

“MARTYR TO THE CAUSE:”¹
THE GOLDWATER CAMPAIGN OF 1964

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It was a bright Friday morning, and “open Western skies” dominated the landscape of Arizona.² It was January 3, 1964, and reporters were swarming all over this spacious home in Paradise City, a suburb of Phoenix. Hobbling forward on crutches, with a cast on his foot, a handsome man in his mid-fifties made his way towards a podium, as an American flag fluttered in the breeze behind him. On this warm winter day in his home state of Arizona, Senator Barry Goldwater declared his candidacy for President of the United States of America, asserting to the assembled media his dedication to conservative principles, and boldly stating “I will offer a choice, not an echo.”

Nine months of campaigning later, Barry Goldwater was home again in Arizona as the votes rolled in from across the country. On November 4, he woke up to one of the largest landslides in American presidential election history. Johnson defeated Goldwater by 16 million votes, winning 61% of the popular vote and capturing the electoral college by the enormous margin of 486 to 52.³ How had the man once described by *Time* magazine as “the hottest political figure this side of Jack Kennedy,” whose book *The Conscience of a Conservative* had sold half a million

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copies in a matter of months, been blown out on election night.²⁴ Many factors contributed to this, the Republican Party's biggest loss in a presidential race, but Goldwater's crushing defeat was due primarily to the effect of Kennedy's assassination upon the country and its creation of a deep sense of defeatism within Goldwater himself, the misrepresentation of Goldwater and his positions by the media, the inexperience of the Republican campaign staff, Goldwater's blunt "shoot from the hip" style, and the brutal Republican infighting during the primaries.

Before turning to how each of these factors brought about Johnson's landslide, it would behoove us to ask the question: Why was the election of 1964 important? To many it is seen as a footnote of postwar American history, lacking the drama of the tightly contested race of 1960 or the conflict of the turbulent election of 1968. Goldwater's campaign was overshadowed by Kennedy's death mere months before its beginning and by the Great Society legislation as the year progressed. Though overlooked at the time, historians now view the election of 1964 as the beginning of many fundamental changes in American politics, changes which are continuing today. First and foremost, 1964 marked the emergence of the conservatives in national politics, and began the surge of the New Right to dominance of the GOP, in the words of the *National Review's* William Rusher, "an historic turning point."²⁵ Richard Nixon's two electoral victories and the Reagan and Bush years of the 1980s were both outgrowths of Goldwaterism. Nixon's victory in 1968 occurred as a result of conservative reaction to the conflict of the 1960s (not to mention the South's newly conservative voters), and Reagan began his political career with his "Rendezvous with Destiny" speech in 1964. 1964 was truly the "Woodstock of American conservatism."²⁶ Today many Republicans look back on Goldwater's campaign as the genesis of their modern party; as commentator and frequent presidential candidate Pat Buchanan described it, "a first love, ... an experience that will never recede from memory."²⁷ Though the election of 1964 was a crushing defeat, it foreshadowed great things for conservatism; as conservative Texas Senator John Tower said, "The '64 campaign was the Alamo before San Jacinto."²⁸ Also vitally important to the Republi-

can Party was its first taste of success in the South, an area it had not won since Reconstruction, a century before. Today the Dixiecrats are a thing of the past, and Southerners like Newt Gingrich, Trent Lott, and Dick Armey form the leadership of the GOP. But until 1964, the Republican Party had never, in 110 years of existence, captured the Deep South. Georgia, one of five Deep South states that Goldwater won on that first Tuesday in November, had never voted Republican in its history. The driving force behind this conversion of the South, conservative opposition to the Civil Rights Act of 1964, also resulted in the swift exodus of blacks from the GOP. Seemingly overnight, the party of Lincoln had become the party of segregation. With the rise of Republican power in the South came a fundamental shift of the political base of the Republican Party. The GOP had always been based in the East; Goldwater himself noted that even Republicans from middle America, such as Tom Dewey of Michigan and Wendell Wilkie of Indiana, had been required to make connections with the Eastern elite, especially on Wall Street.⁹ The Republican National Convention of 1964 showed the rejection of the Eastern, liberal wing of the GOP, personified by Governors Rockefeller of New York and Scranton of Pennsylvania, and the rise to dominance of the Deep South and the Southwest. With increased migration to this area, known as the Sun Belt, in the wake of World War II, its economic and political power grew. Writing ten years later, in his book *The Making of the New Majority Party*, William Rusher described the geographic shift of his party, as shown by Goldwater's nomination: "It demonstrated, with mathematical finality, that a Republican did not need the support of New York, Massachusetts or Pennsylvania to win the party's nomination. He didn't even need that mysterious entity called 'Wall Street'; there were new concentrations of financial power—in Houston, Los Angeles, and elsewhere—that had money, too, and were prepared to put it where their mouths were."¹⁰ Lastly, politics itself showed a shift as advertising and the media entered the Information Age. Attack ads were an important factor in Johnson's overwhelming victory, and were to become even more vital as time passed, culminating in Bush's famous Willie Horton ads in 1988. In 1964, CBS's Charles Kuralt

