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ABSTRACT

Generations of scholars have attributed the development of the Republican Party in the American South during the post-World War II era to a “white backlash” against African Americans and Democratic-sponsored civil rights legislation. Rejecting this overly-reductive explanation, I use service organizations in suburban Cobb County, Georgia as a lens with which to view the growth of a conservative of politics dedicated to anticommunism, individual freedom, and free enterprise between 1942 and 1968. Utilizing organization publications, newspapers, and oral history transcripts, this thesis argues that service clubs and fellow members of the county's white, commercial-civic elite espoused a brand of conservatism that stressed respectability and responsibility as the surest guarantee of sustained growth in affluence, population, and power. Cobb County service organizations’ attraction to the Republican Party, therefore, was rooted not simply in race and reaction but in economic self-interest.

INDEX WORDS: Cobb County, Georgia, Republican, Conservatism, Service clubs

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In early February 1942, Guy H. Northcutt, a prominent Cobb County resident and Marietta Rotarian, wrote in the weekly bulletin of the Marietta Rotary Club that an “army of Yankees” was invading the state. Unlike William Tecumseh Sherman’s army, though, these particular Yankees were not armed with “torch and sword” but with “millions on millions of Uncle Sam’s dollars. Northcutt and others recognized the tremendous effects the “plum of the defense program” would have on the city, county, and state. “Our way of life in Marietta, Georgia,” he reasoned, “will soon be gone forever.” Indeed, the Marietta Rotary Club and other Cobb County service organizations were witnessing and participating in the growth and development of the modern, industrialized South.¹

To be sure, Cobb County owed much of its astounding growth after the 1940s to an “invasion” of defense industries and installations. Enticed by civic-minded boosters and their allies in government, defense contractors the Bell Aircraft brought thousands of white-collar managerial and skilled manufacturing jobs to Georgia and the Southeast. By the end of World War II, Bell Bomber employed nearly 30,000 individuals before closing as hostilities ceased in 1945. Lockheed-Georgia, which reopened the plant in early 1951, employed a comparable number by the late 1960s. This growth—in population, affluence, and political clout—was instrumental in the development of a viable Republican Party organization and a true two-party system in the state. As Cobb County grew, it broke increasingly with political tradition and the Democratic Party and joined

¹ Guy H. Northcutt, “Invasion,” Rotalight, 4 February 1942, 2.
other rapidly growing, affluent urban and suburban areas in the state to become a base of support for the GOP in the first decades after World War II.²

Although astounding, Cobb County’s postwar growth was by no means unique. Much of the South’s economy and population shifted from the rural, agricultural “Black Belt” to its industrializing cities and white-collar suburbs during the period. Thus, by 1955, University of North Carolina sociologist Rupert Vance recognized, “The dominant psychology of the South is no longer agrarian; it is Chamber of Commerce.” The effects of this seismic shift in population, affluence, and political power have led historian Morton Sosna to ask if the impact of World War II on the South was “more important than the Civil War.” These developments had serious and prolonged consequences for the political landscape of Georgia and the entire region as long-simmering points of conflict between liberals, moderates, and conservatives within the Democratic Party reached a boil over issues of enfranchisement, representation, race, funding inequities, and the appropriate role of the federal government. These conflicts became increasingly evident and severe in the aftermath of the Second World War when the emergence of a legitimate Republican organization in the region signaled the collapse of “solid South” and the slow, uneven development of a competitive two-party system.³

Local service clubs and other civic boosters played a critical role in the emergence of this modern Sunbelt South and the creation of a two-party system. As urban and suburban economic centers like Cobb County grew in size and importance, so too did their service organizations. For generations, observers and scholars of American social life have viewed service organizations with a mixture of indifference and derision. Historian Jeffrey Charles has observed that many academicians, journalists, and pundits have accepted the booster stereotype that originated in the early twentieth century and that survives, to some extent, to the present. Individuals like satirist H.L. Mencken and author Sinclair Lewis mocked service organizations as dens of shallow boosterism and conformity; however, the significant role that service clubs played in the growth and development of American communities, like post-World War II Cobb County, Georgia, explodes these crude caricatures. These organizations assembled communities’ most influential citizens to not only improve their own business and economic prospects but also those of their community. These clubs espoused an ethos of corporate, industrial, and community cooperation and growth, and they often served as informal chambers of commerce. In fact, service clubs often joined with official chambers of commerce in “vigorous” and sometimes “frantic” attempts to solicit new business from outside employers and to retain current businesses. Not all club activities, though, occurred on such a large scale. Rotarians, Kiwanians, and others were just as likely to hold a

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4 All Cobb service clubs combined likely boasted around a few hundred members by the late-1960s. Furthermore, I have explored the county’s Rotary and Kiwanis clubs because these organizations were the largest, oldest, and most prominent service clubs as well as the most prolific in terms of publications. The variations between these two clubs in terms of membership composition, structure, objectives, and values were, for the most part, negligible. See, Jeffrey A. Charles, Service Clubs in American Society: Rotary, Lions, and Kiwanis (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1993), 4.
fundraiser for a local high school marching band as they were to lobby government officials for new highway construction and road paving projects.5

The oldest and most prominent of these service organizations developed around the turn of the twentieth century in the Midwest. Paul Percy Harris, a Chicago lawyer and transplanted New Englander, founded the first modern service club in that city on February 23, 1905. Harris hoped that his new Rotary club would create a collegial network that resembled the intimacy of his small hometown of Wallingford, Vermont. Rotary clubs, thereafter, sought to harness the power of collective individualism and focus their efforts primarily on “the good of the community, in small matters as well as in the large.” The result was a concerted effort on the part of Rotary to create, maintain, and expand an idealized vision of the individual, family, and community.6

The establishment of similar organizations soon followed. Ten years after Rotary’s founding, Allen S. Browne, an organizer, and Joseph Prance, a tailor, established the first Kiwanis club in Detroit as a professional fraternity to boost local businesses’ bottom lines. After four years of rancorous debate between competing factions within the club—those who thought the club should support members’ material interests and those who “felt the urge to serve”—Kiwanians bought out Allen Browne’s controlling interest in the club for $17,500 in 1919.7

The Lions were the last of the three major service clubs organized. Founded in 1917 by Melvin “Monarch” Jones in Chicago, the Lions clubs began as an avenue for various and disparate business clubs to “expand their horizons from purely professional

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5 Charles, Service Clubs in American Society, 1-3.
concerns to the betterment of their communities.” Unlike Rotary and Kiwanis, which utilized rigid membership classification guidelines to prevent any one profession or group of professions from seizing control, the Lions were more lenient. Local chapters could invite men from all walks of life to join their ranks. Due in large part to this provision, the Lions clubs became the largest American service organization.  

Although the “big three”—Rotary, Kiwanis, and Lions—represented approximately 90 percent of the total service club membership in the United States, several other organizations began operating around the same time. Clubs like the Civitans, Exchange, Optimists, and many others were structured and operated in much the same way as the well-known “big three.” Regardless of membership composition or selection criteria, the majority of American service clubs endeavored, ostensibly, to develop not only better businesses but also better citizens and communities through collective action in the name of mutual aid and community service.

Like most service club members across the country, Cobb County club members were overwhelmingly white, older, and wealthier than average. As civic-minded, small business owners and local agents of larger national corporations—whose principal focus of attention was the downtown business district,” these men should be considered part of what historian Blaine A. Brownell has called the “white commercial-civic elite.” This grouping of industrial crusaders espoused a brand of politics that accepted the expanded role of government to encourage economic development through federal spending for

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infrastructure improvement projects, school construction, and the military-industrial establishment. In fact, the Cobb County commercial-civic elite urged their representatives in Washington to exhort federal funds and secure military contracts and other forms of defense spending to subsidize their community's modernization and expansion.¹⁰

The brand of politics espoused by service clubs, therefore, was more pragmatic than ideological. These organizations supported candidates and policies that, in their estimation, would best guarantee continued growth and bolster Cobb County's image as a progressive, business-friendly community while fostering individual initiative, efficiency, and upright moral behavior. This ―aggressive traditional moralism‖ was set in opposition to the modern welfare state that grew out of the New and Fair Deals and thrived in the New Frontier and Great Society policies of Presidents John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson. Such government assistance programs for presumably unproductive and undeserving individuals were anathema to organizations that valued employment, productivity, and the vaunted advantages and benefits of the free market system. They denigrated federal welfare spending as wasteful and detrimental to individual initiative and free enterprise. Cobb service club members were, however, among the strongest advocates of government aid for hometown works projects, they vigorously opposed attempts by the federal government to increase regulation. Indeed, the aggressive pursuit of federally-financed industrial and community development projects put the Cobb County commercial-civic elite at odds with more ideologically-rigid conservative

politicians and activists who decried the rapid growth of spending and the overall size of the federal government.\textsuperscript{11}

Moreover, the attitudes, polices, and politics of this business-minded, commercial-civic elite challenge the conventional explanation for the growth of the Republican Party and the rise of the right in the American South. This particular explanation describes how various Republican candidates employed a “Southern Strategy” that exploited white southerners’ fears of increased African American participation in political and social life. The passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965 demonstrated the national Democratic Party’s resolve to end \textit{de jure} segregation and the systematic disfranchisement of the region’s African American population. To many southern whites, these actions confirmed the national Democratic organization’s intent to reshape the nation’s sociopolitical landscape. Millions of white southerners responded by abandoning the Democratic Party at the presidential level. The majority of these voters supported Republican Barry Goldwater in 1964 and American Independent George Wallace in 1968. Thus, by the end of the 1960s, the South was “solid” no more.\textsuperscript{12}


Recent historians, though, have offered a bevy of correctives to what they view as a reductive and outmoded interpretation of the rise of the right in American and southern politics. Drawing heavily from Kenneth T. Jackson’s seminal work of American suburban history, these scholars have argued for what can be called the Republican—suburban strategy.” Setting their work in the high-tech, high-wage, skill-intensive Sunbelt South, these scholars view the right through the lens of economic development, individual rights, and “free enterprise above everything else.” From Orange County, California to the suburbs of Atlanta, Georgia, conservatives increasingly abandoned blatant appeals to racial intolerance and prejudice in their attempt to win power and control of government in the first decades after the Second World War.13

This approach reframes the discussion of the Republican ascendancy in the South in terms of anti-statism, anti-communism, perceived declines in moral, religious, and family values, and an avowed faith in free market capitalism. Ultimately, this new historiographical trend does not discount race so much as it rejects the preeminence it has been afforded in the historical narrative by past scholars. This new generation of historians, thus, strives to move beyond a reliance on the Southern Strategy and the white backlash as the primary factors in the rise of the right by emphasizing what Matthew D. 

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Lassiter has described as the more "colorblind" aspects of the conservative appeal in the Sunbelt South.\textsuperscript{14}

Lassiter’s thesis is particularly appealing to historians of southern politics. He has argued, “The suburban strategies developed in the Sunbelt South, not a Southern Strategy inspired by the Deep South and orchestrated by the White House, provided the blueprint for the transformation of regional politics and the parallel reconfiguration of national politics.” He insisted that white, southern voters increasingly abandoned the nakedly racial politics of the Black Belt in favor of "class-based voting” manifested in the suburbs and throughout the rest of the United States in the first decades after the Second World War. The Republican Party’s success in the South, therefore, should not be attributed solely to white voters’ hostile reactions to civil and voting rights legislation, but, rather, as Lassiter and others have indicated, the GOP’s embrace of key issues and popular causes such as the defense of the free market against the forces of "Godless” communism and an opposition to the burgeoning welfare state. The GOP’s support for these principles was central to the party’s growth and success at the grass-roots level in prosperous communities like Cobb County, Georgia. Similarly, Kevin Kruse has explored the Atlanta suburbs and discovered the “most successful segregationist response” to both the civil rights movement and the increased activism of the federal government. In response to these pressures, conservative white suburbanites, many of them transplants from other regions, abandoned "traditional populist, and often starkly racist demagoguery and

instead craft[ed] a new conservatism predicated on a language of rights, freedoms, and individualism.”

Although the national Republican Party could increasingly expect the support of these Cobb County service club members and other civic-minded citizens of the urbanizing and suburbanizing South in the decades following the Second World War, it would be a mistake to characterize Rotary, Kiwanis, and similar organizations as simply part and parcel of the modern conservative movement that developed during this period. In addition to their relation to the white commercial-civic elite, service organizations and their missions were remarkably similar to the “business-progressive” tradition of southern boosterism and progress. Business-progressivism, which pervaded southern politics and society between the 1920s and the Great Depression, differed from older notions of progressivism in that it emphasized development over reform. Calls for efficiency, public service, and a good public image waxed while calls for corporate regulation and social justice waned. Like the commercial-civic elite, the business-progressive spirit was most closely associated with urban, middle- and upper-class southern whites and, according to historian George B. Tindall, could be found in “chambers of commerce and Rotary Clubs” throughout much of the South.

