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A DEEP SOUTH SUBURB: THE REPUBLICAN EMERGENCE
IN THE SUBURBS OF BIRMINGHAM ALABAMA

By

Ben Robbins

A Thesis
Submitted to the Faculty of
Mississippi State University
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for the Degree of Master of Arts
in History
in the Department of History

Mississippi State, Mississippi

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2009

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IN THE SUBURBS OF BIRMINGHAM ALABAMA

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In 1952, affluent white suburban citizens of Birmingham, Alabama voted overwhelmingly in support of Dwight D. Eisenhower. This thesis explores and examines why the emergence of a thriving suburban community that voted Republican occurred. This examination used a collection of numerous sources, primary and secondary. Newspapers served as the most important tool for discovering why the new suburbs aligned to Republicanism. The sources describe a suburban area that aligned with the Republican Party due to numerous reasons: race, Eisenhower's popularity, the Cold War, and economic issues. Due to those reasons, the election of 1952 began to alter their society and political affiliations. The 1952 presidential election results symbolized the political, cultural, and economic acceptance of the Republican Party, which created a Republican political base in the heart of a Democratic state.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
CHAPTER	
I. INTRODUCTION	1
II. BIRMINGHAM AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SUBURBS.....	11
III. CIVIL RIGHTS: THE CONVOLUTED RHETORIC OF REPUBLICANS AND DEMOCRATS	19
IV. TAXES AND THE APPEAL OF SMALL REPUBLICAN GOVERNMENT.....	37
V. COLD WAR, HEATED POLITICS: EISENHOWER’S COLD WAR REPUBLICANISM	56
VI. WE LIKE IKE: EISENHOWER’S POPULAR APPEAL.....	77
VII. CONCLUSION: THE DEEP SOUTH REPUBLICAN BASE	91
WORKS CITED	94
APPENDIX	
A. POPULATION AND RACIAL FIGURES FOR SHADES VALLEY	99
B. ECONOMIC FIGURES FOR SHADES VALLEY	101
C. EMPLOYMENT FIGURES FOR SHADES VALLEY.....	103
D. BIRMINGHAM FROM ATOP SHADES MOUNTAIN.....	105
E. BIRMINGHAM’S HIGHLANDS	107

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In 1952, affluent white suburban citizens of Birmingham, Alabama, voted overwhelmingly in support of Republican presidential candidate Dwight D. Eisenhower. The suburban community of Mountain Brook, the wealthiest city in Alabama, with a median income of \$6,990, voted 2,996 to 755 for Eisenhower over Adlai Stevenson. In Homewood, the second most prosperous city in Alabama, with a median income of \$5,065, Eisenhower carried ten of the city's twelve voter boxes.¹ The new wealthy Birmingham suburbs collectively voiced their Republican political consciousness at the polls, despite the fact that Democratic candidate, Adlai Stevenson, won the majority of votes in Alabama. The flourishing upper middle-class citizens in Birmingham's suburbs who voted for Eisenhower were not rural, Solid South Democrats. The 1952 presidential election results symbolized the emergence of a Republican enclave in the affluent Birmingham area suburbs.

Republicans' emergence in Southern suburbs is not a new topic approached by historians and political scientist. For example, two political scientists, Donald Strong and Bernard Cosman, examined the phenomenon of Southern suburban Republicanism in the 1950s. Strong's, *Urban Republicanism in the South* and Cosman's *Republicanism in the*

¹ Census of Population: 1950, Vol. II Characteristics of the Population Part 2 Alabama (Washington, D.C: US Government Printing Office, 1952): 61-62; "Jefferson Box by Box" *The Birmingham News*, 5 November 1952, 13.

Metropolitan South were important for understanding voting statistics, voter turnout, and the Southern electorate of 1952. Their political research encompassed the entire South rather than certain locales. Strong and Cosman both pointed to economic interest as motivating factors for Southern suburbanites' alignment with the Republican Party. Many other political scientists have studied Southern Republicanism, the foremost being Earl Black and Merle Black. Their books provided in depth analysis of voting trends and patterns in Southern politics. They argued that social and moral issues drove much of the South into the Republican column. As political scientists, they focus on quantifiable data, such as voting statistics, and neglect the cultural aspects of political change. By revealing the cultural and social contexts behind political numbers, historians can uncover the dynamics beneath political events.²

A historical examination of one specific suburban area will enhance historical understanding of Southern Republicanism by displaying the issues and social underpinnings that motivated their voting. Focusing on Birmingham's suburbs provided a glimpse into the culture and society of one community, which allows the reader to understand localized political movements. Scholarship that blends Strong's and Cosman's political science work with history helps to explain why Southern suburbanites voted for Eisenhower. Answering the question of why suburban Birmingham voted Republican helps scholars to better understand the Southern experience and the political trends of the second half of the twentieth century, such as white Southerners' shift to the Republican Party, the emergence of the two-party South, and the rise of the New Right.

² Donald Strong, "The Presidential Election in the South, 1952," *The Journal of Politics*, Vol. 17, No. 3 (August 1955), 343-389; Strong, *Urban Republicanism in the South* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1977), 3; Bernard Cosman, "Republicanism in the Metropolitan South," (Ph.D. diss., University of Alabama, 1960), 3-10.

Strong and Cosman are not the only scholars to research 1950s Southern Republicanism. Many historians and political writers have scrutinized and analyzed the Republican Party's ascendancy in the South. David Reinhard's *The Republican Right Since 1945*, Stephen Hess and David Broder's *The Republican Establishment*, and William Cash's "The Republican Party in Alabama Since Reconstruction" are insightful, expansive commentaries that convey a detailed history of the Republican Party. These writers employed a top down methodological approach that focused on the movements and actions of the national Republican Party. There is not much detail in their narratives on local communities, and their scholarship did not bestow much attention on local movements. Instead, their historical works focused on the Republican Party hierarchy and its growth throughout the South through major issues, such as race and morality.³

Many historians focus on white Southerners backlash against federal policies to explain the Republican Party's growth with white Southerners. Dewey Grantham in *The Life and Death of the Solid South* and George Tindall in *The Disruption of the Solid South* claim that race and attacks on liberalism brought the South to the Republican column. Their works focused on political trends throughout the entire South and are beneficial in understanding a Southern trend toward Republicanism. Due to their works' expansive nature, they could not focus on one community.⁴

Often historians focus on certain political issues to understand why Republicanism developed in the South. A prime example is Dan T. Carter in *From*

³ David Reinhard, *The Republican Right Since 1945* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 1983), 2; Stephen Hess and David Broder, *The Republican Establishment; the present and future of the GOP* (New York: Harper Row, 1967), 333. William Cash, "The Republican Party in Alabama Since Reconstruction" (Master's Thesis, Mississippi State College, 1957), 118.

⁴ Dewey Grantham, *The Life and Death of the Solid South* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 1988), 5; George Tindall, *The Disruption of the Solid South* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1972), 59.

George Wallace to Newt Gingrich. The book does an excellent job of demonstrating how racist rhetoric played an integral role in the Southern shift to the Republican Party, but it did not delve into other issues, such as economics or liberalism. An example of a historical narrative that widens the lens of realignment is Kari Frederickson's *The Dixiecrat Revolt and the End of the Solid South*. She argued that the 1948 Dixiecrat revolt demonstrated to Southerners that there was something beyond the Democratic Party and that realization led to eventually supporting Republicanism. Frederickson claimed that the Dixiecrats showed Southerners that they could vote for a party other than the Democrats. Her work was influential and important. However, absent from her narrative was an analysis of the origins of Deep South suburbs evolution into a Republican base.⁵

Historical studies of suburban politics are also not new, as most historical studies about the 1950s contain a section about suburban identity and politics. The preeminent historical narrative about suburban politics is Lisa McGirr's *Suburban Warriors*. She focused on the people of Orange County, California, a vast sprawling suburban county that was culturally and politically similar. Despite its focus on Orange County, it provided a good starting point for an analysis of a Southern suburb, because it provides an understanding of suburban communities and emerging Republicanism. Her scholarship provided a bottom up understanding of California suburban Republicanism. There are many parallels to the Southern suburb, such as economic conservatism and

⁵ Dan T. Carter, *From George Wallace to Newt Gingrich: Race in the Conservative Counterrevolution, 1963-1994* (Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 1996), xiii-xiv; Kari Frederickson, *The Dixiecrat Revolt and the End of the Solid South, 1932-1968* (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 2001), 12.

anti-communist sentiment, but there are also cultural and social differences that need exploration to understand Southern suburban politics.⁶

Another important book for understanding the historiography of Republicans and conservatives in 1952 was George Nash's *The Conservative Intellectual Movement*. Nash analyzed the emergence of Conservatism on economic and cultural fronts after World War II. His book focused strictly on conservative intellectuals and the theoretical underpinnings of conservative thought. This thesis relied heavily on Nash's definition of Conservatives. Nash linked three schools of thought to modern Conservatism; anti-communist, evangelicals, and free market supporters. All three schools are present in Shades Valley. Evangelicalism played a major a role in Alabama's culture and society, thus, evangelicalism was significant in Shades Valley's politics. However, it was not the deciding factor in Shades Valley's alignment to Republicanism, because evangelicalism had not become a cornerstone of conservative Republicanism yet.

Earlier historical works provided an excellent understanding of Southern politics and political trends. They also aided in providing definitions to terms used throughout the thesis. The ideology of conservatism supported free markets, limited government influence, states' rights, and often just the opposite of liberalism. Conservatism also opposed the government welfare state and anything associated with it. Republicans accepted the Conservative intellectual philosophy. The term Republicanism, defined the beliefs and practices of the Republican Party.

If Conservatism represented the opposite of liberalism, then the question arises what was liberalism. Liberalism supported the welfare state. Proponents of liberalism

⁶ Lisa McGirr, *Suburban Warriors: the Origins of the New American Right* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University, 2001), 15.

also espoused more government influence in business and citizens' lives, through greater business regulation and assistance. Liberal and progressive are used interchangeably throughout the thesis. Progressivism also described the ideology that supported breaking from the status quo. In the minds of liberals and progressives, their ideology supported advancements in society to create a better state.

Suburbia is another term used throughout the thesis that needs a definition. An inherent difference existed between suburban, urban, and rural environments. Suburbia represented more than a spatial definition, but also an ideology. Suburbia symbolized the model life in the early 1950's, a white-collar father, homemaker mother, and two children that played in the peaceful curbed neighborhood. There can be different definitions for suburban or suburbia but this thesis used the term to define well-kept, exclusive neighborhoods with white residents.

An in depth analysis of a local Southern community's cultural and political emergence to the Republican Party in the election of 1952 would benefit the field of history and add to Southern political historiography. The case study of Shades Valley, supplements the larger narrative of mid-twentieth century politics by providing a greater knowledge of Southern politics. This thesis also contributes to the larger field of historiography by adding a greater context and understanding to the rise of the Southern Republican Party. It also complements history regarding the new South that developed after World War II. The major contribution of this study is that it adds to historians' understanding of Southern suburbs, cities, and politics.

Birmingham, Alabama's suburbs, offers a perfect example, for studying Southern suburban Republicanism due to their location in the Deep South. Most Southern cities

also had growing national Republican bases in the 1950's, from Atlanta to New Orleans. Due to the authors knowledge of Birmingham and proximity to Birmingham it offered a better fit. Understanding Birmingham's suburbs alignment offers insight into the suburban political atmosphere, culture, and Republicanism of Southern suburbanites in the 1950s. Historians can better understand why long-term political trends occurred in Southern suburbs.

To use the Birmingham suburban area, named Shades Valley, as a case study for suburban Republican growth, primary source documents are integral in understanding the political and social factors that led to Republican alignment. The two largest local newspapers, *The Birmingham News* and *Birmingham Post-Herald*, were crucial in researching Republican support. Shades Valley did have its own newspaper at the time, *The Shades Valley Sun*, but no copies from the early 1950s exist. Newspapers provide local insight into the political issues and events that were the most significant to the citizenry. The articles and editorials shaped the debate and voters' understanding of the presidential campaign in Shades Valley. Newspaper clipping files at Auburn University and the Birmingham Public Library's were beneficial in collecting newspaper sources. Newspapers served as the most important source for the thesis but many other primary documents, such as interviews and manuscript collections, offered evidence for why the suburbs of Shades Valley realigned to Republicanism.

Manuscript collections also served as important primary sources. The personal papers of C.O. Vardaman, Chairman of the Alabama Republican Party, served as a valuable tool in understanding the political climate. Vardaman's papers highlight what he believed would attract voters to the Republican Party. Jefferson County

(Birmingham's County) Republican Party papers complemented the papers of C.O. Vardaman, in helping to understand suburban Republicanism. The Jefferson County Republican papers, correspondence, minutes, and leadership notes, helped to comprehend Jefferson County Republican views and were extremely important to understanding the Republicanism of Shades Valley. The Republican Party papers offered documents from committee meetings, which outlined the party's philosophies. Newspaper clippings were in the party's papers, which helped to provide a timeline and identify news stories that were important to Republicans.

In addition to political sources, the personal papers of Robert Jemison, architect and developer of Mountain Brook, served as another important tool. His notes on the development of Mountain Brook were helpful in understanding the Birmingham suburbs. His papers contained notes on the construction of Mountain Brook and his dream for the exclusive suburb. Jemison's papers also presented information about the history of the suburbs. The collection also included real estate brochures that demonstrated Jemison marketed the exclusive neighborhood to the wealthy. The documents offer great insight into the development of the Shades Valley area.

Oral history also provided another beneficial primary source for this thesis. The author conducted interviews with local political figures, which provided insight into Republican history. Besides personal interviews, the University of North Carolina oral history project served as a vital source. During the early 1970s historians associated with the University of North Carolina interviewed many famous Southern politicians. These interviews provide first-hand accounts of the political and social movements of the early 1950's.

In addition to historical sources for context and primary sources for evidence, sociological articles and books were vital in understanding the suburbs. The sociology articles provided a description of the typical suburban mindset that emerged after World War II. The mindset consisted of the husband in a white-collar job, homemaker wife, two children, automobile, and a lawn. The sociological view of suburbia also helps to define Shades Valley's culture, and it elucidated the fear that surrounded the Cold War and how it affected voters' mindset. Sociologists' works were significant in characterizing the culture of suburbia, which help in analyzing Birmingham's suburbs.

This thesis attempted to present a case study of Republican alignment; it focused on numerous issues and their effect on Shades Valley. The discussion of many issues benefits the understanding of Shades Valley and Southern suburb's emergence as Republican enclaves. Racial and civil rights issues were important issues in Southern politics and in Solid South realignment. Chapter Two delves into both political parties' stances on racial and civil rights issues and how neither party had a clear stance on civil rights. Unlike other historical narratives, this thesis attempted to complicate the argument that race represented the major issue in Republican growth, by demonstrating both parties' circular arguments concerning civil rights.

In order to broaden the narrative of suburban alignment, a discussion of other issues besides civil rights was necessary. Chapter Three examined economic issues and their effect on Shades Valley voters. By addressing economic issues, this thesis established how Birmingham suburbanites supported small government and low taxes. With their firm belief in low taxes and anti-liberalism, Shades Valley became a new Republican base of support. When studying 1950's politics one must also analyze the

Cold War. Thus, Chapter Four concentrated on the political and social climate of the Cold War and its subsequent result on Shades Valley's voting. Dwight Eisenhower's popularity served as another motivating factor for Shades Valley's alignment with the Republican Party. Chapter Five analyzed the popularity of Eisenhower and how it aided in suburban Birmingham's Republicanism.

Shades Valley population grew during the 1940s and early 1950s and accepted a suburban way of life. Just as most Northern suburbs in 1952 voted in the Republican column, so did Birmingham's suburbs. Four major issues compelled these Southern suburbanites to the Republican Party: race, Eisenhower's popularity, the Cold War, and economics. Those four issues and an emerging suburban culture, guided Birmingham's suburban voters to a political alignment that lasted for generations. Former Florida Democratic Senator, Claude Pepper, summed up the national trends of 1952 when he stated:

The basic issue was National Health Insurance, civil rights, liberal attitudes favoring labor, minimum wage and all that sort of thing. Adequate hospital and medical care for the people, those things were basically the issue. And of course, the McCarthy stuff was simply the coloration of it. It was an excuse, it was simply a manifestation of that extreme right-wing conservative attitude that was beginning to grow stronger and stronger.⁷

Pepper served as the Florida Senator but he described the trends that were occurring throughout Southern suburbs, in particularly Birmingham's suburbs.

⁷ Claude Pepper, interview by Jack Bass and Walter DeVries, transcribed, February 1, 1974, Southern Oral History Program Collection at University of North Carolina.

CHAPTER II

BIRMINGHAM AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SUBURBS

To answer why Republicanism emerged, one must understand the history and social make-up of Shades Valley. To first comprehend Shades Valley one must be cognizant of the history of Birmingham. The city of Birmingham figuratively arose overnight in the 1890s, when industrial barons transformed a cornfield in Jones Valley into an industrial metropolis. They chose the site of Birmingham because of its resources in timber and the deposits of coal and iron ore in Red Mountain at the foothills of Appalachia.¹ Birmingham's population grew tremendously during the first half of the twentieth century as wealth and investment flowed into the city.

Red Mountain's coal and iron ore deposits not only provided the fuel for Birmingham's industry, but it also represented the city's southern barrier. In the first decades of the twentieth century, a stratified system of wealth and neighborhoods developed in Jones Valley. Steel and ironworkers lived in Fairfield and Ensley and the wealthy tried to move away from the working class neighborhoods.² Birmingham residents had no easy method of transportation to cross Red Mountain. Thus, the affluent

¹ Leah Rawls Atkins, *The Valley and the Hills: an Illustrated History of Birmingham and Jefferson County* (Woodland Hills, CA: Windsor Publications, 1981), 5-12.

² Ibid.

fled to the side of Red Mountain and created exclusive housing districts there with names such as the Highlands.³

Eventually, the advent of the automobile and trolley car enabled people to go over the resource rich Red Mountain into Shades Valley, situated between Red Mountain and Shades Mountain. Shades Valley symbolized tranquility and owed its name to the large trees that created shaded areas in the valley. Gradually, executives and socialites crossed the mountain and built homes in the forest and farmland of Shades Valley.⁴ The transportation revolution allowed wealthy Birmingham citizens to settle in the quaint Shades Valley. When wealthy citizens began to migrate into Shades Valley, a small African Americans crossroads named Rosedale and a white farming village named Edgewood awaited them. The few people who did not work as farmers labored in a small iron-works named Oxmoor.⁵ The emergence of wealthy communities transformed the quaint Shades Valley into bustling suburbia.