went so far as to joke that the campaign was not “between President Johnson and Senator Goldwater” but between their expensive advertising firms.¹¹ More than that, in a nation of 200 million people, it had become obvious that a candidate could not merely “press the flesh” and kiss babies for half a year. To get his message out to the greatest possible number of Americans, a politician was forced to use television and radio. Goldwater himself signaled this change when he stated “I’m not one of those baby-kissing, hand-shaking, blintz-eating candidates.”¹² Far from being an already-decided election that merely gave Johnson a popular mandate for the Great Society, the campaign of 1964 gave powerful omens of three vital changes in American politics.

It would be no exaggeration to say that when John F. Kennedy was murdered in Dallas on November 22, 1963, Barry Goldwater’s (and indeed the GOP’s) hopes for the presidency died with him. Before Kennedy’s assassination, Goldwater was being actively drafted by his fellow conservatives; in Goldwater’s words, “if ever there was a true draft, this was it.”¹³ Led by political operative and former teacher F. Clifton White, a group of twenty-two men, including two Congressmen and *National Review* publisher William Rusher, met for the first time on October 18, 1961, to discuss an organization to draft Goldwater for the Republican nomination for president. Though almost penniless and initially lacking popular support, these men persevered and, within two years, could call themselves a powerful Republican organization. When White called a press conference on April 8, 1963, in Washington, D.C., White’s national Draft Goldwater Committee could claim committees and chairmen in thirty-three states. Meanwhile, supporters, including Senator Norris Cotton of New Hampshire, Senator John Tower of Texas, Representative Bob Dole of Kansas, and Representative Melvin Laird of Wisconsin, were urging Goldwater to declare his intent to seek the Republican nomination.¹⁴ Coupled with Goldwater’s position as an influential Senator, and the popularity of *The Conscience of a Conservative*, Goldwater appeared to have the Republican nomination for the taking.

As the summer of 1963 drew to a close, all signs indicated a coming Goldwater-Kennedy contest. An Associated Press poll, taken on November 2, showed that 85% of local Republican leaders thought Goldwater would be the strongest possible candidate against Kennedy.¹⁵ By October, 1963, Goldwater began to give indications that he intended to run, such as having all his previous speeches and remarks recorded, in case they would be needed later.¹⁶ Though ideological opponents, the Arizona Senator and the President were personal friends, and they talked often of campaigning across the country together in 1964. It is often forgotten that although Kennedy was a popular president while in office, the “legend of Camelot” did not truly begin until after his death. Kennedy would have been tough to beat, but it would not have been an impossibility, as Goldwater’s immense popularity and the extremely narrow margin of Kennedy’s victory in the previous election attested to. In fact, it was reported that the last words out of Kennedy’s mouth as he and Johnson left their Dallas hotel on that fateful day in November were: “Well, Lyndon, I guess we can carry Massachusetts and Texas.”¹⁷

Within hours, Goldwater’s friend and likely opponent was dead, and the Senator’s attitude toward a presidential run had changed from reluctant acceptance to steadfast refusal. What finalized Goldwater’s initial decision not to run was a harsh, blatantly false media attack upon him. When Kennedy was shot, Goldwater was attending his mother-in-law’s funeral in Muncie, Indiana. CBS Evening News’ Walter Cronkite told viewers that Goldwater would miss the President’s funeral because he was in Indiana making a political speech.¹⁸ Though Cronkite later apologized and retracted his comments, the damage had been done, and Goldwater had been given his first taste of the savaging he would receive at the hands of the media. He bluntly told his wife Peggy “To heck with this Presidential thing.”¹⁹ In the days following Kennedy’s death, countless rumors circulated blaming the assassination upon right-wing extremists, and Goldwater by extension. Even Goldwater campaign aide Dean Burch was worried that Kennedy had been shot by “some nut with a Goldwater sticker on his forehead.”²⁰

