ROBERT A. TAFT AND THE 1952
REPUBLICAN PRESIDENTIAL NOMINATION

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INTRODUCTION

The senior Senator from Ohio, Robert A. Taft, had a distinguished record in American public life. By 1952 he had every reason to expect to cap his career with the highest honor his party could bestow, the Presidential nomination. Many of his fellow Republicans concurred in his belief that he was both deserving and qualified.

The Republican party had not controlled the Presidency since 1932. The staunchest Republican in opposition to the New Deal was Robert Taft. He had assumed the leadership of the conservative wing of his party from the time of his election in 1938. His effectiveness in resisting the New Deal and in organizing support against encroachments upon liberty as defined by the Republican philosophy earned him the proud title, "Mr. Republican."

Taft was respected by friend and foe alike because of the many talents and virtues he brought to the public service. He exhibited rare intellect and exacting legislative skills. His cause was always the cause of conservative Republicanism. He accepted the Republican principles of limited government, maximum individual liberty, and minimum participation in world affairs. His devotion to these principles and to
the Republican party were demonstrated by his years of public service. His extreme partisanship coupled with his undeniable sincerity won for him some of the most loyal adherents in the history of American politics. He commanded a loyalty and devotion from conservative Republicans which survived reverses, defeats, and even death.

Many Republicans disagreed with Taft's interpretation of Republican principles. They maintained that the Republicans must accept the fact that the events of the last twenty years made a greater participation by government in domestic and international affairs mandatory. Taft's constant struggle within the party was with these "deviant" Republicans. They had prevented the Ohio Senator from attaining the nomination in 1940 when they chose Wendell Willkie and again in 1948 by selecting another liberal Republican, Thomas E. Dewey. Each time the Republicans were defeated in the national election, the conservative wing contended with increasing conviction that it was because the candidate was not Republican enough. After the 1948 disaster, the logical man for the nomination was the most Republican of the potential candidates, Mr. Republican himself.

The purpose of this paper is to examine the events leading to the defeat of Senator Taft in the Republican Convention of 1952. It will attempt to determine what Taft's
strengths were and where his weaknesses lay. His backers claimed enough votes for a first ballot victory when the convention opened and even outsiders indicated that he had a sizeable plurality.
I. DEVELOPMENT OF THE CANDIDATE

Robert A. Taft was born in Cincinnati, Ohio on September 8, 1889. He was born into a family which enjoyed a secure place economically and socially. The son of William Howard Taft did not have to wonder where he stood in the scheme of things. He knew that he was set apart. Ready access to the highest circles of society, government, and business did not come without obligation. Robert Taft realized early in his life that a Taft had responsibilities to his family, his class, and his country which were his birthright as much as were the advantages of name and family. He was expected to live up to his heritage.¹

Republican politics came to a Taft as naturally as did the sense of noblesse oblige. The Republican tradition among the Ohio Tafts began with the original Cincinnati settler, Robert's grandfather, Alphonso, who was Secretary of War in the Grant administration. It was continued by his father, William Howard Taft, who began his public service in the Harrison administration. Robert Taft had this Republican heritage to maintain throughout his life.²

There is no hint of unhappiness in the life of the young Taft as he was growing up. He accepted his position
in society without question. Except for four years he spent in the Philippines when his father was Governor, he grew up in Cincinnati amid the comforts and security of the people of his class at the turn of the century with leisurely summers at the eighteen room "cottage" at Murray Bay, Canada, and grand tours of the continent.

Early in his childhood, young Taft began to show an inclination for books and figures in preference to physical activity. He was, from his early days, a shy and quiet boy with an oddly serious look and a disposition to match.

The one area where Taft excelled was in his schooling. His formal education was interrupted by his trip to the Philippines, but within a few months of his return, he stood at the top of his class. He maintained this position through the Taft school run by his Uncle Horace at Watertown, Connecticut, continued it at Yale where he received a Bachelor of Arts in 1910 and at Harvard which awarded him the degree Bachelor of Laws in 1913. The records of his school years were replete with honors for scholarship but not for athletics or for debate. His teachers and acquaintances described him as a brilliant but reserved student who was a poor public speaker.

During his junior year at Yale, Taft was a witness to his father's election as the twenty-seventh President of the United States. William Howard Taft had wanted to be a
Justice of the Supreme Court but had given up that ambition because of the pressure from family and friends who thought him highly capable of fulfilling the Presidency.  

The events of 1912 had a profound effect on the President's son. The revolt of the Progressive wing of the Republican party contributed to the defeat of William Howard Taft. This disloyalty confirmed Robert Taft in the belief that party loyalty was of supreme importance. He would later judge all Republicans by this standard.

After his graduation from Harvard, Taft married Martha Bowers, bought a house at Indian Hills, thirteen miles from Cincinnati, and began to live the life of a successful lawyer. When World War I began, Taft volunteered twice only to be rejected both times because of poor eyesight. He did not get his opportunity to serve until 1917.

Robert Taft's first public service was as assistant counsel for Herbert Hoover's United States Food Administration. He performed his duties well and after the Armistice, Hoover took him to Europe as counsel for the American Relief Administration. As Hoover's aid, Taft was an observer of the peace negotiations and a supporter of the League of Nations.

This early contact with Hoover was a highly significant event in Taft's life. Hoover was at the peak of his success at the job he did best when Taft first knew him, and
he must have been a man much admired by the young Ohio lawyer. From the time of their first association until the death of Taft, they were on close terms. They had much in common. Both were highly intelligent with a passion for marshalling facts and figures and both were possessed with a sense of public responsibility and an impatience with opposition. They were poor speakers who had difficulty dramatizing their ideas. Above all, they were both conservative in their economics and individualistic and paternalistic in their philosophy. They thought alike. Throughout his life, Taft accepted Hoover as his guide, and Hoover accepted Taft as his political heir.

After he completed his tour of duty in Europe, Taft returned to his home city where he and his brother Charles established a law practice. By the application of intelligence, hard work, and family connections, it became one of the most prosperous in Cincinnati. The law firm, Taft, Stettinius, and Hollister, specialized in corporation law and in the management of estates and trusts including the large and lucrative business enterprises of the Tafts' Uncle Charles. Robert Taft concentrated on technical cases which allowed him to use his natural ability with figures and details. He directed the reorganization of companies such as the Gruen Watch Company and the Cincinnati Street Railway Company. He perfected in his law career the
technique of mastering immensely complex problems of law and finance. 9

In 1920, at the age of thirty-one, the future Presidential aspirant felt himself sufficiently well established professionally and socially to turn some of his energy to other directions. He became a successful gentleman farmer who received top billing in Cincinnati restaurants for the "Taft Strawberries" grown on his Indian Hill farm. 10 Over the next several years, he was active in directing a number of business and charitable concerns. Inevitably, Taft turned to politics. He began by becoming a precinct worker and moved from that to candidacy for the Ohio House of Representatives. He was elected in November of 1920 and served three terms in the Ohio House. He was chosen speaker in 1926 and later served one term in the State Senate. 11

Taft's years of service in the Ohio Legislature were important in two respects. First, he ran, was elected, and continued his support for the regular Republican organization in Hamilton County when it was under attack by a reform group which included his brother, Charles. They were trying to rid the party of corruption and at the same time to establish the charter form of government in Cincinnati. The charterists in collaboration with the Democrats were able to establish the charter form of government for the Taft
home city and thereby to weaken the control of the corrupt elements in the party and restore respectability to it. Robert Taft remained loyal to the regular party organization, served on its executive committee, and became politically estranged from his brother. Second, he ran for re-election to the State Senate as an avid and avowed Hoover Republican in 1932 and was swept out of office by the Roosevelt landslide. During his years in the Ohio Legislature, Taft demonstrated loyalty to regular Republicans and suspicion of all who doubted them. This political precept of party regularity would guide him throughout his career.