Moreover, this older generation of southern solons, like later Cobb service members, exhibited a sense of respectable, pragmatic conservatism. Tindall described these influential southerners as “circumspect in demeanor, conservatively ‘constructive’ in their approach to public problems, storming no citadels of entrenched ‘privilege,’ but

carrying forward the new public functions that had gained acceptance…especially roads and schools.” As the Great Depression grew steadily worse and the New Deal initiated an era of federal involvement in state affairs, business-progressive governments and policies lost favor throughout much of the region, but it did not die out entirely. Service clubs and their allies promulgated the virtues of the “progressivism of expansion and efficiency” in places like Cobb County during and after World War II.17

For this reason, members of Cobb service and civic organizations became intimately involved in political battles over chronic legislative malapportionment, rural political domination, and the state’s one-party system. Clubs made open schools and better education a major part of their raison d’être, and they were keen to avoid racial hostility and portray themselves and their communities as “progressive” and racially harmonious. Service clubs championed these issues as part of a concerted effort to forge a political system that would guarantee and reinforce Cobb County’s moderate image that appealed to the businesses and industries on whose payrolls they relied for their continued economic prosperity.18

Prominent southern boosters and politicians alike understood the way in which the region presented itself to outside investors and the federal government was critical to its success in the modern economy. Historian Bruce J. Schulman labeled influential southerners who “numbered economic development as their first priority and who looked to the federal government to underwrite the effort” as “new Whigs.” Originally, these

17 Ibid., 148-149, 161-162.
18 I have found no evidence of any African-American members in club records or photographs, but the absence of evidence does not necessarily prove that minorities did not join and participate in service clubs in Cobb County or elsewhere in the state during this time period. This, however, is incredibly unlikely. Women were not officially allowed membership until the late 1980s after a lengthy national court battle. For a brief look at the transnational aspects of service clubs see Victoria de Grazia, Irresistible Empire: America’s Advance through 20th Century Europe (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2005), chapter one.
new Whigs were not interested in attacking the racial caste system or integrating African Americans further into white southern society. When the civil rights movement and the violent reaction to it became increasingly visible, these leaders feared that economic development might be stymied. They called for token desegregation and, eventually, the disavowal of the Jim Crow system altogether. They were not racial egalitarians by any means, but they simply opposed self-defeating resistance to desegregation.” Historian James C. Cobb recognized this phenomenon almost a decade before Schulman. The “sellers of the South” and new industries, Cobb has argued, readily accommodated themselves to the South’s racial hierarchy” until the civil rights movement of the mid-1950s brought the endemic racism of the Jim Crow South under increased national scrutiny. Development-minded southerners like Cobb County service clubs saw it as their duty to foster and secure economic progress by supporting candidates and issues that would cultivate and promote the image of a wholesome, attractive community in which prospective employers could settle and prosper. In many ways, Cobb County’s white commercial-civic elite resembled their contemporary counterparts from North Carolina. In 1959, Time magazine called the Tar Heel State the “South’s New Leader,” and declared, “Behind the thriving economy lay an even greater achievement: a state of mind and spirit that recognized long ago that good schools, expanding culture and economic development were too vital to be stopped short by a fight over integration.” The majority of Cobb countians would certainly not have counted themselves among the ranks of Americans clamoring for civil rights and increased racial equality, they were, however, less energized by the direct appeals to racial fear that motivated their Black Belt counterparts to abandon the national Democrats and support the Republicans.19

19 Schulman, From Cotton Belt to Sunbelt, 128; James C. Cobb, The Selling of the South: The Southern
Although these urban and suburban boosters were often moderate Democrats due to the absence of a Republican alternative in the early years of the postwar period, they increasingly supported the GOP at the national level. Historian Numan V. Bartley found that these white “urban-affluents” were actually moderate-to-progressive Democrats who aligned themselves with politically-active African Americans before the Republican Party became a viable alternative. Outside the Democratic Party, these urban-affluent Georgians would have been politically irrelevant. Thus, they were active Democrats at the state and local level, but they were willing to vote Republican at the national level in general elections. These voters opposed attempts by rural Democrats to elect candidates and enact legislation that threatened to tarnish their business-friendly image and stymie development.\(^{20}\)

Many of these positions put service clubs and other members of the Cobb white commercial-civic elite at odds with not only the old guard, rural leadership that dominated the Georgia Democratic Party but also an increasingly active group of ideologically-rigid conservative Republicans. Service clubs expressed a pragmatic, relatively moderate conservatism that embraced candidates and policies that would ensure the steady flow of outside capital and federal aid into the county and attract further business development. Cobb County’s commercial-civic elite could and would accept responsible conservatives but they opposed reactionary ones whom they believed would

prove detrimental to future prosperity. As such, Cobb service club elites recoiled from the extremism of the left and the right—Democrat and Republican.

In chapter two, I examine the origins of the military-industrial complex in Cobb County, and its role in shaping the county’s political economy in the first years after World War II. Cobb service organizations, whose members were instrumental in attracting the federal installations initially, worked to elect candidates and implement policies that would best guarantee the county’s continued economic expansion. This put the county and its service organizations in direct opposition to the state’s rural political establishment. Indeed, the clubs often played central roles in subsequent political battles to determine the future course of political development in both Cobb County and the state.

In the third chapter, I explore the politics of Cobb service organizations at the national, state, and local levels during the 1950s and early 1960s. At the national level, these clubs became increasingly attracted to the Republican Party’s principles of lower taxes, limited government, and free market capitalism as the county grew and prospered. At the state level, the clubs continued to oppose efforts by the state’s rural-dominated political establishment to enact reactionary policies that might prove injurious to the county and state’s economic livelihood. Lastly, I examine the role of service clubs and their allies in combating indigenous racial extremism that threatened to mar the county’s stable, business-friendly image.

In chapter four, I analyze the rise of Barry Goldwater and the effects of his presidential campaign on politics in Cobb County. Most county service club members were conservative, but many opposed the ideologically-rigid brand of conservatism
expressed Goldwater and his adherents. Maintaining the steady stream of federal aid, defense contracts, and the outside investment needed to fuel the county’s continued economic growth and expansion was the chief concern of these clubs. The business and professional leaders who filled their rosters would accept conservative policies and politicians, but they would not tolerate extreme ones that might jeopardize their economic security.

Finally, in chapter five, I explore the issue of law and order in the political milieu of the mid-to-late 1960s. Service organizations were among the most vocal critics of crime and civil disorder during this period. Blaming these developments on the liberal social and economic policies of the national Democratic Party, Cobb service clubs organized outreach programs to educate their communities about the importance of individual responsibility, respect for authority, and the free enterprise system. These organizations backed politicians who shared these values, and they remained committed to candidates who demonstrated “responsible” and “respectable” conservatism. I analyze the 1966 Georgia gubernatorial election and the 1968 presidential election to demonstrate why inflammatory and provocative social conservatives like Lester Maddox and George Wallace found little support among Cobb service clubs and the local white commercial-civic elite.
Alfred J. Watkins and David C. Perry observed that many scholars of the South have attributed the region’s growth and modernization to an influx of low-wage, unskilled labor. Such industries, though, had been operating in the South since shortly after the Civil War, and they had failed to modernize the region’s economic and political landscapes. The absence of a modern infrastructure, local markets for commercial goods, as well as a protracted out-migration of the region’s most highly skilled and educated workers discouraged outside capital investment and the growth of high-wage, skill-intensive industry. The Franklin Roosevelt administration had even declared the South “the nation’s number one economic problem” in 1938. The phenomenal growth of what has become known as the Sunbelt South began during the New Deal with agricultural adjustment subsidies, rural electrification, and industrial development projects. Coupled with new technology, these programs pushed millions of agricultural laborers off the land and into growing urban-industrial centers both inside and outside the South.¹

However, historian Nancy MacLean has recognized that “if the New Deal opened the region to change, the Second World War and the Cold War brought it.” Federal defense spending, which far exceeded New Deal relief and reform efforts, fundamentally

transformed southern society during and after World War II. As the federal government initiated an unprecedented mobilization of the nation’s military and industrial potential, southern commercial and civic leaders began lobbying aggressively for military installations and war goods manufacturing facilities. The combination of an aggressive southern commercial-civic elite and high ranking, well-positioned congressional leaders worked to secure substantial wartime spending. Ultimately, the availability of well-paying jobs in defense factories as well as the lure of military service succeeded in pulling thousands of young southerners off rural farms and into the region’s rapidly growing cities and military facilities. Between 1940 and 1945, the southern farm population declined by a staggering 20 percent. Additionally, the federal government paid almost a quarter of the region’s total payroll by 1944. Federal defense expenditures and military service were, therefore, critical to transformation of southern communities like Cobb County, Georgia and the development of Sunbelt South.²

Prior to the opening of the Bell Bomber plant in 1942, Cobb County’s economy was a mixture of agriculture and small-scale manufacturing. With no permanent, large-scale economic base to guarantee future employment and prosperity, Cobb County’s population remained relatively stagnant for the first decades of the twentieth century. In 1940, Marietta, the county seat, had a population of approximately 8,600, and the county’s total population was just over 38,000. The arrival of military-industrial

installations like the Marietta Army Airfield (1941), Bell Aircraft Corporation (1942), and the Lockheed Aircraft Corporation (1951) brought an influx of new residents and signaled the beginning of sustained economic growth that would fundamentally alter the county’s sociopolitical landscape.³

Indeed, members of the Cobb white commercial-civic elite played a central role in the ascendance of the county before, during, and after World War II. Cobb’s oldest, largest, and most prominent service organizations were based in Marietta. Established in 1919 by John W. Hancock and twenty Marietta businessmen and professionals, the city of 6,000 became the world’s smallest city to have a Rotary club. In the absence of a formal chamber of commerce, the Rotary Club of Marietta organized and directed projects like street paving. Other city and county business leaders founded the Kiwanis Club of Marietta in 1930. As the city of Marietta and Cobb County grew, business and professional men founded additional service clubs. These were generally smaller and less renowned organizations like the Civitans and Optimists. Additional Rotary, Kiwanis, and Lions clubs, though, developed around the county over the years as more and more people moved into the area.⁴

Many county club members were among the area’s most influential business and civic leaders. During a September 1940 meeting, Marietta Mayor Leon M. “Rip” Blair reminded the city’s Rotary club that four members of the school board, the Chairman of the Board of Lights and Water Works, one member of the Council, four members of the

Housing Authority, the Chief of Police, and the Superintendent of Schools” were all fellow Marietta Rotarians. The power of Cobb service organizations—especially those located in Marietta—was undeniable even prior to the Second World War. The influence and clout of these organizations and their members, though, grew rapidly as the military-industrial apparatus expanded and triggered unprecedented levels of in-migration and capital investment.5

Even prior to the nation’s entrance into World War II, civic-minded boosters endeavored to secure federal aid to improve Marietta and the surrounding area. Mayor Blair and Commissioner George H. McMillan—both Marietta Rotarians—worked closely with General Lucius D. Clay, a Cobb native, to secure federal financing for a local airstrip. As the likelihood of war increased in late 1940, President Franklin Roosevelt ordered Clay to direct a massive airport construction program to bolster the nation’s air infrastructure capacity. By the end of 1942, the Civil Aeronautics Administration had constructed approximately 450 airstrips and airports, including Marietta’s Rickenbacker Field. What began as a small municipal airfield proved critical to attracting both the U.S. War Department and Bell Aircraft shortly after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor.6

The federal government’s eagerness to develop the region and the necessity of jumpstarting a defense industry that had remained dormant during the interwar period both factored into the federal government’s decision to locate and build in Cobb County in early 1942. Local boosters also worked tirelessly to bring the defense industry and

federal dollars to area. Recognizing the potential of the Marietta airfield, Blair and McMillan worked closely with county attorney James V. Carmichael—a Marietta Kiwanian—and consulted Georgia’s congressional delegation to promote the county’s bid for the new Bell bomber plant. Historian Thomas A. Scott, a Cobb County resident and scholar, has observed that civic leaders like Blair, McMillan, Carmichael and countless others embodied a “chamber of commerce mentality.”

Indeed, the efforts of these growth-oriented Cobb boosters paid dividends in February 1942. The U.S. Army announced its approval of the Marietta-Rickenbacker Field site for the new Bell Bomber plant. Local media sources reported that the new Bell factory would cost $15 million to build and support a weekly payroll of nearly $2 million. Once fully operational, the Marietta plant would produce Boeing-designed B-29 Superfortress bombers. Eventually the factory reached a production level of approximately forty aircraft per month. By the end of the war, the factory’s workforce of almost 29,000 employees had produced over 650 bombers.

The federally-subsidized improvement projects that accompanied the Bell plant were also crucial to the county’s long-term growth. Civic leaders recognized that cracking the “jackpot” and winning the “prize plum of the defense program” would lead to major changes for Marietta and Cobb County. With this in mind, the Marietta Rotary Club welcomed Horatio Forbes, a Huntsville, Alabama native, who described the effects

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of federal defense installations on his hometown. Housing disappeared rapidly as thousands flocked to the north Alabama city for defense jobs. This development forced the federal government to commence an emergency homebuilding program to alleviate the area's critical housing shortage. Cobb service club members and other commercial-civic elites, thus, recognized that their community would require significant federal assistance to accommodate the "oncoming hordes" of new defense workers.9

In mid-March 1942, leaders from all across Cobb County met with state and federal officials to assess the potential needs of the area in terms of additional housing, transportation, education, and utilities. These sectors would all require major improvement if the city and county were to provide adequately for tens of thousands of new workers and their families. Likewise, the Marietta Board of Education—led by Marietta Rotarians J. Harold Hawkins and Guy H. Northcutt—submitted a report calling for $320,000 in new school construction as well as an increase in teacher salaries to prevent qualified educators from leaving the rapidly growing district. Both these programs would have required an increase in the school tax rate in addition to $125,000 in federal assistance.10

Moreover, the U.S. Congress passed the Lanham Act of 1940 to alleviate housing shortages and other needs of communities impacted by the federal military-industrial expansion. Recognizing that restrictions on school tax rate increases as well as the loss of taxable property hobbled state and local efforts to provide adequate school funding, Congress amended the original act in June 1941 to provide direct monetary assistance to

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federally-impacted school systems for construction, operation, and payroll. For example, the number of students in the Marietta School District grew from 1,667 in 1941 to 3,304 in 1945. This forced the district to more than double its faculty from 52 in 1942 to 113 in August 1945. As a result, the district received approximately 37.5 percent of its total budget, roughly $95,000, from the federal government in 1944. In all, the city's schools received about $322,000 in Lanham impact aid from the federal government. In addition to faculty hires and operational expenses, Marietta used some of its aid money to construct two new, state of the art school facilities, and they leased a third directly from the federal government. By the end of the war, the Marietta and Cobb County school systems, along with almost a thousand others, had received over $125 million from the U.S. Office of Education.  