It wasn't just the loss of his friend and opponent, nor was it just the media attack that drove Goldwater to declare he wouldn't run. In his days in the Senate in the late 1950s, he had come to view Lyndon Baines Johnson, then Senate Majority leader, as the worst kind of politician. Despite his public statements of support following the assassination, he described Johnson as "a dirty fighter," "treacherous," and "a hypocrite."²¹ Goldwater was well aware of the lengths to which Johnson would go to remain in power, and as he was to declare in January, he wanted a campaign of "principles...not personalities."²² He desired a true debate of conservatism versus the Big Government liberalism of the New Deal and the Great Society, not a mudslinging, personal fight with Johnson. Goldwater wrote later "The overwhelming reason for the decision [not to run] was my personal and political contempt for Lyndon Johnson." Though he kept his loathing for Johnson private, it always simmered just below the surface. Months later, as he gave one last speech on election night, Goldwater said softly, "If Jack were here, we would have had a good campaign."²³

With Kennedy gone, Goldwater felt a deep sense of defeatism about the upcoming election. He was firmly convinced that "the American people were not ready for three presidents in little more than a year."²⁴ Goldwater said he did not want to be a candidate, and it was only the determined efforts of his fellow conservatives that drew him back into the fray. On December 8, Goldwater met with his closest advisers and allies to detail why he was abandoning a run for the presidency. A race with Johnson would prove dull and smear-filled, and he had no desire to enter a campaign he knew he was bound to lose; he bluntly told the assembled conservatives "Our cause is lost." When Goldwater was done speaking, his ardent supporter Senator Norris Cotton spoke, telling the Arizonan that little had changed; it was, he said, Goldwater's duty to lead the conservative forces, just as DeGaulle had taken charge of France as the Third Republic crumbled. Cotton's eloquent speech changed Goldwater's mind, showing him that he must lead the conservative movement he had started; as he put it "I had planted the flag on the hilltop, now I must defend that flag."²⁵

Though he had decided to enter the race, Goldwater was still firmly convinced that he would be defeated in November. He told his wife at Christmas that he had no desire for the presidency, just a firm need to see the conservatives gain a voice and offer an alternative to Big Government liberalism. He told her, "We'd lose the election but win the party." His decisions throughout the entire campaign were marked by an overriding belief that he would lose, and therefore he might as well "be myself." Having no illusions about his chances of winning the election, Goldwater was determined from the outset to do things his way. As he wrote in his autobiography three and a half decades later, it was "my own conviction that, barring a political miracle, I'd lose the race against Johnson."²⁶

This belief colored all of Goldwater's political decisions. When giving his January press conference, he ignored all the conventional wisdom and did it his way. Just months after Kennedy's death, the health of the chief executive was a real concern, yet Goldwater chose not to wait until his foot had healed from an operation and his cast could be removed. Giving the press conference in Arizona, and on a Friday, was foolish because it deprived Goldwater of greater media access. Though the decision to open the campaign in Phoenix can perhaps be explained away as sentimental, the decision (against the urging of his aides) to announce at a time when it would make the Saturday papers, the least read in the nation, was pointless. Goldwater could have merely waited a day and been front page news in the Sunday papers, the most read in the country.²⁷ Another example of this defeatism in action was the Senator's selection of friends and Arizona politicians, dubbed the "Arizona Mafia" by the media, as his campaign staff. Goldwater wrote that he picked these men, few of whom had any experience in national politics, because "I could honorably ask friends to walk down a dead-end road with me." He felt that it would be wrong to ask professional operatives to "accept a large responsibility in a doomed campaign."²⁸ The selection of the Arizona Mafia, responsible for inexperienced mismanagement of the Republican campaign, was a hidden admission of Goldwater's fatalism about the upcoming election. Months after

choosing his campaign staff, Goldwater made another vital decision about his campaign, and once more it was based on his defeatism. In selecting Representative William E. Miller of New York as his running mate, Goldwater gave one more sign that he would like nothing better than to throw in the towel. Miller came from New York, an Eastern state Goldwater never had a real hope of winning, and despite being Catholic, Miller would receive few of their votes, committed as they were to supporting the successor of the beloved President Kennedy. Miller, like his running mate, had few illusions about his chances in November. One newspaperman covering the campaign told him "I'll bet you a hundred dollars you guys lose the election—and give you five to one odds." Miller quickly replied "I may be a gambler, but I'm not crazy enough to bet on this election."²⁹ Miller was plucked from almost complete obscurity as a congressman from a small New York district to be a major party's nominee for vice president because after the bruising primary battles Goldwater refused to mend ties with his former opponents, liberal GOP leaders like Governors Rockefeller, Scranton, and Romney of Michigan. Moreover, as Goldwater said admiringly, "One reason I chose Miller is that he drives Johnson nuts."³⁰ Though Miller did a good job as the campaign's "hatchetman," tackling subjects Goldwater shouldn't or wouldn't, he, like the Arizona Mafia and the mishandled January press conference, was not the best possible choice, but one motivated by Goldwater's defeatism and desire to go down his way. Though he defended his actions by saying later "We would have lost even if Abraham Lincoln had come back and campaigned for us," Goldwater's pessimism did serious harm to his campaign.³¹