Homewood incorporated in 1924 by merging Rosedale and Edgewood.⁶ Despite combining an African American and a Caucasian community to create Homewood, racial diversity did not define Homewood; by 1950, only 660 of the 12,866 residents were non-white.⁷ The rising affluent suburbs garnered the nickname “Over the Mountain,” which came to represent prosperity and exclusivity. Hollywood, a ritzy development in Shades Valley, defined Shades Valley’s high-class surroundings with the slogan, “Out of the

³ Ibid.

⁴ *The Birmingham News*, 4 October 1979, Homewood History Newspaper Clipping Files (Tutwiler Collection of Southern History and Literature: Birmingham Public Library).

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ *Birmingham Post Herald*, 10 January 1978, Mountain Brook History File, Newspaper Clipping Files (Tutwiler Collection of Southern History and Literature: Birmingham Public Library).

⁷ Census of Population: 1950, Vol. II Characteristics of the Population Part 2 Alabama (Washington, D.C: US Government Printing Office, 1952) 62.

smoke zone and into the ozone of Hollywood.”⁸ In 1926, Homewood annexed Hollywood. Connotations derived from the nickname “Over the Mountain” and slogans like Hollywood’s implied to blue collar Birmingham that these communities had escaped the industrial landscape. Not only did the suburbanites live in an economically and socially different world, but a physical mountain also separated the laborers from the prosperous sanctuary Over the Mountain.

In 1926, architect Robert Jemison set out to build a more exclusive haven Over the Mountain, named Mountain Brook. Jemison built Redmont Park and Jemison Park in Birmingham, but there were not as large as Mountain Brook. A major focus in his development of Mountain Brook was to create a neighborhood with big yards and open areas for horseback riding. He made the roads curvy, for their alternate use as bridle paths. The roads were also winding in order to resemble English country lanes.⁹ From the roads to the yards, Jemison planned the neighborhood to exude affluence, unlike any other place in Birmingham. Jemison’s architecture company published a brochure that advertised the Mountain Brook Estates’ exclusivity and Old South charm:

Such is the setting, surpassed in natural charm by no other location in Birmingham, where Jemison and Company is fashioning today an exclusive estate section for country homes, where cultured persons can preserve those fine traditions of aristocratic life which the Old South knew in Antebellum days.¹⁰

⁸ *Birmingham Post Herald*, 10 January 1978, Mountain Brook History File, Newspaper Clipping Files (Tutwiler Collection of Southern History and Literature: Birmingham Public Library).

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ Robert Jemison and Co. Brochure for Mountain Brook Estates, Inc., Robert Jemison Papers, Birmingham Public Library Archives, Birmingham, Alabama.

Jemison wanted to demonstrate that Mountain Brook would serve as a sanctuary for the high-class of Alabama and a place that held onto the aristocratic image of the Antebellum South.

With the onset of the Great Depression and then World War II, no growth or development transpired Over the Mountain. However, at the conclusion of the war, Shades Valley's population surged. With returning soldiers and the baby boom in full swing, people had a rising need for housing. Shades Valley offered an abundance of land for people to build homes and subdivisions. Residents of suburban Birmingham had increased personal wealth from booming business, which allowed them to move to "better" schools, neighborhoods, and the suburban dream of Shades Valley.¹¹ Homewood experienced a 73.9% population increase between 1940 and 1950. The population exploded from 7,397 in 1940 to 12,866 in 1950, with only 660 non-white residents.¹² A *Birmingham Post-Herald* article best described the massive development during the 1940s, "The magic growth of Jack's beanstalk doesn't rate at all compared to the miraculous apartment growth in Shades Valley."¹³

With the flow of citizens Over the Mountain into the sprawling, Shades Valley, a new suburb atop Shades Mountain named Vestavia Hills incorporated in 1950.¹⁴ Vestavia Hills matched the pre-existing notion of prosperity and tranquility that existed in Homewood and Mountain Brook. It began as a real estate development in 1945. More

¹¹ Sheryl Spradling Summe, *Homewood: The Life of a City* (Homewood, AL: Friends of the Homewood Public Library, 2001), 163-165.

¹² Census of Population: 1950, Vol. II Characteristics of the Population Part 2 Alabama (Washington, D.C: US Government Printing Office, 1952): 2-8.

¹³ *Birmingham Post Herald*, 8 September 1947, Shades Valley and Mountain Newspaper Clipping Files (Tutwiler Collection of Southern History and Literature: Birmingham Public Library).

¹⁴ *The Birmingham News*, 15 March 1953, Vestavia Hills Newspaper Clipping Files (Birmingham Public Library, Microfilm Section).

people and families flooded to the subdivision, and in 1950, residents voted to incorporate. The population of Vestavia Hills surged from 660 residents in 1950 to about 1200 by 1953.¹⁵ Since Mountain Brook and Vestavia did not exist in 1940, there was no population information in the 1940 census. By the early 1950s, three large and growing wealthy suburbs existed in the posh suburbs of Shades Valley.

Shades Valley's growth did not happen in a vacuum. It followed the national trend toward suburbia sweeping the nation. A pattern of dense urban living created by industrialization followed by expansion into sprawling suburbs characterized American suburban history. After World War II, the nation and Birmingham experienced their largest periods of suburban growth due to the baby boom and increased personal wealth.¹⁶ Suburban growth typically was racially monolithic, almost completely Caucasian. Birmingham typified the trend, as Mountain Brook's African American population was only 3.35% of the population and Homewood's African American population was only 5.13% of the population.¹⁷ Birmingham's suburban growth matched the demographic trends of Chicago, Los Angeles, or Detroit where white residents were moving from the city proper to the suburbs.¹⁸ Sheryl Spradling Summe's genealogical study of Homewood best described the growth and change, "Homewood epitomized the growth of the forties and fifties." Summe made that statement, due to Homewood's massive growth and racial homogeneity.¹⁹

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Kenneth Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier: the Suburbanization of the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 175-215.

¹⁷ Census of Population: 1950, Vol. II Characteristics of the Population Part 2 Alabama (Washington, D.C: US Government Printing Office, 1952): 2-65.

¹⁸ Thomas Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton Press, 1996), 13.

¹⁹ Sheryl Spradling Summe, *Homewood: The Life of a City* (Homewood, AL: Friends of the

Suburban citizens conformed to a suburban way of life, typically called suburbia. Frederick Jackson, the pre-eminent suburban historian, stated, “Suburbia is both a planning type and a state of mind based on imagery and symbolism.”²⁰ Middle class suburban citizens assumed similar values, such as government conservatism. The public’s embrace of suburban ideology created a new society; the residents were neither rural nor urban, they were “suburban.”²¹ Homewood, Mountain Brook, and Vestavia Hills not only resembled a Northern suburb in terms of suburban growth, but also ideologically as each city accepted the suburban way of life.

Shades Valley portrayed an image of elitist whites who relaxed at country clubs away from the smoke and bustle of Birmingham.²² Women in Shades Valley enjoyed glamour and fashion, while their husbands directed banks and industries.²³ The communities blended over an idea of opulence and escape from the city or their shared suburban state of mind. Southern traditions of poverty and agrarianism did not plague Shades Valley citizens who lived in suburbia. A *Birmingham Post-Herald* headline best described the society of Shades Valley, “To the upwardly mobile Mountain Brook is the promise land.”²⁴

Even the homes and communities were more modern than the rest of the state. In Jefferson County in 1950, there were 159,377 dwelling facilities, but only 88,157 had

Homewood Public Library, 2001), 163.

²⁰ Kenneth Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier: the Suburbanization of the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 4-5.

²¹ Sylvia Fleis Flava, “Suburbanism as a Way of Life,” *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 21, No.1 (Feb. 1956) : 35.

²² Robert Jemison, Jr., Mountain Brook Land Co. Papers, “The Country Club District,” Birmingham Public Library Archives, Birmingham Library.

²³ Joan Hoffman, “The Women of Mountain Brook,” (Ph.D. diss., Emory University, 1996), 47-48.

²⁴ *Birmingham Post Herald*, 10 January 1978, Shades Valley and Mountain File Newspaper Clipping Files (Tutwiler Collection of Southern History and Literature: Birmingham Public Library).

bathing facilities.²⁵ However, the affluent communities in Shades Valley were the antithesis to the rest of the state. Only four of the 2,884 homes in Mountain Brook did not have running water.²⁶ In Homewood, there were 3,737 home dwellings, and 3,353 of those had bathing facilities. To further prove this point, Opelika, a rural community with a similar population to Homewood, differed drastically in its numbers of bathing facilities. Opelika had 3,476 homes, but only 1,782 homes with bathing facilities. Homewood and Mountain Brook had the most homes with modern indoor facilities. The homes Over the Mountain were different from those in the rest of the state.²⁷

Another aspect of suburbia was that, politically, residents typically became Republicans and more inclined to support conservatism.²⁸ In the election of 1952, Alabama suburbanites voted for Eisenhower in a state that voted for Stevenson. Across the state, only other wealthy districts (Montgomery, Mobile, and Selma) and the traditional Republican stronghold since the Civil War, Winston County, voted for Eisenhower. However, Eisenhower's margin of victory in those areas did not compare to the landslide he received Over the Mountain. From the labor-oriented boxes of Birmingham or Anniston to the rural boxes of Clay County, Adlai Stevenson won in a landslide. Stevenson won a more decisive majority in the Democratic stronghold of the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) districts in North Alabama. Thus, Shades Valley voted differently from most of the state of Alabama.²⁹

²⁵ U.S. Census of Housing: 1950, General Characteristics Alabama (Washington, D.C: US Government Printing Office, 1952) :18.

²⁶ Ibid, 31.

²⁷ Ibid, 19.

²⁸ Douglas Miller and Marion Nowak, *The Fifties; The Way We Really Were* (New York; Doubleday and Co., 1975), 135.

²⁹ Donald Strong, *Urban Republicanism in the South* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1977), 5.

The development of Birmingham, led to the eventual creation of Shades Valley, which became a Republican enclave. The suburban communities that grew in Shades Valley matched the idea of suburbia. Over the Mountain became an exclusive retreat from the hustle and bustle of Birmingham and created a distinct society. The emerging suburban society aligned with the Republican Party. Shades Valley grew from the desire of executives to escape Birmingham and it resulted in distinct communities and a political structure.

CHAPTER III
CIVIL RIGHTS: THE CONVOLUTED RHETORIC OF REPUBLICANS AND
DEMOCRATS

With an understanding of Shades Valley's development and cultural make-up, one can then comprehend who the voters were. Political issues explain why these suburbanites voted Republican. Racial issues were inherent Southern politics and serves as the starting point for any historical study of Southern politics or Southern society. In addition, numerous historians have argued that opposition to the national Democratic Party's civil rights stance led to a realignment of Southern white voters. Kari Frederickson, claimed that the 1948 Dixiecrat revolt subsequently created the Southern two-party system.¹ Other historians, such as Dan Carter, argue that the Republican Party established a racist lexicon to tap into the region's deep-seated racism.² Their arguments have some traction because the Republican Party became a viable party in the South with the Barry Goldwater campaign in 1964. He anchored his Southern campaign on the fact that he had opposed civil rights and all forms of federal intervention to force intergration.³

¹ Kari Frederickson, *The Dixiecrat Revolt and the End of the Solid South, 1932-1968* (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 2001), 5-14.

² Dan T. Carter, *From George Wallace to Newt Gingrich: race in the conservative counterrevolution, 1963-1994* (Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 1996), xiv.

³ Rick Perlstein, *Before the Storm: Barry Goldwater and the Unmaking of the American Consensus* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2001), 3-15.

The Goldwater movement of 1964, however, came well after the 1952 election. In 1964, Goldwater carried the entire Deep South, but the 1952 Republican movement emerged specifically in affluent suburbs, such as Shades Valley. In addition, Goldwater's brand of John Birch Republicanism did not have a major voice in the party in 1952. At that time, most Republicans were moderate and diverse. The white South might have realigned to Goldwater primarily for racial reasons in 1964 but more factors were at work in the suburbs in 1952. Shades Valley's political emergence to Republicanism differed from the majority of the rural and urban South.

The theory that race served as the most important motivation behind Republican alignment in Shades Valley does not hold water. To believe that, one must accept the idea that Republicans were against integration and Democrats supported it. However, if voters that wanted to vote against civil rights issues they did not have a party to support. During the 1952 presidential campaign, both parties were multi-dimensional concerning racial issues. The rhetoric and actions of Republicans and Democrats complicated the political dialogue and did not make either party stand out on racial issues. In the election of 1952, suburban Birmingham voters threw their support to the Republican Party, not a Jim Crow party.

Throughout Southern political history, race had a ubiquitous undertone in politics. However, white Southerners started to become distressed with the national Democratic Party, because of Harry Truman and his efforts in civil rights. As president, he wanted to establish a federal commission that would ensure African Americans opportunities for fair employment. He also aspired to end segregation within the federal government's sphere of power. Truman pushed the Democrats further away from the Southern racial

viewpoint. Many Southerners were dissatisfied with Roosevelt but he never went as far as Truman's push to eliminate segregation in the federal government. The party that had sustained their Jim Crow system now disillusioned white Southerners.⁴

At the 1948 Democratic National Convention, many Southern Democrats protested, Trumanism and the party's increasing progressiveness towards civil rights, and walked out of the gathering. Birmingham attorney Horace Wilkinson led the Alabama Delegation's exodus from the Convention. The Southern Democrats who marched out of the Convention reconvened in Birmingham to form their own party. They created the Dixiecrat Party and nominated South Carolina Governor Strom Thurmond for president and Mississippi Governor Fielding Wright for vice-president. The party drafted a states' rights platform that advocated for limited federal government involvement in any racial matters.⁵

In Alabama, Wilkinson and the Dixiecrats usurped the power of the Alabama Democratic Party, by placing Dixiecrats in charge of the Alabama Democratic Party. With Dixiecrats in control of the party apparatus, they designated Strom Thurmond and Fielding Wright as the Democrat candidates. On election day, Truman's name did not appear on the Alabama ballot. Instead, it listed Strom Thurmond. In 1948, the Dixiecrat Party won the state of Alabama.⁶ Voting figures for Shades Valley in 1948, are not indicative of a Republican emergence because of the communities development after 1948, they were a different electorate in 1952. After Thurmond's national loss, the

⁴ Dewey Grantham, *The Life and Death of the Solid South* (Lexington, KY: UK Press, 1988), 6-18.

⁵ J. Barton Starr, "Birmingham and the 'Dixiecrat' Convention of 1948." *Alabama Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 32, Nos. 1-2 (Spring and Summer 1970), 1.

⁶ Numan Bartley and Hugh Graham, *Southern Elections: County and Precinct Data, 1950-1972* (Baton Rouge: LA, 1978), 349.

Dixiecrats had a tenuous grip on the Alabama Democrat Party. By 1950, Alabama's Democratic Senators Lister Hill and John Sparkman seized back control of the state Democratic Party by eliminating the Dixiecrats from positions of power. Despite losing their dominance, Dixiecrats continued to exist as a constituency within the Alabama Democratic Party, but their power never again rivaled that of 1948. With a component of the state party rejecting the national party's philosophy, disputes over racial issues and the role of Dixiecrats often arose.⁷

When regular Democrats regained control of the state party's political apparatus, they wanted to retain it and push the Dixiecrats out of any executive positions. Ben Ray, Alabama Democratic Party Chairman, devised an approach to eliminate Dixiecrats. His plan involved forcing delegates to the 1952 Democratic Convention to swear an oath to support the National Party's presidential and vice presidential nominees. The pledge read: "I do further pledge myself to aid and support the nominees of the national convention of the Democratic Party for president and vice president."⁸ Ray thought the oath would purge Dixiecratic leaning delegates and assure that only regular Alabama Democrats went to the convention. Instead, a legal quarrel concerning delegates to the National Convention developed between Alabama Democrats and Dixiecrats.

Dixiecrats considered the oath an attack on their political position. In response, Horace Wilkinson and Edmund Blair sued the Democratic Party to allow Blair to qualify as a delegate without swearing an oath. The Dixiecrats did not want to pledge support to a presidential or vice presidential candidate if the candidate promised to continue

⁷ *The Birmingham News* and *The Birmingham Post-Herald*, 1948-1952.

⁸ Fred Taylor, "Truman Withdrawal Leaves Righters High, Dry, says Ray," *The Birmingham News*, 3 April 1952, 6.

Truman's initiatives. The Dixiecrats wanted to attend the national convention, so that they could work to direct a states' rights platform or walk out again.⁹

The Alabama Supreme Court declared the oath unconstitutional and nullified it.¹⁰ Ray then appealed the decision to the US Supreme Court. The high court upheld the state party's right to force delegates to say a pledge, stating that a private organization could set their own rules and guidelines.¹¹ The Supreme Court judgment meant Dixiecrats had to pledge to support the Democratic Party or become political independents, which might force hard-line Dixiecrats out of the party. If Dixiecrats wanted to influence one of the major party's platforms, they would have to work with the Republican Party.

Amidst the upheaval in the formerly Solid South, Republicans began to market themselves to the independent Dixiecrats and disgruntled Democrats. Under National Republican Chairman Guy Gabrielson's guidance, the Party went after Southern voters by not taking a progressive, hard-line on civil rights. Gabrielson directed efforts to attract discontented Southern Democrats and Dixiecrats to the Republican camp. During the early stages of the presidential campaign in February of 1952, Gabrielson spoke in Birmingham to promote the Republican Party to Alabama Dixiecrats and Democrats. He told the crowd they were fighting the same enemy, Truman. The highlight of his inclusive speech came when he said: "Our friends call themselves states righters and we call ourselves Republican. But they oppose corruption (Korea and Communism) in

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Fred Taylor, "Rep. Scott Blasts Top Court for Loyalty Pledge Ruling," *The Birmingham News*, 5 April 1952, 3.

¹¹ Ibid.

government and so do we.”¹² Gabrielson’s Birmingham speech exemplified his efforts to splinter the Solid South.

The Party followed the strategy set forth by Gabrielson at the Republican Convention of 1952. The Party of Lincoln transformed itself, altering its platform from 1948. Republicans drafted a new clause that denounced Truman’s Fair Employment Practices Act. The subcommittee that drafted the policy concluded that employment practices were the responsibility of each state. They stated after the convention, “Federal action should not duplicate state efforts to end such practices (integration); should not set up another huge bureaucracy.”¹³ According to the states rights philosophy, Birmingham citizens could decide their own course of action for civil rights. Thus, instead of having the federal government impose racial progressivism, they could instead set their own rules concerning integration in Birmingham.