In 1938, Taft ran for the United States Senate. At that time, the nation was experiencing a recession and was becoming disillusioned with the New Deal. Roosevelt's popularity was waning and the Democratic party was divided by the Supreme Court fight and by Roosevelt's attempt to "purge" the conservatives from his party. Taft won a substantial victory after a hard fight. First, he won the nomination over another Republican who had the support of the state party organization. Then he defeated the Democratic incumbent. He made his fight in direct opposition to the New Deal program, presenting his forthright views on the dangers of too many federal controls. Taft, with his own hard work and with the help of the effective campaigning of his wife, was able to win an outstanding victory with a
When Senator Taft took the oath of office in January 1939, his position as an avowed conservative was rare enough to win the attention of his party. He combined with this the magnetic name of Taft, a capacity for hard work, and an exceptional skill for figures and detail work that soon made him an indispensable Republican Senator. The Seventy-sixth Congress, which organized in 1939, was overwhelmingly Democratic with only twenty-three Republicans in the Senate. Because of the small number of Republicans, there were committee positions open for a first-term Senator, and Taft was appointed to the important Banking, Appropriations, and Labor Committees. He rapidly became the Republican spokesman on fiscal policy.

Taft took with him to the Senate a set of beliefs based on his strict interpretation of the Constitution. He was by no means insensitive to the needs of the less fortunate in his society, but he believed that their needs should be met as a matter of charity and as a duty of the conscience. Taft believed that the Federal Government under the New Deal was usurping powers which rightfully belonged to State and local governments. He maintained:

... questions of welfare, education and health and housing—all of those things are primarily local—in the Constitution they are for the State and local governments to do. And they have done them—they have done them on the basis of what you may call charity—they've done them on the basis of seeing
that every family has enough food to live on-the minimum supply of food. They have done it through unemployment compensation or direct relief of all kinds to see that they have a minimum amount of food and clothing to maintain the family together.

His attitude toward the role of the Federal Government called for the narrowest possible limits consistent with meeting this duty. He said:

... I think federal aid is justified, if the need is great enough, if the States are too poor to do the minimum decent job the people want to have done, and if we can afford it. I don't think it is socialism so long as you do it on the basis of need.15

His was a never ending fight to slow the growth of government and to restrict its activities. He believed that any expansion of government was an infringement upon the liberties of the individual and could not be accepted without a fight.

Basic to this concept of limited government was the Senator's belief that government should be economical. Government spending was a great danger to liberty in itself. He believed that unless national expenditures were cut, ever-increasing tax rates would cripple free enterprise and the country would drift into socialism. He said,"There is some point at which high taxes must lead directly to socialism."16

Taft also believed that the powers of the President should be limited. He felt that the Congress must exert maximum power in order to defend American liberties. His
conviction throughout his career was that any expansion in
the powers of the President amounted to a move toward
totalitarianism. 17

In the area of foreign policy, Taft was guided by
the same attitudes of opposition to big government, a strong
President, and high taxes. He maintained that the United
States should limit its involvement in world affairs just as
it should in domestic affairs. He emphasized that any
commitments which made necessary an increase in the size or
expense of government was antithetic to the liberty of the
American people. He always minimized the dangers of the
foreign challenge to American liberties in favor of
domestic challenges. 18

Because of these beliefs, Taft was accepted as the
apostle of orthodox Republicanism who could be depended
upon to reject any accommodation with the forces which were
undermining them. Thus he acquired the title, Mr.
Republican.
NOTES


5. Ibid., p. 69; White, *The Taft Story*, p. 29.


10. Ibid., p. 114.

11. Ibid., pp. 107-117; White, *The Taft Story*, p. 32.


II. PRELUDE TO THE 1952 REPUBLICAN CONVENTION

The two factions in contention at the Republican National Convention in 1952 represented a fundamental division in the party that had developed during the years of Republican eclipse. It developed over the position the party should take toward the social revolution brought about by the depression and the New Deal and toward America's role in world affairs.

One faction contended that the Republicans should take a definite stand against the New Deal-Fair Deal. They aimed their political appeal at those who believed that the New Deal had gone too far in usurping power from the Congress and that the extension of Presidential powers had led to a disastrous foreign policy. This faction of the Republican party was strongest in the Middle West which was a direct reversal of the division of the 1920's when Progressive Republicans had been from the Middle West. This had come about as a result of the economic liberals of the Progressives joining the Democratic coalition while the isolationist Progressives had joined the economic conservatives of the Middle West.¹

These conservative Republicans saw the increasing involvement of the United States in world affairs as an
unnecessary extension of government power which should be resisted. The opposition of the conservatives became increasingly obstructionist as the Republicans were frustrated by their years out of power. Robert Taft was the acknowledged leader and ideal of the conservative wing of the party because of his family connection with the party and because he was such an unswerving opponent of the New Deal and the Fair Deal. He came to symbolize Republican orthodoxy to a large block of the party at a time when their beliefs were being challenged by the Democrats, the course of events in the nation and the world, and even more important, by members of their own party.

The other faction saw the social revolution of the New Deal years not as a partisan triumph for the Democrats but as a social revolution brought into being by the necessities of the times. These changes would have to be accepted by the Republicans if they were to regain power. The liberal Republicans were willing to make accommodation with the changing conditions of the country by accepting a new role for the United States in the world. This branch of the party was not as concentrated geographically as the conservative wing but it was predominantly eastern. This liberal wing of the party was strong among the Republican Governors. The leader of this faction of the party was Thomas E. Dewey who was able to mobilize sufficient support
to win the nomination of the party in 1944 and in 1948.

The Republicans who became the eastern wing of the party first gained dominance over the national convention in 1940 when Wendell Willkie won the nomination over the strong opposition of the conservative Republicans who remained loyal to Taft to the end. Dewey had also been a contender for the nomination and the delegates who had supported him went over to Willkie. Willkie was the first of the candidates to accept a new role for the Republican party. He based his campaign for the Presidency on a promise to reform and improve on the New Deal rather than upon repeal of it. Willkie accepted the necessity for the United States to aid the allies and made little pretense of his lack of difference with the President on certain facets of the New Deal foreign policy. The conservatives did give their support to Willkie in 1940, but after his defeat, they declared that his opposition to the New Deal had not been vigorous enough. They characterized him as a "me-too" candidate. Political analysts found, however, that Willkie had been defeated by the traditional class voting patterns that had existed before the campaign. This was reinforced by the stereotyped conceptions of New Dealism and Republicanism. The voters could not believe that Willkie would continue the programs begun under Roosevelt. The international situation also contributed to Willkie's defeat.
In 1944, Taft was not a candidate for the nomination. The conservatives of the party were represented by Governor John W. Bricker of Ohio. In the interim, Dewey had been elected to his first term as Governor of New York and had succeeded in organizing overwhelming support for his candidacy. Dewey won the nomination unanimously. Bricker received the nomination for Vice-President as a reward for withdrawing from the Presidential race. Dewey announced at the start of the campaign that in the interest of national security, he would not make the war effort or foreign policy an issue. He concentrated on the theme that the men in control of the government were a group of tired old men who should be retired from office. He did not emphasize opposition to the New Deal but instead maintained that he could institute more effective social reforms. He thus laid himself open to the charge of being a "me-too" candidate by the Taft forces. When he was defeated, he was scored by the conservatives for not attacking Roosevelt and the New Deal on all issues.  

The 1948 contest for the nomination was again divided between candidates who favored an all-out fight against the New Deal and others who believed that a more moderate posture would be necessary for victory. The first group was again led by Taft and the second by Dewey. Taft had become a much more formidable contender by 1948 because of the
record he had made in the Senate as the unflinching opponent of the New Deal. He was chairman of the powerful Republican Policy Committee and de facto leader of the Republican Eightieth Congress which had passed the Taft-Hartley Bill. He commanded the unwavering support of the conservatives in the country and in Congress. He could make an appeal to others that Dewey had his chance as a "me-too" candidate in 1944 and failed. Taft had antagonized many interests by his forthright statements on issues such as civil rights and fair employment practices while Dewey carefully avoided offending anyone. Dewey's very effective backers, under the capable leadership of his experienced campaign manager, Herbert Brownell, exploited their candidate's position as titular leader of the party to strengthen his position. Because of personal and ideological differences, Taft was not able to unite with other contenders to stop Dewey, and the conservatives went down to defeat again at the hands of the liberal Republicans.