The Arizona Mafia were another important reason Goldwater was blown out that November. When Goldwater began seriously contemplating a presidential run, towards the end of 1963, he ignored White's powerful grass-roots Draft Goldwater Committee and instead chose to build his campaign staff from among his friends and politicians from Arizona. Though he reported being "impressed" with White's group when they first met, on November 12, 1962 in Washington, Goldwater not only refused to endorse White but told him to cease his efforts.³² But

White persisted and when Goldwater did decide to run, the Draft Goldwater Committee was a substantial (though underappreciated) part of the drive to the nomination. When the campaign began, White was given the minor job “coordinator of field operations,” even though “his political acumen was unmatched in the Goldwater camp,” and despite the fact that it was White’s groundwork in 1962 and 1963 that enabled Goldwater to attract delegates quickly.³³ Though Goldwater conceded that White was “an excellent professional,” he remained removed from the most important planning of the campaign because he was not a friend or close associate of the senator.

Not only were White and his experienced comrades isolated from the inner workings of the Goldwater campaign, but the people running the show were vastly inferior in skill, knowledge, influence, and contacts. Goldwater’s close friend, Phoenix lawyer Denison Kitchel, was named campaign manager of the senatorial campaign in 1963, and then took over the presidential campaign when Goldwater entered the race in January. Kitchel didn’t desire the job, and he later told Goldwater, “Barry, I don’t think the staff knew what we were doing. I blame myself a lot. We had no background, no expertise. A great deal of my performance was inadequate. We didn’t play according to the rules because we didn’t know the rules.”³⁴ Senator John Tower, one of Goldwater’s strongest supporters, called Kitchel a “neophyte” who had “no real sensitivity for politics.”³⁵ Kitchel’s complete lack of political knowledge was blatantly obvious, and a particular story was soon making the rounds among Republicans in Washington. Kitchel was once told to bring a particular problem to Arthur Summerfield, to which he responded “I’ll do it if you say so, but who is Arthur Summerfield?” Most Republicans found it funny that Goldwater’s manager didn’t know the name of the man who had been national chairman of the Republican Party and Eisenhower’s Postmaster General.³⁶

Goldwater would have been much less affected by Kitchel’s lack of political skill if he had had someone else in his organization who possessed national political experience. Before he alienated

Clifton White, however, Goldwater dispensed with his only close friend with true political skill. Steve Shadegg had managed Goldwater's successful 1952 and 1958 Senate races, and he had skillfully handled the Senator's abortive bid for the Republican nomination in 1960. There were three theories for Goldwater's break with the man who had once been his best political operative. It was said by some that Goldwater was angry about Shadegg's attempted run for the other Arizona Senate seat in 1962. Shadegg had talked as though he had Goldwater's endorsement and full backing, and Goldwater "hit the roof." Others said that the break was a result of a feud between the two over the syndicated newspaper column they co-authored.³⁷ Shadegg himself said the split was the result of his public relations work for the Salt River Project, a company providing water and power to much of Arizona. The Salt River Project was engaging in a highly public feud with rival power provider Arizona Public Service, and, according to Shadegg, Goldwater had no wish to have his campaign thrust into the conflict.³⁸ Whatever the reason, the removal of Shadegg, a man with national experience and special knowledge of the Sun Belt states, was a severe blow to the campaign.