The party marketed itself for Southern voters through writing a states rights platform. Republicans had a presidential ticket that believed in states rights, in General Dwight D. Eisenhower for President and California Senator Richard M. Nixon for Vice President. The amateur politician Eisenhower accepted the Republicans’ platform, which included states rights. Eisenhower claimed: “I believe we can do more by leadership and getting states to do it (integration) than make it a federal compulsory thing.”¹⁴ After the Convention, Republicans became marketable to the many independent Dixiecrats and Democrats disgruntled over Truman’s civil rights proposals.

¹² *The Birmingham News*, 9 February 1952, Political Parties (Republican) Newspaper Clippings File, (Microfilm Section: Birmingham Public Library).

¹³ “GOP Leaders Seek Quick Approval of Civil Rights Plan,” *The Birmingham News*, 10 July 1952, 2.

¹⁴ Jack Bell, “Against Federal FEPC, Say’s it’s for States,” *The Birmingham News*, 5 June 1952, 1.

C.O. Vardaman, Mountain Brook resident and Alabama Republican Chairman, served on the committee that drafted the Republican platform, in hopes of attracting Southerners to the Republican Party. Before becoming active in Republican politics, Vardaman served as an executive with Birmingham Electric Co. When he returned to Birmingham after triumphantly drafting the civil rights provisions, he welcomed Dixiecrats and Democrats into the Party. Regarding civil rights, Vardaman said on the front step of his Mountain Brook home, “Republicans feel that more can be done by good will and education than can be done by compulsion.”¹⁵ Republicans courted white Southerners at the Convention and Vardaman returned home to Shades Valley to promote the candidacy of Eisenhower in Alabama and the South.

At the 1952 Convention, the Democratic Party drafted a platform that many Southerners considered opposed to their long held traditions of white supremacy. For example, it openly called for the end to racial discrimination. The Democrat platform also promised African Americans and other minorities’ equal opportunities to vote and work. Many of the civil rights provisions that the Democratic Party discussed represented a continuation of Trumanism, the same ideology that had led some white Southerners to desert the party.¹⁶

The 1952 democratic platform emerged from the Convention, watered down from its 1948 counterpart despite its civil rights provisions. Many white Southerners, including Alabama Senator John Sparkman, helped draft the civil rights plank and reach a compromise on its passage. At the convention, the Democrat Party took a risk of losing

¹⁵ *The Birmingham News*, 14 July 1952, C.O. Vardaman Papers, Newspaper Clippings (Auburn University Special Collections, Auburn University).

¹⁶ “Ike or Adlai,” *The Birmingham News*, 19 October 1952, 1-2.

liberals in order to retain the conservative South by dropping some of Truman's racial progressive calls for more integration. Immediately after the convention, media sources touted white Southerners' victory at the Convention, *The Birmingham News* stated, "Union chiefs, liberals lost bid to reshape the Democrat Party."¹⁷ The fact that media sources touted the platform as a Southern win demonstrates the complexity of the civil rights issues in 1952.

Alabama Senator John Sparkman's presence provided a Southern voice on the platform. Many Southern politicians, from Sparkman to Mississippi Senator James Eastland, spoke positively about the Democratic platform. Southerners who supported the platform did not view the platform as perfect, but found it to be more in line with Southern traditions. The fact that Southern politicians defended and drafted the party platform, demonstrate that if Shades Valley voters wanted to cast their vote for racial issues then both parties presented a similar view.

With a modified civil rights platform, the Democrats nominated Illinois Governor Adlai Stevenson for president at the Democratic convention. He supported states rights, Stevenson asserted: "I feel very strongly that this (FEPC) is the first responsibility of the states themselves."¹⁸ Stevenson supported ending racial and religious bigotry; however, he never outlined new legislation to end such problems. Despite Stevenson's rhetoric, he provided a conundrum to Shades Valley voters. In addition, Harry Truman, the figure who sparked the 1948 walkout, supported Stevenson and campaigned for him.¹⁹

¹⁷ "Union Chiefs, Liberals lost bid to reshape the Democrat Party," *The Birmingham News*, August 5, 1952, 1.

¹⁸ "Here's How Adlai Stands on Issues," *The Birmingham News* 23 July 1952, 1.

¹⁹ Porter McKeever, *Adlai Stevenson: His Life and Legacy* (New York: Morrow, 1989), 85.

While campaigning for Stevenson, Truman stopped in Harlem to speak to a group of African Americans. After his Harlem speech, the Alabama Citizens for Eisenhower Committee placed an advertisement in the *Birmingham News* with excerpts from his speech. The advertisement put Truman's words in bold print, "He (Stevenson) will make a great civil rights President."²⁰ Alabama Eisenhower supporters' efforts to connect Stevenson to Truman and civil rights demonstrate the importance of race in the political dialogue. Republicans wanted to connect Stevenson to Truman, creating an image of him being pro-Fair Deal, including liberal racial practices.

The Citizens for Eisenhower tried to bring voters to the Republican column by playing to segregationist. However, many Alabama Republicans supported integration. Hobart Grooms Birmingham attorney and supporter of integration, served as Eisenhower's Alabama campaign treasurer.²¹ Eisenhower later appointed Grooms to a federal judgeship where he made the decision that the University of Alabama had to integrate. Grooms support demonstrated that Republicans did have a wing that supported integration.²²

In order to offset any racial liberalism that Stevenson exuded from his connection with Truman, the Democrat Party nominated John Sparkman as vice president. In Sparkman's ten-year career, he had sixteen opportunities to vote on civil rights laws and each time he opposed them.²³ He opposed every form of integration, anti-lynching legislation, and anti-poll tax bills. In addition to Sparkman's record, he openly opposed

²⁰ "Read what Truman Told Harlem Audiences about Civil Rights," *The Birmingham News*, 13 October 1952, 3.

²¹ Allen Woodrow Jones, "Republicanism in Jefferson County, AL 1952-1958," *The Alabama Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 22, No. 1 & 2 (Spring and Summer, 1960), 111.

²² B.R. Brazeal, "Some problems in the Desegregation of Higher Education in the "Hard Core" States," *The Journal of Negro Education*, Vol. 27, No. 3, (Summer 1958), 352-372.

²³ "Alabama Ballot Slogan Target of N.Y. Governor," *The Birmingham News* 9 October 1952, 1.

Truman.²⁴ During Sparkman's Congressional career, he had been a staunch opponent of Truman. Sparkman even met with Eisenhower in 1948 in an attempt urge him to run for the Democratic presidential nomination against Truman.²⁵ To the suburban voters of Birmingham, Sparkman could counterbalance any racial progressivism of the liberal national Democrat Party.

Democrats achieved their objective of retaining most white Southern voters when they placed Sparkman on the ticket. They won back the Deep South and many white citizens returned to the Party. Sparkman's nomination offered Alabamians a sense of pride; they could boast of their local legend. Having Sparkman on the ticket also provided Alabamians a sense of ownership of the party.²⁶ Birmingham attorney and former Dixiecrat Ernest Jones best described why Alabama Democrats returned to the national party in 1952:

I think the ticket is a recognition of the Southern viewpoint. I feel nomination of Sparkman, who is an eminent statesman, will do a lot toward uniting the party in Alabama...I cannot feel that an administration of which John Sparkman is a part can hurt the South.²⁷

While many Dixiecrats returned, there were still some not convinced by the Democrats' more traditional stance. Despite Sparkman's record and Alabama ties, many former Dixiecrats, such as Tom Abernathy former executive of the State Democratic and Dixiecrat Party, campaigned against him. They were afraid as a national political figure, he might follow Hugo Black's example. Black, a native Alabamian and Jim Crow

²⁴ "Alabama Politicians," *The Birmingham News*, 19 May 1952.

²⁵ *Mobile Press Register*, 27 July 1952, John Sparkman Clipping Files (Tutwiler Collection of Southern History and Literature: Birmingham Public Library).

²⁶ Donald Strong, *Urban Republicanism in the South* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1977), 9-10.

²⁷ "States' Righters Split over Demo plank on Civil Rights," *The Birmingham News*, 27 July 1952, 1.

supporter, began supporting measures for African American civil rights once he sat on the Supreme Court.²⁸ The suggestion that a correlation could exist between Black and Sparkman emerged due to political maneuvers Sparkman made during the 1952 campaign to appeal to voters outside the South. Often on the campaign trail, he discussed political issues with African Americans. He attempted to take a more moderate stance concerning segregation and racial issues to appeal to a national audience. Even during his first campaign speech in the South, he “sidestepped” the racial issue by not discussing civil rights or his voting record for segregation.²⁹

Sparkman’s attempt to appear moderate provided fuel to Tom Abernathy, turned Eisenhower supporter. Abernathy declared that Sparkman had sold out his constituents and supported Truman.³⁰ Abernathy hoped that there were still undecided Dixiecrats that might vote Eisenhower. However, a racist undertone to the campaign rhetoric did not saturate Eisenhower’s campaign during 1952. He campaigned in Harlem, and spoke to a smaller crowd than Truman. During his speech, even a few onlookers booed at points during his speech. Despite the negative crowd, Eisenhower still sought African American votes because he operated a campaign not based solely around white voters. In his campaign address, he promised the African American crowd, “Wherever the federal government has responsibility, there will be no discrimination as long as I can help it in private or public life, based upon any such thing as color, or creed or religion-never.”³¹ Eisenhower’s campaigning for African-American votes did not exist in the South.

²⁸ Roger Newman, *Hugo Black: a Biography* (Fordham Press: New York, 1977), 5.

²⁹ Fred Taylor, “Demos Blasted at Rally for Ike,” *The Birmingham News*, 8 July 1952, 5.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ “General,” *The Birmingham News*, 26 October 1952.

Eisenhower said he firmly believed in states rights, but where he had jurisdiction he wanted to end segregation. In a speech in Los Angeles, he stated:

We must make equality of opportunity a living fact for every American—regardless of race, color, or creed...that is part of the unfinished business of America...and I'm for starting to do it right in our nation's Capitol.³²

In the statement, Eisenhower explicitly articulated the fact that he wanted to end segregation in Washington D.C. This put him at odds with white Southern segregationists.

Not only did Eisenhower openly defend African Americans' civil liberties and the integration of Washington D.C., but he also supported the idea of possibly appointing an African American to his cabinet. During the campaign Eisenhower claimed, "I will search for merit wherever it is...If, in a particular field where the appointment would give reassurance to Negro men, I would do such a thing."³³ Thus, Eisenhower challenged another basic tenet of Southern life; by claiming he would appoint an African American to his cabinet. These instances in Eisenhower's campaign, calling for integration in D.C., might have led white Southerners to believe that he did not support a Southern agenda.

Eisenhower had the opportunity to declare himself a candidate who supported traditional Southern racial attitudes when he traveled to Birmingham in September of 1952. However, he did not discuss civil rights issues. Instead, his speech focused on hidden taxes and the mess in Washington. In the Heart of Dixie, Eisenhower stayed away from racial issues.³⁴ Eisenhower's desire to appear as a national candidate, did keep him from playing the role of segregationist. His attempt to win Southern voters while

³² "Torrents of Words flowed as Ike, Adlai told where they stand," *The Birmingham News*, 2 November 1952, 1.

³³ "General says Wasters Must be Booted Out," *The Birmingham News*, 5 September 1952, 1.

³⁴ "Speech, Weather right – so was Ike," *The Birmingham News*, 4 September 1952, 1.

simultaneously shying away from racist rhetoric undertones made the civil rights issue complex.

The New England wing of the Republican Party further confused Southern voters over their party's push to gain Southern voters in 1952. The New England Republicans distanced themselves from Gabrielson's manufactured image. Leading members of the party, such as New York Governor Thomas Dewey, Vermont Governor Sherman Adams, and Massachusetts Senator Henry Cabot Lodge, were progressive regarding African Americans' civil rights. Racial progressivism, revolved around anti-segregation and racial equality. They also had major influence on Republican Party policy. Dewey had run for president in 1944 and 1948 and Lodge and Sherman managed Eisenhower's campaign.³⁵ Dewey asserted that the basic principles of Republicanism included equal rights for all Americans. He confirmed white Southerners' long-held beliefs about Republicans, that they were the party of Lincoln and inherently opposed to Southern traditions of white supremacy.³⁶ The rhetoric of the New England Republicans, combined with some of Eisenhower's racially progressive statements, presented a Republican Party that did not support traditional white Southern principles, thus further complicating the civil rights issue.

Dewey and Lodge added more complexity to the issue when they attacked the Democrats' civil rights stance and vice presidential candidate John Sparkman. Dewey argued that the Alabama Democratic Party epitomized racism, because the Alabama

³⁵ Nicol Rae, *The Decline and Fall of the Liberal Republican* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 36-39.

³⁶ "Republicans," *Time Magazine*, October 13, 1952, 23.

Democratic ballot had a rooster on it with the words “white supremacy for the right.”³⁷ Sparkman swore an oath of allegiance to the Alabama Democratic Party, thus Dewey believed that he had no right on a national ticket. To Dewey, no one who endorsed Jim Crow should hold a national office.³⁸ In addition to Dewey’s declaration, Lodge argued that Sparkman’s presence on the ticket demonstrated that the Democrat Party intended to do nothing constructive about civil rights.³⁹ Thus, an influential wing of the Republican Party criticized the Southern racial system.

Even on the local level, race did not serve as the sole driving factor for everyone involved in planning and organizing the Republican growth. John Buchanan, a Republican activist and Birmingham area Congressman who won election in 1964 with Goldwater, claimed that he never remembered a conversation about racism while working with the party. The Southern Baptist preacher became active with Republicans during the 1950’s and ran unsuccessfully for Congress in 1962. He never understood the Jim Crow, white supremacy order in the South. Buchanan stated that race did not play a role in his personal alignment with Republicanism. He did claim that he believed race possibly served as a factor in many voters alignment with the Republican Party but did not provide the major reason for Republican growth.⁴⁰

Thus, if race represented their sole political concern, suburban voters would not have voted Republican due to both parties’ complex stance on the issue. The national Democratic Party’s emerging liberal position on civil rights and Eisenhower’s support of DC integration, demonstrated to Shades Valley voters that they did not have a

³⁷ “Alabama Ballot Slogan Target of N.Y. Governor,” *The Birmingham News*, 9 October 1952, 1.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ “GOP Hammers away at Demos on Civil Rights,” *The Birmingham News*, 31 July 1952, 6.

⁴⁰ John Buchanan, interview by the author, Washington, DC, 5 May 2008.

presidential candidate who supported a Jim Crow agenda. On the surface, each presidential candidates' rhetoric did not differ drastically concerning civil rights. The presidential candidates and parties platforms complicated the civil rights political dialogue in Shades Valley.

The story of the Dixiecrats demonstrated the inability of Jim Crow voters find a party to support. The Dixiecrats in Alabama, who separated from the Democratic Party in 1948, were political independents that did not realign as one solid group to either the Republican or Democratic Parties.⁴¹ Many leaders of the Dixiecrat Party thought the state should return to the Democratic camp. Judge Hardy Riddle, probate judge of Talladega County and vice-chairmen of the 1948 walkout delegation, best described that thought: "When they (Conservative Democrats) repudiated those radicals like Sen. Hubert Humphrey of Minnesota, Sen. Blair Moody of Michigan, Averell Harriman and the rest of that crowd. It's time for me to come back to the regular Democratic Party."⁴² The Riddle statement demonstrated that many Alabamians thought that the Democratic Party had defeated the racially progressive element within its ranks. To him and many former Dixiecrats, it appeared that the Party had returned to its moderate past before Trumanism.

The Republican Party's states' rights viewpoint sold some Dixiecrats and disgruntled Democrats on Republicanism well before Eisenhower announced his candidacy. John Temple Graves, editor of the *Birmingham Post-Herald*, in Dothan, Alabama stated: "But in the great course of events it has come about that from the

⁴¹ Fred Taylor, "States Righters Blast Both Parties as Being Anti-South," *The Birmingham News*, 19 October 1952.

⁴² "States' Righters Split Over Demo Plank on Civil Rights," *The Birmingham News*, 27 July 1952, 1.

standpoint of the [race] problem there is now no more reason for voting Democrat than Republican.”⁴³ Graves’ statement demonstrated that a trend in some Dixiecrat groups to abandon their Democratic Party roots existed.

Similar to Graves’ statement, Tom Abernethy represented a trend to the Republican Party. Abernethy became an active member in the Republican Party. In 1952, he campaigned and addressed crowds throughout Alabama on behalf of Eisenhower. Alongside CO Vardaman, he declared, “We’re starting out on a crusade in Alabama to elect Dwight Eisenhower President of the United States.”⁴⁴ Abernethy and Vardaman focused on many issues in addition to race. At their first speech, the two barely mentioned race, but it remained an undertone of the campaign. Instead, they looked to other issues to mobilize voters, such as Eisenhower’s ability to clean the government of subversives or his military background.⁴⁵ Their mention of other issues when they declared a crusade, illustrated that race did not serve as the only issue discussed in the campaign rhetoric.

With many white Southerners waffling between joining the Republicans or moving back to the Democrats, some Dixiecrats like Horace Wilkinson, the leader of the 1948 walkout, led a movement against both parties. He encouraged white Southerners to stay at home and not vote on Election Day. Wilkinson told the people of Alabama, “I don’t think either one ought to be president- they’re going against the South. I’m not going to vote...The whole campaign by both candidates has deteriorated into nothing but

⁴³ Fred Taylor, “Weeks Brand Dixiecrats’ Party Without Purpose or Program,” *The Birmingham News*, 19 March 1950, Dixiecrat Newspaper Clipping Files (Tutwiler Collection of Southern History and Literature: Birmingham Public Library).

⁴⁴ Fred Taylor, “Demos Blasted at Rally for Ike,” *The Birmingham News*, 7 August 1952, 3.

⁴⁵ *Montgomery Advertiser*, 23 July 1952, C.O Vardaman Papers, Newspaper Clipping File, (Auburn University Special Collections, Auburn University).

competition for minority groups.”⁴⁶ Both parties’ attempts to attract white Southern voters and their campaign for African American voters disillusioned many Dixiecrats. They felt that neither were successful at their campaigns on civil rights and did not go far enough in promising to oppose African American civil liberties.

The exact number of Dixiecrats who voted for Democrats and Republicans in 1952 compared to 1948 was difficult to ascertain. The Dixiecrats wrested power from the Democrats. In 1948, every vote for Thurmond was a vote for Democrats since the ballot listed Dixiecrat candidates under the Democratic column with no Democrats listed. Thus, it is unclear in Alabama how many Dixiecrats supporters in 1948 came back to the Democrat folds, because it is unknown how many voters specifically wanted to vote Democrat or Dixiecrat. However, both major parties use of rhetoric involving African American civil rights would provide evidence that Dixiecrats were unaffiliated and did not rush to either party because of race. Instead, Riddle’s and Wilkinson’s statements establish that many Dixiecrats disapproved of the Republican stance. Thus, race did not represent the sole motivation for Shades Valley’s massive Republican voting, but it did serve as a factor.