Dewey again adopted the strategy of trying to win the support of those who were dissatisfied with the Democratic administration but wanted to retain the reforms of the New Deal. He avoided taking a stand in opposition to the Democratic administration and at the same time he was cautious not to take a position that would force the dissenting Democrats to support Truman. The conservatives
charged that these tactics had lost the election and that Dewey had succeeded, despite the split in the Democratic party, in "snatching defeat from the jaws of victory." The discouraged Republican party was ripe for new leadership.

Analysis of the voting in 1948 indicated that Dewey's campaign had not gone far enough in attempting to convince the voters that he would continue the programs of the New Deal which had led to prosperity for the new middle classes. Dewey was able to come close to victory only because Wallace had drawn 1,150,000 votes, and another several hundred thousand former Roosevelt supporters had not voted.

In 1949, Taft entered what William S. White called his "sad, worst period". Taft had been embittered by the defeat of his efforts in 1948 and by the Dewey campaign which was a repudiation of the Republican congressional record he had helped to make. The frustrations of years of defeat coupled with the rejection of his leadership led him to become even more extreme in his rejection of the eastern wing of the party and more willing to sanction any means for the destruction of the Truman administration. He countenanced the charges of conspiracy in high places and made common cause with Senator McCarthy. The depth of his desperation was well illustrated when he told a group of Washington reporters that he had "no particular faith in the accuracy of McCarthy's information but that he
had urged McCarthy to "keep talking, and if one case doesn't work out, proceed with another." Taft asserted that Dean Acheson was determined to let the Communists take Formosa. He spoke of the "continuous sympathy toward Communism which inspired American policy." These blatant charges were a contradiction of Taft's integrity. Senator Taft reached the place where he was prepared to suspect the very worst of almost any Democrat. During this period, some of his most ardent supporters became disillusioned with Taft's cynicism and this affected his final try for the Presidential nomination.

After the debacle of 1948, Dewey had no choice but to declare himself out of the running for 1952. Though there were others who were willing to make the fight in the name of the liberal Republicans, the opportunity for the conservatives to reassert their leadership seemed to be at hand. The one potential candidate who had a recognized national standing, commanded a loyal following among party members, and was not associated with the defeated liberal wing was Senator Taft.

In 1950, Taft won re-election to another term in the Senate despite the fact that the Democrats and organized labor had made an all-out effort to defeat him. Though Taft continued to hammer at corruption and subversion in the Democratic administration, Taft's Ohio
campaign was conducted in defense of the Taft-Hartley Law. Labor leaders were determined to defeat "labor's worst enemy," but the militant labor campaign provoked fear and opposition in the voters which solidified support for Taft. This victory was accepted by the Senator and his backers as evidence that he could win with his conservative record and his association with the Taft-Hartley Law. The Taft campaign for the Presidential nomination began immediately.

Senator Taft sent his two trusted aides, David S. Ingalls and Ben E. Tate, to survey the sentiment of the country, and he became convinced that he could win in 1952. The Taft wing of the party had already, as early as August 1949, succeeded in wresting control of the Republican National Committee from the Dewey wing and installing a Taft supporter, Guy Gabrielson, of New Jersey, as National Chairman. This victory coupled with his striking win in Ohio, where he received 437,000 votes, encouraged him to try again for the Presidential nomination. He had received "more than 2,000 letters, telegrams, telephone calls urging him to run from numerous state chairmen, national committeemen, Senators, Congressmen, publishers, and other party leaders" which prompted him to be first in the race. He announced his candidacy on October 16, 1951 before a press conference in Washington. He had agreed
to allow his name to be entered in the Wisconsin primary on April 1 and to allow the party leadership in Ohio to make a favorite son candidate of him. He said:

I am going to run because I believe I can conduct the only kind of campaign which will elect a Republican to office. I believe we can extend to the entire nation the methods which we used in Ohio—a forthright presentation of our case to the people of this country, to the farmers and the workmen, to the businessmen and to all of those who accept American principles; a determined organization of every enthusiastic supporter to interest the voters who have stayed at home in such large numbers, but who can be interested and persuaded to vote if there is enough enthusiasm on the part of Republican supporters.  

He emphasized that the party needed a "gut" Republican and not a "me-too" candidate in 1952. The nominee should be one "who will go out and slug, not play around as Dewey did in 1948." In answer to the charge that he couldn't win, Taft said, "What do they mean Taft can't win? Look what I did in Ohio. I can do it in the nation."  

He set the optimistic tone of his campaign for the nomination in his declaration that "in a number of states the promises of support are so general that delegates are assured. In a sufficient number of others to constitute a majority at the convention, the prospect appears to me to be strongly in my favor."  

He named a committee of three, headed by Ingalls, to recommend to him an organization set-up to keep in touch with the developments in various states. Other
members of the committee were John D.M. Hamilton of Philadelphila, national chairman in the ill-fated Landon campaign of 1936, and Thomas E. Colemen, the "power behind the throne" in Wisconsin Republican affairs. 18

In 1952, there were others who were seeking the Republican Presidential nomination. The first of these to follow with a formal announcement was the three term Governor of California and Vice-Presidential candidate in 1948, Earl Warren, who made his hopes public on November 14. He was followed by the perennial favorite son, Harold E. Stassen on December 14. Both were associated with the liberal branch of the Republican tree. There were others who were willing to make the try, including General Douglas MacArthur who had become the hero of the Republican right wing because of his spectacular defiance of the Truman administration and his attacks on its foreign policy. He appealed to them because the solution he proposed to the cold war called for one decisive stroke in Asia while ignoring Europe. His program allowed the isolationists to demonstrate their distrust of Europe while espousing a solution for international problems which was backed by the great prestige of MacArthur.

The real contender to be reckoned with was, as in the three previous nomination campaigns, the candidate of the eastern liberal wing of the party led by the Governor
of New York. The candidate they had chosen to carry their standard into the fray was the popular Dwight David Eisenhower. As early as October 16, 1950, Dewey had named Eisenhower as a candidate who could receive the support of eastern Republicans. Eisenhower had replied with a reiteration of his long standing refusal to become involved in politics. Eisenhower's candidacy and even his political affiliation remained in doubt until January, 1952. Regardless of their candidate's hesitancy, the Easterners continued to cajole him because they saw him as the only potential candidate with a chance to stop Taft. Though Eisenhower failed to declare himself a candidate, he did not irrecoverably refuse. In December, 1950, the General was recalled to active duty from his position as President of Columbia University and assigned as Commanding General of Supreme Headquarters, Allied Powers in Europe. He embarked in January, 1951 without making any public announcement about his political affiliation or his intentions for 1952. The stop-Taft forces were occupied for the next several months with the delicate task of convincing their candidate to announce that he was a Republican and to agree to allow them to work for his nomination.

Taft was quick to realize the advantage he enjoyed over his antagonists because of the reluctance of their candidate, and he set out immediately on one of the most
strenuous campaigns for delegates in the history of presidential nominations. He emphasized in his campaign that he was a party regular who understood that the party faithful should be recognized and that he valued the support of the regular party leaders. He pointed out that he was the leading spokesman of the opposition to the New Deal-Fair Deal who deserved to be called Mr. Republican. The Taft forces often reiterated that in a poll of Republican Congressmen, their candidate had received overwhelming support. The campaign was particularly aimed at the delegates or potential delegates in the South where Taft had received substantial support in 1948 and at those in the Middle West where the hard core of his support lay.

As a potential national candidate for the Presidency, Taft stressed that he was the only candidate who could present the issues to the country in a way that would bring a Republican victory in November. He developed his campaign along the lines of opposition to the New Deal-Fair Deal philosophy which he claimed was ruinous to the country. He maintained that the country was looking for relief from this domination and would support a Republican candidate who promised it to them. Taft emphasized that the economic policies and high taxes of the Truman administration were leading the county to
socialism. He vigorously opposed Truman's foreign policy and at the same time tried to convince the public that he was not an isolationist. Taft deplored the extension of the power of the President. He stressed the internal threat to American security.