The problems of the Arizona Mafia were not confined to the absence of Shadegg and Kitchel's lack of experience, however. The campaign's second most important man, Richard Kleindienst, was an Arizona politician whose only national experience was as a member of the Arizona delegation to the 1960 Republican National Convention.³⁹ Kleindienst, whom Goldwater appointed director of field operations, was described by a contemporary as a "Western cowboy roughneck: tactless, boisterous, and professionally profane in two languages (English and Navajo)."⁴⁰ When Goldwater called him and offered him the job of director of field operations, Kleindienst bluntly asked, "What the hell's that?" Press secretary Tony Smith also had no knowledge of politics outside of Goldwater's senatorial races, and Kitchel's assistant, Dean Burch, had only been involved in Goldwater's most recent reelection and in the 1958 Arizona gubernatorial campaign.⁴¹ Chief speechwriter Karl Hess, hand-picked by Goldwater, was a *Newsweek* writer with no political experience.⁴² Indeed, the only member of the Arizona

Mafia to have any real national political experience was former Eisenhower staffer Ed McCabe, who held the relatively insignificant post of director of research with the Goldwater campaign.⁴³

The inexperience and incompetence of the Arizona Mafia were serious impediments to Goldwater's campaign, but even more serious was the malice of Bill Baroody. Baroody, the resident intellectual on the campaign staff, was a former Democrat and the head of the American Enterprise Institute. Though he brought some measure of intellectual respectability to the campaign, Baroody was power hungry and jealous, a man Kitchel called "a real Machiavellian type, a schemer" who had intense feelings of "possessiveness" about his place in the campaign.⁴⁴ In September 1963, shortly after Baroody had joined the campaign, an event occurred in Washington which was to have far reaching negative consequences for Goldwater and his campaign. William F. Buckley, Jr., the powerful founder of *National Review*, and his colleague Brent Bozell (who had also helped Goldwater write *The Conscience of a Conservative*) met with the Senator and his closest aides, Baroody and Kitchel, to discuss campaign contributions. Goldwater told them he would get back to them, and the issue seemed postponed. Two days later, however, the *New York Times* ran a story on the supposedly-secret meeting, which began with "The Goldwater for President ship has just repelled a boarding party from the forces who supposedly occupy the narrow territory to the right of the Arizona Senator."⁴⁵ As a result of this humiliation, Buckley and Bozell, both named in the article, drifted away from the Goldwater campaign and offered it no formal support. Kitchel and Goldwater later became convinced that Baroody had "slammed the door" on a threat to his power by leaking the story to the press.⁴⁶ The loss of Buckley and Bozell meant the loss of a formidable national magazine, skilled Republican strategists, and campaign funding, in short, a disaster for Goldwater and his campaign, one which would hurt them in the bruising primary fight that followed.

The Republican primaries were to bring together three fundamental reasons for Goldwater's landslide loss in November: Goldwater's blunt, seemingly thoughtless manner of speaking on

the stump, media misrepresentation of Goldwater's positions on controversial issues, and the strong attacks inflicted upon Goldwater by his fellow Republicans during the primaries. The primaries started badly; as Goldwater put it, "The New Hampshire primary was a lesson in how not to run a campaign."⁴⁷ Booked for eighteen hours of appearances a day, Goldwater was constantly speaking off the cuff, and it was here that his blunt style was to get him into trouble with the media, and, more importantly, the voters. While speaking to reporters, he said "it made sense to me to permit the commander of NATO forces some discretion in the use of nuclear weapons," a position that had been in practice since the Eisenhower Administration. Goldwater made the mistake of assuming that this was common knowledge; moreover, a reporter made the word "commander" plural, suggesting that Goldwater carelessly advocated allowing any young American colonel to use nuclear weapons at his discretion.⁴⁸ The image of Goldwater as trigger-happy and careless with nuclear weapons was to dog him for the rest of the campaign, and it was particularly negative in an America still psychologically recovering from standing at the brink of Armageddon during the Cuban Missile Crisis.

Also introduced in New Hampshire was the charge that Goldwater was out to destroy Social Security. In Concord, the state's capital, Goldwater told reporters he favored making it voluntary. The next day, the *Concord Monitor's* front page began with the headline: GOLDWATER SETS GOALS: END SOCIAL SECURITY.⁴⁹ In New Hampshire, the state with the second largest percentage of elderly residents, the line was quickly spread by Goldwater's opponents. Not only that, but a day after the headline, all New Hampshire Social Security recipients received, courtesy of Governor Nelson Rockefeller of New York, a copy of the article. Considering that the names of Social Security recipients are supposed to be confidential, "The Rockefeller campaigners either were marvelously efficient or had advance information that such a headline would be used."⁵⁰ Rockefeller had lost a great deal of popularity as a result of his recent divorce and remarriage to a woman he had had an affair with while married, Margaretta Fidler Murphy. As a result, the New Hampshire primary was won by

Henry Cabot Lodge, a man not even on the ballot or even in the country at the time (he was U.S. Ambassador to Saigon at the time). Goldwater polled a distant second, and many claimed he was finished.⁵¹