With Dixiecrats divided over whom to support, Republicans needed to win Democrats to gain a majority in the state. However, five of Alabama’s U.S. Congressmen, Birmingham Mayor Cooper Green, and former Governor Jim Folsom, stumped the state in support of Stevenson. All of the aforementioned politicians had strong Jim Crow records. State Democratic Party Chairman Ben Ray declared that he

⁴⁶ Fred Taylor, “States Righter blast both parties as being Anti-South,” *The Birmingham News*, 19 October 1952, 3.

considered Stevenson-Sparkman a conservative ticket.⁴⁷ During the Democratic Convention, Alabama Governor Gordon Persons served as Stevenson's Southern liaison.⁴⁸ The Alabama Democratic Party leadership became deeply involved in the Stevenson-Sparkman ticket.

With a modern suburban culture, the picket fence, small lawn, two children, and homemaker, Over the Mountain, atypical Southern racial philosophies began to emerge. Some executives in the suburbs began to contemplate abandoning racial discrimination for other than human rights issues. They saw no more benefit for low-skilled workers in the economy with decreased industrial production after World War II. In the minds of some suburban middle class voters, the rigid racial caste system became less efficient because of the decline in need for manual labor.⁴⁹ Thus, to some voters in suburban Birmingham, issues other than race had to compel these voters to the Republican Party.

Civil Rights issues divided Dixiecrats and many Democrats remained loyal to the national party. The citizens of Shades Valley who voted overwhelmingly Republican endorsed a different political ideology than the rest of the state. Shades Valley citizens were typically not farmers who found sustenance in the Solid South and the Democratic Party. In their new suburban culture, they were Republican just like most suburbanites in the 1950's.⁵⁰ Race did serve as an issue in Shades Valley, but the complexity of the issue demonstrated that civil rights did not completely dictate their political stance. Therefore, other issues were important to the emergence of Shades Valley's Republicanism.

⁴⁷ "Front page headline," *The Birmingham News*, 1 August 1952, 1.

⁴⁸ *The Birmingham News*, 22 July 1952, Democrat Newspaper Clipping Files (Tutwiler Collection of Southern History and Literature: Birmingham Public Library).

⁴⁹ Joan Hoffman, "The Women of Mountain Brook," (Ph.D. diss., Emory University, 1996), 74.

⁵⁰ Douglas Miller and Marion Nowak, *The Fifties; The Way We Really Were* (New York; Doubleday and Co., 1975), 15.

CHAPTER IV
TAXES AND THE APPEAL OF SMALL REPUBLICAN GOVERNMENT

“Today and tomorrow, here in the Southland, I shall intensify my attack against corruption in government; against the heedless policies that nullify our thrift and erase our savings by inflation; against federal deficits and the failure to live within our means! Against waste of resources and our money; against arbitrary usurpation and seizure of power; against disloyalty in the federal service; against the whole tangled aggregation of incompetence and expediency of bossdom.”¹

With increased economic wealth in Shades Valley, fiscal issues and government bureaucracy became influential factors in the Southern suburban voting psyche. The New Deal and World War II augmented wealth in Birmingham. Shades Valley accepted the suburban way of life emphasizing independence from government intrusion. With increased wealth, Shades Valley voted for less government influence in their economic ventures and lower taxes to retain profits outlined in the Republican platform. Shades Valley voters did not vote for farm subsidies or any form of big government but instead supported Republicanism. With their Republican support, Shades Valley cast their vote similarly to Northern suburbs.² Political rhetoric concerning opposition to Democratic liberalism and Republican ideology concerning fiscal issues and limited government were important in Shades Valley’s vote for Republicanism.

¹ General Eisenhower speaking in Birmingham. “Text of Eisenhower’s Speech,” *The Birmingham News*, 4 September 1952, 40.

² Paul Mattingly, *Suburban Landscape: Culture and Politics in a New York Metropolitan Community* (Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press, 2001), 2.

During the 1932 presidential election, Franklin Roosevelt provided an American definition to the term liberal.³ Liberalism became a term to explain a government/political philosophy that responded to and provided the wants and needs of the populace through government-sanctioned programs. The Democratic Party became associated with the philosophical ideas of liberalism because it served as the cornerstone of the New Deal and Fair Deal. Fiscal conservatives were proponents of free laissez faire markets and opponents of the government welfare state.

To big business and fiscal conservatives, liberalism represented a dangerous form of government. Republican voters accepted the ideology of Frederich Hayek stated in *The Road to Serfdom*, which claimed that government welfare programs would eventually lead people into peasantry.⁴ Republicans blasted the Democratic political philosophy as a direct path to bankruptcy, inflation, and failed government. To Republicans, continued liberalism meant increased taxes, more government intrusion, and more power in Washington. Despite being a moderate Democrat, Stevenson's party affiliation connected him to big government liberalism. Shades Valley residents in 1952 voted in support of free markets and anti-expansion of the welfare state.

Support for Eisenhower and an anti-liberal agenda led Shades Valley to align with the Republican Party.⁵ Dwight Eisenhower ran his 1952 campaign in support of small government. He explained the crux of his beliefs in an interview in *US News and World Report* when he stated, "In some things... We have drifted too far to the so called left."⁶

³ Richard Hofstadter, *Anti-Intellectualism in American Life* (New York: Knopf, 1963), 35.

⁴ Road to Serfdom excerpted from George Nash, *The Conservative Intellectual Movement in America, since 1945* (New York: Basic Books, 1976), 207.

⁵ George Packer, *Blood of the Liberals* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2000), 22.

⁶ Excerpt from Life Magazine in *The Birmingham News*, 24 March 1952, 3.

Throughout the campaign, Eisenhower hammered away at liberalism. He continuously re-iterated his belief that the federal government had grown too intrusive into American families and the economy. Eisenhower even attacked liberalism with humor. In a speech in Boise, Idaho, he stated, “The government does everything but come in and wash the dishes for the housewife.”⁷ On the campaign trail, Eisenhower’s rhetoric laid the foundation for his belief in a small government.

Eisenhower’s conservative political platform propelled many Birmingham suburbanites to align with the Republican Party. As WL Longshore, Jefferson County Republican Chairman and 1954 Republican Congressional candidate, stated, “Educated, business people knew we needed a change, Republicans were the best for the economy.”⁸ The rhetoric of Eisenhower and Longshore demonstrate how important economics and anti-liberalism were to suburban Birmingham. According to Longshore, the economy drove the voters of Shades Valley to switch to the Republican Party. John Buchanan seconded his point by stating: “More professional, business people were naturally made for Republicans.”⁹ They agreed with Eisenhower that the government had drifted too far to the left and taken power away from business people.

During the campaign, Eisenhower claimed that he wanted to install ordinary business methods in Washington. His support of low taxes and business sent the business-minded suburbanites flocking to Republicanism.⁸ Shades Valley residents and Alabama Republicans began to employ and accept the rhetoric of Eisenhower.

⁷ *The Birmingham News*, 21 August 1952, Political Parties (Republican) Newspaper Clippings File, (Microfilm Section: Birmingham Public Library).

⁸ W.L. Longshore, interview by the author, Washington, DC, 2 May 2008.

⁹ John Buchanan, interview by the author, Washington, DC, 5 May 2008.

⁸ Kenneth Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier: the Suburbanizations of the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 191.

Alabamians campaigned for Eisenhower highlighting his pro-business stance and Stevenson's liberalism that continued the economic policies of Truman. C.O. Vardaman and other Republicans frequently attacked the Fair Deal and all the underpinnings of liberalism. He stated to an Eisenhower campaign crowd, "The history of the Fair Deal is written in red...Red deficit in the treasury, red blood spilled in war, red traitors in government, red faces from scandal, and red handed when caught."¹¹ Shades Valley voted for the ideas and philosophies of the Republican Party's conservatism.

During the campaign, the candidates debated the difference between both parties' economic and government platforms. One of the major issues that demonstrated the parties' different views on business occurred during the spring of 1952. In the spring and early summer of 1952, Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) steel workers went on a wave of strikes for higher wages. CIO's strike during a war created a major crisis in the steel industry. Many of Birmingham's major steel foundries stopped operation due to the workers' strike, which adversely affected Birmingham's economy. Local executives in the steel business and businessmen associated with steel supported management and wanted an end to the strike. However, President Truman responded by forcing voters to examine the presidential candidates' approach to labor and government authority.¹²

With the strike in full swing, Truman believed that America needed a quick resolution for military and domestic supplies. He therefore ordered U.S. Steel and the CIO to reach an agreement or the government would assume control of the private steel

¹¹ "The Birmingham News, 17 October 1952, Political Parties (Republican) Newspaper Clippings File, (Microfilm Section: Birmingham Public Library).

¹² Victor Riesel, "Truman Preparing to seize Steel Industry," *The Birmingham News*, 1 April 1952, 1.

industry for national security and economic reasons. In the process, he would boost steel workers' wages. Truman acted in support of the CIO and the war effort, which made him appear hostile to management. When management and labor could not reach an agreement, Truman seized the steel industry under the emergency powers of the president and implemented wage increases.¹³ With Truman's actions, most of Birmingham's steel factories fell under the direct authority of the federal government. Birmingham and national steel executives believed that Truman had overstepped his authority.

With manufacturing forming Birmingham's economic backbone, the massive steel strike directly affected Shades Valley. With the Over the Mountain communities forming an affluent haven, the residents of Shades Valley often were the executives of steel factories or heads of businesses directly related to manufacturing.¹⁴ For example in Mountain Brook, out of the 2,935 males employed, 1,181 were managers/officials. The majority of the 3,341 females were homemakers however 85 females were managers.¹⁵ In Homewood, the male and female working population also tended to be managers. Homewood had a male working population of 6,078, with 1,144 working as managers and a female population of 6,788 with 103 working as managers.¹⁶ Birmingham only had 9,208 male managers compared to 153,749 male employees and only had 1,806 female managers compared to a total female population of 172,288.¹⁷ Besides managerial

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Leah Rawls Atkins, *The Valley and the Hills: an Illustrated History of Birmingham and Jefferson County* (Woodland Hills, CA: Windsor Publications, 1981), 17.

¹⁵ Census of Population: 1950, Vol. II Characteristics of the Population Part 2 Alabama, (Washington, D.C: US Government Printing Office, 1952): 69.

¹⁶ Ibid. 57.

¹⁷ Ibid. 56.

positions, the other major professions Over the Mountain were in manufacturing and finance.¹⁸

When the national steel strike occurred, approximately 25,000 local workers from Birmingham to Gadsden walked out of their jobs. Virtually every steel mill in the manufacturing district of Birmingham stopped production.¹⁹ The steel strike had a ripple effect on the Alabama economy because other major projects came to a standstill without steel. Seventeen large construction projects throughout the state stopped because of the strike. Paul Jones, district manager of the Department of Commerce's National Production Authority office, reported that \$6 million worth of construction in the Birmingham area was on hold or cancelled due to the steel strike.²⁰

The discontinuous two month long steel strike meant reduced profits for the steel industry and business executives in Birmingham, but it also directly affected the entire community. If the strike lasted longer, it might affect Shades Valley's affluent executives even though they were salaried. The strike could mean business people with smaller profits also invest less money, which meant less money in banks or stocks. Then when bankers, financial advisors, and other service providers receive less business they also spend less money. The steel strike had a cyclical effect on the affluent economy of Shades Valley. Despite the effect the workers' strike had on the economy, Shades Valley voters did not want the Democratic, pro-labor agenda of Truman controlling steel and

¹⁸ Ibid. 57-69.

¹⁹ "District's Mills Expected to be Idled by Midnight," *The Birmingham News*, 2 June 1952.

²⁰ Victor Riesel, "Truman Preparing to seize Steel Industry," *The Birmingham News*, 1 April 1952,

increasing wages. The president's actions took authority away from Shades Valley management class.²¹

The president believed that he had the authority and right to take control over the giant steel industry. Truman thought he had to end the steel workers' strike for national security reasons because steel was vital to the war effort.²² A steel strike would also slow down other domestic needs. If the railroads were deficient, it would in turn weaken America's infrastructure, and the economy would suffer. Therefore, President Truman saw the seizure of the steel industry as being in the interest of America and his duty as president.²³ His actions highlighted the liberal theory that the government had the authority and right to seize private industry in the nation's interest, using the emergency war powers. Stevenson's Democratic affiliation and endorsement by Truman appeared to voters to fall in line with the liberal theory of government and labor.

The Republican Party blasted Truman over the steel seizure. Republicans in Congress believed that the President did not have the power to seize or operate private industry without specific authorization from Congress.²⁴ Eisenhower and Republicans viewed the steel seizure as an abuse of presidential power and antithetical to the Republicans' conservative agenda. Steel executives maintained that Congress had not authorized the seizures and that they violated the Constitution. Executives also believed

²¹ District Mills Expected to be Idled by Midnight," *The Birmingham News*, 2 June 1952, 1.

²² Victor Riesel, "Truman Preparing to seize Steel Industry," *The Birmingham News*, 1 April 1952, 1.

²³ "Truman sets Stage for Court Fight on Right of Government to Seize Private Industry," *The Birmingham News*, 9 April 1952, 1.

²⁴ Ibid.

that Truman's actions represented the first step in the nationalization of business.²⁵ The views of Republicans and steel executives closely aligned regarding the steel strike.

General Eisenhower's approach to business and government made him appear as an ally of business. Eisenhower attacked Truman's actions regarding the strike and other liberal measures. Eisenhower's argument and the Republicans' actions in Congress demonstrated a difference between the two parties' economic philosophies. Eisenhower and the Republicans represented the sanctity of private property to voters.²⁶

Eventually, the Supreme Court overturned Truman's attempt to take control of private industry without the approval of Congress.²⁷ However, Truman's actions perpetuated an image of government centralization, which Stevenson continued. Truman's open support of labor and his friendship with Phillip Murray, head of CIO, entrenched the idea among Shades Valley residents that Democrats were in line with labor and against the business agenda of low taxes. Democratic Senator Hubert Humphrey heightened their impression when he stated, "The steel industry has done a greater disservice to the country by undermining the defense stabilization program more than any foreignism could do."²⁸ Eisenhower and business appeared on the other end of the spectrum. Truman's actions and Humphrey's words pitted the Democratic Party against the pro-business Shades Valley residents.

When the strike continued after the Supreme Court's opinion, Shades Valley executives from US Steel and Republic Steel joined with major national steel executives in their attacks on Truman and the CIO. Steel companies, blasted the CIO, claiming that

²⁵ "Industry Loses New Legal Move in Steel Seizure," *The Birmingham News*, 9 April 1952, 1.

²⁶ "Behind Eisenhower's Victory," *The Nation*, Vol. 175, No. 20, 15 November 1952.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ "Steel Strike Report," *The Birmingham News*, 15 May 1952, 1.

compulsory union membership served as the catalyst behind the prolonged strike.²⁹ *The Birmingham News* published a full-page campaign advertisement from a group called Steel Companies in the Wage Case, a group of major steel officials who formed to end the steel strike. Steel Companies in the Wage Case urged people to write their representatives and force Truman to keep out of the situation. The advertisement had large print with a headline that read, “To American Freedom, How Government Seizure of the Steel Mills Affects You.” The advertisement went on to read, “If the government can seize steel, it can seize any business, large or small, any farm, cattle off the range, or any private property anywhere.”³⁰

The steel seizure directly influenced the vote of Shades Valley. Actions by Truman aligned the Democrats with labor. Statements by Humphrey and Truman caused Shades Valley executives to perceive themselves on the defensive against an onslaught of the Democrats’ economic principles. The Shades Valley business executives were against the large bureaucracy and power of the Federal Government over private business. For instance, The Young Men’s Business Club of Birmingham attacked Truman’s seizing of the steel industry as unlawful.³¹ CIO President Phillip Murray backed Stevenson and the Democratic platform, further increasing Democrats’ image as sympathetic to labor and opposed to management.³² Shades Valley residents that supported fiscal conservatism found the stance of the CIO and Democratic Party opposite

²⁹ “How Government Seizure of the Steel Mills Affects You,” *The Birmingham News*, 17 April 1952, 5.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ *The Birmingham News*, 25 April 1952, Young Men’s Business Club of Birmingham Newspaper Clipping Files (Tutwiler Collection of Southern History and Literature: Birmingham Public Library).

³² “CIO Backs Stevenson,” *The Birmingham News*, 14 August 1952, 3.

of their views. To the pro-management citizen in Shades Valley, Eisenhower offered a rescue from the pro-labor/anti-management Democratic Party.

Besides seizing the steel industry, Truman's actions during 1952 further ostracized the emerging business management class in Shades Valley from the Democratic Party. Another major issue concerning business arose when companies began to drill for oil off the Gulf Coast, which raised questions about who had rights to the oil. States from Texas to Florida believed they had rights to tax the oil and not the Federal Government. The states also believed that the companies should operate under their legislation. However, Truman and Democrats in Congress believed that the federal government should have more authority over the coastal oil than the states. Republicans and business executives stood by the states rights argument concerning coastal oil. They saw federal control as another expansion of government authority.

Harry Truman's stance and that of the Democratic Party furthered the image to Shades Valley residents that Democrats wanted to increase the federal government's power over the states and businesses. In 1952, a Republican introduced a coastal oil bill, sympathetic to the states claims to oil, in the Legislature. Truman vowed to veto any such legislation. On the front page of *The Birmingham News*, an Associated Press article stated, "President Truman hung a label of robbery in broad daylight...on legislation giving states clear title to oil-bearing submerged lands."³³ Truman's position represented a view of a strong central government that had power over states and limited laissez faire business.

³³ "Truman Blasts Coastal Oil Bill, Veto is Certain," *The Birmingham News*, 18 May 1952, 1.

Adlai Stevenson's point of view on coastal oil did not alter the mindset of Shades Valley residents regarding the image of the Democratic Party as pro-labor and pro-big government. The words and actions of Stevenson did not distance him from Truman. In fact, Stevenson appeared as a continuation of Trumanism concerning coastal oil. During the presidential race, Stevenson claimed that he wanted to split the tidelands between the state and federal governments.³⁴ Limited government supporters thought that the oil belonged to the states and that the federal government had no right to assume authority over coastal oil.

The Democratic Party and Stevenson did not support states rights on coastal oil. However, Eisenhower and the Republican Party defended states rights over coastal oil. In Eisenhower's campaign through the South, he stopped in New Orleans in October. The coastal oil debate deeply affected the Crescent City. The fact that he campaigned so close to the election about coastal oil demonstrated the issue's importance. In the Crescent City, he guaranteed a states' rights approach to business and coastal oil and promised to provide economic power to states and businesses.³⁵ Four days after Eisenhower's speech in New Orleans, Stevenson attacked Eisenhower's tidelands views. Despite the claims of Stevenson, Eisenhower and the Republicans appeared stronger regarding coastal oil and states' rights.