Taft claimed that the reason for the Republican defeat in the last election was that Dewey had not "squared off" against the Democrats and had compromised and temporized rather than attacking them. He said that a campaign such as he planned which emphasized Republican differences with the Democrats would bring to the polls many voters who had not voted in the last three elections because they could not see any difference between the Democratic candidate and the "me-too" Republican candidate. These reasons, along with hints that generals were better suited to war than to the subtle art of statecraft, were the bases for the Taft claim to the nomination.21

Taft concentrated his search for delegates on the state leaders. He had a hard core of delegates numbering 274 who had remained loyal to him to the end in 1948. His strategy was to expand this to an incontestable lead by using it as a basis to attract the professional politicians of the party who wanted to be on the winning side. He maintained throughout the campaign that he had enough support to control the convention and to win the
nomination which would put him in possession of the means to reward those who supported him.

In the early stages of the battle, Taft had considerable success with this strategy, but when General Eisenhower clearly became a candidate in January 1952 and began to rally his forces, Taft's progress was slowed.

The first challenge to Taft's predominance came in March with the New Hampshire primary. Eisenhower had allowed his name to be entered and his candidacy was backed by Governor Sherman Adams and the state party as well as by Senator Lodge of Massachusetts who campaigned vigorously for the absent General. Harold Stassen was also entered and campaigned hard. Taft was in hostile territory, but he campaigned long and vigorously. The results, 46,661 for Eisenhower, 35,838 for Taft, and 6,574 for Stassen, were a blow to Taft's claims to invincibility but not a serious one because it was acknowledged that he would not receive the support of the eastern states in any case. 22

The New Hampshire setback was followed by a more serious reversal on March 18 when Taft received only 24,000 write-in votes in the Minnesota primary as compared to his chief rival's 100,000. The favorite son candidate, Stassen, received the Minnesota delegates with a plurality which was only 20,000 greater than Eisenhower's write-in
vote. Taft had received a severe blow to his claim of popular support among the rank and file of his party. Taft forces had claimed early in March before the results of the first primaries were known to have 579 delegates to Eisenhower's 549, and Taft continued to receive delegates selected by conventions, which allowed him to claim a substantial lead. The Taft opponents had, however, been given ammunition with the victories in New Hampshire and Minnesota to attack his impregnable position and his claims of sure victory began to be doubted.

Taft reasserted his strength in April as the tremendously complex machinery for selecting delegates to the national convention went into full swing. A series of victories in state primaries proved his vote-getting power and forced the party professionals to question Eisenhower's chances for victory. Victories in Wisconsin and Nebraska on April 1 were followed by further advances in Illinois on April 8 which gave Taft's chances a strong boost as well as renewed his claim to popular support. These results made it clear to the Eisenhower backers that their candidate would have to actively seek the nomination in order to beat Taft. After much urging from his supporters, Eisenhower announced his resignation as SHAPE commander on April 11 thus ending doubts that
he was a serious candidate. Eisenhower then won a victory in the New Jersey primary and continued to collect delegates in the state conventions. On April 30, the Associated Press reported that with 716 delegates selected, Taft had 274, Eisenhower was close behind with 270, Stassen trailed with 23, Warren had 6 and MacArthur 2, with 141 unknown. Though he claimed 303 delegates at the end of April, Taft had clearly not outdistanced his rival and with a majority of the delegates selected, his chance to overwhelm his opposition was fading.

Late in May the contest which was symbolic of the whole dispute between the old guard and the new Republicanism took place in Texas. The Republican party in Texas, as in the other overwhelmingly Democratic states, was a small clique controlled by a few bosses for their own benefit. When their control was threatened by the influx of new members, they reacted in the traditional manner of using their control to disenfranchise the newcomers. This was routine procedure which had been going on in the South for forty years. The liberal faction seized upon this contest to dramatize the conflict between liberalism and conservatism and were able to skillfully exploit it as an issue to mobilize support for Eisenhower's nomination.
May and June brought no new changes in the strength of the two factions in contention. Each side claimed great strength and a probable first ballot victory. The Associated Press poll showed Taft leading in delegates with 530 including the ones in dispute and Eisenhower very much in contention with 427. In the scoreboard of intangibles which play as important a part as delegate strength in determining the outcome of conventions, Eisenhower was leading. A Gallup poll released on June 19 indicated Eisenhower could beat both the likely Democratic candidates and that Taft would be beaten by them. The Eisenhower forces were supplied with the dramatic issue of the disputed southern delegates. On the other hand, the old guard controlled the party machinery and were determined to nominate their leader, Taft. The outcome was very much in doubt as June ended and the two factions prepared to confront each other in Chicago where the National Committee was meeting on June 30.
NOTES


7. Ibid., 472.


11. Ibid.


15. Ibid.
16. Ibid.
17. Ibid., p. 1.
18. Ibid.
20. Ibid., p. 27.
22. David, Moos, and Goldman, Presidential Nominating Politics 1952, pp. 31-32.
23. Ibid., p. 32.
III. THE MEETING OF THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE

Senator Taft was at the peak of his power when he arrived at Chicago on June 30 to marshal his forces. He was confident of the outcome of the contest about to take place. He was about to see the results of his years of work establishing himself as the leader of the conservative faction of his party.

Taft announced condescendingly on his arrival that he was of "a very forgiving nature," and that if nominated, he would try to heal the break in the party by asking those who had supported his opponents to come in and cooperate in the campaign for his election. The dispute, however, was much too fundamental to be healed by such platitudes. It involved more than a rivalry between two candidates for the Republican nomination. The issue was over what direction the party would take in the future. The conservative wing was attempting to assert its control over the nomination as it had over the machinery of the party. The dispute was complicated because the party had not won the Presidency for twenty years, but this only intensified the struggle and the bitterness. Taft, as the champion of the conservatives, was convinced that he could win the national election if given the opportunity.
There were ninety-six delegates in dispute at Chicago during the first week in July, 1952. The National Committee of the Republican party was empowered by the rules to resolve these disputes. They were forced by the drastic division within the party to make even more important decisions about the future of their party. What was at stake was the nomination of the candidate. Because the race was so close, the decision on these delegates could mean victory or defeat for one contender or the other. The outcome of the deliberations of the National Committee was never in doubt. The National Chairman, Guy George Gabrielson, was an acknowledged Taft supporter, and the membership of the committee was predominantly sympathetic to Taft. They had already demonstrated where their sympathies lay. They had selected Taft supporter, General of the Army, Douglas MacArthur, as keynote speaker. The committee had nominated Walter S. Hallanan, manager of the successful Taft campaign in West Virginia, as temporary chairman and Joseph Martin, long time conservative leader of the House Republicans, as permanent chairman of the convention. The committee proceeded to "steamroller" the Eisenhower forces in every contest regardless of the merits of the case.

The first dispute to bring the two factions into open conflict was the relatively minor question of
whether or not the deliberations of the National Committee would be open to coverage by radio and television. Although Taft had said that he was willing to allow broadcasting of the proceedings, his backers on the National Committee chose to assert their control immediately. They maintained, with considerable plausibility, that the television, radio and motion picture men required so much equipment that their presence would impede the ability of the committee to judge the contests in a calm and dignified atmosphere, and they proceeded to bar coverage by a vote of sixty to forty.² The minority claimed that this action was an attempt to prevent the public from witnessing the Taft "steal" of the delegates in dispute before the committee. The television cameras focused on the closed door of the committee room, and television and radio commentators declared that these were "iron curtain" proceedings.³ This emphasized the Eisenhower claim that the Taft forces "were out to steal the nomination and they didn't want anybody to know how they did it."⁴ Because the Taft backers had chosen to make this minor issue a test of power, the Eisenhower forces were able to make an early start in their efforts to discredit Taft.

Twenty-eight of the delegates in dispute before the National Committee involved local questions which did not
bring the two factions into contention. These contests were resolved quickly.