Wartime industrial expansion, thus, sparked a tremendous evolution in the economic systems of southern communities like Cobb County. Bell Aircraft not only employed nearly 30,000 Georgians at its productive peak in 1944, but it also educated this workforce through extensive vocational training programs and paid them well above the regional average. Supervisors and managers received $2,600 per year, and unskilled and skilled laborers earned between $1,400 and $1,700 annually. The majority of Bell workers lived in or near Cobb County, and they spent the bulk their wages to spur the local economy. As the war drew to a close in mid-1945, though, the Bell plant needed fewer and fewer workers to meet the declining demand for military aircraft. By August,  

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the company had slashed 8,000 positions. Within months, the factory was left with a skeleton crew of only a few thousand. Shortly thereafter, Bell ceased its Marietta operation and the U.S. Army Air Corps shuttered the plant.\textsuperscript{12}

Furthermore, vast political transformations accompanied this tremendous economic growth. Numerous commercial and civic leaders resolved to run and elect candidates who would best guarantee continued economic growth and prosperity that their communities had experienced during the war. Additionally, the disproportionate growth in affluence and population in southern cities and metropolitan areas exacerbated the longstanding rural-urban divide in southern politics. All in all, as historian Jennifer Brooks declared, good government and economic growth became the "watchwords" for Georgia’s commercial-civic elite in postwar southern politics. In Cobb, the loss of the Bell factory only intensified this sense of urgency among the business and civic elite.\textsuperscript{13}

Not every Georgia politician, though, embraced the politics of moderation and growth. For example, the demagogic Eugene Talmadge employed an amalgam of virulent anticommunism, economic populism, and rabid racism to play on rural Black Belt whites’ fears of "outside agitators." Gene Talmadge's political style descended from the Populist tradition of Tom Watson, and, like Watson, Talmadge claimed to champion the poor, white farmer. To Talmadge, big business, the New Deal, and urban politicians were threats to his idealized vision of a bucolic Georgia run by whites for whites. Talmadge and his ultraconservative, white supremacist supporters managed to dominate politics in Georgia for almost half a century by splitting moderate opposition and utilizing the

\textsuperscript{12} Scott, "Winning World War II in an Atlanta Suburb," 14.
\textsuperscript{13} Brooks, \textit{Defining the Peace: World War II Veterans, Race, and the Remaking of Southern Political Tradition} (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press), 5, 111; Schulman, \textit{From Cotton Belt to Sunbelt}, 123. Jennifer Brooks' work is an excellent appraisal of post-World War II GI revolts and their effects of the Georgia political system.
iniquitous effects of the state's notorious county unit system. The postwar growth of the state's urban and suburban areas, however, challenged this rural dominance.\(^{14}\)

In no other state election were the interests of Georgia's burgeoning cities and suburbs pitted so starkly against the Black Belt than in the 1946 Democratic gubernatorial primary contest between former Governor Eugene Talmadge and former Bell executive James V. Carmichael. Talmadge, who hailed from rural Telfair County, had been out of office since 1938. He had run for governor in 1942, but Ellis Arnall, the young state attorney general, defeated the "Wild Man from Sugar Creek." Arnall's anti-Talmadge coalition was crucial in neutralizing the former governor's rabidly loyal rural voting bloc. This coalition, however, fractured after the United States Supreme Court abolished Texas' whites-only primary in the case of Smith v. Allwright (1944). A subsequent federal district court decision in the case of Chapman v. King (1946) invalidated Georgia's white primary two years later. The specter of the state's black population voting freely split the anti-Talmadge coalition and resuscitated Talmadge's political career.\(^{15}\)

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At the behest of Arnall and other political and media leaders, James Carmichael, a Cobb native, announced his candidacy for governor. Carmichael boasted extensive experience in both the public and private sectors. He had opened a private law practice in Marietta after graduating from Emory Law School in 1933, and he had served two terms in the Georgia General Assembly. As Cobb County attorney, Carmichael played a key role in attracting Bell Aircraft in 1942. He had also served as the director of the Georgia Department of Revenue during the Arnall administration. Most notable, though, was his position as general manager of the Marietta Bell Bomber factory. As the head of the state’s largest industrial operation, Carmichael embodied Georgia’s business-progressive politics. Announcing his candidacy at a meeting of the newly-formed Cobb County Chamber of Commerce, Carmichael promised to maintain “good government in Georgia” and develop “business and industry as a ‘happy counterbalance’ to agriculture.” He rejected the reactionary politics and limited-government ideology of Eugene Talmadge; instead, Carmichael advocated an ethos of government efficiency, economic growth, and improved standards of living.¹⁶

Cobb County commercial and civic leaders endorsed their native son enthusiastically. Cobb County Times columnist Lyman Hall’s list of Georgia’s needs read like a Carmichael political advertisement: “Better schools,” “Improve the health of the people,” “Revise the antiquated tax program,” and “Pull Georgia out of the quagmire.” In

addition to the usual exhortations of Carmichael’s experience and qualifications, the Cobb press savaged his primary opponents. Cobb editorials reminded their readers constantly of the corruption and graft that had plagued the administrations of Eugene Talmadge and Eurith D. (Ed) Rivers. They asked their readers if they would vote for a return to office of men who are notorious for their pardon racketeering, school wrecking, and treasury raiding activities or [would they] throw [their] support to one recognized the state over for his ability, integrity, and honesty?"  

Cobb service club members also backed Carmichael. Due to organizational restrictions, the Marietta Rotary Club was prohibited from endorsing Carmichael, a prominent city Kiwanian, but they reminded their members that, as Rotarians, "there was] no greater way to place ‘Service Above Self’ than to vote in the upcoming July primary. Service clubs, they charged, abhorred the ‘misuse of privilege,’ and their concern was not necessarily personal or partisan politics but their ‘commission’ as productive members of society to elect the best and most capable leaders."

While Carmichael ran his campaign on honest, economical, and respectable government, Talmadge employed his tried and true platform of white supremacy to appeal to his traditional rural base. In stem-winding stump speeches throughout the state, the former governor harkened back to the Democratic Party of Redemption by promising

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18 Ivan Smalley, “On Common Grounds,” Rotalight, 26 April 1946, 2. On Rotary guidelines for campaigns and endorsements see, “Rotary and Public Affairs,” Rotarian, May 1947, 5: – The general welfare of the community is of concern to the members of this Club and the merits of any public question involving such welfare may be fairly and intelligently studied and discussed before a Club meeting for the enlightenment of its members in forming their individual opinion. However, this Club shall not express an opinion on any pending controversial public measure...This Club shall not endorse or recommend any candidate for public office and shall not discuss at any Club meeting the merits or demerits of any such candidates.”
to restore a ‘Democratic white primary unfettered and unhampered by radical, Communist, and alien influences.’ Although the Georgia Democratic Party administered the state’s primary elections, the General Assembly had written the white primary into the state’s election law with the Neill Primary Act of 1917. Thus, without a viable Republican alternative, the all-white Democratic primary served as the de facto general election. The Talmadge remedy, therefore, consisted of essentially repealing the Neill Primary Act and turning complete control of primary elections and the county unit system over to the executive committee of the Democratic Party.  

Also enacted by the Neill Primary Act of 1917, the Georgia county unit system awarded ‘unit votes’ based on a county’s representation in the state legislature. A county received two votes for each representative it sent to Atlanta. Every county had at least one representative and no county had more than three. The eight most populous counties had six unit votes, the thirty next-most-populous counties had four unit votes, and the 122 least populous counties had two unit votes. This scheme discriminated against urban and suburban counties because it allowed sparsely populated rural counties to negate the vote of the state’s largest population centers. For example, Cobb County had four unit votes in 1946, and DeKalb and Fulton each had six. A total of 122,555 voters turned out for the Democratic primary in these three counties, but it took only 6,328 voters in the eight counties with the lowest voter turnout in the state to cancel out their combined vote. With the right political connections in rural counties, a popular firebrand demagogue like Eugene Talmadge could forfeit the votes of the state’s largest counties and still win.

elections by appealing to the sentiments of the rural electorate. Talmadge understood that, in the words of former President Jimmy Carter, “The royal road to power in Georgia politics” lay in exploiting the rural bias of the county unit system.\footnote{Bernd, Grass Roots Politics in Georgia, 71-105, 4. These eight counties were Baker, Chattahoochee, Glascock, Lee, Quitman, Schley, Talbot, and Webster; Cobb, Georgia Odyssey, 2d ed. (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2008), 54-55; Brooks, Defining the Peace, 2, 6; Jimmy Carter, Turning Point: A Candidate, a State, and a Nation Come of Age (New York: Times Books, 1992), 9; Scott, Cobb County, Georgia, 207. Counties with six unit votes were Bibb (Macon), Chatham (Savannah), De Kalb (Atlanta), Floyd (Rome), Fulton (Atlanta), Muscogee (Columbus), Richmond (Augusta), and Troup (LaGrange).}

Although Carmichael and his supporters knew that Talmadge stood to benefit most from the continued use of the county unit system, they also understood that most Georgians supported the electoral scheme. Criticizing the state’s county unit system would, therefore, be extremely unwise on the part of the Carmichael campaign. Instead of denouncing the system, Carmichael embraced and defended it. Talmadge’s plan to repeal the Neill Primary Act would have terminated the county unit system, but Talmadge had promised to return the county unit system via constitutional amendment. This explanation drew harsh criticism from the Carmichael camp. A political cartoon run by the Marietta Daily Journal showed two gallus-wearing Gene Talmadges delivering simultaneous stem winders from a dais of labeled “Deception.” One exclaimed, “We gotta [sic] restore the white primary,” while thinking to himself, “of course…we’ll have to bust up the county unit system.” The other Talmadge claimed, “We’re gonna [sic] save the county unit system,” while saying to himself, “of course…we’ll have to drop the white primary.” Regardless of how repugnant many in Georgia may have found the Supreme Court’s decision to invalidate the white primary, Carmichael argued that the state would have to accept it if they wished to maintain the county unit system. Carmichael recognized that he would need at least some rural votes if he hoped to beat Talmadge. Thus, he defended
a system that furnished a disproportionately large amount of political clout to the state's sparsely-populated rural counties in an effort to undermine Talmadge's support.\textsuperscript{21}

The abolition of the white primary may have been the cornerstone of Talmadge's campaign, but Cobb County media outlets rejected his plans and promises. "A decision of the Supreme Court...is final and conclusive," wrote Times columnist Paul Stevenson, "all the red gallus shaking, all the screaming and shouting, and all the night shirts riding in the state is not going to affect it." Many commercial and civic leaders accepted the Supreme Court and later federal court decisions, but that is not to suggest they approved of them or advocated for the further integration of African Americans into white society. Like the majority of post-World War II economic boosters, Carmichael supported segregation and did not actively seek to dismantle the Jim Crow system. Unlike the Talmadge camp, however, he and his supporters did not employ scorched earth tactics and fire breathing rhetoric to express their support for Jim Crow.\textsuperscript{22}

Social order and a positive, business-friendly image—both critical to enticing new industry to the state—were the most important concerns of commercial-civic leaders like Carmichael. He pledged to improve that state's education and healthcare systems without running a budget deficit. Policies like income-specific healthcare and educational advancement, he argued, would promote social progress and move the state forward. Leading Cobb County school administrators agreed. In the waning days of the election, Marietta superintendent and Kiwanian Shuler Antley joined Waterman Street School principal Ruth Whitehead in endorsing Carmichael. "He understands the educational


needs of Georgia,” they averred, “and recognizes the training of youth as the greatest asset to decent living in a democratic state of good government.”

Leading up to the July primary election, Talmadge issued thinly-veiled threats directed at African Americans who considered registering and voting in the primary. He and his supporters also made increasingly blatant appeals to white racist sentiment. Speaking to supporters in Swainsboro, Talmadge declared, “Wise Negroes will stay away from the white folks’ ballot boxes.” Another report quoted Talmadge: “If the good white people will explain it to the Negroes…just right, I don’t think they will want to vote.”

In addition, Talmadge warned that a vote for Carmichael was a vote to end racial segregation in Georgia schools. J. Harold Hawkins, a superior court judge, former school board president, and Marietta Kiwanian, campaigned on Carmichael’s behalf to blunt these charges of racial liberalism. Hawkins told a Cobb County audience that, as a lawyer, Talmadge knew very well that segregation “is the rule in the state.” Hawkins assured the crowd that Talmadge’s warnings were meaningless, and that they would be served best by ignoring “two men [Talmadge and Rivers] who as governor did so much to interfere with the proper administration of justice in Georgia.”