Although the coastal oil debate focused on the Gulf Coast, it indirectly affected suburban Birmingham. Both candidates disputing over the states rights to coastal oil demonstrated that both parties thought differently about free enterprise and states' rights.

³⁴ *The Birmingham News*, 23 August 1952, Democrat Newspaper Clipping Files (Tutwiler Collection of Southern History and Literature: Birmingham Public Library).

³⁵ "State Ike Backers Voice Comments," *The Birmingham Post-Herald*, 3 November 1952, 1.

When Winton Blount, Chairman of the Alabama Citizens for Eisenhower, listed the important issues of the election, he described tidelands oil as one of the five most important issues to all Alabamians, not just those on the Gulf Coast. States rights represented to management minded voters in Shades Valley another reason to support a Republican candidate and vote against the Democrat Party.³⁶

Harry Truman's Fair Deal shaped much of the debate and rhetoric of the 1952 campaign. During Harry Truman's presidency, he advocated an idea of socialized medicine, which meant a government-managed healthcare system for all people in the country. Shades Valley Republicans rejected socialized medicine and all paternalistic economic plans of the Fair Deal. The Birmingham suburbanites believed that less government authority meant a destruction of federal paternalism. The affluent suburbanites resented welfare programs because they believed the system represented another form of government's excessive authority over private industry and individuals. Socialized medicine became another issue that caused voters to decide between supporting the liberal Democrat Party or the conservative Republican Party.³⁷

Eisenhower often spoke against socialized medicine. In a debate in Birmingham between Republican and Democratic political leaders, Dr. James Garber, co-chairman of the Volunteer Professional Committee (Medical Professionals), attacked Stevenson's stance on socialized medicine. Garber claimed, "General Eisenhower has come out against socialized medicine while Governor Stevenson has favored it." Dr. Garber aligned with the majority of doctors throughout the country in their stance against socialized medicine and Adlai Stevenson. Dr. Garber encouraged fellow physicians,

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Mary Brennan, *Turning Right in the 60's* (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 1995), 42.

pharmacists, dentists, and nurses to join the group in opposition to Stevenson. In addition to Garber, Dr. Ernest Irons, the American Medical Association's former president, spoke to the Volunteer Professional Committee and criticized the Democratic Party on healthcare.³⁸ The doctors and citizens of Shades Valley aligned with their counterparts in their opposition to socialized medicine.

On the issue of socialized medicine, Stevenson differed from Truman. Stevenson spoke against a national socialized medicine plan during his campaign. In response to Dr. Garber, John Gobold, executive director of Alabama's Democratic campaign committee, quoted Stevenson in his opposition to socialized medicine as him saying: "I am just as much opposed to socialized medicine as any doctor is in this country, just as I would be opposed to the socialization of our profession (law)."³⁹ Despite Stevenson's claims stance against socialized medicine, he appeared linked to the Fair Deal. To Shades Valley voters, Stevenson represented another New Deal style welfare Democrat who would drain the national economy and in turn provide the federal government more authority in the public sphere. Alabama Democrats ran an advertisement in local papers for a Stevenson campaign address, which stated in bold writing "Stevenson speaks tonight, note his opposition to socialized medicine."⁴⁰ Stevenson could not break away from the Truman image of the welfare state.

To the voters of Shades Valley welfare programs, such as socialized medicine, came to represent socialism and socialism embodied Communism, the ultimate evil.

³⁸ Socialized Medicine Issue is Stirred; does Adlai Favor it," *The Birmingham News*, 4 October 1952, 3.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Alabama Democratic Party Advertisement, "Stevenson Speaks Tonight," *The Birmingham News*, 6 October 1952.

Rejecting the idea of socialized medicine and government paternalism, Eisenhower stood in direct contrast to Truman and the Democratic Party.⁴¹ The voters of Shades Valley found themselves emerging as a distinct suburban district politically different from their rural and urban counterparts. In Eisenhower's first campaign address, he attacked the Democratic philosophy by stating: "a gradual absorption by the central government of functions that belong to local communities and individuals."⁴² Shades Valley voters supported Eisenhower's stance, suburbanites discovered a candidate and a party that supported their pro-business, small government agenda.

Business minded citizens of Shades Valley could not believe the figures and thought the nation needed a new direction away from Democratic liberalism. Two of the top officers at the US Chamber of Commerce met with Adlai Stevenson regarding the debt. Laurence Lee, president of Chamber of Commerce, informed Stevenson, "There may not be a depression, but there will be bankruptcy of government, the way they are spending- that's just plain mathematics."⁴³ As a result, Eisenhower came out in support of cutting national spending and reducing the deficit. With Eisenhower addressing changes to national spending, the economic conservatives saw him as a savior of the national treasury.

Taxes, served as another important economic issue at the heart of Shades Valley's alignment to Republicanism. Taxes and spending were so important to people in the Birmingham area that Sylvia Porter, the financial reporter for *The Birmingham News*,

⁴¹ "Torrents of Words flowed as Ike, Adlai told where they stand," *The Birmingham News*, 2 November 1952, 1.

⁴² "America can have Peace with Honor," *The Birmingham News*, 5 June 1952, 1.

⁴³ "Business Leaders Visit Adlai, Warn of 'Bankruptcy,'" *The Birmingham News*, 16 September 1952, 1.

wrote a ten-part series about tax complaints and problems with the tax system. Porter stated, “the hundreds of letters you have written to me revealing how today’s income tax law discriminates specifically against you.”⁴⁴ Porter encouraged the Birmingham area to force an income tax revolution to change the tax system away from the liberal sliding scale. The series highlighted her belief that the current income tax system imposed unnecessary and unfair hardships that drained people of their hard earned money.

Eisenhower’s political ideology matched Sylvia Porter’s argument in the *The Birmingham News*. His promise to cut government spending and taxes attracted Shades Valley to Republicanism.⁴⁵ Shades Valley voters, who rebelled against Truman’s Fair Deal, found a complement in Eisenhower. During the campaign, Eisenhower promised an even larger tax cut of forty billion dollars instead of a ten billion cut proposed by some Republicans. In addition to Eisenhower’s campaign rhetoric, U.S. Representative Daniel Reed, a New York Republican, guaranteed that Congress would cut taxes with a Republican victory.⁴⁶ The Republican position voiced by Reed and Eisenhower presented an incentive to pro-business suburbanites to vote Republican. They saw Republicans’ as the party that would not only decrease the federal government but also would limit their tax burden.

Eisenhower’s rhetoric on taxes and spending appealed to the new Alabama Republicans. C.O. Vardaman, Tom Abernathy, and Winton Blount frequently attacked

⁴⁴ Sylvia Porter, “’53 is Called Time for Tax Overhaul,” *The Birmingham News*, 20 October 1952, 1.

⁴⁵ “Valley goes GOP, Close County Vote Won by Dem.,” *The Birmingham Post-Herald*, 5 November 1952, 1.

⁴⁶ “Southerners, GOPers Put Knife to Budget,” *The Birmingham News*, 16 March 1952, 3.

the Democratic Party's spending policies.⁴⁷ Vardaman's speeches and Sylvia Porter's series demonstrated Alabama Republicans' closeness to Northern suburban voters. These concerns over rising taxes and inflation allowed Republicans to gain control of Congress in 1946. Therefore, economic conscience voters created a groundswell of support and Shades Valley followed the trend.⁴⁸

When Eisenhower spoke in Birmingham, newspapers described his speech as hammering at deficit spending, high taxes, and world peace. The problems with the tax system and national debt, Eisenhower and Alabama Republicans believed, were due to the Democratic Party. Truman epitomized the bloated government spending that many people believed defined the Democratic Party. Adlai Stevenson could not break the image of himself as a continuation of the Fair Deal. John Sparkman also did not help to break the image of excessive spending. No major party candidates, other than Eisenhower and Nixon wanted to curb federal spending and lower taxes, which pleased the business-minded voters of suburbia.

Stevenson attempted through many attacks and claims to win Southern voters on economic issues. With less than a month before the election, Stevenson declared his support for agriculture and defended past Democratic administrations agriculture policies, such as the Agricultural Adjustment Act and the Farm Security Administration. Stevenson claimed that a Republican victory would result in another Great Depression.⁴⁹ He argued that Eisenhower and the Republicans would abolish farm price supports. The claims of Stevenson did not entice Shades Valley voters to the Democratic Party. For

⁴⁷ *The Birmingham News* and *The Birmingham Post Herald*, 1952.

⁴⁸ David Reinhard, *The Republican Right Since 1945* (Lexington, KY: UK Press, 1983), 20.

⁴⁹ "Adlai Says GOP Would End All Farm Price Supports," *The Birmingham News*, 17 October 1952, 1.

generations Democratic agriculture policies served as one of the major issues that kept the South Solid. Stevenson could not attract the Over the Mountain voters to his candidacy through agriculture issues. Thus, Shades Valley voters were not voting for the farm expenditures but for other issues.⁵⁰

Not only did Stevenson attempt to attract voters by discussing agriculture and protecting farmers, but he also campaigned to protect the accomplishments of the New Deal and Fair Deal. In a speech attacking Republicans, Stevenson stated: “they would, presumably repeal minimum wage law, abolish social security and undo all the great work of Franklin Roosevelt and Harry Truman.”⁵¹ Stevenson’s claims of protecting the progressive liberal agenda of the Democratic Party drove business executives, in places like Shades Valley, to Eisenhower’s Republicanism. Stevenson’s claims might have kept the rural and urban Democratic voters in his column but his platform pushed small government suburbanites away.

Democratic vice-presidential candidate John Sparkman defended the Democrats’ philosophy. In August of 1952, Sparkman flew back to Alabama to campaign. When he landed in Huntsville, he declared:

The South was liberal and that liberalism is nothing new to Alabama and other Dixie states...I’ve always considered the South was liberal. Just check the records for the last twenty years. Every great piece of legislation put on the statute books was put there with votes and sponsorship of southern congressmen and senators.⁵²

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Fred Taylor, “Sparkman Says ‘Liberalism’ Not New in Alabama, South,” *The Birmingham News*, 18 August 1952, 1.

Sparkman's campaign speech highlighted how white Southerners had been Solid Democrats but his appeal to the past did not affect the voting mentality of suburban Birmingham.

In addition to desiring lower taxes, Republicans also espoused less government control and paternalism. Fewer government regulations and programs would allow these upwardly mobile suburbanites to invest and earn more money without paying increased taxes to support government programs. Eisenhower believed continued excessive government welfare could drain the government. Suburbanites defended Eisenhower's philosophy and wanted to end Fair Deal paternalism and the welfare state.⁵³ Shades Valley mirrored other affluent suburbs in the nation because, like other opulent suburbs, it wanted a decentralized federal government and associated itself with the Republican Party.⁵⁴ Eisenhower and Over the Mountain voters agreed that people and states should have political authority not the federal government.

Birmingham's suburban citizens consciously voted for economic reasons. Their voting mentality aligned with the political psychology of Northern suburban voters. Homewood, Mountain Brook, and Vestavia Hills blended to create a Republican base in the heart of the Deep South. Similar to how affluent Northerners voted for less government control and lower taxes, Birmingham suburbanites did the same.⁵⁵ Their wealth, economics, and political thinking represented the "Suburban Way of Life." By 1952, Birmingham suburbs had accepted the appropriate behavior and politics of national

⁵³ Richard Hofstadter, *Anti-Intellectualism in American Life* (New York: Knopf, 1963), 221.

⁵⁴ Douglas Miller and Marion Nowak, *The Fifties: The Way We Really Were* (New York: Doubleday and Co., 1975), 135.

⁵⁵ Lawrence Larson, *The Urban South* (Lexington, KY: University Press for Kentucky, 1990), 142.

suburbia by joining the Republican Party.⁵⁶ With their support of Dwight Eisenhower, Shades Valley realigned and became a base of Republicanism.

⁵⁶ *The Birmingham News*, 4 October 1979, Homewood History Newspaper Clipping Files (Tutwiler Collection of Southern History and Literature: Birmingham Public Library).

CHAPTER V
COLD WAR, HEATED POLITICS: EISENHOWER'S COLD WAR
REPUBLICANISM

Economic and government conservatism served as major factors in Shades Valley vote with the Republican Party. However, other issues besides race and anti-liberalism were important to the Republican electorate. Dwight Eisenhower's immense popularity among Americans served as one major factor that inspired the Birmingham suburbs to vote Republican. The Cold War represented another major issue in the campaign that propelled the growing suburbs to vote Republican. American people were experiencing a period of high anxiety and uncertainty due to the numerous issues surrounding the Cold War. Shades Valley matched the American paranoia of fear involving Soviet attacks and communist subversion. These issues were not the most important in explaining Republican emergence in Shades Valley but they were a part of the campaign rhetoric and central to understanding the electorate.

By the 1952 presidential campaign, the Cold War became an underlying topic in American political and social culture. Douglas Miller and Marion Nowak described the period of 1948-1953 in their book *The Fifties* as "The Age of Fear," an era shrouded in high anxiety due to the Cold War.¹ With America preoccupied with Cold War anxiety, it

¹ Douglas Miller and Marion Nowak, *The Fifties: The Way We Really Were* (New York: Doubleday and Co., 1975), 13.

created a dialogue that directly affected political consciousness. Due to America's Cold War fear, voters wanted a president who could respond to Korea, handle the arms race, and be strong against the Soviet Union. Shades Valley did not represent a distinct region separated from the nation concerning the Soviets and Communist Party. Issues of security and Communism were major topics of campaign rhetoric in Shades Valley.

Nuclear issues and the Soviet Union served as important issues but the Korean War received the most media coverage of all Cold War issues during the 1952 campaign. Harry Truman instituted his "Truman Doctrine," a policy that proclaimed the United States would aid any nation in their defense against Communism. The Truman Doctrine's first actions in containment occurred when America fiscally supported Greek forces in a civil war against the Greek Communists. After the fall of China to the Communist Party, Truman and other American policy makers became worried about Asia descending into Communism. Due to this concern about the spread of communism, the theory of containment evolved into the use of ground troops when North Korean communists invaded South Korea.²

With the North Korea invasion, the United States deemed military action necessary in support of the South. Americans entered the conflict with high aspirations of defending freedom and containing Communism. General Douglas MacArthur claimed that the war would be over by Christmas of 1950. The war never went as smoothly as planned. After America advanced into North Korea, Communist China entered the conflict. The Chinese pushed back the Americans and the war quickly turned into a stalemate. With years of a deadlocked war, Americans were yearning for peace or

² Arnold Offner, *Another Such Victory: President Truman and the Cold War, 1945-1953* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002), 4.

victory in Korea by 1952. Winton Blount, wealthy Democrat, industrialist, and Chairman of the Alabama Citizens for Eisenhower, declared the importance of Korea to Alabamians: “Don’t let a party label cause you to lose a son in a needless war in Korea... Despite the importance of taxes, tidelands oil, FEPC, and other issues, the most important is Korea.”³ Blount used his position as chair of the Alabama Citizens Campaign to discuss Korea, thus the Korean War played a role in the Alabama campaign.

Shades Valley voters could not escape information about the protracted conflict in Korea. Local newspapers constantly printed updates about the ongoing struggle. The stories informed the public about the grim reality of war and strategic stalemate. By 1950, *The Birmingham News* started reporting North Korea’s excessive brutality, with a headline that read, “Army murdered thirty-two American soldiers with their hands behind their back.” Besides informing readers about North Korean brutality, the newspaper demonstrated the sacrifices of war during the conflict. For example, *The Birmingham News* printed a picture of a young soldier standing in Korea with the caption, “Maturing the hard way.”⁴ News articles informed Shades Valley residents of the difficulty in fighting the Korean War.

Peace talks that began in mid-1951 had gone nowhere. By 1952, many Americans had become tired of the long Korean War. *The Birmingham News* and *Birmingham Post Herald* frequently printed articles about lost and won battles. Shades Valley residents read about the continuous struggle for Triangle Hill during the campaign of 1952. Triangle Hill represented a miniature example of the stalemate in Korea.

³ “State Ike Backers Voice Comments,” *The Birmingham Post-Herald*, 3 November 1952, 1.

⁴ *The Birmingham News*, 17 & 18 August 1950, Korean War Scrapbook, (Birmingham Public Library Archives, Birmingham, AL).

During the back and forth combat for Triangle Hill, one Alabamian died, five were wounded, and one went missing. Just as the Korean War affected Americans, so did Triangle Hill.⁵ The battle for Triangle Hill represented to Americans that Korea had become a series of bloody battles for the same piece of land. Reiterating the public's idea of Korea and Triangle Hill, *The Birmingham News* published an Associated Press article a few days before the election that stated, "Reds storm Triangle Hill...the 18 day battle shows no signs of slowing."⁶

Triangle Hill represented another facet in Shades Valley residents' war fatigue. Reports and news stories during the war allowed the suburban citizens to understand the war's impact on Alabama. For example, throughout the conflict newspapers printed headlines such as, "30 seamen die in cruiser blast. Three Alabamians were killed in the blast."⁷ These headlines reminded the citizens that Alabamians were fighting and dying in the Korean War. Korea did not serve as a strong enough factor to motivate the traditional Solid South to join the Republicans. However, Korea's importance to voters is unknown, due to the lack of exit polls.

Even if Shades Valley residents did not read the stories from the front lines of Korea, they could not avoid the running toll of the dead and frequent articles about conscription. Due to the increasing need for soldiers, the Army prolonged service time and continued to conscript more than earlier predicted. The number of local soldiers in Korea continued to rise when the Army extended the enlistments of 126,000 soldiers in

⁵ *The Birmingham News*, 20 October 1952, Korean War Newspaper Clippings File, (Tutwiler Collection of Southern History and Literature: Birmingham Public Library).

⁶ *The Birmingham News*, 30 October 1952, Korean War Newspaper Clippings File, (Tutwiler Collection of Southern History and Literature: Birmingham Public Library).

⁷ "30 Seaman Die in a Cruiser Blast," *The Birmingham News*, 25 April 1952, 1.

April of 1952.⁸ In July of 1952, the military conscripted 1066 Alabamians including 127 from Jefferson County into service.⁹ By October of 1952, Alabama had 30,000 Korean War veterans.¹⁰ Due to the large number of local soldiers fighting, *The Birmingham News*' had a running total of the dead in Korea. The tally forced Shades Valley residents to become cognizant of the local loss of life in Korea.¹¹

Stalemated peace talks with the Koreans added another reason for Americans to desire an end to the war. Korean truce talks worsened during the presidential campaign. In May of 1952, the associated press reported, "Truce talks sink to all time low, after the Communists rejected the Allies plan."¹² The Korean War stalemate appeared permanent to Shades Valley voters.