The first major conflict to be decided by the committee was the question of the disputed Georgia delegation. The entire seventeen member delegation was in doubt. The Republican party in Georgia had been divided since 1944 over local questions. In 1944 and 1948, the National Committee and the convention had recognized the faction led by W. Roscoe Tucker, who was State Chairman of the Georgia Republican party in 1952. The Tucker faction received the official call to the 1952 Republican National Convention. The other delegation led by Roy Foster maintained an independent party apparatus based on the claim that it was the parent organization in the State and should be recognized by the national convention. The Foster group had selected a slate of delegates which declared itself to be unanimously for Taft. The Tucker group was divided thirteen for Eisenhower and four for Taft. The National Committee voted to seat the Foster delegation by almost the same vote as the one on the question of television coverage.5

The Eisenhower campaign leaders had realized from the beginning of the campaign that the outcome of the National Committee deliberations would be favorable to the Taft wing of the party and that they must discredit the
conservatives to offset this advantage. They made the charge of a "steal" of the southern delegations from the time the results of the Texas State Convention at Mineral Wells were announced. Eisenhower declared in Dallas on June 21 that the Taft backers were guilty of "a betrayal of the whole Republican party and its principles" when they "deliberately and ruthlessly disenfranchised" the majorities that voted for another candidate at the precinct and county conventions. "In this case," he said, "the rustlers stole the Texas birthright instead of the steers."

The Eisenhower forces continued to hit hard at this theme without achieving any great success until the decision of the National Committee on the Georgia delegation shocked the public with its gross injustice.

Senator Richard M. Nixon of California expressed the indignation of uncommitted delegates. Declaring that the Georgia decision raised an issue of whether the Republican National Convention would be conducted "with complete integrity and fair play," Nixon said that he was convinced that the pro-Eisenhower delegation from Texas must be seated if the party was to survive. He continued:

The issue of which delegation from Texas is seated in the Republican National Convention is bigger than the Taft-Eisenhower contest for the Presidential nomination.

The real issue is whether the Republican party is to survive. It is whether the G.O.P. is to be
a closed corporation or open to all people who want a change of administration in Washington. It is whether the voice of the people shall be heard. It is whether the selection of the Republican candidate for President is to be determined by the will of the people or by a small clique of politicians who happen to control the party machinery. 7

Senator Nixon said that the Republicans had a potentially big issue against the Democrats in the corruption issue but that they would lose that advantage if their own hands were not clean. 8

On the same day as the Georgia decision, twenty-three of the twenty-five Republican Governors struck a blow at the Presidential aspirations of Robert Taft. At the annual Governors' Conference meeting in Houston, they signed a manifesto to the Republican National Convention calling upon the convention not to permit delegates whose credentials were in dispute to vote on the seating of any others whose places were in contest. They too said that the Republican Presidential nominee must enter the campaign "with clean hands." 9 The two Republican Governors, John S. Fine of Pennsylvania and Theodore R. McKeldin of Maryland, who had not signed the manifesto because they were not in Houston, later endorsed it. 10 The Governors were proposing a change in the rules of the convention which had since 1912 allowed delegates in dispute to vote on all contests except their own.

The Houston manifesto was engineered and carried
through by the Eisenhower strategists. It was a serious setback for the Taft candidacy. He answered that the voting question was "a parliamentary one rather than one of principle" and that if delegates were prevented from voting because of contests, it would be possible for a minority to dominate the convention simply by contesting several hundred delegates. The National Chairman, Guy Gabrielson, expanded Taft's arguments by saying:

We would make it possible for ruthless, selfish men to prevent any delegate from voting in the next Republican convention—merely by filing contests in every state and territory. And we would be taking this step, not in justice, equity or fair play, but for temporary political expediency.

It is difficult for me to understand why some of those who controlled the Republican National Convention of 1944 and 1948 did not seek such a rule then, but demand it now.

Senator Henry Cabot Lodge, speaking for the Eisenhower forces, dismissed the arguments of Taft and Gabrielson as "irrelevant legalistic debating points because the rule was for this convention alone and not for future conventions." He also pointed out that the pro-Taft Louisiana delegates had a natural interest in voting to seat the pro-Taft Texas delegates and that no delegate who had such a special interest in seating another group of delegates should be permitted to vote.

As Taft pointed out, the Houston manifesto was merely a resolution on procedure, but it had a psychological effect that hurt Taft's cause. It appeared that the twenty-three
Governors who had signed the manifesto were against him. It appeared to give credence to the accusation that Taft was trying to steal the nomination and was willing to condone injustice in the process.

Eisenhower's campaign manager, Senator Lodge, set the battle line on July 3 when he declared "the issue has now been joined, the fight is on. We shall soon find out who is going to run this convention—the Taft majority of the National Committee or the delegates who believe that the Taft steamroller has exceeded the speed limit."\(^{15}\)

On July 3, Eisenhower told the people of Denver that he was going to Chicago to say:

... that our party cannot go before the public and ask for its votes unless it comes into court with clean hands. I'm going to ask every delegate to help in this fight for fair proceedings at the convention. I'm going to ask every delegate to do his part to see to it that the proceedings and decisions of the convention conform to the American and Republican principles of clean and honorable conduct.

And I want you to know that I haven't the slightest doubt of the outcome. Fair play and majority rule are Republican principles and the convention will uphold them. We are determined to win next November and at Chicago we will prove that we deserve to win.\(^{16}\)

Eisenhower then departed on his special train from Denver to Chicago hitting hard at "chicanery" and "crookedness." He kept hammering at this theme in a series of formal speeches, television appearances, and whistle
stops attacking the "smoke filled rooms" and "star chamber methods" of the National Committee. Declaring that politics was a "high calling" which should rest on a "broader base than favoritism," he said:

It is not a business of buying and selling and backroom bidding. It is not a network of cynicism or privilege or iron clad discipline that reaches out from Washington to the fringes of the last cheap little deal.

Whether politicians are to be loyal servants or arrogant masters is the issue at this very moment in Chicago.17

Taft chose not to attack the moral issue but to continue with his contention that the whole problem was a parliamentary question and that Eisenhower was making "wild charges" because he lacked the delegate strength to win the nomination.18

The second important conflict to come before the Republican National Committee involved thirteen of the fifteen Louisiana delegates. In this state, the regular organization led by John E. Jackson was challenged by John Minor Wisdom and a group of insurgents who had capitalized upon the great popularity of General Eisenhower in their state to organize rival delegations to the Louisiana State Convention. The conservatives used their control of the state machinery to rule enough of the pro-Eisenhower delegates improperly elected to control the state convention and send a Taft delegation to the national convention from
Louisiana. The Wisdom faction proceeded to organize a rival delegation pledged to Eisenhower. These delegates claimed to be the ones who had the support of the majority of the Republicans of Louisiana. The result of the hearings before the National Committee was the reward of eleven of the thirteen delegates in dispute to Taft.¹⁹

The Texas question which had begun in May at Mineral Wells was the third major conflict to come before the National Committee. This conflict became the center of the dispute between the two contending factions of the party. The dispute was similar to the one in Louisiana.

An insurgent faction led by H.J. Porter took advantage of Eisenhower's popularity and the support of the national Eisenhower organization to draw new members to the county and district conventions. They elected delegates to the Texas State Convention who were backers of Eisenhower and opposed to the old guard leadership of Henry Zweifel and the regular party organization. As in Louisiana, the regulars exercised their power over the state machinery and the state committee to declare these insurgent delegates illegally elected and the Zweifel slates to be the legitimate ones.²⁰

The justification used by the Zweifel faction for disallowing their opponents was the claim that the insurgents were Democrats who should not have been permitted to take part in Republican activities. This claim highlighted
the basic difference between the old guard of the party and the new Republicans. The old guard refused to consider anyone a regular Republican who was not a long standing member of the party, and they insisted that they did not need the support of any but regular Republicans. Taft insisted that "only people in the party should be allowed to participate in the primaries." The new Republicans saw the need for an appeal to a broad segment of the people and were willing to accept anyone into the party no matter how recent his conversion had been.