Composed of rural Georgians intent on maintaining strict racial barriers, the Talmadgeite faction had done very little to bring Bell to Cobb County during the war. In fact, Talmadgites generally abhorred the idea of welcoming the federal government into the state and ensconcing it in a position of significant power. Talmadge disparaged the

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characteristics of the New Deal and federal relief programs. He and his supporters worried that this federal aid would empower urban areas at the expense of the rural. Talmadge went so far as to label members of the extremely popular Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) as “bums and loafers.” On the campaign trail, he boasted regularly of his steadfast refusal to campaign in a county with a streetcar. At rallies, the self-described friend of the poor “dirt farmer,” implored his rural supporters to join him in Atlanta to “piss over the rail on those city bastards.” Service clubs and other civic-minded individuals did not forget this when they went to the polls in July 1946.26

At the state-level, the support of service organizations, commercial-civic leaders, and a strong majority of urban and suburban Georgians propelled Carmichael to a popular vote victory over Talmadge and Rivers. When all the votes were counted, Carmichael’s share totaled 313,389 to Talmadge’s 297,245 and Rivers’ 69,489. Talmadge, though, earned 242 unit votes to Carmichael’s 146. Rivers received 22 unit votes. Despite besting “Ole Gene” by more than 15,000 votes, the former Bell executive and Georgia District Kiwanis president lost the gubernatorial nomination, and therefore the governorship, because of the county unit system.27

The moderate Cobb County business and civic leadership turned out in force for Carmichael. Carmichael earned 8,274, or 65 percent, and Talmadge garnered 2,950, or 25 percent of the vote in Cobb. Over half of Carmichael’s share came from Marietta and Smyrna. Talmadge, though, won several of Cobb’s smaller, rural, and undeveloped

26 Lemmon, “The Ideology of Eugene Talmadge,” 246; Cobb, Georgia Odyssey, 56.
27 Georgia Department of Archives and History, Georgia Official and Statistical Register, 1945-1950 (Atlanta: Department of Archives and History, 1951), 486. Hoke O’Kelley, a minor, perennial candidate, received 11,758 votes but no unit votes. See also, Bernd, Grassroots Politics in Georgia, 71. Eugene Talmadge died before ever taking office. Differences in constitutional interpretation and the major personalities’ (Governor Ellis Arnall, Lieutenant Governor Melvin Thompson, and Herman E. Talmadge) inability to compromise led to the infamous “Three Governors Controversy.”
precincts like Big Shanty, Gritter, and Post Oak. The local press denounced the statewide results. Voicing its displeasure, the *Marietta Daily Journal*—owned and operated by Rotarian Otis A. Brumby, Jr.—referred to the newly reelected Eugene Talmadge as “the Wild Man from Sugar Creek…the Negro-hating South Georgian, who fought his campaign in red suspenders on a white primary platform.”

Several factors contributed to Carmichael’s defeat. First, and perhaps most important, was the county unit system. Carmichael’s urban and suburban support was no match for a scheme designed to provide Georgia’s rural areas with disproportionate electoral clout. Second, the presence of former governor Ed Rivers on the ballot siphoned county and municipal-level support and votes away from Carmichael. The *Atlanta Journal* estimated that 90 percent of Rivers’ votes would have gone to Carmichael, and Talmadge carried about twenty counties in which the combined Carmichael-Rivers vote was greater than his own. Third, despite Carmichael’s support from the state’s business and media leaders, his political connections were dwarfed by the Talmadgeites. The Talmadge machine used fraud, intimidation, violence, and trickery throughout the campaign to prevent African Americans from registering and voting. Talmadgeite courthouse gangs throughout the state challenged the qualifications of prospective black voters, purged black registrants, and, in many central and south Georgia counties, barred African Americans from registering altogether. Fourth, numerous local political leaders backed Talmadge for purely pragmatic reasons. Backing the winning candidate was

critical, especially in rural Georgia, to securing local works projects and state jobs. Local bosses like Jim Gillis, Marvin Griffin, and Roy V. Harris, who had backed Arnall in 1942, switched to Talmadge in 1946 and brought several counties with them. Fifth, Ellis Arnall blamed Carmichael's defeat on his lack of political ambition. Decades later, Arnall recalled that Carmichael “didn’t have the burning desire to be governor…he wasn’t as enthusiastic about it as some of us.” Lastly, the progressive political reforms enacted by the Arnall administration may have also contributed to Carmichael’s defeat. Most reforms, like depoliticizing the state Board of Regents, were unimportant to many rural and lower-status Georgians. Moreover, many poor whites voted for the first time in 1946 thanks to the abolition of the state’s poll tax. Unencumbered by financial restraints and drawn to Talmadge’s white supremacy platform, these first-time voters swung heavily to the champion of the poor dirt farmer.29

After retiring from electoral politics, James Carmichael became an even stronger champion of industrial, institutional, and political modernization. In a commencement address at Emory University in 1950, Carmichael implored, “Why must some of us keep fighting the Civil War? Why must some of us continue to rant about issues which were settled with the blood of our forefathers?” Furthermore, Thomas Scott observed, “Carmichael denounced members of the lower classes who felt entitled to public support, and members of the upper classes who would stop progress to protect their privileges.”30

By assailing special interests that utilized antiquated electoral devices like the county unit

29 Bernd, “White Supremacy and the Disenfranchisement of Blacks in Georgia, 1946,” 509, 508, 500-503; Henderson, The Politics of Change in Georgia, 168; Arnall Interview, 1986; Belvin, “The Georgia Gubernatorial Primary of 1946,” 50; Bernd, Grass Roots Politics in Georgia, 11. African American precinct voting figures show that Carmichael received almost unanimous support from black Georgians able to cast a ballot.

30 “Place South on Map, Emory Graduates Urged,” AJC, 4 June 1950; Scott, “Winning World War II in an Atlanta Suburb,” 17. See also, James V. Carmichael’s Analysis of Regional Needs: Education Called South’s Key to Prosperity: Sales Tax Urged to Aid Georgia’s Schools,” AJC, 11 June 1950, sec. F, p. 1.
system, race-baiting tactics, and a stagnant one-party system that, in his opinion, stymied Georgia's progress and development, Carmichael the Kiwanian voiced the ideals of many of Cobb's civic-minded service club members. These positions suggested that Carmichael may have been better suited for the Republican Party, but, as astute observers of Georgia politics indicate, this would have been political suicide in the 1940s and 1950s. However, the Republican Party, with its business-oriented, pro-development policies, attracted more and more urban and suburban voters like Carmichael as these areas grew in population and prosperity during and after the Second World War.\(^\text{31}\)

Carmichael's loss did little to boost the spirits of Cobb County commercial and civic leaders. Furthermore, Marietta Rotarians, appalled at the "silly mockeries" that ensued during the "Three Governors" debacle, declared that the state of politics in Georgia demanded the immediate attention of every wisely thinking man and woman.” The death of Eugene Talmadge prior to taking office triggered a two-month-long power struggle for the governor's chair. Among the most bizarre and troubling of these "mockeries" were charges of fraudulent write-in ballots, Herman Talmadge's use state troopers to prevent Ellis Arnall from entering the governor's office, and the relocation and establishment of an Arnall administration in exile, first in the state house rotunda and then in his downtown Atlanta law office. After a contentious legal battle, the Georgia Supreme Court ruled that Lieutenant Governor Melvin E. Thompson was the legitimate acting governor. The "Three Governors Controversy" and the chaos and bad press that followed compelled the Marietta Rotary Club to call on their members to "exert every effort to prevent 'dirty politics'… [and] again make our state one of dignity and worthy

of respect.” After all, political turmoil and illegitimate power grabs were detrimental to attracting outside investment and fostering economic and industrial growth.  

Political scientist Joseph Bernd examined the political temperament of these service club members in his 1960 report on voting communities in the bi-factional Democratic primaries of the 1940s and early 1950s. With growth and development as their watchwords, service organizations, clustered in cities and large towns, inculcated their members with the spirit of community growth and progress. It was unlikely, therefore, that a “horse and buggy” governor like Eugene Talmadge could earn their votes by appealing to issues of tradition and race. Additionally, Cobb County service club members had little patience for Talmadge-style politicians’ rural base. Writing in the Marietta Rotalight, Bob Lyons, a club member, opined, “These people are easily swayed by political harangues and always vote for the ‘colorful’ candidate.” Election Day, for these particular Georgians, was “their only chance to feel important.” Urban and suburban voters, on the other hand, sought and elicited support for policies that would improve the core of their communities: roads, schools, parks, and other infrastructure projects. This meant appealing not to Georgia’s traditional rural base but to progressive-minded voters living in the state’s growing metropolitan areas. Despite the relatively small number of service club members in the state of Georgia—perhaps a few thousand or so by the late 1960s—they typically occupied positions of power and influence at the

32 W.M. Anderson, “Rotary and Politics,” Rotalight, 24 January 1947, 2; Henderson, The Politics of Change in Georgia, 171-189; Bernd, Grass Roots Politics in Georgia, 13; “Telfair Dead Were Voted,” Atlanta Journal, 2 March 1947, p. 1; The Atlanta Journal found that the last 34 voters in the Helena precinct of Telfair County, home of the Talmadges, voted alphabetically. These late votes enabled the state legislature to elect Herman Talmadge governor.
local and state levels. No serious politician could afford to ignore their interests as Georgia’s cities and suburbs grew.\textsuperscript{33}

In fact, Herman Talmadge broke with his father’s low-tax, limited government legacy during his own tenure as governor. First elected in 1948 and reelected in 1952, the younger Talmadge worked to modernize the state. He oversaw the passage of new taxes and fees as well as a state constitutional amendment that permitted deficit spending for state projects. Most significant was the Minimum Foundation Program. First passed by the state legislature in 1949 and enacted in 1951, the Minimum Foundation Program instituted a three percent sales tax to fund education, health, recreation, roads, and other community enhancement projects that wooed boosters and attracted prospective business interests to the state. Although he and his father had both objected to higher taxes, Herman Talmadge understood that the state had to collect taxes and provide select services if it hoped to modernize and attract prospective employers and residents.\textsuperscript{34}

Indeed, Herman Talmadge’s administration spent more on public education than all previous administrations combined, and Georgia led all states in school funding by 1954 with 53 cents of every dollar going to education. With the help of federal funding provided by the Hill-Burton Act, Talmadge also initiated an aggressive health care

\textsuperscript{33} Bob Lyons, "Rotalics," \textit{Rotalight}, 9 April 1948, 2; Bernd, \textit{Grass Roots Politics in Georgia}, 27-29. James Cobb has observed that Georgia corporations with large fleets of vehicles benefited most from Governor Eugene Talmadge’s reduction of the state’s ad valorem tax rate. This tax cut forced rural counties, Talmadge’s base of support, to find alternative ways to raise revenue for education since the state’s school fund was depleted by these tax cuts.

expansion campaign. Between 1948 and 1954, the state increased appropriations to public education by 310 percent, public health by 436 percent, public welfare by 400 percent, and the state university system by 128 percent. Although many forward-looking members of Georgia’s “better element” supported Governor Melvin Thompson in 1948, Talmadge’s economic modernization programs succeeded in winning him the financial backing and political support of many of these urban and suburban professionals. His modernization programs even led a writer for Harper’s Weekly to declare Talmadge “the best southern governor.” By the time he left office in 1954, Talmadge’s administration could rightly be called the most progressive—at least economically—in the state’s history.35

Just as reactionary, rural-centric politicians drew the ire of service club members, so too did the one-party system they perpetuated. In this respect, Herman Talmadge and his supporters broke with many service club members and metropolitan commercial-civic elites. Club members loathed the one-party system because it depressed urban and suburban voter turnout and, many believed, hindered economic progress. The Democratic primary and the county unit system also dissuaded the rural ruling class’ political opponents from participating in elections. This flew in the face of the service clubs’ civic ideals. Writing in 1948, Marietta Rotarian Grover Smith called on his club to educate and mobilize the electorate. Blaming “group adherence and -partisanship,” Smith lamented

that “an unenlightened citizenship is ground for oligarchy, despotism and anarchy.” A subsequent editorial in the Marietta club’s bulletin asserted, “The welfare of the individual and the masses alike are respected and safeguarded” when two parties are vibrant. Identification with and adherence to the Democratic Party “regardless of the competency or incompetency of the candidate,” they argued, were detrimental to the state and its economic and political development. Indeed, the inability of the Marietta Rotalight staff to find anyone in their organization willing to support the one-party system led the club to conclude optimistically, “Georgia is not only ready but anxious to break with her hide-bound political tradition of the past.”

A 1950 state constitutional amendment battle showcased the ideological split between one-party and two-party system advocates. Backed by Governor Herman Talmadge and the state’s rural-dominated Democratic Party, the General Assembly passed an amendment to extend the county unit system into the general election for all statewide offices. The amendment’s supporters argued that the expansion was necessary to protect the state from a “potential bloc of 105,000 negroes [sic] in Atlanta and Fulton County [who could] control all statewide elections.” Amendment proponents also mischaracterized the legislation as a safeguard against integration. The amendment’s defeat, they claimed, would “force mixed schools and colleges in Georgia.”

Anti-amendment forces included many of the same politicians, newspapers, and civic organizations who opposed Gene Talmadge in 1946 and his son in 1948. Anti-amendment Cobb state representative Raymond Reed informed a countywide audience

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36 Grover Smith, “Rotary and Politics,” Rotalight, 16 January 1948, 2; Bolan Glover, “Do We Need a Two-Party System in Georgia?” Rotalight, 19 October 1951, 2.
37 James S. Peters, Political Advertisement for the 1950 County Unit Amendment, MDJ, 5 November 1950, p. 8.
that Cobb’s population was equal to that of the state’s fourteen smallest counties. Due to
the county unit system, though, those counties had twenty-eight unit votes to Cobb’s six.
Moreover, the value of a vote in Chattahoochee County, he claimed, was worth fifty in
Cobb County. Therefore, he encouraged Cobb County voters to “strike [the county unit
amendment] from the ballot like a cancer.” James Carmichael rebutted claims that the
county unit system protected the state’s electorate from boss-style political machines.
With an extended county unit system, the former Bell executive declared, political
demagogues could extend their control of the state by “strategic distribution of highway
contracts and waving the flag of hatred and prejudice.” The Marietta Daily Journal also
observed that most political machines could were located in the state’s smallest counties,
and these courthouse gangs “could be bought and sold like pigs on the auction block.”
The paper concluded that the amendment would stymie efforts to create a two-party
system and limit citizens’ freedom of choice at the ballot box.\textsuperscript{38}

Moreover, the 1950 convention of the Georgia District of Kiwanis International
approved a resolution that indirectly attacked the nugatory effects of the county unit
system and attempts to extend it. The Georgia Kiwanians endorsed as their mottoes:
Safeguard of Freedom.” The convention approved these in light of “the record of the past
50 years in the decline of legal voters failing to cast their ballots.” The Kiwanians feared
the prospect of further minority governments, such as in 1946, that voter apathy in

\textsuperscript{38} Bernd, \textit{Grass Roots Politics in Georgia}, 15; Paul Thompson, “Reed Assails Talmadge Tactics in County
primary and general elections yielded. Minority governments, they surmised, were "fraught with grave danger to the Democratic [sic] form of government."