Goldwater recovered though, and his inexperienced staff learned from some of their mistakes in New Hampshire. They lessened the length of his campaign stops, reducing the chance their candidate would blurt out controversial comments as he had in New Hampshire. More importantly, Clif White was brought back after New Hampshire, and he was appointed codirector of field operations, together with Kleindienst. Using his grass-roots strength, White was able to quickly capture the delegates from Oklahoma, North Carolina, Kansas, and Tennessee, and build support in the South.⁵² Ignoring insignificant primaries like Oregon, Goldwater was soon on pace to capture the nomination. In California, Goldwater saw a chance to rid himself of his most persistent rival, Rockefeller, once and for all. Rockefeller saw this too, and told his staff that, in the words of his public relations head, Stuart Spencer, “We had to destroy Barry Goldwater as a member of the human race.”⁵³ Rockefeller threw attack ad after attack ad at his opponent, harping on the issues of nuclear irresponsibility and Goldwater’s desire to “destroy” Social Security. Goldwater responded with his real strength: grass-roots movements. Young Republicans, Young Americans for Freedom, the remains of White’s Draft Goldwater Committees, and members of the John Birch Society were among the eight thousand who turned out for one massive canvassing of half a million homes in Los Angeles on May 23.⁵⁴ Yet the very next day, Goldwater was once more put on the defensive. While on the ABC-TV show *Issues and Answers*, Goldwater impetuously remarked that a good way to stop North Vietnam from receiving arms would be “defoliation of the forest by low-yield atomic devices.”⁵⁵ Lyndon Baines Johnson felt no need to attack Goldwater for his comments, as he later wrote, “He was clearly isolating himself from the majority of voters.”⁵⁶ The story made all the front pages, but Goldwater’s team had become skilled in damage control, and Barry Goldwater won the California primary by 58,000 votes.

As the Republican convention and Goldwater's seemingly inevitable nomination drew near, the media became even more strident in their denunciations of him. Many in the media, and even a few Republicans, criticized Goldwater's ties to the John Birch Society, a far-right group that denounced Eisenhower as a "Communist dupe" and said the U. S. government was "sixty to eighty percent Communist."⁵⁷ *The New Republic* managed to turn harmless family fun into a serious political issue when it reported: "Barry Goldwater opened the last month of his wait for the Republican nomination by allowing his son-in-law-elect to throw him into the family swimming pool. In theory he embodies all our stern and unfashionable principles; by nature, he defers to all our slack and modern heresies, of which the most pervasive is the notion that Father Knows Least."⁵⁸ Even worse than *The New Republic's* repeated assaults, however, was CBS News reporter Daniel Schorr's broadcast from Berlin in July. Goldwater had gone there to visit a friend in the military and while there, the Senator had granted a brief interview to the magazine *Der Spiegel*. Schorr reported it this way: "It is now clear that Senator Goldwater's interview with *Der Spiegel* with its hard line appealing to right-wing elements in Germany was only the start of a move to link up with his opposite numbers in Germany." Schorr also said that Goldwater was planning a trip to Berchtesgaden, Hitler's Bavarian retreat. As one of Goldwater's biographers later wrote, "The implications were obvious: the grandson of the Jewish peddler was in league with neo-Nazis and an admirer of Der Führer."⁵⁹

When the Republican National Convention finally came to the Cow Palace in San Francisco, it offered little solace to the beleaguered Goldwater. His liberal GOP opponents, primarily Governors Rockefeller, Romney, and Scranton, united in one last effort to stop him. They pooled their resources, and Scranton circulated a vicious letter to Goldwater that stated, among other things, "You have too often prescribed nuclear war as a solution to a troubled world...You have too often stood for irresponsibility in the serious question of racial holocaust...Goldwaterism has come to stand for being afraid to condemn right-wing extremists."⁶⁰ A furious Goldwater rejected all thoughts of compromise with the

liberal wing of the party, and Scranton, who had once been a possible vice-presidential candidate, was pushed out of the scene. Conflict was in the air, and Rockefeller and other moderates who took to the podium were booed. Norman Mailer said the convention was “murderous in mood...Chimeras of fascism hung like fogbanks...a mystical communion in the sound even as Sieg Heil used to offer its mystical communion.” When Rockefeller tried to quiet the crowd, ABC’s Sam Donaldson reported, “The ‘bund’ booed louder.”⁶¹ Most stunning of all to America was Goldwater’s acceptance speech, in which he boldly declared to the nation, “I would remind you that extremism in the defense of liberty is no vice and let me remind you also that moderation in the pursuit of justice is no virtue.”⁶²