Numerous Americans also wanted to end the war because they thought it gave the Soviet Union an advantage in the Cold War. Many military advisors and average Americans viewed the Cold War as a zero-sum game, so any losses by the United States equated to victories for the Soviets. Thus, failures in Korea were successes for the Soviets. Military analysts worried that Russia had lured America into Korea because if America were fighting in Korea, they would weaken their defenses and open themselves to a possible Soviet offensive in Europe.¹³ Due to the stalemate in Korea, many Americans believed that the stalling had allowed Communism to spread to Indo-China and Guatemala.

⁸ "US Extends 126,000 Enlistments," *The Birmingham News*, 19 April 1952, 1.

⁹ *The Birmingham News*, 25 July 1952, 1 Korean War Newspaper Clipping Files (Tutwiler Collection of Southern History and Literature: Birmingham Public Library).

¹⁰ *The Birmingham Post-Herald*, 21 October 1952, Korean War Newspaper Clipping Files (Birmingham Public Library, Southern History Section).

¹¹ *The Birmingham News*, 1952.

¹² "Truce Talks in Korea Sink to all Time Low," *The Birmingham News*, 7 May 1952, 1.

¹³ *The Birmingham News*, 14 July 1950, Korean War Scrapbook, (Birmingham Public Library Archives, Birmingham, AL).

Both candidates addressed the Korea and provided their stance on how to end the war. When Eisenhower declared, “the overriding issue of our time is peace,” Eisenhower established himself as the candidate pursuing honorable peace.¹⁴ Despite the fact that Eisenhower supported containment at all cost, he painted himself as the stronger candidate for peace. Furthering his image, Eisenhower unveiled a new campaign slogan weeks before the election that stated, “Prosperity without war.”¹⁵ Shades Valley voters who wanted a candidate for peace but who would not appear weak to the Communists would gravitate to Eisenhower, due to his campaign rhetoric of staying strong against communist.¹⁶

During the campaign, Eisenhower did more than just mention a few slogans for peace. He established a specific plan to end America’s role in the Korean conflict. At campaign speeches, Eisenhower told crowds his first actions in the Oval Office would be first to better train South Koreans and second to start pulling out American forces. As he stated with a direct manner in Champaign, Illinois, “Let Asians fight Asians, with our support on the side of freedom.”¹⁷

Eisenhower and the Republican Party defamed the Cold War Democratic policy. Republicans wanted an honorable finish to the war and not a gridlock with no end in sight. At the Republican Convention, General Douglas MacArthur defined the Republican Party’s platform on Korea and Democrats. When MacArthur declared that the Democrats were a “War Party,” the crowd cheered in unison. He stated the Republican Party view concerning about Korea, “Korea stands today as the hallowed

¹⁴ “Ike or Adlai,” *The Birmingham News*, 19 October 1952, 1-2.

¹⁵ “Ike says Moral Values Must Rule Foreign Policy,” *The Birmingham News*, 22 October 1952, 1.

¹⁶ “Ike or Adlai,” *The Birmingham News*, 19 October 1952, 1-2.

¹⁷ “Sees ‘no sense’ in U.S. Carrying Main War Load,” *The Birmingham News*, 2 October 1952, 1.

graveyard for countless American dead. We must not let it become as well a graveyard for American hope, American faith, and American honor.”¹⁸

Vice-presidential candidate Richard Nixon, an ardent anti-Communist Senator, furthered the Party’s stance on Democrats as failures in Korea. In campaign speeches, Nixon constantly referred to the Democratic foreign policy as botched. He harked on his belief that the Democrats had allowed America to lose too many lives in Korea.¹⁹ Through the efforts of Nixon, MacArthur, and others, the Republican Party successfully situated the Democrats on the defensive about their foreign policy and the Korean War. With the Democrats taking a defensive position, Republicans could play offensive politics and convince voters of the rightness of their position.

Alabama Republicans supported the national party’s stance on Communism and Korea. In late October, the Alabama Republican Party published a campaign advertisement to attract voters to Republicanism. The advertisement had a picture of two soldiers in a foxhole with the caption, “They never had it so good.” In bold print on the advertisement it stated, “Will you trust America’s future foreign policy to those responsible for Korea?”²⁰ Alabama Republicans had the means and capital to print a campaign advertisement and they decided that discussing the Republicans stance on Korea served as a tool to encourage voters to their party. Thus, Alabama Republicans viewed the national Republican position as popular in Alabama. Alabama Republicans were attempting to capitalize on alleged Democratic failure in Korea.

¹⁸ “MacArthur Pounds at Demos as ‘War Party,’ Calls for Crusade,” *The Birmingham News*, 8 July 1952.

¹⁹ Alabama Republican Party, “Will you Trust America’s Future Foreign Policy for those Responsible for Korea,” *The Birmingham News*, 20 October 1952, 9.

²⁰ Ibid.

The Alabama Republican Party did more than advertise their stance about Korea. Alabama Republicans frequently spoke positively about Eisenhower and the party's platform on Korea throughout 1952. Tom Abernathy and C.O. Vardaman both outlined in numerous speeches, what they considered to be Democratic policy failures in Korea. Shades Valley residents were flooded with information from newspapers about the Republican stance on Korea.²¹ Therefore, when they went to the polls in November they were familiar with Eisenhower's position on Korea and Cold War diplomacy.

With Americans inundated with information about supposed Democratic failures, Adlai Stevenson attempted to defend the party against the Republican onslaught. Stevenson also attempted to attract voters while constantly defending the Truman Administration. During the campaign, Stevenson blasted Eisenhower's thoughts on American withdrawal from Korea. Stevenson rebutted Eisenhower's plan about training South Koreans, he claimed that American forces were already training and fighting alongside South Koreans. Stevenson also believed that Eisenhower's plan allowed for an early exit from Korea without stabilizing the nation.²² However, throughout the campaign, Stevenson did not outline a withdrawal plan from the war. In addition, he defended Truman's decision to enter Korea. Stevenson claimed, "We (Democrats) have not yielded to hot heads who want to extend the war nor the weak-kneed who wanted to quit when the going got tough."²³ Adlai Stevenson's statement demonstrated that he considered the Democrats justified in their policy and diplomacy.

²¹ *The Birmingham News* and *The Birmingham Post-Herald* 1952.

²² "S. Koreans Regain Crest of White Horse," *The Birmingham News*, 12 October 1952, 1.

²³ *The Birmingham News*, 2 November 1952, Democrat Newspaper Clipping Files (Tutwiler Collection of Southern History and Literature: Birmingham Public Library).

With many Americans upset over what they considered a stalemate, they did not want a continuation of Truman's policies suggested by Stevenson. At a campaign speech, Stevenson stated, "I think there is good reason to believe that resolute action by the UN in Korea not only gained time in the East but saved NATO in the West."²⁴ Americans and Over the Mountain voters looking for a change in policy found the same in Stevenson. Eisenhower believed in containment, like Truman, but he pointed out mistakes in Truman's policy and handling of the war. When voters went to the polls and voted for Eisenhower, they voted for a party that blamed the Democrats for the stalemate in Korea and a presidential candidate that spoke of militarily exiting Korea.

Korea might have been the most important issue concerning the Cold War, but Birmingham citizens viewed many other Cold War issues, such as communist subversion or nuclear topics, as central in the campaign. Both candidates had to address their foreign policy toward the Soviets and the danger of communist subversion in the government. A *Birmingham News* editorial defined the importance of the Cold War to Birmingham readers. The editor wrote in his article, "First task of the new president will be to arm the western world against Russia."²⁵ His statement exemplified that the Cold War and a strong approach to communism held importance to all voters, even those in the greater Birmingham area, which includes Shades Valley.

Sociologist Barry Glassner argued in his book, *The Culture of Fear*, that when people hear or read information from an assumed authority they view that information as fact.²⁶ According to Glassner's theory, news and government reports about Soviet

²⁴ "Here's how Adlai Stands on Issues," *The Birmingham News*, 23 July 1952, 1.

²⁵ Editorial, *The Birmingham News*, 4 August 1952, 15.

²⁶ Barry Glassner, *The Culture of Fear* (New York: Basic Books, 1999), 205-208.

expansion and possible war made the threat plausible and serious. Thus according to the theory, when local newspapers published articles that described the Soviets as a war threat, Shades Valley citizens would consider the threat of a Russian war realistic. Headlines on the front pages of local newspapers such as, "US betting no war 'til 54 or 55," put in print the fear of many citizens. The article claimed, "Top Pentagon leaders are gambling Soviet Russia will not touch off another world war until 1954 or 1955."²⁷ Newspapers frequently quoted Government officials that discussed a possible nuclear war. With officials telling people that Russia could attack America, it made the Soviet's ability to initiate war seem highly likely.

In addition to government reports, news stories made the Soviet threat appear imminent. In May 1952, *The Birmingham News* published a series of articles describing the supposed plan of Soviet expansion. The articles described in detail the Soviets' treatment and control of Hungary, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Bulgaria. The writers also attempted to enlighten the readers about the brutality of the Soviets and their campaigns of fear in their own homeland.²⁸ Local headlines during 1952, such as, "Reds shoot down Swedish aircraft," or "Russia admits Firing on Missing B-29,"²⁹ provided Shades Valley with evidence of the Soviet Union as a constant threat. The news series, stories, and articles further indicated that the Soviets were a direct threat to their American lifestyle. Even if the news media did not convince voters of Soviet aggression,

²⁷ "US Betting no War 'til 54 or 55," *The Birmingham News*, 5 February 1952, 1.

²⁸ *The Birmingham News*, May 1952.

²⁹ "Russia Admits Firing on Missing B-29, In Protest to US," *Birmingham Post Herald*, 13 October 1952, 1; "Reds Shoot Down Swedish Aircraft," *The Birmingham News*, 6 June 1952, 1.

then Dwight Eisenhower's declaration during the campaign that the Soviets were bent on world conquest had to affect Shades Valley.³⁰

Politicians and the media made war with the Soviet Union always seem imminent to suburbanites. Newspapers not only used articles and government reports to establish the credibility of war, but "fear mongers" even used the words of Joseph Stalin. *The Birmingham News*, published an associated press article that reminded the public of a Joseph Stalin speech in 1927, where he re-iterated Lenin's theory of constant communist revolution and expansion. In that 1927 speech, Stalin stated to the Soviet politburo that a day would come when Communists and Capitalists would fight to control the world. Stalin's statement makes a Western Soviet showdown inevitable. However, by 1952, Stalin backed off his claim imminent war between the two political and economic ideologies. Americans were not convinced and still viewed the Soviets as a direct threat to American peace and prosperity.³¹

Stalin backed off his 1927 position, but Americans still believed war with the Soviets could happen at any minute. With the nation concerned over the communist menace, Stevenson and Eisenhower had to address the Soviet threat and their plan to protect America. Eisenhower established himself as a convincing candidate who would act strongly to stop the Soviets. Stevenson never appeared as convincing to the public as Eisenhower, concerning the Soviets. He campaigned on a three-step plan to prevent a Soviet attack. The first step, establish a security force that would be so large that it would terrify the Soviets. The second prong of his plan involved greater cooperation

³⁰ "Adlai and Ike Both Insist his Party Best Equipped to Combat Communism," *The Birmingham News*, 12 October 1952, C11.

³¹ Ibid.

among all the free nations. Third, Eisenhower also proclaimed that the United States would not allow the Soviet Union to make any gains internationally.³² Eisenhower convinced voters that he represented the best candidate to avoid war or guide the nation through a possible war, because of his military experience.

The need for a leader to protect America from a world war and maintain national resolve against the Soviets became more important with the threat of a possible nuclear attack. After World War II, the Soviet and American leaders both developed foreign policy from their Cold War suspicions. The two nation's distrustful foreign diplomacy produced an arms race. In response to America's nuclear dominance, the Soviets created and tested an atomic bomb in 1949. By 1950, Harry Truman approved the development of the hydrogen bomb and the world appeared spiraling toward a catastrophic war. The Soviet and American arms build up added another layer of tension in the Cold War dialogue. The arms race and Eisenhower's Soviet policies directly affected the political climate of American.³³

Under the Truman Administration, the US developed nuclear dominance and then witnessed the Soviets obtain nuclear weapons. Shades Valley residents frequently read reports in the newspaper about the development of new weapons and technology. With the constant fear of Soviet expansion and war, a defense build-up seemed necessary but also provided more anxiety.³⁴ At the United Nations in August of 1952, the US delegation told the United Nations assembly that it reserved the right to use atomic

³² "Legion Chief says America World 'Dupe,'" *The Birmingham News*, 25 August 1952, 1.

³³ Arnold Offner, *Another Such Victory: President Truman and the Cold War, 1945-1953* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002), 6.

³⁴ "Anti-Aircraft Defense System to Prevent Massive Air Strike," *The Birmingham News*, 19 August 1952, 1.

weapons or germ warfare on future aggressors. The US position on weapons and the Soviet development of weapons made a nuclear war and fallout appear possible.

Americans realized a war between the Soviet Union and America could mean a nuclear holocaust.³⁵ As a result, fallout planning and protection became important issues in the 1952 campaign. Thus, voters were searching for a candidate who would best prevent a nuclear war on American soil but simultaneously not appear weak on foreign policy.

Birmingham area newspapers discussed nuclear war. The topic of nuclear war became more possible to the public, when Air Force General Hoyt S. Vandenberg spoke at a Senate Committee hearing in 1952. He informed senators that within two years Soviet Russia would possess the means to launch a long-range atomic attack. In addition to Vandenberg's words, earlier in the year a news report asserted that the Soviets were test-firing missiles to reach the Ruhr, Europe's main industrial region. The news media also claimed that the Soviets gained more guided missiles from the Nazis after World War II than the Americans and British put together. In addition, during 1952, an Air Force and Pentagon report told Truman that a Russian war would be brief but terrible due to Russian atomic and air progress.³⁶ With the Soviets developing long-range missiles and nuclear weapons, evidence demonstrated that if a war with the Soviet Union occurred it would be nuclear. The reports added another layer of anxiety to Shades Valley.

Shades Valley residents that watched television news, read newspapers, and read news magazines were aware of the devastation and fall-out that a nuclear war would wreak upon Americans. Reports and photos from Hiroshima and Nagasaki were making their way into the Shades Valley homes of newsreaders. *Life* published a series of photos

³⁵ "When A-Bomb Struck Uncensored," *Life Magazine*. Vol. 33, No. 13, 29 September 1952.

³⁶ "Air Force Report," *The Birmingham News*, 28 June 1952, 1.

taken by survivors of the atomic blasts. The pictures displayed the destruction and loss of life caused by an atomic bomb. The horrific pictures depicted complete destruction. Shades Valley citizens that read *Life* or saw the pictures of Hiroshima and Nagasaki were aware of the side effects caused by an atomic attack. Thus, voters who were searching for a candidate to prevent a possible nuclear war with the Soviets drifted to Eisenhower's rhetoric.³⁷

Birmingham's development into a major city, forced greater Birmingham to enter an American discourse concerning fall out. Many area residents worried that the city would become a Soviet nuclear target. A *Birmingham News* headline best expressed Birmingham's nuclear fears, "Birmingham could be Russ A-bomb target." A picture printed under the headline depicted downtown Birmingham with a mushroom cloud enveloping the city. The picture highlighted certain downtown buildings and landmarks consumed by a nuclear cloud to demonstrate the destructive effects of a bomb on Birmingham. The caption under the picture read chillingly, "Death hovers over the city- At least 100,000 die if an A-bomb fell on unprepared Birmingham."³⁸ The article that supported civil defense does not state the number of deaths possibly averted by civil defense. However, it does inform residents on what steps to take to prepare for a nuclear strike.

With such fears abounding, Birmingham residents started a civil defense organization to inform the public about civil defense issues, the records and membership rolls of this group do not exist. The Civil Defense Organization and the Junior Chamber of Commerce brought Alert America, a public safety organization, to Birmingham in

³⁷ "When A-Bomb Struck Uncensored," *Life Magazine*. Vol. 33, No. 13, 29 September 1952.

³⁸ "Birmingham could be Russ A-Bomb Target," *The Birmingham News*, 9 March 1952, B1.

March 1952, to perform a weeklong exhibit. Their goals were to teach people how to prepare and react in case of a nuclear strike.³⁹ Birmingham officials also developed a plan for when and if Birmingham suffered an atomic attack, named “Operation Bulldozer.”⁴⁰ Actions by local officials and the creation of a Civil Defense Organization demonstrated the importance of nuclear issues and fallout to the greater Birmingham area.

Local groups attempted to inform the public about what actions to take in case of a nuclear attack. In addition, local newspapers published articles instructing local citizens of what to do after an attack. The newspapers also provided citizens with a list of necessities to have at home in case of a nuclear conflict and how to remain safe from nuclear fallout. For example, *The Birmingham News* published a four-part series in March of 1952, to inform residents on what to do in case of an attack. The articles recommended that people have a basement or bomb shelter equipped with blankets and canned goods. Birmingham citizens shared the Cold War experience of other Americans who thought they needed to prepare for a Russian nuclear attack.⁴¹

Americans were worried about Communist and war abroad, but Americans’ were also concerned over the threat of Communism at home. News reports described Communist infiltration of the federal government flooded media outlets. In January of 1950, a federal court convicted Alger Hiss, a State Department employee, of perjury. Then in response to Hiss’ conviction, Senator Joseph McCarthy claimed, in February of 1950, that he had compiled a list of Communist spies in the State Department. In essence, his speech started McCarthyism and the hunt for Communists in government. In

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ “Where is all the Water Going to Come From,” *The Birmingham News*, 3 February 1952, B2.

⁴¹ “Birmingham Could be Russ A-Bomb Target,” *The Birmingham News*, 9 March 1952, B1.

1951, the Rosenbergs, who shared nuclear secrets with the Soviets, were convicted for conspiracy to commit espionage and exacerbated the nation's fear of communist infiltration. Due to the national and local events after World War II, Shades Valley developed into being during the pinnacle of the McCarthy era.