When all the ballots were counted, Georgia voters rejected the 1950 county unit extension amendment by a vote of 164,337 to 134,290. Cobb County defeated the amendment by more than two-to-one. Again, Talmadgeite forces were able to carry several of the county’s smaller, rural precincts, but heavy majorities in Marietta—which cast more than half of all Cobb County’s ballots—Smyrna, and Acworth proved more than enough to defeat the amendment. Nearly seventy percent of Cobb ballots went against the county unit system. This figure was almost identical to Carmichael’s 1946 total.

Cobb County and its urban and suburban brethren had turned back the attempt to further disfranchise the state’s fastest growing areas. The power to elect politicians amenable to their interests was crucial to continued prosperity, and, therefore, the defeat of county unit expansion was an important accomplishment for these urban and suburban voters. It was also critical to eventual rise of the Republican Party. A true two-party system, insisted a later Republican candidate, echoing Rotary and Kiwanis club rhetoric, would prove to be an appealing factor for new industry.” A viable political alternative would assure northern industrial and financial interests that backward-looking rustics could no longer hinder progress. This assurance became even more important during the 1950s when the federal government chose to expand the county’s military-industrial

39 “Resolution,” Georgia Kiwanian, Fall 1950, 6. This was an issue that would have likely split the state’s service clubs along rural/urban lines. There is no way to know the sentiments of every club member, but the largest clubs tended to be from urban and suburban areas. Rural clubs were shrinking due to population out-migration. Indeed, over 70 percent of new clubs founded nationwide between 1945 and 1955 were established in metropolitan areas. See, Charles, Service Clubs in American Society, 148.
apparatus. The expansion of Cobb’s military facilities and the arrival of California-based aerospace giant Lockheed fundamentally altered the county’s political culture and economy forever.41

To be sure, many residents of Cobb County and the surrounding area had worried about the probability of a protracted economic decline when the Bell plant shuttered shortly after the end of World War II. Instead of abandoning Cobb County and the region, however, many laborers remained in the area, working in smaller industries with the skills acquired at Bell. In spite of the loss of the state’s largest wartime employer, Cobb County’s population still grew from 38,000 in 1940 to almost 62,000 in 1950. This was an increase of approximately 61 percent. The national average during the same period was only 14 percent. Marietta, the county’s economic engine, grew by 12,000 people to almost 21,000 between 1940 and 1950—a 138.7 percent increase. The city would add roughly 5,000 more residents after Lockheed Aircraft Corporation reopened the old Bell Bomber facility in early 1951. Furthermore, the value of Cobb County’s property soared along with its population. In 1940, the city of Marietta had a total assessed property value of approximately $5.5 million. That figure almost tripled over the decade to $15.1 million in 1951. This overall growth in population and affluence, though, conceals a significant out-migration of Cobb’s African-American population during this period. As recently as 1930, African Americans had made up approximately 18.5 percent of the county’s total population. Population out-migration of African Americans and immigration of whites reached such a pace in subsequent decades that blacks comprised

only 16 percent of Cobb’s population in 1940, 10 percent in 1950, 7 percent in 1960, and 2 percent in 1970.42

Furthermore, Cobb civic and commercial leaders continued to reach out for state and federal assistance in their quest to extend this wartime the population and economic boom. Cobb County service club members worked in concert with the official Cobb County Chamber of Commerce—of which many were also members—to encourage Cobb’s elected representatives in Washington to seek out and elicit new military-industrial prospects to fill the void left by the closure of the Bell operation.

One such prominent leader was Seventh Congressional District representative Henderson Lovelace Lanham.43 Politicians from the district's northern mill towns of Dalton, Rome, and Summerville had dominated the district since before the Civil War. Lanham, a Rome lawyer, state representative, and solicitor general of the Rome judicial circuit, was no exception. First elected in 1946, Lanham benefitted from the support of unionized World War II veterans, newly-enfranchised African Americans, and other progressive politically-active organizations in what became known as “GI Revolts.”


Returning veterans and other likeminded voters demanded good government and expanded economic opportunity, and they opposed courthouse gang candidates and other boss-style politicians. The results of the postwar GI revolts were mixed, but, as James Cobb has recognized, they reflected a "gradual but ongoing process of political and institutional modernization" in the South. Progressive elements in the Seventh District had tired of incumbent Malcolm Tarver’s uncompromising anti-New Deal rhetoric and limited-government stances. These voters hoped that Lanham’s moderate tone would persist after he unseated Tarver.44

Cobb business and government leaders urged Lanham regularly to use his political connections to promote the local and state economy. In spring 1949, C. Russell Mills, the secretary-manager of the Cobb County Chamber of Commerce, requested that Lanham persuade the Air Force to reopen the vacated Bell plant for production of the Fairchild T-31 trainer plane. Relocating the T-31 operation from Hagerstown, Maryland to Marietta, Mills argued, would save the federal government approximately $1 million. Lanham concurred, and he contacted General Frederick M. Hopkins, Jr., commander of the Chief Industrial Planning Division’s Air Materiel Command to request the project’s relocation. An official from the Air Force’s Legislation and Liaison division, however, denied his request. The Marietta factory was a heavy-bomber facility, the official said, and the cost of moving the factory’s stored machine tools and retooling for the much smaller T-31 “would involve an expense which could not be justified.” This rejection led

Lanham to admit in a letter to a Cobb constituent, “I do not anticipate [the Bell factory] will be used for any other purpose [besides storage] short of another war.” In less than a year, though, the United States was once again at war.45

One month after the outbreak of the Korean War, Cobb County commissioner John Heck wrote Lanham and thanked him for “using [his] best effort for the reopening of the old Bell Aircraft plant at Marietta.” Continuing to sell the idea to Lanham, Heck assured the congressman that the “labor situation could be handled” if and when the military reactivated the factory. As the Korean War intensified, the Air Force realized that it did not have a sufficiently large bomber fleet to prosecute the war in Korea and maintain Strategic Air Command’s first-strike deterrent. Lanham notified Cobb County commercial and civic leaders that he had received word from the Air Force in early January 1951 that the California-based Lockheed Aircraft Corporation would reopen at least a portion of the Marietta facility to refurbish and modify over one hundred B-29 bombers. The Air Force also planned for Lockheed to manufacture the new Boeing-designed B-47 StratoJet.46

Lockheed tapped James Carmichael to serve as general manager and lead the factory during this critical early period. Carmichael’s experience as a Bell Aircraft executive and prominent government official with close ties to the region’s commercial and civic leaders, the Air Force and Lockheed reasoned, would be invaluable as they

45 C. Russell Mills to Henderson Lanham, 29 April 1949; Henderson Lanham to General Frederick M. Hopkins, Jr., 2 May 1949; Colonel Robert E. L. Eaton to Henderson Lanham, 15 June 1949; Henderson Lanham to Jim Manning, 12 August 1949, all in Series I (General) Box 3, Folder 9, Henderson Lovelace Lanham Papers, Richard B. Russell Library for Political Research and Studies, University of Georgia Libraries, Athens, GA.
46 John A. Heck to Henderson Lanham, 27 July 1950, Series I (General) Box 3, Folder 9, Lanham Papers; Scott, Cobb County, Georgia, 246-247; Boyne, Beyond the Horizons, 224-225; Henderson Lanham to W. P. Sprayberry, 2 January 1951, Series I (General), Box 3, Folder 9, Lanham Papers; "Carmichael to Head Lockheed Set-up at Bomber Plant," MDJ, 4 January 1951, sec. A, p. 1.
sought to ensure a smooth reopening as the Korean War and Cold War intensified. In addition to his position as general manager of Lockheed-Georgia, Carmichael also served as the vice president of the Lockheed Corporation and the president of the Atlanta-based Scripto Company. However, he did not remain general manager at Lockheed very long. Dan J. Haughton, a promising young Lockheed executive, replaced Carmichael after serving a brief stint as his assistant. One of Haughton’s first duties was reaching out to community leaders and explaining, in detail, what Marietta and the surrounding communities could expect as plant operations commenced.\textsuperscript{47}

Despite the obvious economic boost, the \textit{Marietta Daily Journal} acknowledged, “It won’t be all peaches and cream.” Providing adequate housing education, transportation, and public services would be a daunting task, but the paper was quick to remind its readers that “we did it before. We can do it again.” Still, area residents expected the federal government to “pitch in and aid Marietta and Cobb County.” Cobb Rotary, Kiwanis, and other commercial-civic groups pursued federal assistance for much-needed construction and public works projects. In the end, American taxpayers footed much of the bill for new housing, roads, schools, and water systems constructed in Cobb County during the early post-World War II era.\textsuperscript{48}

Days after the announcement that Lockheed would reopen the Marietta factory, congressional Democrats and the Truman administration publicized a bill that would provide millions in assistance for federally-backed mortgage insurance for the

\textsuperscript{47} Scott, \textit{Cobb County, Georgia}, 233, 215-216; “Carmichael to Head Lockheed Set-up at Bomber Plant,” p. 1; Boyne, \textit{Beyond the Horizons}, 225; Roy Dale, “East Friday,” \textit{Rotalight}, 2 March 1951, 3. Although Carmichael only served as general manager for a year, he remained the director of Lockheed-Georgia until his death in 1972.

construction of private homes as well as aid for critical school and infrastructure projects.\textsuperscript{49} Calls from Cobb County constituents to Congressman Lanham’s office for federal assistance—especially aid for school construction—came frequently during the early days of Lockheed’s operation. Anticipating waves of new residents, the Cobb County Board of Education wrote frantically to Lanham in February 1951 requesting that he extradite [sic] the needed school buildings for Cobb County.” Similarly, the superintendent of Marietta schools, Shuler Antley, secured the help of his fellow city Kiwanian, James Carmichael, to persuade Lanham and other congressional leaders of the city’s dire need for federal funds for school construction. Antley and Carmichael contended that new school facilities were not only critical to maintaining the Marietta district’s accreditation but also absolutely essential to the defense effort and necessary to take care of the children of workers we will be bringing into this area to staff the plant with required skills.” With the assistance of Lanham and other Georgia congressional leaders, aid to public schools began flowing into Cobb and surrounding counties by mid-1951.\textsuperscript{50}

Two critical pieces of legislation also enabled the federal government to direct millions of dollars to local school districts affected by federal Cold War military-industrial activities. Enacted in 1950, Public Law 815 provided federal funds for school construction and Public Law 874 granted money for the day-to-day operations of impacted school districts. Like the earlier Lanham Act, these “Impact Laws” neither set preconditions for obtaining aid nor restricted how the money could be spent once a

\textsuperscript{50} L. N. Lassiter to Henderson Lanham, 21 February 1951; James V. Carmichael to Shuler Antley, 28 February 1951, both in Series I (General), Box 5, Folder 1, Lanham Papers; Earl J. McGrath to Henderson Lanham, 1 June 1951; Earl J. McGrath to Henderson Lanham, 8 August 1951, both in Series I (General), Box 5, Folder 3, Lanham Papers.
school district demonstrated adequate need to the U.S. Office of Education. During the program’s first year, the federal government provided just under $30 million to 1,172 school districts. Due to its high number of military-connected facilities, the majority of “impacted areas” were located in the South, and, therefore, the bulk of related education aid went to the region. Ironically, conservative southern legislators were among the most vocal opponents of comprehensive federal education assistance; yet, these same congressional leaders were more than willing to exhort federal money under the auspices of the Impact Laws of 1950.51

A community, however, had to be first certified as a “critical defense area” before it could receive federal aid. To qualify for certification, a community had to demonstrate that the presence of federal military-industrial operations had caused an acute strain on local infrastructure, resources, and social services. Once a community received this designation, it would be eligible for relaxed housing credit and loan restrictions as well as permits for allocations of home, road, and utility construction supplies. Cobb service clubs, especially those in Marietta, were particularly anxious to win certification as a critical defense area. These boosters recognized that the Lockheed factory would attract skill-intensive, high-wage labor and contribute positively to the county’s growth and

development. These prospective employees would not, however, uproot their families and relocate to a community that lacked suitable housing and other necessary facilities.\(^{52}\)

Cobb County civic leaders, including several service club members, lobbied hard for Marietta and Cobb County’s designations as critical defense areas in mid-1951. Jason J. Daniell, the secretary-manager of the Cobb County Chamber of Commerce, informed Lanham that “people want to live in Cobb County. New homes are a safe investment.” The same day, publisher and prominent Marietta Rotarian, Otis Brumby, wrote that critical shortages of housing, schools, and water were hobbling Lockheed’s manufacturing efforts. “Fear here,” Brumby declared, “is that local aircraft production will bog down unless the bottleneck is broken on housing for workers.” James Carmichael also contacted Lanham to corroborate the Cobb boosters’ claims. “Lockheed Aircraft Corporation,” he wrote, “is extremely anxious that Marietta and Cobb County be declared a Critical Defense Housing Area.” Marietta Kiwanis Club president T.E. Baskin begged that Lanham’s influence be used to have Marietta and Cobb County declared [sic] a defense area immediately to insure proper facilities such as housing, schools, etc. for workers of reactivated Bomber Plant at Marietta.”\(^{53}\) Without critical defense area status, Earl Medford, a Marietta insurance and real estate salesman and Kiwanian, warned, “Inside of three months there will be no way for people to live in Cobb County, unless we get a large number of additional housing units right away.” The message could not be clearer: Cobb County business and civic leaders demanded federal assistance for

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\(^{53}\) Jason J. Daniell to Henderson Lanham, 20 August 1951; Otis A. Brumby to Henderson Lanham, 21 August 1951; James V. Carmichael to Henderson Lanham, 20 August 1951; T.E. Baskin to Henderson Lanham, 23 August 1951; Earl G. Medford to Henderson Lanham, 22 October 1951, all in Series I (General), Box 5, Folder 1, Lanham Papers.
the expansion and modernization of its infrastructure and other facilities they considered vital to attracting and retaining industry and residents.

