roosevelt.**

**IF YOU WANT PEACE WITH HONOR
AND CONTINUED PROSPERITY**

Vote for Wilson!

It's Up To You and Your Conscience

Democratic National Committee.

Selected Television Advertisements

* The transcripts that appear in the section below consist of those that were not discussed at length in the paper.

1964 Presidential Election

Candidate: Lyndon Johnson

Title: "Merely Another Weapon",¹²⁰

Transcript:

Male Narrator: "On October 24th, 1963, Barry Goldwater said of the nuclear bomb, "Merely another weapon." Merely another weapon? Vote for President Johnson. The stakes are too high for you to stay home."

Candidate: Lyndon Johnson

Title: "Our President",¹²¹

Transcript:

Male Narrator: "The Constitution does not tell us what kind of man a President must be. It says he must be thirty-five years old and a natural-born citizen. It leaves the rest to the wisdom of the voters. Our presidents have been reasonable men. They have listened. They have thought clearly and spoken carefully. They have cared about people, for the pieces of paper on which they sign their names change people's lives. Most of all, in the final loneliness of this room they have been prudent. They have known that the decisions they make here can change the course of history or end history altogether. In crisis and tragedy, we have found men worthy of this office. We have been fortunate. Vote for President Johnson on November 3rd. The stakes are too high for you to stay home."

Candidate: Lyndon Johnson

Title: "Ice Cream",¹²²

Transcript:

Female Narrator: "Do you know what people used to do? They used to explode atomic bombs in the air. Now children should have lots of vitamin A and calcium, but they shouldn't have any strontium 90 or cesium 137. These things come from atomic bombs, and they are radioactive. They can make you die. Do you know what people finally did? They got together and signed a nuclear test ban treaty. And then the radioactive poison started to go away."

¹²⁰ "Commercials - 1964 - Merely Another Weapon," *The Living Room Candidate*, Web. 14 Oct. 2010, <http://www.livingroomcandidate.org/commercials/1964/merely-another-weapon>.

¹²¹ "Commercials - 1964 - Our President," *The Living Room Candidate*, Web. 14 Oct. 2010, <http://www.livingroomcandidate.org/commercials/1964/our-president>.

¹²² "Commercials - 1964 - Ice Cream," *The Living Room Candidate*, Web. 14 Oct. 2010, <http://www.livingroomcandidate.org/commercials/1964/ice-cream>.

But now there's a man who wants to be president of the United States, and he doesn't like this treaty. He fought against it. He even voted against it. He wants to go on testing more bombs. His name is Barry Goldwater, and if he is elected they might start testing all over again.

Male Narrator: Vote for President Johnson on November 3rd. The stakes are too high for you to stay home."

1980 Presidential Election

Candidate: Jimmy Carter

Title: "Peace"¹²³

Transcript:

CARTER: I'm grateful that I can look back on my first term and see four years of peace.

[TEXT: Tuscumbia, Alabama; Labor Day, 1980]

And that's what we want for the next four years, is peace. But I'd like to remind you that the peace we enjoy is based on American military strength and American moral strength.

MALE NARRATOR: As the first President from the deep South in 140 years, President Carter personifies and carries to the nation and to the world a special view of the ancient relationship between making war and preserving the peace.

CARTER: We Southerners believe in the nobility of courage on the battlefield and because we understand the cost of war, we also believe in the nobility of peace.

MALE NARRATOR: President Carter. A military man and a man of peace.

Candidate: Ronald Reagan

Title: "Peace"¹²⁴

MALE NARRATOR: Very slowly, a step at a time, the hope for world peace erodes. Slowly, we once slid into Korea, slowly, into Vietnam. And now, the Persian Gulf beckons.

Jimmy Carter's weak, indecisive leadership has vacillated before events in Angola, Ethiopia, and Afghanistan. Jimmy Carter still doesn't know that it takes strong leadership to keep the peace. Weak leadership will lose it.

[TEXT: July 17, 1980]

REAGAN: Of all the objectives we seek, first and foremost is the establishment of lasting world peace. We know only too well that war comes not when the forces of freedom are strong. It is

¹²³ "Commercials - 1980 - Peace (Democrat)."

¹²⁴ "Commercials - 1980 - Peace (Republican)."

when they are weak that tyrants are tempted. Four times in my lifetime, America has gone to war...

MALE NARRATOR: The message Ronald Reagan has carried to America is one of strength.

[TEXT: October 19, 1980]

REAGAN: Peace is made by the fact of strength - economic, military, and strategic. Peace is lost when such strength disappears, or - just as bad - is seen by an adversary as disappearing.

MALE NARRATOR: The message Ronald Reagan has carried to America is one of restraint.

REAGAN (voice-over): I have repeatedly said in this campaign that I will sit down with the Soviet Union for as long as it takes to negotiate a balanced and equitable arms limitation agreement, designed to improve the prospects for peace.

MALE NARRATOR: The message Ronald Reagan has carried to America is one of confidence.

REAGAN (voice-over): Whatever else history may say about my candidacy, I hope it will be recorded that I appealed to our best hopes, not our worst fears; to our confidence, rather than our doubts; to the facts, not to fantasies. And these three - hope, confidence, and facts - are at the heart of my vision of peace.

MALE NARRATOR: Strength, restraint, inspired leadership. The time is now: Reagan for President.

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