During the heightened era of anxiety, the Republican Party took a stronger anti-Communist approach. Joseph McCarthy transformed the Republican Party into a fighting party and not an isolationist party.⁴² Republicans, such as Richard Nixon and McCarthy, claimed that Communist subversives and spies had infiltrated the U.S. federal government. McCarthy claimed that subversives and Democrats were allowing the United States to lose the Cold War. He cited the fall of China to Mao Zedong, the Soviet development of an atomic bomb, and the Rosenbergs as examples of Democratic failures. McCarthy also led the Republicans on a witch-hunt, McCarthyism, to eliminate alleged Communist subversives from the government and nation. McCarthyism forced a certain idea of Americanism on the public. It also worked politically by linking the Democrats to America's ultimate enemy, the Communists, and painted Republicans as right. Due to McCarthyism, how both candidates would eliminate subversives from the government and the internal Communist threat were important political issues.

McCarthy might have been a Wisconsin Senator, but McCarthyist dialogue resonated in the affluent Shades Valley suburbs. During the fall semester of 1952, the Birmingham chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution, located in the Highlands District of Birmingham atop Red Mountain, which served as the branch for Shades Valley, filed suit to remove a textbook from a high school civics class. The members

⁴² George Nash, *The Conservative Intellectual Movement in America, since 1945* (New York: Basic Books, 1976), 132.

claimed that a chapter of the book, *The Challenge of Democracy*, epitomized subversion and anti-Americanism. The publishers of the book agreed to delete certain passages after the Sons of the American Revolution merged with Birmingham business groups to form a coalition against the book. However, there is no direct quotation from the book. Once the coalition formed, it set goals beyond editing textbooks to legislating classroom curriculum. The coalition wanted to force teachers to educate by instilling Americanism. They wanted teachers to instill democracy and American principles in all Alabama students.⁴³

With the lawsuit against the textbook pending in Montgomery Circuit Court, the State Board of Education met. State superintendent WJ Terry proposed screening every textbook for possible Communist subversion. Terry's proposal also included a ban on any book whose authors had had any Communist ties in the last ten years. If a publisher could not guarantee that the authors, editors, or illustrators were free of any Communist sympathies then Alabama's Board of Education would not purchase the textbook.⁴⁴ The lawsuit, coalition, and Terry's proposal demonstrate that Birmingham residents believed that Communism had permeated their lives and their children's education. Eventually the case faded away after the book's removal from the classroom.

The Sons of American Revolution attacked Communism, similar to the techniques McCarthy used in recreating the Republicans. Birmingham's U.S. Representative Laurie Battle's campaign for re-election symbolized a view in greater Birmingham concerning Communism. His political advertisements in local newspapers

⁴³ "Anti-Communist Screening of Textbook is Proposed," *The Birmingham News*, 5 October 1952, 3.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

focused strictly on his strong record against Communism. One of Battle's advertisements had a title in bold, "Author of the 'Battle Act.'" The "Battle Act," his namesake, placed an embargo on shipments of war materials to the Iron Curtain and controlled trade to the Communist bloc. It also cut off aid and military support to any country that did not support American policy.⁴⁵ Shades Valley's re-election of Battle and the textbook controversy symbolized Alabamians concerns over Communist.

During the campaign, Eisenhower linked himself with McCarthy as they campaigned together in Appleton, Wisconsin. At the campaign stop, Eisenhower accused the Truman administration and the Democrats of adopting a soft policy towards subversives in the government. Eisenhower believed that Truman had allowed contamination in every branch of the government. In Wisconsin, Eisenhower threw his support behind McCarthy for his Senate campaign. However, Eisenhower cited differences between himself and McCarthy to attract more voters that were moderate. Eisenhower alluded to the fact that he did not act like the divisive character that McCarthy, but that he was still strong against Communism.⁴⁶

Eisenhower campaigned on the idea that Truman and the Democrats had allowed Communists to infiltrate the government. He augmented his image of being anti-Communist by claiming that he would eliminate any Communist threat to the government. An Eisenhower campaign advertisement in the *Birmingham Post-Herald* stated the major facet of his campaign, "This is a crusade to sweep out our government,

⁴⁵ Friends of Laurie Battle, "Laurie Battle has Made Good in Congress and in Service to His Folks Back Home," *The Birmingham News*, 4 May, 1952, 3.

⁴⁶ "Torrents of Words Flowed as Ike, Adlai told Where They Stand," *The Birmingham News*, 2 November 1952, 1.

banish the subversives, build a strong economy and save our great, free nation.”⁴⁷

Eisenhower’s campaign pledge to clean the government of Communist subversives attracted voters who worried about Communist infiltration because Stevenson did not discuss subversives as much as the Republicans.

The Republican ticket enhanced their image of being stronger against Communism by nominating Richard Nixon as vice president. Nixon rose to fame with McCarthy, because of his strong against Communism stance against subversives and foreign communism. As a Senator, he worked alongside Senator McCarthy in his pursuit of Communist sympathizers. In campaign speeches, Nixon made Communist subversion and corruption his major themes. While campaigning, Nixon attacked the Democratic Party for allowing Communist infiltration. Nixon claimed that the “(Alger Hiss Case) is a small part of the whole shocking story of Communist espionage in the United States.”⁴⁸ Shades Valley voters concerned over Communist infiltration heard more rhetoric from Eisenhower and Nixon concerning purifying the government of any Communist inclinations.

Stevenson had the misfortune of running as a Democrat when the Republicans were successfully blaming Cold War losses on his party. In addition, Stevenson appeared to some voters as weak on the internal Communist threat. The Republican campaign harped on the fact that Stevenson had served as a character witness for Alger Hiss. Republicans were able to use Stevenson’s experience with Hiss to demonstrate his supposed weakness against Communist subversion. Stevenson’s relationship with Hiss

⁴⁷“This is a Campaign to Sweep out our Government, Banish the Subversives, Build a Strong Economy, and Save our Great, Free Nation,” *The Birmingham Post-Herald*, 3 November 1952, 6.

⁴⁸ Douglas Miller and Marion Nowak, *The Fifties: The Way We Really Were* (New York: Doubleday and Co., 1975), 27.

confirmed to voters already apprehensive about Democrats and Communists, that they were ineffective in fighting Communist infiltration.⁴⁹

Due to Republican attacks, Stevenson attempted to combat the issue of appearing weak on Communism. He spoke about his willingness to rid the government of subversives, but his Democratic platform stated, “The loyalty program of President Truman has served effectively to prevent infiltration by subversive elements.”⁵⁰ *The Birmingham News* published excerpts from a speech of Stevenson’s. During the speech, he claimed he would deal sternly and mercilessly with all who would betray the country. However, he did not believe that Communists subversives were in every branch of the government.⁵¹ With Stevenson’s position highlighted by local newspapers, voters who believed that Communists had infiltrated would migrate to Eisenhower’s campaign rhetoric.

The Democrat’s vice presidential candidate, John Sparkman, did not add much to the image of being strong or weak against Communist subversives. He rarely mentioned Communist infiltration during the campaign. Domestic issues were more important to Sparkman, and he did not have a strong Senate record of combating Communist infiltration. Thus, any resident who felt concerned over Communists in the government or the internal threat gravitated to the Republican Party.

Democrats could not tear down the hero status of Eisenhower that existed in many Shades Valley residents’ minds. Cold War issues actually made him more popular in the South. He referred to himself as a “Cold War Republican,” representing a shift in the

⁴⁹ Richard Hofstadter, *Anti-Intellectualism in American Life* (New York: Knopf, 1963), 112.

⁵⁰ “Here’s How Adlai Stands on Issues,” *The Birmingham News*, 23 July 1952.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

Republican viewpoint. To white Southerners the term “Cold War Republican” meant a change from isolationist Republicans and Reconstruction.⁵² Eisenhower’s military history and “Cold War Republicanism” allowed him to resonate as the best candidate against all Communist threats.⁵³

The disposition of fear caused by the Korean War, anti-Communist demagoguery, and the arms race forced Birmingham citizens to confront the issue of who would be the better Cold War leader. The Korean War and the fear of Communism led many Democrats and affluent Birmingham citizens to vote for Eisenhower’s “Cold War Republicanism.” The 1952 campaign and the Republicans’ tough stance against Democrats and Communism drew support from the Birmingham area residents who were convinced of the danger of subversion or a Communist attack. Eisenhower’s stance on Cold War issues helped create a Republican base in Shades Valley. The base created in 1952, provided the networks that aided Goldwater and Nixon in later presidential campaigns.⁵⁴

⁵² H.W. Brands, *The Strange Death of American Liberalism*, (New Haven, Conn: Yale University 2001), 67.

⁵³ “Behind Eisenhower’s Victory,” *The Nation*, Vol. 175, No. 20, November 15, 1952.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

CHAPTER VI

WE LIKE IKE: EISENHOWER'S POPULAR APPEAL

“General Eisenhower is a tremendously popular man in Alabama and we’re going to make an all out campaign to convert that popularity into votes.”¹ Claude Vardaman

Shades Valley’s esteem for Dwight Eisenhower served as a factor in the development of the Republican Party in Alabama. In the 1952 election, white Southerners voted in substantial numbers for a Republican candidate for the first time. Eisenhower’s popularity served as a factor in leading Shades Valley to become a Republican base. Herbert Hyman and Paul Sheatsley eloquently describe the popularity of Eisenhower in their article, “The Political Appeal of President Eisenhower.” They claimed that Dwight Eisenhower had such immense popularity that he could have won the presidency in 1948 for either party.² Shades Valley did not differ from the nation in its esteem for Eisenhower. The overwhelming majority Eisenhower won in Shades Valley indicated his popularity and emerging Republicanism.

There were many reasons that Eisenhower had such immense popularity. Besides his status as the hero of War World II, he was one of the most well known people in the world. To voters he also did not appear as a typical politician but instead as a

¹ *The Birmingham News*, 4 August 1952, C.O. Vardaman Papers, Newspaper Clippings (Auburn University Special Collections, Auburn University).

² Herbert Hyman and Paul Sheatsley, “The Political Appeal of President Eisenhower,” *The Public Opinion Quarterly*, Vol. 17, No. 4 (Winter 1953-1954), 443-460.

figure above politics. The General also had a folksy charm that people found relatable. Eisenhower's persona resonated with voters because he had an image as the protector of democracy and American soldiers. The rhetoric of local writers and politicians matched that of the entire nation, which called Eisenhower a great man or the hero of World War II.

One of the important motives for his popularity resulted from his military service. To Americans, Eisenhower represented a great war leader who had defended America. Shades Valley voters saw him as the hero of D-Day and the savior of democracy. John Sparkman realized the improbability of beating Eisenhower because of people's intense admiration for him. In an interview with the *Birmingham News*, Sparkman stated, "We (Stevenson-Sparkman) could have beaten anybody but Ike. He had been supreme commander in Europe and had a 'papa' image to millions of American servicemen."³

W.L. Longshore, a Birmingham area resident, Jefferson County Republican Chairman, and 1954 Congressional candidate for the greater Birmingham area, discussed his past with the Republican Party. He claimed: "Eisenhower started it (Shades Valley Republicanism) he was a war hero." According to Longshore, Eisenhower's hero status and popularity helped lead to emergence of the Republican Party. Longshore and Sparkman's comments demonstrate that they believed Eisenhower's image had an effect on voters.⁴

Eisenhower's dedication to the military and America won him admiration among voters throughout the nation. After the war, he served as Columbia University's

³ *The Birmingham News*, August 26, 1979, John Sparkman Clipping Files (Tutwiler Collection of Southern History and Literature: Birmingham Public Library).

⁴ W.L. Longshore, interview by author, Washington, DC, 2 May 2008.

president. However, with the creation of North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), Eisenhower left his post to again serve America in Europe as commander of NATO. The national media and Eisenhower's campaign cast him as a man dedicated to serving America. Voters saw him as a man who responded when the nation asked him to perform a duty. Eisenhower's image appealed to Shades Valley.⁵

Besides widespread hero-worship, Eisenhower attracted voters for numerous other reasons. For example, within Eisenhower's image as a military leader also existed an approachable, unpretentious man. *Life* published several issues during the campaign season to better inform voters about the candidates. The magazine stated that three words summed up Eisenhower, "warm, friendly, and commanding."⁶ Another issue of the magazine stated, "Ike symbolizes optimism."⁷ Even though Henry Luce, the editor of *Life*, supported Eisenhower, the words demonstrate comments that surrounded Eisenhower's campaign. The campaign slogan, "We like Ike," rang true as most viewed him almost like a distant friend.

Eisenhower's campaign worked to accentuate his apparent friendliness and to distance Stevenson from voters. Historian Richard Hofstadter described Eisenhower as "conventional." In essence, Eisenhower created an image of himself as an "average" American, not as a highly educated, East Coast resident, despite his graduation from West Point.⁸ He symbolized the heroism of World War II but also an "average" American. Thus, Eisenhower created a dual personality; he appeared as an average man but also a war hero that helped him receive support Over the Mountain.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Robert Elson, "Question: What Is Ike Like?" *Life Magazine* Vol. 32 No. 22, 2 June 1952.

⁷ Ed., "The Ike Boom" *Life Magazine* Vol. 32 No. 13, 31 March 1952.

⁸ Richard Hofstadter, *Anti-Intellectualism in American Life* (New York: Knopf, 1963), 3-4.

Eisenhower's approachable image bolstered his folksy nature. Frequently, pictures of Eisenhower performing activities that typical people would do appeared in local newspapers. For instance, pictures showed him eating corn or sitting at a picnic.⁹ In interviews and campaigning, Eisenhower discussed his love of golf and western films. While campaigning in Birmingham, he visited the Birmingham Museum of Art. Looking at an abstract painting, he stated, "That's not for me."¹⁰ Whether the campaign controlled these images or not, America and Birmingham media outlets latched onto the idea of Eisenhower as common American.

He spoke in practical language that people could understand. Campaign speeches also served as occasions to augment his folksy, approachable charm. Occasionally, on the campaign trail Eisenhower discarded his campaign speeches, so that he could answer questions that the crowd might have. His speeches often resembled informal gatherings as opposed to formal addresses. Besides appearing more personable at these political gatherings, he also used jokes and humor on the campaign trail to increase his folksy image. Eisenhower best exemplified his sense of humor at a speech in Fargo, North Dakota, where he mocked Harry Truman. Referring to verbal attacks Truman had leveled against him, Eisenhower said that he "was accustomed to real artillery and was not disturbed by blanks."¹¹ Statements such as those and Eisenhower's pursuit of the "simple life" made him appear ordinary and amicable. People could relate to a man who enjoyed golf, spoke colloquially, and appeared approachable.

⁹ "Ike," *The Birmingham News*, 5 July 1952, 3.

¹⁰ Chris Waddle, "General Visited City," *Birmingham Post Herald*, March 29, 1969, President Eisenhower and the South Clipping Files (Birmingham Public Library, Southern History Section).

¹¹ "Ike to Fight Communism his own way not of McCarthy," *Birmingham Post Herald*, October 6, 1952, 1.

Eisenhower's heroic and uncomplicated imagery also made him appear to be above politics to Shades Valley citizens. To voters, Eisenhower represented someone whom the public had drafted to run for the presidency as his duty. Eisenhower symbolized hope and togetherness during the trying years of the early Cold War. The idea of him being drafted started because he did not openly campaign during the early primary season. He did not return from his NATO command until March 24, after the New Hampshire primary, which he won without campaigning. Eisenhower appeared larger than politics and turned the Republican race into a two-man battle between himself and Ohio Senator Robert Taft, without openly campaigning. Eisenhower symbolized to many Americans recruited to run for president because of his service to the nation and ability to unite the public.¹²

Eisenhower's image and charm overwhelmed Adlai Stevenson's campaign. Stevenson could not compete against the war hero and down-to-earth figure of Eisenhower. After the war, no American, much less Adlai Stevenson, who did not fight in World War II, could contend with the hero worship for Eisenhower. Stevenson could not rally Americans around an imagery of gallantry that Eisenhower could. Stevenson did not have the "papa" image that Sparkman mentioned. Claude Pepper, Democratic Senator from Florida, described the lack of appeal that Stevenson had when he stated: "With no dynamic, magnetic personality like Roosevelt to lead in the liberal cause, I noticed as early as '44 that the trend was developing strongly toward conservatism."¹³

¹² Fred Taylor, "Alabama Republicans for Gen. Eisenhower Turn on the Pressure for Delegate Voters," *The Birmingham News*, 30 March 1952, 22.

¹³ Claude Pepper interviewed by Jack Bass, February 1, 1974, Southern Oral History Program Collection at University of North Carolina.

Eisenhower's popularity always placed Stevenson on the defensive. With Eisenhower appearing above politics, Stevenson had to defend his long political history. Stevenson's father and grandfather were politicians. His family name made him appear old and a common politician, despite the fact that Stevenson did not campaign for the Democratic nomination. He did not bring freshness to the political arena as Eisenhower did. Eisenhower could sway voters with his above politics imagery but Republican's cast Stevenson as part of the political establishment.¹⁴

Besides his family and party allegiance, Stevenson had many other image problems when facing Eisenhower. His elite education provided Richard Nixon, the material to call him an "egghead," a derogatory term, referring to an intellectual with no practical solution to a problem, and inherently unable to relate to the people.¹⁵ The Eisenhower campaign successfully sold Eisenhower as a regular citizen and distanced Stevenson from the mainstream. Nixon's depictions cast Stevenson as not approachable. In essence, it created for voters a decision between a folksy war hero and an "egghead."

The Eisenhower campaign's efforts to display a Stevenson pedigree that was not relatable to average Americans was successful. The influential *Chicago Tribune* published an editorial attacking Stevenson's supposedly elite background. The headline of the article read, "Harvard tells Indiana how to vote."¹⁶ Tom Abernathy seconded these

¹⁴ Douglas Miller and Marion Nowak, *The Fifties; The Way We Really Were* (New York: Doubleday and Co., 1975), 14.

¹⁵ Richard Hofstadter, *Anti-Intellectualism in American Life* (New York: Knopf, 1963), 225.

¹⁶ Excerpt from Richard Hofstadter, *Anti-Intellectualism in American Life* (New York: Knopf, 1963), 225.

points at a Republican luncheon, when he stated, “Stevenson is a parlor pink (educated elite liberal) with a Harvard accent.”¹⁷

Sparkman’s rags to riches story could still not offset the lost votes because of Stevenson’s image. His rise from the son of a sharecropper to a U.S. Senator brought pride to the people of Alabama. However, pride did not result in suburban votes for the Democratic ticket. During October and November of 1952, Sparkman campaigned in Alabama, and on November 1, the state observed John Sparkman Day. Despite his roots and support, an editorial on the front of the *Birmingham News* summarized how voters could support Eisenhower with an Alabamian on the ticket. It stated: “Our convictions as to the 1952 national election have decisively led us to support of the Republican ticket. We keenly regret that that firm position is obviously incompatible with giving our support to John Sparkman again.”¹⁸

The Republican Vice Presidential candidate, Richard Nixon, did not harm the folksy image of the Eisenhower campaign. Similar to Sparkman, Nixon had a poor upbringing and worked his way to the US Senate. He did not have Southern roots but Shades Valley voters could respect his self-made success. *The Birmingham News* defined the image of Nixon in a headline that read, “GOP’s Nixon product of plain, hard-working American family.”¹⁹ Nixon had traits and self made success that Shades Valley citizens found admirable and in keeping with the Eisenhower image.