Lanham wasted no time in fulfilling the wishes of the Cobb boosters. He contacted Ralph R. Kaul, chairman of the Critical Areas Committee of the Defense Production Administration. The congressman insisted that over one thousand Lockheed workers were without affordable housing. To better demonstrate the county’s pressing needs, Lanham forwarded figures from Lockheed officials that demonstrated the serious need for roads, schools, water supply, and sewage systems,” and he urged that Kaul’s office activate and expedite Marietta’s file due to the critical nature of Lockheed’s work. Ultimately, the Critical Areas Committee declared Cobb County and Marietta defense areas in late 1951 and assisted Cobb communities in building and expanding the badly needed infrastructure improvements necessary for the smooth operation of the Lockheed plant as well as their own growth and development.54

With a new, federally subsidized infrastructure in place, Lockheed-Georgia established a permanent military-industrial base in the county. Lockheed, whose move was enabled and hastened by government spending, was, as historian Richard Combes recognized, “sustained by ongoing federal contracts” including the C-130 Hercules turboprop cargo transport, first awarded in 1953. Employment reached a high for the decade in August 1956 when the factory employed 19,936 workers. More than half of all hourly workers resided in Cobb County during the first decades of the factory’s

54 Ralph R. Kaul to Henderson Lanham, 7 September 1951; Henderson Lanham to Ralph R. Kaul, 27 August 1951; Henderson Lanham to Bob Miles, 8 November 1951, all in Series I (General), Box 5, Folder 1, Lanham Papers. Although Senators Richard B. Russell and Walter George also worked to bring Lockheed to Marietta, Cobb County commissioner John A. Heck told Lanham that “it was principally through your efforts that the goal was reached.” See, John Heck to Henderson Lanham, 13 November 1951, Series I (General), Box 5, Folder 1, Lanham Papers.
operation. Additionally, over 60 percent of white-collar employees called Cobb County home. Although these particular Cobb countians were the most directly connected with the success of Lockheed-Georgia’s Marietta operation, they were hardly alone. Composed of accountants, bankers, educators, insurance and real estate agents, and numerous other small business owners, Cobb County service organizations had a vested interest in attracting industries like Lockheed and developing others already present in and around the county.55

Naturally, these Cobb citizens expressed considerable interest in the future of the Lockheed factory as well as Dobbins Air Force Base. Despite the area’s critical defense designation, many large banks and private insurers refused so-called permanent loans to Cobb County businesses and residents. According to William H. McNeal, a Cobb real estate agent, these loans were denied because many financial experts “look at Lockheed and see Marietta as a ‘one industry’ city and that Dobbins’ future is uncertain.” McNeal claimed that his company did half its business with well-salaried Dobbins Air Force Base personnel and Lockheed employees. At the behest of Congressman Lanham, John M. Ferry, Air Force special assistant for installations, replied to McNeal that the Air Force had a continuing need for the aircraft produced in Marietta and that Dobbins Air Force Base had been approved for designation as a permanent base. “This [designation],” Ferry said, “is an assurance to the community that the Air Force foresees a continuing requirement for this base.”56

56 William H. McNeal to Donald A. Quarles, 12 October 1955; Henderson Lanham to Donald A. Quarles, 17 October 1955; John M. Ferry to William H. McNeal, 9 November 1955, all in Series I (General), Box 5, Folder 3, Lanham Papers. Donald Quarles served as Secretary of the Air Force from 1955 until his sudden death from a heart attack in May 1959.
Many in Cobb County found it necessary to assure current and prospective investors that the federal government would maintain their already sizable presence and influence in the region. Sustained affluence and growth relied heavily on federal spending and the military-industrial complex. As well-positioned and well-connected residents, service club members sought to profit along with the rest of the county. In sum, Lockheed and its government sponsorship were not only integral to Cobb County’s growth and prosperity but also that of its thriving white commercial-civic elite. This realization served as the impetus for Cobb service clubs’ political behavior and rhetoric throughout the post-World War II period.
CHAPTER 3

REPUTATION POLITICS AND PRESIDENTIAL REPUBLICANISM

The expansion of the area’s military-industrial economic base encouraged more native, white southerners to remain in the region while also attracting new, well-educated and highly-trained professionals and their families. In 1940, before the U.S entered World War II, Georgia was a heavily rural state with only one-third classified as urban by the Census Bureau. By 1960, however, 55 percent was classified as urban. During this period, the out-migration of native Georgians drained the state of both its best and worst educated. While the in-migration of well-educated, skilled white residents offset the state’s white out-migration, historian Gavin Wright demonstrated that African Americans left the South at all ages and education levels.” As was the case throughout the South, most modern industrial jobs were reserved for whites.” Black employees found their prospects limited to entry-level and unskilled positions, and many blacks fled the county and the region in search of improved job prospects in the industrial urban centers of East and Midwest. These demographic shifts, which had begun during the New Deal, marked the decline of Georgia’s Black Belt. This region, which had dominated the state’s political and economic systems for generations, contained 60 percent of its population in 1940, but that figured fell to 40 percent by 1960. Many who did remain in the Black Belt relocated from the countryside to cities like Macon. These demographic upheavals transformed the economic and political systems in Cobb County and the state during the
postwar period. This political transformation included the development of large-scale Republican campaigning and voting at the presidential level.¹

Continuing the trend started during the New Deal and World War II, Georgians fled the countryside for the state’s urban and metropolitan centers. After the war, the development of national labor standards, the creation of a national minimum wage, and the commencement of state-level industrial and professional recruitment crusades capitalized on these demographic changes and altered the direction of southern economic development. According to Wright, the rapid decline in the South’s reliance on low-wage, skill-intensive labor had the most immense and durable effect of the region’s economy. By 1950, Georgia had more residents employed in manufacturing jobs than in agriculture for the first time. The state’s urban and metropolitan populations grew concomitantly with this industrial expansion. By the mid-1950s, regional out-migration had slowed, and the trend had reversed entirely by the beginning of the 1970s. Young, well-educated, and upwardly-mobile professionals flocked to the South to take advantage of new, large-scale employment opportunities like Lockheed-Georgia’s Marietta aircraft factory. This, in turn, spurred the growth of a large-scale white-collar service economy. Numan Bartley observed that finance, government, insurance, retail, and real estate were among the fastest growing areas of employment in the South during this period of rapid urban and metropolitan expansion. Many of those who lived and worked in burgeoning communities like Cobb County were local, small-business owners and agents or representatives of regional and national corporations. These were precisely the kind of business and professional men who joined and participated in service organizations like

Rotary and Kiwanis. Using their positions as prominent members of the county’s white commercial-civic elite, these influential Cobb citizens lobbied public and private sector leaders to guarantee sustained economic growth.\(^2\)

At the national level, Georgia’s urban and suburban residents began to view the Republican Party as the best vehicle for political expression as the state’s cities and suburbs grew. Indeed, service organizations advocated several tenets that became part of the GOP platform during its post-World War II ascent. At the state level, Cobb service clubs advocated policies that would best promote equity in political representation, increased opportunity for socioeconomic advancement, and racial moderation. Since their economic livelihood rested on the attraction and retention of major employers like Lockheed, service clubs and other likeminded groups promoted their idealized image of Cobb County as a well-ordered, racially-progressive, business-friendly community. These positions put Cobb’s white commercial-civic elite in direct opposition to Black Belt-sponsored measures that sought to give the area a disproportionate share of representation and defend the sanctity of Jim Crow at the expense of the state’s urban and suburban areas. From the county unit system to public education, service clubs joined the fight for political moderation and economic progress.

Most southerners viewed the Republican Party of Abraham Lincoln, African Americans, and plutocratic northern financial interests with disdain since the Civil War and Reconstruction. In 1949, V.O. Key, Jr. claimed the Republican Party in the South wavered somewhat between an esoteric cult on the order of a lodge and a conspiracy

for plunder.” Except in isolated pockets—primarily in the Appalachian Mountain counties—Republicans were virtually nonexistent in the region for first half of the twentieth century. Furthermore, these “mountain Republicans” had little interest in building the party machinery necessary to compete with the Democrats at the state level. They remained preoccupied with electing local officials and winning federal patronage jobs from GOP presidential administrations.³

Although Republican New York governor Thomas Dewey had received a paltry 18.3 percent of Georgia’s vote, he did outperform States’ Rights Democrat Strom Thurmond in Cobb County in 1948. In fact, Thurmond won only the tiny Post Oak precinct in northeast Cobb. Dewey, on the other hand, showed surprising strength and won over 1,500 ballots. The county’s most populous cities, Marietta and Smyrna, cast two-thirds of all Republican ballots in 1948, and Dewey managed to win almost a quarter of all Marietta ballots. General Dwight D. Eisenhower tapped into the sentiment of moderate economic conservatives who had joined the ranks of the state’s middle and upper classes during the postwar boom and improved the national Republicans’ showing in the state’s urban and suburban communities in the 1952 presidential election. In fact, Eisenhower became the first Republican presidential candidate to make substantive inroads for the GOP in the South since Reconstruction. Some of Eisenhower’s strongest support in Cobb County came from its service clubs and other members of the flourishing commercial-civic elite.⁴

Budding suburban communities were home to increasingly prosperous voters who had tired of the Democratic Party’s New Deal and Fair Deal policies. Eisenhower offered a reasonable alternative. Neither Republican nor Democratic presidential candidates spent much time stumping in Dixie because of the region’s solidly Democratic tendencies. Eisenhower bucked this tradition in 1952. The Georgia Republican Party opened several campaign headquarters across the state, and the party chairman, Elbert P. Tuttle, promised the most extensive campaign in the state’s history. Locally, several prominent commercial and civic leaders came together to create a Cobb Republican organization. Three members of the Marietta Rotary Club served as Cobb GOP officers in 1952: P.D. Reeser, vice-chairman; Floyd Baird, secretary; and Bolan Glover, treasurer. As businessmen, these Marietta Rotarians and others like them, took an increasingly active—and Republican—position in national politics as the county grew and flourished. Early in 1952, the Marietta Rotalight reprinted a column by conservative commentator Thurman Sensing. Sensing declared, “Business must get into politics for its own self-preservation and for the building of a better America.” The chief concern of American businessmen, Sensing contended, was the preservation of the free enterprise system. Since the businessmen of America pay the piper,” he argued, “they had better be interested in the tune.”

Historian Jeffrey Charles has asserted that local, state, and national service organizations positioned themselves in opposition to what they considered to be the

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“Presidential Election in Cobb County,” CCT, 4 November 1948, p. 1. In addition to Texas, Oklahoma, and Florida, Republican presidential candidate Herbert Hoover won the upper South states of Virginia, Tennessee, Kentucky, and North Carolina in his rout of Democratic New York governor Al Smith in 1928.

excessive and wasteful growth of “big government” and “big labor” in the postwar America. As “articulate representatives of the great middle class,” former Kiwanis International president O. Sam Cummings asked that all service club members…vigorously champion the cause of the private enterprise system…if it is to survive.” Making the familiar link between free enterprise and democratic government, Cummings contended, “If we lose our economic freedom we shall lose our political freedom too.” Another former Kiwanis International president, Ben Dean, was perhaps the most vocal service club official in the campaign against the expansion of government welfare programs. Dean warned Kiwanis Magazine readers that some Americans were waging an insidious effort…to undermine our freedoms through socialistic schemes in the guise of public welfare.” During the 1952 presidential campaign, Dean urged his fellow Kiwanians to join the “Ballot Battalion.” Tasked with registering, informing, and turning out every potential voter for the general election, the Kiwanis Ballot Battalion was the organization’s attempt to “tip the scale in the November election for decency, economy and high morality in government.” Dean cautioned readers that if the results of the 1952 election were the same as in 1948, the country’s freedoms may well be doomed… [and] confiscatory taxes and ever-spreading government controls may be beyond check.” Since Democrats held majorities in both houses of Congress and had controlled the White House for almost twenty years, Dean’s claim that the Ballot Battalion was purely nonpartisan seems dubious.

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6 Charles, Service Clubs in American Society, 141.
Cobb County service organizations made similar arguments in their club programs and publications. P.G. Smith, a Marietta Rotarian, recognized that many of the socialistic elements found within the American economic system — serve as a good and stabilizing influence in our life,” but “their dangers are the abuse to which they lead.” The pervasive threat of an increasingly powerful federal state required, in Smith’s estimation, “constant vigil and courageous action.” Courageous action may have meant campaigning and voting for the presidential candidate of the party of Abraham Lincoln and Reconstruction—a party that had been practically lifeless in the state since the late nineteenth century.8

Dwight Eisenhower employed several of these talking points during a political rally in Atlanta’s Hurt Park. Joined on stage by close friend and Marietta native General Lucius Clay, Eisenhower declared in his folksy manner, “The hide that the cost of this Washington Mess is being taken out of is your hide. It is being taken out of your hide in higher taxes.” He promised his audience that he would confront government corruption and end “heedless policies that nullify our thrift and erase our savings by inflation.” His candidacy would end the near twenty-year Democratic domination of the federal government that had become a “tangled aggregation of incompetence and expediency and bossdom.” This Republican rhetoric was music to the ears of voters who lived and voted the service club ideal; they had long experienced the kind of one-party domination described by Eisenhower and had railed against “reckless spending” that threatened the “democratic form of government.”9

9 Bartley, From Thurmond to Wallace, 6; Bartley and Graham, Southern Politics and the Second Reconstruction, 86; Complete Text of Eisenhower’s speech at Atlanta’s Hurt Park,” AJ, 2 September 1952, p. 12; Government Housing,” Rotalight, 31 March 1950, 2.
To be sure, Eisenhower’s small government rhetoric and invectives against the corrupting influence of absolute power struck a chord with many service clubs members during the 1952 election. His calls for “strictness in government” went a long way toward reversing the Democratic Party’s stranglehold on the solid South. The Republican war hero even won the endorsement of Otis Brumby’s *Cobb County Times*. Calling for a “change” in administration, the paper declared Eisenhower the “most capable candidate for the office.” The *Times*‘ sister paper, the *Marietta Daily Journal*, however, took a politically pragmatic approach in making its endorsement. The *Journal* recognized that the last twenty years of Democratic presidential control had transformed the area from “mule and the sharecropper bondage to the machine advantages of tractors and trucks and general prosperity.” Republican victories could diminish the power and prestige of Georgia politicians like Senator Richard Russell and Congressman Carl Vinson. Many in Cobb County and throughout the South may have had more in common politically with Eisenhower and the national Republican Party in 1952, but many still remained unwilling to dump the Democratic Party for fear of becoming an “ignored area.”