This conflict was emphasized in Texas because of the election laws there which did not require registration as a prerequisite to taking part in Republican conventions. Many Texans signed a statement declaring themselves Republicans in order to work for the nomination of Eisenhower. They were dissatisfied with one party rule in their state and saw the General as a rallying point around which an effective second party could be organized.

The Zweifel faction had operated the Republican party in a Democratic state as a small coterie which existed only as justification for maintaining its leader as a national committeeman and for sending a delegation to the national convention. At this convention, it was able to exert influence out of all proportion to the number of Republicans it represented or the influence it could have on the general election.
The Eisenhower managers chose to challenge the conservatives in the South and especially in Texas by encouraging insurgent Republicans and dissident Democrats to unite in order to unseat the entrenched Republican leadership. The Eisenhower managers turned a struggle for power within some southern states into an issue which they used to counteract the Taft control of the party machinery.\(^{24}\)

The one attempt during the proceedings of the National Committee to blunt the Eisenhower attack came when Taft offered to compromise on the division of the Texas delegation. This offer served only to redouble the efforts of the Eisenhower forces because it indicated the effectiveness of their strategy.

The deliberations on the Texas dispute began on Friday after the Taft forces had demonstrated their domination of the proceedings by their decisions earlier in the week. Former President Hoover sent a telegram to the committee in an attempt to ease the pressure on the Taft forces. Hoover suggested that each side select "an eminent citizen, not one of their own managers, to sit down with him and see if they could find a basis of agreement."\(^{25}\) Taft offered a compromise solution of his own. In a letter to Chairman Gabrielson, he presented a detailed analysis of the Texas dispute on a district by district basis and offered to split the delegation twenty-two for Taft and sixteen for Eisenhower.\(^{26}\)
In offering this compromise Taft said, "While I will suffer a delegate loss in making this proposal, I am doing so because I think it is so generous that its equity cannot be questioned."27

Senator Lodge replied to these offers by refusing any compromise. He succeeded in using them to emphasize the differences between the two camps. He replied to the Hoover proposal, "I cannot imagine anything more undemocratic than for three men to arrogate unto themselves the power to disenfranchise many thousands of Americans." To Taft's proposal he replied, "General Eisenhower is a no deal man."28

The Taft-dominated Republican National Committee voted to accept the Taft compromise solution over the objections of the Eisenhower backers. In an effort to counter charges that they were steamrollering the Eisenhower delegates, the Taft backers sacrificed sixteen delegates, but the Eisenhower management had skillfully made this appear to be an even more odious example of the same steamroller tactics.

On Sunday July 6, Taft held a press conference where he dramatically announced, "I don't think anybody ever came into a convention with such support from the delegates." He claimed to have "607 or 608" convention votes. He displayed 510 telegrams from delegates who had pledged to stay
with him to the end and said that he would receive twenty-
seven more for a total of 537 which he called his "hard
core" of support for the nomination. Taft was continu-
ing to follow his strategy of attempting to overwhelm
the convention by main force. He said further that the award
of sixteen of the Texas votes to General Eisenhower was, if
anything, overgenerous, but he was willing to go along with
it in order to end any show of a legitimate complaint by
the Eisenhower forces. He declared that his purpose was
"to eliminate all this name calling on both sides," but
that the Eisenhower people had "refused even to sit down
with our people."29

On Sunday evening, Herbert Brownell had arranged a
meeting for General Eisenhower with Governor John S. Fine
of Pennsylvania and Arthur Summerfield of Michigan whose
support had been sought by both candidates. Brownell felt
that the support of these two men and their pivotal dele-
gations would start a movement among the uncommitted
dele-gates to Eisenhower.30 As a result of this meeting,
both Fine and Summerfield agreed to support the Eisenhower
forces in securing passage of the fair play amendment, but
neither announced support for Eisenhower's nomination.31

On the same day, the Citizens for Eisenhower
Committee placed a full page advertisement in the Chicago
Tribune, one of the few papers supporting Taft.32 The
advertisement was addressed "To all Republican delegates" and said:

The eyes of the nation are on you. The nation may differ as to WHO should be nominated. But the nation agrees that there must be no shadow of doubt that the winner of the Republican nomination—no matter who he may be—was honestly nominated, in a free and unrigged convention. . . . Unless the American people have confidence that they were not cheated of their votes and that the nominee was duly and freely chosen in an unrigged convention, this convention might better never have been held. 33

It was clear that the Eisenhower forces had no intention of allowing the first test of strength to come where Taft was strongest. On Sunday July 6, Senator Lodge announced plans to force an immediate test of strength with Taft by pushing the "fair play" amendment to the temporary rules. This amendment was essentially the Houston Manifesto. 34
NOTES

8. Ibid.
13. Ibid., p. 8.
14. Ibid.
15. Ibid.
17. Ibid.


26. Ibid.


32. The *New York Times* reported on July 7 that Eisenhower headquarters had mimeographed a list of more than a hundred newspapers in thirty-five cities who were demanding the nomination of General Eisenhower. Taft supporters had no list but the Senator charged that there was a "conspiracy of the press to block his choice." *New York Times*, July 7, 1952, p. 7.


IV. THE CONVENTION

The Taft forces attempted to settle the question of the fair play amendment before the opening of the convention. Senator Taft declared that because of a desire to maintain unity in the convention, he would accept the amendment if seven delegates from Louisiana never passed on by the National Committee were permitted to vote.\textsuperscript{1} Leaders of the Taft, Eisenhower and Warren factions met to discuss this offer, but no compromise was reached. On emerging from the meeting, Representative Brown of Ohio expressed the sentiments of the Taft forces when he said, "We're so close together it is silly not to work it out."\textsuperscript{2}

The Eisenhower forces had rejected all compromises because they wanted to take full advantage of the effect of the debate and the vote. Governor Fine had predicted that if Eisenhower won this test of strength by one hundred votes, the psychological advantage would help him to obtain the nomination.\textsuperscript{3} Senator Lodge announced after the meeting, "We are taking this fight to the floor."\textsuperscript{4}

The Eisenhower forces had no intention of compromising. When the rule change was introduced, the text of it was mimeographed and ready for the press in advance.\textsuperscript{5}
The Republican National Convention opened at the International Ampitheatre on Monday July 7, 1952. The crucial test of strength came immediately. In the routine course of organizing the convention, Senator John W. Bricker of Ohio moved the adoption of the 1948 Rules of the Republican National Convention. As requested by Senator Lodge, Chairman Gabrielson then recognized Governor Arthur B. Langlie of Washington who offered a substitute for the resolution which called for a "fair play" amendment to the 1948 rules along the lines of the Houston manifesto. The Langlie substitution incorporated a change from the original Governors' proposal which met Taft's chief criticism that it would open the convention to spurious challenges. The Langlie proposal provided that delegates who had not received a two-thirds affirmative vote in the National Committee would not be allowed to vote in the convention or in committees until a decision on their contests had been made by the whole convention.

Congressman Clarence J. Brown of Ohio countered for the Taft forces with an amendment to the Langlie substitution. The Brown amendment called for the exclusion of seven of the Louisiana delegates from the Langlie proposal because they had been declared legal delegates by the Republican State Committee of Louisiana. This was in conformity with the rules of the 1948 Republican National Convention. The Brown amendment was an attempt to
retrieve a desperate situation by introducing a legalistic issue in hope that its merits would divide the support for the Langlie substitution. 6

A bitter two hour debate followed. The chair had allotted one hour to each side to present arguments on the original motion (Bricker), the substitution (Langlie), and the amendment to the substitution (Brown), but the speakers addressed themselves mainly to the Langlie proposal.

The Eisenhower speakers emphasized the moral issue raised by the decision of the National Committee on the seating of the southern delegations. Governor Langlie said that the adoption of the motion was:

    ... the only way in which the Republican party can show the people of this nation that we believe in integrity and honesty in our deliberations and in the administration of the affairs of National Government ... .

    It seems imperative to me that this Convention conduct its deliberations under a rule which in the opinion of every Republican delegate and to the United States reflects the best standards of fair play ... .