With the conventions in San Francisco and Atlantic City done, both Johnson and Goldwater threw themselves into the campaign. With little time and two hundred million Americans, both candidates employed extensive television advertising. Johnson’s young aide Bill Moyers created two devastating “bomb” ads that attacked Goldwater as a “nuclear madman.”⁶³ The first showed a young girl plucking a daisy, while a military voice in the background counted down to zero. The screen burst into flame, and the girl was enveloped by a mushroom cloud. Johnson’s voice then gave a brief speech. A week later, the second “bomb” commercial was shown. This time, a little girl was licking an ice cream cone as a female voice told her that once radioactive fallout from testing had killed children, but a treaty had been signed to prevent that. Barry Goldwater, the woman said, had voted against the treaty. The ad ended like its predecessor, with the words “Vote for President Johnson on November third. The stakes are too high for you to stay home.”⁶⁴ Goldwater rejected his campaign’s attempt at a similar low blow. His advertisers had created a television ad featuring strip shows, black riots, and other signs of moral degeneracy. Goldwater canceled the ad, called *The Choice*, because of its racism.⁶⁵ Both candidates tacitly agreed not to discuss the issues of civil rights or the war in Vietnam, because both felt these highly emotional issues would further divide the nation.

When the results flowed in during the early morning hours of November 4, 1963, the predicted landslide was coming true. Goldwater won his home state of Arizona by less than one percent of the vote. Due to having expressed his desire to sell the TVA while in Knoxville, Tennessee, Goldwater lost that state too. Out of fifty states, Goldwater won a grand total of six: Alabama, Arizona, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, and South Carolina.⁶⁶

When one considers all of the dilemmas Goldwater faced, the more important question is actually: "How did Goldwater manage to win five states?" The answer to this question is actually fairly simple. While his grass-roots organizing was important to his success, it was Goldwater's stand on civil rights that allowed him to win more than Arizona.

Goldwater had long been opposed to racial prejudice. He had desegregated the lunch counters of Phoenix and the Arizona Air National Guard.⁶⁷ He opposed the Civil Rights Act of 1964, because, he said, its articles on public accommodations were unconstitutional and gave the federal government too much power. Goldwater became the only Republican Senator to vote against the act. Many saw his vote as being part of a Republican "Southern strategy." Goldwater understood this, and said when he cast his vote, "If my vote is misconstrued, let it be, and let me suffer the consequences."⁶⁸

Regardless of his motivation, Goldwater's opposition to the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was to bear serious political dividends. Goldwater lost the entire black vote, which had once been fairly evenly split between the Republicans and Democrats, and he also lost the votes of many whites sympathetic to the civil rights movement, but most of these sympathetic whites were in the Northeast, an area Goldwater's campaign had written off as being lost to the liberals. The gains among Southern whites more than offset any other losses. After signing the Civil Rights Act of 1964 into law, Johnson admitted to an aide that he had "delivered the South to the Republican Party for a long time to come." According to columnist Robert Novak, conservatives agreed in 1964 to follow a set of guidelines, including: "Policy A: Soft-pedal civil rights.

While stopping short of actually endorsing racial segregation, forget all the sentimental tradition of the party of Lincoln. Because the Negro and Jewish votes are irrevocably tied to the Democrats anyway, this agnostic policy won't lose votes among the groups most sensitive to Negro rights. But it might work wonders in attracting white southerners into the Republican Party, joining white Protestants in other sections of the country as hard-core Republicans."⁶⁹ In particular, the policy did a great job of attracting the votes of poor Southern whites, doubling the Republican vote among poor whites in much of Georgia and South Carolina. Though Johnson took anywhere from 94% to 99% of the black vote, Goldwater was supported so much more heavily among white voters that he won five states in the cradle of segregation. Many Republicans were surprised to include racist Southerners among the party of Lincoln and emancipation. At national Republican meetings in 1963 and 1964, northern Republicans were shocked to hear Southerners carrying on "boisterous conversations about 'niggers' and 'nigger lovers.'"⁷⁰ Despite attracting racists and segregationists in droves, the Republicans had broken the Democratic stranglehold on the South.