In his first campaign against Adlai E. Stevenson II, the governor of Illinois, Ike earned roughly 199,000 votes, or just over 30 percent of the total ballots cast throughout the state. Cobb County—whose population and voter rolls had doubled since 1948—gave 29 percent of its vote—nearly 4,200 ballots—to the Republican. The *Times* highlighted that “along with the increased vote in the county there was an increase in Republican votes.” Eisenhower earned a respectable number of votes from populous Marietta wards while rural Cobb residents continued to cast their ballots like Black Belt Democrats.

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Cobb support for the GOP may seem relatively low, but it is more understandable when the nascent operations at the Lockheed factory are taken into account. The plant had only recently opened, and even the Marietta Rotary Club’s Rural-Urban Committee had difficulty deciding whether Cobb County was still rural or "industrial urban" at the time. Moreover, the county’s relative dearth of African American voters—who still supported the GOP in large numbers in South—also worked to keep Eisenhower’s vote down in 1952. Still, white, affluent business and professional residents in the cities and suburbs, Georgia’s "better element" as many referred to them, voted for the Republican presidential candidate. These individuals based their votes more on economic self-interest and community prosperity rather than their "great-grandfather’s activities in the 1860s.” Eisenhower’s presidential campaigns, Numan Bartley asserted, "established the GOP as the party of the affluent middle-class voters in the cities and the suburbs.” Business and industry were the future, and the GOP, these voters reasoned, was the party that could ensure this continued growth and prosperity. 11

The development and evolution of presidential Republicanism in Georgia continued during the 1956 rematch between Eisenhower and Stevenson. The Georgia Republican Party elected county leaders and sent delegates to a statewide GOP convention. Indeed, more and more Georgians began to understand that their state would never "come into its own politically" until a two-party system became a reality.

11 Reese Cleghorn, "Lifelong Democrats Cheered Ike’s Talk,” AJ, 3 September 1952, p. 10; McGillivray and Scammon, America at the Polls, 1920 to 1956, 155; "Voters Defeat Amendment 1, OK No. 2 in Tuesday Election,” CCT, 6 November 1952, sec. A, p.1, 3; Mark Waits, "Voters Defeat Unit Issue; Road Amendment Ok’d,” MDJ, 6 November 1952, sec. A, p. 1; "Unofficial Returns,” CCT, 6 November 1952, sec. A, p. 1; "Rural-Urban Committee,” Rotalight, 3 August 1956, 2; Bartley, The New South, 102; Donald Strong, The 1952 Presidential Election in the South,” Journal of Politics 17, no. 3 (August 1953): 382; Bartley, From Thurmond to Wallace, 6; Samuel Lubell, White and Black: The Test of a Nation (New York: Harper and Row, 1964), 69 in Bartley, From Thurmond to Wallace, 54. Over half of all Cobb’s Eisenhower ballots were cast in Marietta.
Democrats took the state's votes for granted, and the GOP wrote off its electoral prospects in the state as "hopeless." Service clubs were interested, however, in specific Republican policies as well as the possible benefits of a two-party system.\(^{12}\)

For example, in 1955, the Georgia District of Kiwanis International promised to champion "individual initiative and free enterprise." The next year, the club resolved to foster greater cooperation between government, business, and industry. Just prior to the 1956 election, the Georgia District Kiwanis governor proposed a creed that embodied many of the values that drew Kiwanians increasingly toward the Republican Party. First, the government owed no person a living. Similarly, one Marietta Rotarian claimed, "Poverty is largely a state of mind." No one could be poor if he or she knew the "satisfying glow that comes with the knowledge of a job well done." If business and industry could be nurtured, government welfare programs for the poor and unemployed could be decreased or eliminated altogether. Second, government was "the servant of the people not their master." Republicans worried the steady growth of the federal government that accompanied welfare policies would result in commensurate declines in individual autonomy and personal freedom. Lastly, thrift, in the form of a balanced budget was "a prime requisite of good financial structure." Calls for smaller government persisted through the 1956 election and well into the 1960s and beyond.\(^{13}\)

Eisenhower won three southern states—Florida, Tennessee, and Virginia—in 1952, but he improved his showing in the region by adding Kentucky and Louisiana to the Republican column in 1956. Eisenhower also improved slightly over his showing in

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1952 by garnering 33.3 percent of the votes cast in Georgia. Cobb County, with 4,000 additional registered voters than the in the previous election, gave 36.7 percent of its vote, or about 6,800 ballots, to the incumbent president. Moreover, the 1956 presidential race was much closer in Cobb’s municipal precincts than it was in 1952. Both Acworth and Marietta, which accounted for just under half of all GOP votes, gave more than forty percent of their votes to Eisenhower. These middle and upper-class white Cobb residents voted like Cobb’s small African American community. Ballot boxes from the county’s two African American wards showed that voters there favored the Republican Eisenhower 598 to 95. These results support the conclusions of historian Numan Bartley who has argued that prosperous middle- and upper-class white southerners living in Georgia’s urban and suburban areas tended to cast their ballots the same as African American voters of all economic levels during this period. This “urban-affluent” coalition tended to be the most progressive in the state. They supported moderate, civic- and business-minded candidates, opposed attempts to extend the county unit system, and championed public education throughout the early postwar period. Thus, as Cobb County grew in size and affluence, so too did its affinity with the Republican Party.\(^\text{14}\)

At the state level, Cobb County service clubs and their commercial-civic allies waged a hotly contested battle in 1952 against at yet another attempt to expand the county unit system. The 1952 county unit amendment was more draconian than its predecessor in its attempt to prevent the development of a true two-party system in the

state. While non-Democrats could petition to gain access to the ballot in the 1950 amendment, the 1952 incarnation required all general election candidates be nominated in a party primary using the county unit system. With few members, limited financial resources, and inadequate party machinery, these additional logistical obstacles would have almost certainly prevented the growth of a viable Georgia Republican Party. Indeed, the *Cobb County Times* concluded, “It is evident that one subtle purpose of Amendment No. 1 is to block the formation of a Republican Party, or any opposition party, and thus prevent competition to those in power in the State Democratic Party.”

Pro-amendment advocates employed many of the same tactics they used during the 1950 amendment battle. For example, during a visit to Cobb County in September 1952, Governor Herman Talmadge couched the amendment in starkly rural-urban terms. He claimed that opponents of the amendment sought to put “all the political power in the state in the hands of 100,000 bloc voters in the Atlanta Metropolitan district.” Cities, proponents argued, were rife with communist and outside (read northern) influences. The Talmadgeite supporters of the 1952 county unit amendment produced and disseminated pamphlets assuring voters that the unit system was a safeguard against racial integration, boss-style labor, organized crime, and county consolidation that would disfranchise rural voters. A vote for the county unit system, Talmadge promised, was a vote to protect the traditional segregation of schools.”

County unit system opponents—political moderates, residents of the much-maligned cities and suburbs, and civic organizations—championed more equitable

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enfranchisement, higher voter turnout, and the creation of a viable two-party system in their attempt to thwart county unit extension. These voters viewed the amendment as yet another effort to further disenfranchise urban and suburban voters. Two Cobb County state legislators, Fred Bentley and Ben Smith, opposed the extension amendment. Bentley contended that Cobb County “would be foolish to vote for a thing…that will forever deny us the chance to give our home county its proper place in the government of our state.” Once more, local civic and political leader Raymond Reed led the fight against the extension of the county unit system in Cobb County. Reed told local reporters that the county was “growing by leaps and bounds,” but their level of representation remained artificially low. If the efforts of Herman Talmadge and the Democratic state committee succeeded, Reed declared, Cobb County’s “chance of ever rectifying this iniquitous situation is forever gone.” After all, residents of communities like Marietta and Smyrna were loath to surrender more political power to the rural counties when urban and suburban voters accounted for 30 percent of the state total but received only 12 percent of the county unit vote. In its pre-Election Day endorsement, the Times announced, “The ballot box stands between a free people and enslavement.” Similar to local service clubs, the Cobb weekly reminded its readers that “government of the people is possible only when the people of Marietta and Cobb County make their stand known.” The alternative, it warned, was a familiar whipping boy: “government by the minority.” The local Rotary club shared these sentiments. “Many of us are inclined to let the others do the voting while we do the talking and complaining about the results of their ballots,” lamented Rotarian Judson Palmer. “We should vote if we wish to have the kind of government we are seeking.”

17 “How Cobb Legislators Stand on Unit Amendment,” MDJ, 12 October 1952, sec. A, p. 1; “Battles Over
The 1952 amendment was as hotly contested as the first, and the result was similar. A majority of voters in Cobb County and the state rejected the county unit amendment. Georgia voters also defeated the amendment by a vote of 309,170, 52.5 percent, to 279,882, 47.5 percent. Cobb rejected the amendment 61.6 percent to 38.4 percent with almost 14,000 ballots cast. This margin was again roughly equivalent to James Carmichael‘s victory in the county‘s 1946 Democratic gubernatorial primary. Once again, voting fell along rural-urban lines. Marietta and Smyrna voted heavily against extension while smaller and rural communities voted the Talmadgeite line.\(^{18}\)

Cobb and its urban and suburban brethren had defeated yet another effort to disenfranchise the state’s fastest growing communities. It would be the federal government, though, that would end the use of the county unit system permanently a decade after the unit amendment battles. In the wake of its landmark ruling in *Baker v. Carr* (1962), which outlawed the “invidious discrimination” apparent in Tennessee’s primary election system, the U.S. Supreme Court abolished Georgia’s county unit system in the case of *Gray v. Sanders* (1963). Writing for the eight-one majority, Justice William O. Douglas called the system a violation of the “one person, one vote” doctrine of the Fourteenth Amendment and ordered its immediate termination. Historian Douglas Smith has recognized that decisions like *Gray v. Sanders* and later representative reapportionment cases ended not only rural and Black Belt political domination in the South but also freed suburban areas like Cobb County from urban control.

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development of an extensive military-industrial apparatus, massive population growth, and increased independence and political clout facilitated the development of a new brand of politics that downplayed traditional appeals to racial prejudice and emphasized individual initiative, free enterprise, social and moral order, and selective calls for limited government.19

Service clubs and the business-progressive interests they represented understood, however, that regular voting and equitable enfranchisement were not the only means to power and prosperity. Quality public education, service organizations argued, was critical to everything from lowering crime rates to attracting industrial development. As James Cobb has argued, “Sophisticated firms employing upper-middle-class executives and skilled technicians could ill afford to locate where children of their employees could not be assured of adequate preparation for college.” The desire to create and protect access to quality public education led influential business and civic leaders—many of them service club members—to campaign actively for quality, accessible education. In a talk before the Rotary Club of Marietta, Atlanta business and civic leader Ivan Allen—who would go on to lead the Atlanta Chamber of Commerce’s Forward Atlanta program to attract business and industry and succeed William Hartsfield as Mayor—outlined the necessary steps to attracting industrial prospects to the region. He ranked a high-quality school system among the most important factors. Moreover, the crusade for industrial development in the South during the 1950s and 1960s forced many members of the white

19 Bartley, From Thurmond to Wallace, 11; Carter, Turning Point, 40, 26; Douglas Smith, “Into the Political Thicket: Reapportionment and the Rise of Suburban Power,” in The Myth of Southern Exceptionalism, eds. Matthew D. Lassiter and Joseph Crespino (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 264, 279-280; Scott, Cobb County, Georgia, 514-515. A federal district court also found the Georgia General Assembly unconstitutionally apportioned and in violation of the “one person, one vote” doctrine in the case of Toombs v. Fortson (1962).
commercial-civic elite to adopt, sometimes reluctantly, the policies and rhetoric of racial moderation in their attempt to knock down “road blocks” to economic progress.\textsuperscript{20}

National service clubs leaders advocated regularly for the preservation and improvement of public education. “Our schools are under attack from various sources,” former Kiwanis International President Ben Dean averred in the summer of 1954. Kiwanians and other service and civic organizations, he contended, needed to become more involved in school matters to protect our schools from destructive and malicious criticism while striving to make them better prepared and equipped to educate our children.” To do this effectively, Dean suggested that civic-minded club members run for school boards and champion local school bond issues. At a time when national defense necessitated a well-educated and highly-skilled workforce, superior public education was an absolute necessity. Cobb County service club members were well aware that their economic wellbeing was tethered to the maintenance of the Lockheed aircraft plant and Dobbins Air Force Base. An educated workforce, therefore, was crucial to not only attracting new industry to the county but also sustaining its significant military-industrial establishment.\textsuperscript{21}