    This amendment simply meets with fairness the situation which has thrown a state of distrust on our party, endangering success at the polls in November.

Sherman Adams, Eisenhower's floor manager, said, "I am in support of the principles of honesty and integrity." 8

The conservative wing of the party centered its argument on the sanctity of tradition and emphasized that the rules of the convention had stood the test of time and
should not be changed for political expediency. Clarence A. Barnes of Massachusetts, a Taft supporter, said:

Precedents and parliamentary procedures were not made for a day. They were not made to fit a special occasion. They were not made to come in here today for a change and then go back afterwards to the old rules. Laws and precedents are fundamental. The rules of this Convention have stood the test of time. . . .

I see no reason why these rules should be changed now. The issue is not a moral one but it is a parliamentary one.9

When the crucial vote came, it was on the Brown amendment. The 548 who voted for the amendment were the hard core of Taft's support. The 685 who defeated the Brown amendment were Eisenhower supporters, the uncommitted delegates, and the delegates from the favorite son states.10 Following the defeat of the Brown amendment, the Taft managers accepted the inevitable and moved that the Langlie proposal be approved by the convention unanimously.11

Taft was not beaten by this setback, but it was a serious blow to his chief strategy for the nomination, control of the convention. This was a great psychological victory for Eisenhower. It united the uncommitted delegates and the delegates from the favorite son states of Maryland, Minnesota, and California in a common cause.12

The result of the amendment was a reduction by thirty-two in the potential votes of the Taft people when the final test came. Of the sixty-eight seats in dispute,
fifty had been claimed for Taft and eighteen for Eisenhower.¹³

Even after this rebuff, the Taft forces did not modify their strategy. On Tuesday and Wednesday, while the convention waited impatiently, the Taft-dominated Credentials Committee struggled with the problem of the contested seats. They avoided the error made by the National Committee a week earlier by allowing television and motion picture coverage of the proceedings.

When the committee was organized, Ross Rizley of Oklahoma, a Taft supporter, was elected chairman. The major contest which brought the two factions into contention were again Georgia, Louisiana, and Texas. The decisions of the National Committee were upheld in the Georgia and Texas disputes. In an attempt to compromise with the Eisenhower forces, the Credentials Committee awarded all the Louisiana delegates in dispute to Eisenhower. Taft then declared, "If one who has talked about fair play and justice cannot abide by a fair and impartial decision, he had better give up all talk of fraud."¹⁴ Representative Brown said that this was an attempt to "restore a measure of harmony within the convention and put an end to talk of stolen delegates."¹⁵ The Eisenhower forces were relentless and made this further attempt at compromise appear to be just another instance of the
immorality of the Taft backers. Lodge answered, "Just so there can be no misunderstanding, however, I want to make it perfectly clear that the Eisenhower forces will not accept any deals or compromises on the contested delegates." 16

While the Credentials Committee was in session, both factions were trying to win the support of the uncommitted delegates. In speeches before the delegations, Taft stressed the need for his nomination in order to save the Republican party. Eisenhower remained publicly aloof from the actual securing of delegates. He left this to Brownell and Lodge. 17

On July 9, an Associated Press poll showed that Taft had 540 delegates; Eisenhower 439; others 107; and 120 were uncommitted. Of the delegates with known preferences, sixty-eight were in contest, and of this group, fifty favored Taft and eighteen favored Eisenhower. 18

It was not until the Wednesday evening session that the results of the Credentials Committee's deliberations were announced. Ross Rizley presented the majority report on Georgia which upheld the decision of the National Committee and awarded all of Georgia's seats to Taft. This decision was immediately challenged by state senator Donald W. Eastvold of Washington who presented the minority report calling for the seating of the Tucker faction which
was divided fifteen for Eisenhower and two for Taft. In the debate which followed Eastvold presented the case for the minority report which emphasized the legal arguments for seating the Tucker delegates.19

Senator Everett M. Dirksen made an impassioned plea for the cause of the old guard. He said that the convention should accept the ruling made by both the National Committee and the Credentials Committee. The split in the Republican party was dramatized by Dirksen when he addressed, "My good friends from the eastern seaboard." He said, "When my friend Tom Dewey was the candidate in 1944 and 1948, I tried to be one of his best campaigners. . . . re-examine your hearts before you take this action in support of the minority report, because we followed you (Dewey) before and you took us down the path to defeat."20 The Taft cause suffered its second defeat when the convention rejected the circumlocutory arguments of Senator Dirksen and accepted the minority report by a vote of 607 to 531.21 The Eisenhower forces were not as strong on the Georgia vote as they had been on the Brown amendment.22

The Taft members of the Credentials Committee had conceded the fight on the Louisiana question, and this decision was ratified unanimously by the convention.

The Texas delegate dispute never came to a vote. The Credentials Committee had accepted the Taft compromise on
Texas. Although a minority report was presented and debate took place, the Taft forces anticipating another roll call defeat avoided it by moving that the convention unanimously support the minority report. The Republican National Convention then proceeded to adopt the permanent role of delegates and alternates.

Taft still retained a large number of delegates which had remained loyal to him throughout the fight over the contested seats. He was not out of the race, but it was clear that he no longer controlled the convention. His strategy from the beginning of his campaign for the nomination had been based on this control, and when it was gone, the uncommitted delegates he had hoped to overawe began to re-evaluate their position toward him. On July 10, Governor Fine announced for Eisenhower and carried fifty-one of the Pennsylvania delegates with him. Fine said that his choice was made on the basis "of the least risk to Republican failure in the general election." He continued,"Moreover, I am convinced the broad and deep knowledge Eisenhower has in that area of international concern will more rapidly dissolve the anxieties of a tormented world."23

An Associated Press poll on July 10 showed that Eisenhower had passed Taft in delegate strength but that neither had enough delegates for a first ballot victory.
Eisenhower had 523 delegates, Taft had 491, Stassen had 25, MacArthur had 9, and 82 were uncommitted. 24

On Thursday afternoon, Taft's headquarters issued a newspaper-size broadside which demonstrated the desperation of the Taft camp and indicated the bitterness of the dispute for the nomination. The attack was aimed at Dewey rather than at Eisenhower. It was headlined "Sink Dewey!!" and read in part:

TOM DEWEY IS THE MOST COLD-BLOODED, RUTHLESS SELFISH POLITICAL BOSS IN THE UNITED STATES TODAY. He stops at nothing to enforce his will. His promises are worthless. He is the greatest menace that the Republican party has. Twice he led us down the road to defeat and now he is trying the same trick again hidden behind the front of another man.

Behind Tom Dewey is the same old gang of Eastern Internationalists and Republican New Dealers who ganged up to sell the Republican party down the river in 1940, in 1944, and in 1948. They are trying it again this year. . .

Tom Dewey, his machine, and his coldblooded, self-seeking ruthlessness have meant only sorrow and defeat to the Republican party. Until and unless Dewey and Deweyism are crushed our party can never win and America can never be made safe from the insidious efforts of the New Dealers, whatever their party label, to take us down the road to socialism and dictatorship. 25

The Thursday morning session of the convention was devoted to the business of adopting a set of national party rules. Some of the rules were changed in an attempt to prevent a repeat of the bitter struggle just witnessed by the convention.
At the same session, the convention adopted the 1952 platform. The Resolutions Committee had worked out the controversial issues before it was presented to the convention. The two planks on which trouble had been anticipated were foreign policy and civil rights. John Foster Dulles had worked out the foreign policy plank to the satisfaction of both Taft and Eisenhower. Though both endorsed it, neither was enthusiastic about it.26 In the compromise plank the demands of the Taft forces for a sharp attack on the failure of the Truman administration were included, but it also met the demands of the Eisenhower supporters for endorsement of continued European aid.27 On the civil rights issue, the Resolutions Committee compromised by rejecting proposals for a federal fair employment practices act. The plank stated that discrimination in employment because of race, color, religion or national origin primarily were matters for the individual states to handle.28 This plank was too weak to satisfy the liberals. Harold C. Burton, a Negro from New York, attacked it as being too weak, but then decided not to bring it to the floor of the convention. The New York Times reported that Irving M. Ives of New York and Governor Alfred E. Driscoll of New Jersey told Mr. Burton that a floor fight on the civil rights plank would be detrimental to Eisenhower.29 It was Burton who seconded the motion to adopt the platform as presented
by the Resolutions Committee. Both the Taft and Eisenhower forces had compromised on the platform.