From their respect for Eisenhower, people found themselves supporting him politically and campaigning for him to win election. Shades Valley citizens not only

¹⁷ “Report from Republican Lunch,” *The Birmingham News*, October 12, 1952, 3.

¹⁸ Editorial, “Deserved Honor for Sparkman,” *The Birmingham News*, July 27, 1952, 1.

¹⁹ GOP’s Nixon Product of Plain, Hard-Working American Family,” *The Birmingham News*, 24 July 1952, 1.

voted for Eisenhower but their efforts to help him win the election set the stage for permanent Republicanism. Perry Hooper, future Alabama Chief Justice, became a Republican in 1952. At that time, he was a law student and Birmingham resident with many connections Over the Mountain. In his explanation for why he voted for Eisenhower in 1952, he said, "I just liked Ike."²⁰ The simple answer for why he voted for Eisenhower has a deeper meaning and symbolism. It demonstrated the influence that Eisenhower possessed among many young voters throughout the greater Birmingham area. Hooper symbolized a transition that that occurred in Alabama. After voting for Eisenhower in 1952, he ran for the Birmingham City Commission in 1953 as a Republican. Hooper was the first Republican to run for the seat, however he did lose.²¹

Before Eisenhower even officially announced that he was running for president, clubs formed in Birmingham to support his campaign. *The Birmingham News* declared as early as February, "Under the Eisenhower aegis, thousands of Democratic dissidents are joining Republican clubs and attending GOP meetings."²² Mel Trammell, president of the "We Like Ike Club," Birmingham chapter, seconded the newspaper's point. In February, he told local reporters that his club already had several hundred members. Support for Eisenhower grew from February to his election in November. The many clubs and organizations expanded during Eisenhower's campaign and became active by going door-to-door and posting signs.²³

²⁰ Perry Hooper, interview by author, Washington, DC, 7 April 2008.

²¹ Allen Woodrow Jones, "Republicanism in Jefferson County, AL 1952-1958," *The Alabama Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 22, No. 1 & 2 (Spring and Summer, 1960): 103-106.

²² "Under the Eisenhower Aegis, Thousands of Democratic Dissidents are Joining Republican Clubs and Attending GOP meetings," *The Birmingham News*, 3 February 1952, 1.

²³ *Montgomery Advertiser*, 8 November 1952, C.O. Vardaman Papers, Newspaper Clippings (Auburn University Special Collections, Auburn University).

Many clubs formed and campaigned for Eisenhower, including college students. When the election heated up in August, College and High school students started “Youth for Eisenhower” at Homewood City Hall. The students drafted plans to spread throughout the state, creating chapters in the other Alabama cities. Members also planned to join the national Eisenhower youth movement. Youth for Eisenhower pledged to support the Eisenhower headquarters in downtown Birmingham, by going door to door or calling potential voters. Adult clubs also developed even before Eisenhower declared his intention for running for president.²⁴

Political clubs and organizations not only demonstrate his support but also provide a survey of Eisenhower’s political base because most clubs were in the suburbs. The Youth for Eisenhower students are indicative of the supporters for Eisenhower for several reasons. Their movement came together in the suburbs and had little to do with the urban center on the other side of Red Mountain. The members were atypical for Alabama youth, for instance, one of the two people who started the club, Elliot Wilder, was a student matriculating at Harvard. Students also resided in the wealthiest section of the state.²⁵ The youth of Shades Valley represented the ideology of the emergence of white suburban Southerners.

The growth of clubs and organizations represented the origins of a new political suburban Birmingham. Many Eisenhower supporters discussed the support they received anonymously. Winton Blount, chairman of the Alabama Citizens for Eisenhower club, informed the *Montgomery Advertiser* that he had received significant monetary

²⁴ “Alabamians Organize for Eisenhower Drive,” *The Birmingham Post Herald*, 8 January 1952, Political Parties (Republican) Newspaper Clippings File, (Microfilm Section: Birmingham Public Library

²⁵ Ibid.

contributions from Democratic office holders. He said that frequently donors told him, "I'll give you my money gladly, but don't use my name."²⁶ Claude Vardaman echoed Blount at a newspaper photo shoot where he received a donation for Eisenhower's Alabama campaign from Birmingham attorney Hobart Grooms, future federal judge.

The rhetoric Democrats and Eisenhower's opponents used, demonstrate his popularity. A debate in January, months before the Republican or Democratic conventions, highlighted the Eisenhower's popularity in Alabama. State Democratic leader, Ben Ray, state Republican leader, Claude Vardaman, and state Dixiecrat leader, Tom Abernathy were the debaters.²⁷ Fred Taylor, political journalist for the *Birmingham News*, described how:

The mention of his (Eisenhower's) name as GOP presidential candidate before the outpouring of editors, publishers, and guests at Friday night's triangular discussion in the capital of the Confederacy brought far greater applause than that of any other Democrat or Republican.²⁸

After Eisenhower's nomination for president, Ben Ray thought that Eisenhower would build a strong-two party system in the South.²⁹ Alabama Democrats and Dixiecrats understood the political popularity of Dwight Eisenhower.

Democrats saw that Republicans were gaining political viability. *The Birmingham News* best stated the suburban Birmingham view of Eisenhower. On the cover of the July 13, 1952 issue, the headline read, "Eisenhower is the Man!" The editorial on the front page read, "*The News* is acting even in advance of the Democratic convention, so strong

²⁶ *Montgomery Advertiser*, 13 July 1952, C.O. Vardaman Papers, Newspaper Clippings (Auburn University Special Collections, Auburn University).

²⁷ "Debate Points up one Certainty: Ike is Popular in State," *The Birmingham News*, January 19, 1952, 3.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ Fred Taylor, "Ray sees Ike as Shot-in-Arm to Two-Party System," *The Birmingham News*, 12 July 1952, 1.

is our feeling that this choice transcends partisan considerations and that Eisenhower is outstandingly and singularly the man for the nation's needs."³⁰ The editor voiced his opinion, which respected Eisenhower but also thought he would meet the nation's needs.

The Birmingham News further demonstrated its support and high esteem for Eisenhower when it published a series of articles in the spring of 1952. The series described events in the life of Eisenhower, from his childhood to his war years. All the tales made Dwight Eisenhower appear more like a regular person. No other such series appeared in the newspaper for other candidates.³¹ The newspaper did not act in a vacuum as forty-one other Southern newspapers endorsed Eisenhower, including *The Birmingham Post-Herald* and seven other Alabama daily newspapers. The two major papers in Birmingham and Montgomery endorsed Eisenhower.³²

The ultimate sign of General Eisenhower's popularity occurred when he spoke in Birmingham on Wednesday, September 3, 1952. Eisenhower planned a campaign tour through the South. Flying from Tampa, Florida, Eisenhower landed at the Birmingham airport at 11:40am. Several hundred people were waiting at the airport on the plane. When he stepped off the plane the crowd erupted in cheers for Eisenhower. Birmingham dignitaries presented Eisenhower grits and declared, Dwight Eisenhower Day, to celebrate his appearance in Birmingham.³³

Eisenhower's campaign stop in Birmingham shut down the typical operations in Birmingham. Several major employers, Alabama Power, Alabama Gas, and Birmingham

³⁰ Editorial, "Eisenhower is the Man," *The Birmingham News*, 13 July 1952, 1.

³¹ *The Birmingham News*, January 1952.

³² "41 Southern Papers Indicate They Will Support Eisenhower," *The Birmingham News*, 1 August 1952, 1.

³³ "Speech, Weather Right – so was Ike," *The Birmingham News*, 3 September 1952, 1.

Electric, gave their employees a long lunch break. In addition, luncheon clubs postponed their meetings.³⁴ If someone could not personally attend the event, forty-three radio stations and two television stations carried his speech. Birmingham opened its doors to the first Republican presidential candidate ever to campaign in the city.³⁵

After the celebration at the airport, Eisenhower's motorcade rode through downtown Birmingham. On his trip to City Hall for his planned speech, around 75,000 people lined the streets for their chance to see the Republican presidential candidate. Confetti trickled down from the windows of skyscrapers on 20th Street. The confetti covered the route and rained onto the motorcade. Eisenhower's motorcade then parked in a parking lot adjacent to Birmingham City Hall. Inside he prepared for his speech and met more Alabama dignitaries.³⁶

Outside city hall in adjacent Woodrow Wilson Park, 25,000 waited for Eisenhower's speech. Before his speech, Democratic Mayor Cooper Green presented Eisenhower a key to the city. Standing on the balcony overlooking the throngs of people, Donald Comer, an industrialist, life-long Democrat, and son of a former Democratic governor, introduced Eisenhower. Comer led the crowd in cheers for Eisenhower, before he welcomed the man he termed, "the next president of the United States."³⁷

As Dwight Eisenhower stepped onto the east steps of the balcony after Comer's introduction, the crowd erupted in applause. Eisenhower told the crowd, "This is wonderful. This is a surprise nothing could delight me more." The crowd cheered throughout the speech for Eisenhower. When he declared, "I'm a neophyte in politics

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ "Ike Invades City in Big Battle for Dixie," *The Birmingham News*, 3 September 1952, 1.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid.

and did not know that a national politician was supposed to take Southerners for granted,” the *Birmingham Post-Herald* described the cheers as uncontrollable. *The Birmingham News* stated, “The general overwhelmed the crowd. Large as it was, each person in it seemed to want to stay until the candidate had said his last word.”³⁸

When Eisenhower spoke to the crowd in Birmingham, he had the opportunity to appear as supporter of the Southern caste system. Instead, he never mentioned racial issues or segregation to the Birmingham crowd. *The Birmingham News* noted, “He hammered at deficit spending, high taxes, and world peace. The main theme was the mess in Washington.”³⁹ He avoided racial rhetoric to not alienate Northern Republicans. However, despite his Republican speech, citizens of Birmingham cheered emphatically for Eisenhower.

After Eisenhower departed Birmingham, he continued his Southern campaign. Local politicians and pundits analyzed Eisenhower’s visit. The most telling response of the political current that flowed through Birmingham that day came from Democratic Mayor Cooper Green. He told local reporters, “I’m a Democrat but I think General Eisenhower is a great American and deserved the great tribute here.... I believe the Republicans now have a strong nucleus for a real two party system in the South.”⁴⁰ Democrats, Dixiecrats, and Independents all respected and admired Eisenhower.

Wealthy citizens not only supported Eisenhower but also became a base of Republican support. Socialites created “Citizens for Eisenhower,” “Ike and Dick Clubs,” “Youth for Eisenhower,” and other such organizations. The Alabama Republican Party

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Speech, Weather Right – so was Ike,” *The Birmingham News*, 3 September 1952, 1.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

for the first time established a presidential campaign headquarters in downtown Birmingham. From the headquarters, the party planned door-to-door canvassing and mass campaign material distribution.⁴¹ From Eisenhower's initial popularity in Shades Valley, to voters support of fiscal conservatism to anti-communist, the movement around Eisenhower developed Shades Valley into a Republican enclave.⁴² The fact that people created clubs, newspapers supported him, and Democrats spoke positively of Eisenhower demonstrated his popularity. It also suggests that people voted for Eisenhower rather than against Stevenson.⁴³ Shades Valley emerged Republican and discovered their political support of the popular Eisenhower.

⁴¹ "Ike and Dick Club' Latest Formed to Aid Eisenhower," *The Birmingham News*, 16 September, 17.

⁴² *Montgomery Advertiser*, November 8, 1952, C.O Vardaman Papers, Newspaper Clipping File, (Auburn University Special Collections, Auburn University).

⁴³ *Ibid.*

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION: THE DEEP SOUTH REPUBLICAN BASE

The election of 1952 represented the political and social emergence of Republicanism in Shades Valley. The Over the Mountain voters' support of Eisenhower represented the future political orientation of the area. Civil rights, economics, national security, and Eisenhower's popularity led generations of affluent suburban Birmingham voters to the Republican Party. The post-war sprawl to suburbia and Republicanism that swept the nation occurred in Shades Valley. The same suburban phenomenon also resulted in the alignment of Shades Valley to the Republican Party.

Besides voting Republican, organizations developed throughout the greater Birmingham area. Race, economics, the Cold War, and Eisenhower's popularity lured Shades Valley to the Republican Party. *The Birmingham News* argued that Eisenhower's campaign made inroads with mobilizers and community organizers when it stated: "Under the Eisenhower aegis, thousands of Democratic dissidents are joining Republican clubs and attending GOP meetings."¹

Republicanism continued to grow and spread from the Southern suburban base of Shades Valley. Even in local elections, Republicanism matured Over the Mountain after the Eisenhower movement of 1952. Homewood elected a Republican constable and

¹ "Under the Eisenhower aegis, thousands of Democratic dissidents are joining Republican clubs and attending GOP meetings," *The Birmingham News*, February 3, 1952, 1.

Justice of the Peace in 1956.² By 1954, the Alabama Republican Party fielded a gubernatorial candidate, thirteen candidates for statewide offices, seven candidates for state house, and one for state senate.³ Tom Abernathy, the Eisenhower stumper, carried Shades Valley in the 1954 gubernatorial election. In 1956, Eisenhower won the majority of Jefferson County, which encompassed Shades Valley and metropolitan Birmingham. By 1960, Richard Nixon paraded through Birmingham to massive crowds of 50,000. Nixon then went on to win 60% of Jefferson County's votes.⁴

From their Republican base in Shades Valley, the Party continued to develop and establish a viable statewide two-party system in the 1960s. In 1962, political novice Jim Martin ran to unseat long time New Deal Senator Lister Hill. The election represented the peak of the Republican Party's work in establishing a permanent base of support in Shades Valley. Lister Hill won the close race by only 8/10 of one percent.⁵ John Griener, Shades Valley resident, a young attorney and former president of the Jefferson County Young Republicans, directed the Martin campaign and reached his goal to "break the back of the Alabama Democratic Party in Alabama with Jim Martin."⁶ Due to Griener's success with the Martin campaign, he directed the Southern campaign for Barry Goldwater in his 1964 run for president. Goldwater carried Shades Valley and for the first time a Republican carried Alabama and all the Deep South states. These 1962 and

² *The Birmingham News*, November 12, 1956, Political Parties (Republican) Newspaper Clippings File, (Microfilm Section: Birmingham Public Library).

³ James Sledge, "The Alabama Republican Party" (Ph.D. diss., Auburn University, 1998), 159.

⁴ Dr. Thomas Brigham and Mrs. Harold Miller, "History of the Republican Party of Alabama," Jefferson County Republican Committee Papers, (Birmingham Archives: Birmingham Public Library).

⁵ Earl and Merle Black, *The Rise of Southern Republicans* (Cambridge: Harvard University, 2002), 126.

⁶ *The Birmingham Post-Herald*, August 11, 1962, Political Parties (Republican), (Birmingham Public Library: Southern History Section).

1964 campaigns completed the process of establishing a competitive two party system in Alabama begun during the 1952 presidential election for Dwight Eisenhower.⁷

The rising wealth and suburbs of Birmingham in the 1950s presented social and political ingredients that led to a local suburban Republican enclave. Suburban citizens voted according to issues that benefited them economically. Shades Valley citizens voted for lower taxes, smaller government, and national security.⁸ Agriculture and farm issues no longer represented concerns that kept all Southerners in the Democratic column. With a changing political mentality, the majority of residents in Shades Valley represented a Republican enclave in a Solid South state. Their abandonment of the Solid South in the 1952 presidential election represented the political marriage of the Birmingham suburbs with similar suburban communities outside the Deep South. The election meshed the rising Birmingham suburbs and the Republican Party. A Republican bastion emerged in Shades Valley after the 1952 election.

⁷ Earl and Merle Black, *The Rise of Southern Republicans* (Cambridge: Harvard University, 2002), 84.

⁸ John Buchanan, interview by the author, Washington, DC, 5 May 2008.

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APPENDIX A
POPULATION AND RACIAL FIGURES FOR SHADES VALLEY

APPENDIX A¹
 POPULATION AND RACIAL FIGURES FOR SHADES VALLEY

City	Total Population	White Population	Non-White Population	African American Percentage of Population
Mountain Brook	8,359	8,079	280	3.35%
Homewood	12, 866	12,206	660	5.13%
Jefferson County	558,928	350,822	208,106	37.23%

¹ Census of Population: 1950, Vol. II Characteristics of the Population Part 2 Alabama, US (Washington, D.C: US Government Printing Office, 1952), . Note Vestavia Hills had not been incorporated in the 1950 Census.

APPENDIX B
ECONOMIC FIGURES FOR SHADES VALLEY

APPENDIX B²
ECONOMIC FIGURES FOR SHADES VALLEY

City	Total Population	Median Income
Homewood	12,866	\$5,065
Sheffield (next closest in income to Homewood)	10,000+	\$4,687
Mountain Brook	8,359	\$6,990
Chickasaw (next closest in income to Mountain Brook)	2,500-10,000	\$3,141

² Ibid. The Census categorized the cities in Alabama by their populations. For example, Mountain Brook was in the 2,500-10,000-population category. Homewood was in the 10,000+-population category. Both cities had the highest incomes in the state and these two cities were the closest in their population category.

APPENDIX C
EMPLOYMENT FIGURES FOR SHADES VALLEY

APPENDIX C³
EMPLOYMENT FIGURES FOR SHADES VALLEY

City	Employed Population	Manufacturing	Managers/Officials	Finance
Birmingham	326037	31956	11014	5726
Homewood	12866	948	2950	495
Mountain Brook	6276	309	1266	417

³ Census of Population: 1950, Vol. II Characteristics of the Population Part 2 Alabama, (Washington, D.C: US Government Printing Office, 1952): . Note Vestavia Hills had not been incorporated in the 1950 Census.

APPENDIX D

BIRMINGHAM FROM ATOP SHADES MOUNTAIN

APPENDIX D⁴
BIRMINGHAM FROM ATOP SHADES
MOUNTAIN



APPENDIX E
BIRMINGHAM'S HIGHLANDS

APPENDIX E⁵
BIRMINGHAM'S HIGHLANDS



⁵ Photograph by Alfred Keily, February 3, 1962. Birmingham Public Library. The Highlands are inside the city limits of Birmingham. However, not the original affluent neighborhood that bore Mountain Brook and Homewood with the advent of improved travel. One can see from this picture that it has a more serene view than the rest of Birmingham, such as Shades Valley.