After his presidential campaign, Goldwater returned to the Senate, where he served for an additional twenty years. It would be very hard to argue that Goldwater could have won the election of 1964. Even if the media had supported him, even if the Arizona Mafia had possessed more political experience and savvy, he would still have been up against a popular incumbent who had been in office barely a year. If so many factors had not been against Goldwater's campaign, he could have given LBJ a close race. As it was, Goldwater only managed to capture six states because of his stance on civil rights. Senator Barry Goldwater saw his campaign as a crusade, not only for the presidency, but also for the future of the Republican Party. While he failed in his quest to become President, he undoubtedly succeeded in reshaping the politics of America.

- ¹ Robert Alan Goldberg, Barry Goldwater (New Haven, 1995) p. 210
- ² Edited by Harold Faber, The Road to the White House (New York, 1965) pp. 15-16
- ³ Goldberg, p. 232
- ⁴ Barry M. Goldwater, With No Apologies (New York, 1979) p. 162
- ⁵ Alan Crawford, Thunder on the Right (New York, 1980) p. 232
- ⁶ Goldberg, p. 181
- ⁷ Sara Diamond, Roads to Dominion (New York, 1995) p. 65
- ⁸ Goldberg, p. 237
- ⁹ Barry M. Goldwater and Jack Casserly, Goldwater (New York, 1988) p. 115
- ¹⁰ Crawford, p. 187
- ¹¹ Gil Troy, See How They Ran (New York, 1991) p. 218
- ¹² Ibid., p. 215
- ¹³ Goldwater, With No Apologies, p. 157
- ¹⁴ Stephen Shadegg, What Happened to Barry Goldwater? (New York, 1965) pp. 44, 58 and 64
- ¹⁵ Goldwater and Casserly, Goldwater, p. 148
- ¹⁶ Shadegg, p. 72
- ¹⁷ Goldwater and Casserly, Goldwater, p. 149
- ¹⁸ Ibid., p. 149
- ¹⁹ Faber, p. 14
- ²⁰ Goldberg, p. 179
- ²¹ Goldwater and Casserly, Goldwater, p. 151
- ²² Faber, p. 16
- ²³ Goldberg, p. 232
- ²⁴ Goldwater and Casserly, Goldwater, p. 150
- ²⁵ Goldwater, With No Apologies, p. 163
- ²⁶ Goldwater and Casserly, Goldwater, p. 157
- ²⁷ Faber, p. 15
- ²⁸ Goldwater and Casserly, Goldwater, p. 157
- ²⁹ Ibid., p. 208
- ³⁰ Goldberg, p. 204
- ³¹ Ibid., p. 182
- ³² Goldwater, With No Apologies, p. 159
- ³³ Goldberg, p. 183
- ³⁴ Goldwater and Casserly, Goldwater, p. 158
- ³⁵ Goldberg, p. 182
- ³⁶ Shadegg, p. 65

- ³⁷ Ibid., p. 56
- ³⁸ Ibid., p. 55
- ³⁹ Goldwater, With No Apologies, p. 103
- ⁴⁰ Goldberg, p. 182
- ⁴¹ Ibid., p. 182
- ⁴² Shadegg, p. 70
- ⁴³ Goldberg, p. 183
- ⁴⁴ Shadegg, pp. 67-68
- ⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 69
- ⁴⁶ Goldwater and Casserly, Goldwater, p. 149
- ⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 160
- ⁴⁸ Goldwater, With No Apologies, p. 166
- ⁴⁹ Goldwater and Casserly, Goldwater, p. 160
- ⁵⁰ Goldwater, With No Apologies, p. 168
- ⁵¹ Ibid., p. 168
- ⁵² Goldberg, p. 188
- ⁵³ Ibid., p. 189
- ⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 190
- ⁵⁵ Goldwater, With No Apologies, p. 175
- ⁵⁶ Johnson, p. 102
- ⁵⁷ Crawford, p. 95
- ⁵⁸ Murray Kempton, "The GOP Disestablishment," The New Republic (12 July 1964) p. 5
- ⁵⁹ Goldberg, pp. 200-201
- ⁶⁰ Goldwater and Casserly, Goldwater, p. 181
- ⁶¹ Goldberg, pp. 201 and 204
- ⁶² Goldwater, With No Apologies, pp. 189-190
- ⁶³ Goldberg, p. 225
- ⁶⁴ Goldwater and Casserly, Goldwater, p. 198
- ⁶⁵ Goldberg, p. 226
- ⁶⁶ Faber, p. 295
- ⁶⁷ Goldwater and Casserly, Goldwater, p. 173
- ⁶⁸ Thomas Byrne Edsall and Mary D. Edsall, Chain Reaction (New York, 1991) pp. 37, 40, and 43
- ⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 40
- ⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 43

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