The nominations took place at the Thursday evening session. Senator Taft was nominated first when Alabama yielded to Illinois for that purpose. Senator Dirksen made the speech nominating Taft. He stressed that the Republican party had been defeated since the New Deal because "it had forgotten how to fight," and he emphasized that Taft could win. Governor Earl Warren was second to be nominated by his fellow Californian, Senator Knowland. Next Eisenhower's name was put in nomination by Governor Theodore R. McKeldin of Maryland who had been persuaded by Brownell to release the delegation pledged to him as a favorite son. The speeches for Eisenhower asserted that he was the popular candidate, had the support of the people, and represented honesty and integrity in government. The men who made the speeches for Eisenhower were young men, and an Eisenhower aide said, "We are trying to dramatize our point: the Ike people are young and vigorous, opposing the Old Guard." While the demonstration for Eisenhower was in progress, Arthur Summerfield of Michigan announced his support for Eisenhower. Harold Stassen and General MacArthur were nominated, and the convention recessed until Friday morning when the vote would be taken.

Taft continued to express optimism as the decisive
moment approached. He still retained the hard core of delegates who had remained committed to him throughout the convention. He would need, however, an additional seventy or eighty votes to win the nomination. He could not expect to receive the delegates of either Warren or Stassen. Stassen had long been opposed to Taft and some of the Minnesota delegates were openly for Eisenhower. Warren could not have delivered California to Taft because the delegates favored Eisenhower. Taft's opportunity to attract the uncommitted delegates had been lost with the defeat of the Brown amendment and with the loss of the delegate fight on the floor of the convention.

On the first roll call, the decision was made. Eisenhower received 595 to Taft's 500, with 81 going to Warren, 20 to Stassen, and 10 to MacArthur. Eisenhower was only nine votes short of the 604 required for the nomination. These were quick in coming. Minnesota had requested that it be recognized at the end of the first roll call. When Chairman Martin recognized Senator Thye, Minnesota changed its vote to Eisenhower which gave him 614 to Taft's 500. Other states followed Minnesota's lead and the final tally was 845 for Eisenhower, 280 for Taft, 77 for Warren, and 4 for MacArthur. Senators Bricker and Knowland moved that the nomination be made unanimous which officially ended the fight.
NOTES

2. Ibid., p. 16.
3. Ibid., p. 11.
4. Ibid., p. 16.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid., p. 20.
8. Ibid., p. 33.
9. Ibid., p. 34.
11. Ibid., p. 16.
15. Ibid., p. 17.
16. Ibid., p. 17
20. Ibid., pp. 175-178


31. Ibid., pp. 347-353.


V. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The Cincinnati Tafts were a family of wealth and prominence. They accepted social responsibility as a part of their heritage. It was also a tradition in the Taft family to be successful in one's own right.

Robert Taft had a successful career as a corporation lawyer and entered politics to fulfill his obligation to society. His background led him to believe in the principles of limited and economical government in domestic affairs, maximum individual liberty, minimum participation in world affairs, and restrictions on the powers of the President. Taft incorporated these into a political philosophy which was to guide him in his career in the public service.

His devotion to these principles and his father's defeat at the hands of the Progressives influenced him to have a strong respect for party loyalty. He remained a party regular who was suspicious of anyone who challenged the regularly constituted party leadership.

At the time of Taft's election to the Senate, the Republican party was experiencing a period of frustration and defeat. As one of the few Republicans in the Senate, he assumed leadership of the conservative wing of the party.
and made his career in forthright opposition to the New Deal.

During their years out of power, the Republicans were divided over the question of how to regain the leadership of the country and over the proper approach for their party in an increasingly complex world. Taft had made his reputation in the Senate as the inexorable opponent of extension of the powers of the President, high taxes, and big government. As foreign policy came to dominate the concern of the American people, his opposition became increasingly untenable. In 1952, the concerns of the Korean War and the cold war overshadowed all others which left Taft with an indefensible position on foreign policy. He had attempted to modify his foreign policy position in an effort to gain the support of the liberal wing of the party and to make himself a more acceptable candidate in 1952, but his long association with isolationists and his vigorous opposition of Truman's foreign policy made his conversion seem empty.

The liberals of the party believed that a more active role for government in both domestic and international affairs was inevitable. The liberal faction had prevailed at the conventions from 1940 to 1948 but had been beaten in the general elections. Taft believed that the task of the opposition party was to oppose all policies of
the Democrats, and he saw the campaigns of the Republican party from 1940 to 1948 as not fulfilling this obligation. After each of these defeats, Taft maintained that the candidates had not carried on a vigorous enough campaign in opposition to the Democrats, but political analysts have found that it was not the "me-too" sounding policies which defeated the Republicans.

With each defeat, Taft became increasingly bitter and his strategies to defeat the Democratic party increasingly desperate. He supported McCarthy and made charges of subversion in the Democratic administration. Taft had compromised his integrity in his effort to defeat the Democrats and those in his own party who would support the Truman policies.

Robert Taft came very close to receiving the Republican nomination for the Presidency in 1952. His control of the party was nearly complete at the end of June. The loyalty of the delegates who were pledged to him remained firm. The factor that undermined his strength in delegates was the very quality that had developed it. His unvarying support of the party regulars and their entrenched position laid him open to the charge that he was not willing to seek support outside the party in order to win in the general election. Taft's hard core of delegates came from the states where the party machinery was controlled by the party regulars.
Taft's successful strategy of collecting overwhelming delegate strength in order to control the convention left him vulnerable to the attack that he was dictating to the convention, but his hopes of success depended upon being able to demonstrate that strength. When the opposition leveled the charge of steamroller against him, it was true.

Taft depended upon the support of the party regulars for his strength and denied the right of others to participate. When the regular leaders in the South used their entrenched position to block participation by outsiders, Taft accepted party regularity and tradition as reason enough for their actions. This made him vulnerable to the charge that he was willing to countenance injustice and corruption to achieve victory. Taft never disavowed the regulars of Georgia, Louisiana, and Texas even when it became obvious that their actions had been unjust. Had he repudiated the actions of his supporters in Texas in May, he would have deprived his opposition of one of their most important issues against him. From this time on, every event of the campaign came to be associated with this unsavory Texas "steal". By deciding all questions on the basis of partisan considerations, the National Committee, which was acknowledged to be dominated by Taft men, seemed to confirm the charges of bossism.

The crucial delegations from the two-party states
came to believe that Taft's nomination would be to their disadvantage in the general election because of his association with corruption and isolationism. The Republican politicians of these states depended upon the strength of the Presidential candidate to help carry their state party into power, and they were not willing to give Taft the nomination.

The Eisenhower forces had made their candidate appear to be the one who could resolve international problems, reconcile disputes within the party, and attract dissatisfied Democrats who disliked Truman's domestic policies but were not willing to reject his foreign policy. Eisenhower was promoted as the statesman who was above faction and who was the favorite of the new young Republicans. The Eisenhower forces aimed their campaign for delegates at the Republican Governors who were responsive to local politics while the Taft forces depended upon the support of Congressmen who were more conservative.

Eisenhower's candidacy allowed the Republican party to avoid a clear cut decision on the issues dividing the party by shifting the emphasis of the factional fight to the moral question of delegate control and away from the real issues dividing the factions. Taft's candidacy would have served to sharpen the issues within the party and would have made it virtually impossible for the Republicans
to attract support from uncommitted voters or Democrats.

Taft's control of the convention had been undermined when the first clear-cut defeat came over the dispute of the Langlie substitution. He still retained great strength in delegates pledged to him, but his ability to attract the uncommitted delegates had been lost and with it the nomination.
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