In 1953, the Georgia state legislature passed a “private school amendment” in anticipation of the 1954 \textit{Brown v. Board of Education} decision (or something like it). This amendment would have granted the state legislature the authority to halt state


funding of public education and, instead, provide parents with state-subsidized private
school vouchers to preserve racially-segregated classrooms. This, opponents of school
integration reasoned, would allow the state to circumvent any Supreme Court segregation
decision because any ruling would pertain only to public schools. This state constitutional
amendment came before the full electorate in November 1954, and the battle lines proved
comparable to the ones that had formed during the county unit battles. Once again,
Governor Herman Talmadge and his rural allies supported the amendment, and urban and
suburban moderates, including service and civic clubs, opposed the private school
amendment.22

One major hurdle facing the anti-amendment forces was the concern that they
would appear to be integrationists. This derogatory moniker would have hindered the
promulgation of their message in many parts of the state. In an attempt to obviate this
potential political hazard, Cobb County superintendent and Marietta Kiwanian W. Paul
Sprayberry asked residents to remain “calm…and resolute” in the wake of the Brown
decision. Meanwhile, Marietta superintendent and fellow Kiwanian Shuler Antley hoped
for a decision that would be “to the best advantage of everyone concerned.” State
representative and Marietta Rotarian Fred Bentley, however, took a more aggressive
stance. Although he “regretted” the Brown decision, he argued vigorously that school
closures would produce chaos in communities throughout the state.23

22 Coleman, A History of Georgia, 363-364; Scott, Cobb County, Georgia, 276-277; Peter S. Willett, “Lead
23 Local Leaders Avoid Comment on Ruling Banning Segregation,” MDJ, 18 May 1954, p. 1; Sprayberry
Asks for “Calm” Attitude About Segregation,” MDJ, 20 May 1954, sec. A, p. 1; Scott, Cobb County,
Georgia, 277; Rotalight, 6 August 2008. Both Sprayberry and Antley were members of the Marietta
Kiwanis Club’s Youth Service Council. This committee was responsible for planning and coordinating
events and programs for the benefit and edification of Marietta and Cobb County youth.
Bentley and other local school closure opponents voiced their concerns about the possible fallout from the private school amendment. Cobb anti-amendment forces hammered private school proponents for their lack of details and assurances. Attorney General Eugene Cook, a prominent amendment advocate, reported that “plans [would] not be made public until after the people have voted.” The amendment’s backers, including Attorney General Cook and state General Assembly floor leader Frank Twitty, admitted that the state would not be able to guarantee racial segregation in Georgia private schools anymore than they could in the state’s public facilities. Bentley derided the “so-called private school plan,” calling it a “hopped-up, half-baked idea.” Amendment opponents in Cobb and elsewhere may have been segregationists, and many were, but maintaining the absolute sanctity of the color line in public schools was secondary to keeping public schools open and effective.²⁴

Closure opponents were more concerned with negative effects school closures might have on Georgia’s youth and the future development of its growing communities. On the eve of the private school amendment vote, opponents affirmed that the choice was not between “segregation and integration,” but whether or not Georgia school children would “be sold down the river.” Indeed, critics of the private school plan argued that the new private schools might not even be accredited, and the lack of accreditation would

²⁴ Voters Tuesday to Decide Fate of Private School Plan,” CCT, 28 October 1954, sec. A, p. 1, 7; Billy Cook, “A Student’s-eye View of So-Called ‘Private School’ Plan for Georgia,” CCT, 28 October 1954, sec. A, p. 6; Lucrete Marshall, “Public Forum Airs 4th Amendment,” MDJ, 27 October 1954, p. 1; “Marietta Rotary Friday Welcome District Governor,” MDJ, 27 October 1954, p. 1; “Fred Bentley Blasts Private School Plan,” MDJ, 26 October 1954, p. 1. Frank Twitty of Camilla was the acting governor for Rotary International District 240. His support of the private school amendment suggests that service clubs throughout the state held divergent opinions on at least some controversial political issues. Many clubs retained and reflected the prevailing opinions and values of their local communities, but this was not always the case. No club was ever unanimous in its sentiments.
make obtaining a college education much more difficult for the state’s young and upwardly-mobile generation.\textsuperscript{25}

Increased funding and interest in public education was necessary to bolster the number of Georgia children who completed their entire primary and secondary educations. Obviously, this task would be hobbled if the state jettisoned its public education system. Apart from the lack of legislative oversight and assurances that parents would actually spend the money on their children’s education, amendment opponents worried that federal aid to education would decrease or dry up entirely. Many Cobb residents fretted that the private school plan would jeopardize the county’s critical defense area status. They worried that their school districts would be unable to accommodate additional students without federal assistance, and, as one concerned Cobb high school student recognized, the federal government did not give aid to private schools. Although new residents continued to flow into the county in search of defense jobs and the need for additional school facilities persisted, the passage of the private school plan, state legislator Raymond Reed declared, would mean the “hope of any additional schools or any additional federal funds would [be lost].” This would not bode well for the future of Cobb’s military-industrial base or its commercial-civic elite. Both relied on the sustained economic development that it facilitated. The impediment posed by the private school amendment to business recruitment and retention, thus, was unconscionable to many Cobb County service club members.\textsuperscript{26}

Moreover, service organizations worried that the private school amendment would contribute to juvenile delinquency and youth crime which were already at "shocking" levels by the mid-1950s. Service clubs and other civic and fraternal organizations had made the fight against juvenile delinquency a major part of their post-World War II social agenda. With large numbers of returning veterans and the prospect of widespread unemployment, many Americans worried about a youth-driven postwar crime wave. Prominent government officials like FBI director J. Edgar Hoover blamed youthful rebelliousness on "defective mental attitudes." He argued that the surge in delinquent behavior had "a very definite relation to the problem of crime in the future."

Enlisting organizations like Rotary and Kiwanis, Hoover and other leaders hoped to combat delinquency by instilling "old-fashioned but fundamental principles which are as old as the history of civilized man." Georgia service clubs stressed the need for increased vocational and other forms of education as an elixir for juvenile delinquency and youth crime. Efforts to close Georgia’s public schools, therefore, did not appeal to many service club members in communities like Cobb County.27

The Georgia press expected an above average turnout of between 300,000 and 400,000 voters for the amendment vote. Despite urban and suburban counties voting down the amendment by sizable margins, the private school amendment passed by roughly 30,000 votes. Cobb and Fulton counties demurred by the same margin: 58.2 to 41.8 percent, a smaller margin than in both the 1946 gubernatorial primary and the 1952

County Unit amendment referendum. Once again, Cobb’s rural precincts supported the Talmadgeite position while the urban and suburban precincts voted down the proposition. Marietta, which cast more than half the county’s anti-amendment ballots, opposed the private school amendment 65 percent to 35 percent. Despite the amendment’s passage, anti-Talmadge Cobb legislators Fred Bentley and Raymond Reed promised “vigorous opposition” to any and all attempts to close the schools.28

Although no serious attempt was ever made to execute the private school plan, squabbles over public education continued throughout the 1950s and into the 1960s. The Rome News-Tribune published an editorial in response to a 1957 effort to repeal a state law requiring compulsory attendance through age sixteen. “If compulsory school attendance was no longer required,” the writer warned, “we will have to expand our juvenile courts, our probation systems, our training schools.” The Georgia District Kiwanians agreed that the best way to keep Georgia’s streets safe and communities prosperous was not to close the schools or end compulsory attendance but to keep the schools open and teachers well compensated. One Marietta Rotarian surmised that every Georgia citizen deserved a “free and adequate education.” Quality, accessible public education was absolutely essential to advocates of economic growth like Cobb County service club members. Education remained a contentious political issue well into the next

decade, and service clubs remained vocal advocates for public education in the face of appeals to racist sentiment.  

Officially, massive resistance to desegregation remained the position of Georgia's rural-dominated state government. During the 1958 gubernatorial campaign, Governor S. Ernest Vandiver promised to close Georgia's schools to prevent integration. Vandiver's promises were tested between late 1959 and early 1960 when a federal district court in Atlanta ordered the city to create a suitable desegregation plan. Led by the 30,000-member Atlanta chapter of Help Our Public Education (HOPE), civic-minded Georgians lined up in support of open schools. Ellis Arnall, the state's progressive ex-governor, joined the fray in April 1959, promising that "unless the public schools are kept open or some worthy candidate comes forth, I will be a candidate for governor in 1962, and I will be elected."

Indeed, many of Georgia's urban and suburban residents realized that sustained economic and population growth relied on maintaining a positive, business-friendly climate. Florida Governor T. LeRoy Collins, a racial moderate, argued, "Nothing will turn our investors away quicker than the prospect of finding here communities hepped [sic] up by demagoguery and seething under the turmoil of race hatred." Collins, like most southern business and government leaders at the time, was an avowed segregationist, but he feared that racial unrest would negatively affect the economies of

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the region’s fast-growing urban and metropolitan centers. According to Numan Bartley, “Most white business and professional people were segregationists, but their ideological commitment was to capitalist economic expansion.” When reactionary racial sentiment threatened to force the closure of the state’s public schools in early 1960, business and civic leaders in communities like Cobb County resisted. Once again, their moderate, business-oriented stance forced many to become the reluctant proponents of racial moderation and alternatives to massive resistance.31

By early 1960, the prospect of Arnall’s reentry into state politics, backroom political pressure from Senator Herman Talmadge and his political allies, and the mobilization of the state’s metropolitan commercial-civic elite in support of open schools had eroded Vandiver’s commitment to absolute racial segregation. Key Vandiver aides began hinting that the governor would be open to alternative school segregation policies, and soon after, Vandiver appointed John Sibley, retired former general counsel to Coca-Cola, chairman of the Trust Company of Georgia, and member of the Rotary Club of Atlanta, to chair the Georgia School Study Commission to consider the viability of continued racial segregation.32

Part of the Sibley Commission’s charge was to travel to each of the state’s ten congressional districts to learn where Georgia citizens stood on the issue of school segregation. Cobb residents represented the largest delegation at the Seventh Congressional District meeting at Cartersville, in nearby Bartow County, in early March

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1960. Most Cobb attendees supported segregation, but they were not inflexible on the issue. Indeed, most of the Cobb business community lined up against school closures. The Cobb Chamber of Commerce reported that over eighty percent of its members favored a local option or pupil placement program. Representatives from the Marietta Rotary and Kiwanis clubs also attended and spoke at the public meeting. Charles Laubacher, a Kiwanian, reported that a straw poll of club members showed a unanimous vote for open, but segregated schools. None of the Marietta Kiwanians, though, supported the closing of public schools to prevent integration. Judge G. Conley Ingram spoke for the Rotary Club of Marietta. Rotarians, he said, favored a pupil placement program if the federal courts ordered desegregation. The consensus among Cobb County attendees favored allowing local communities to solve the segregation question in their own way. Additionally, many worried that school closings would threaten the county’s “friendly…progressive” reputation and hinder efforts to attract and retain industry.

Overall, Seventh District witnesses favored open schools by a three-to-one margin. Only the majority of workers at Rotarian Bolan Glover’s machine factory supported complete segregation. Glover’s opinion, though, was a minority one, and the vast majority of his fellow club members broke with him on issues of race and segregation.33

The Sibley Commission concluded its public hearings in early April 1960.

Rejecting the private school option due to difficulties in funding, accreditation, and

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33 “Local Control Wins By 3-To-1 Vote in Seventh District,” MDJ, 11 March 1960, p. 1; Charles Pou, “Seventh Asks Local Option,” AJ, 11 March 1960, p. 1; School Interest Gratifies Sibley, CCT, 10 March 1960, p. 1; Ben Green Cooper, “Seventh District Gives View on School Mixing,” CCT, 10 March 1960, p. 1, 2; Cobb County Chamber of Commerce, “Welcome to Marietta, Cobb County, Georgia,” Pamphlet, 1955(?) City of Marietta Vertical File, Georgia Room, University of Georgia Libraries, Athens, GA; Scott, Cobb County, Georgia, 282-283. Bolan Glover, a Marietta Rotarian and Cobb County Republican, represented a major exception to the progressive, racially moderate image of the white commercial-civic elite. Glover was the proprietor of the county’s oldest small-scale industrial operation, and he was also a member of Cobb County White Citizens for Segregation.
controlling private school curriculums, the majority of the commission recommended that local school districts be allowed to have the final decision of whether to remain segregated. This local option would permit Georgia school districts to deal with desegregation on a case-by-case basis. Ultimately, the Sibley Commission report as well as Governor Vandiver’s refusal to close the University of Georgia in 1961 effectively ended massive resistance in the state.34

The Marietta Rotary Club hosted speakers who railed against attempts to close Georgia’s public schools. Dr. Jake Ward, a Marietta native and vice president and dean of faculty at Emory University in Atlanta, argued that “public schools are traditional institutions in this country and the idea of no public schools is incomprehensible.” Ward reminded the Rotarians, “Public schools need public support and understanding” because “it is these institutions which give our young people, reared in lowly circumstances, an opportunity to develop their talents and climb the social ladder.” Just one month later, Henry Kemp, superintendent of the Marietta School District, quoted Jake Ward and beseeched the club to support public education because “communities cannot have better public schools than the people want.” Cobb County eventually accepted such a “freedom of choice plan” on March 1, 1965 to comply, at least on a token basis, with the Civil Rights Act passed the previous year. Piecemeal integration proceeded gradually over the next five years, ending with full integration of all public schools in 1970.35


Energized by the school integration controversy, a group of residents established the Cobb County White Citizens for Segregation in early 1960. C. E. Rainey chaired the organization, and Liberty Hill Church of Christ minister O. D. Wilson represented the group at the Cartersville Sibley Commission hearing. Wilson claimed the group represented more than seven hundred residents and supported strict segregation in the county’s schools. Pupil placement programs and other forms of token integration could not safeguard segregation, Wilson argued, because “the colored people want complete integration.” The group’s activities and rhetoric intensified after the Sibley hearing. The white supremacist organization planned to survey local business owners’ stances on segregation as well as their willingness to defend the color line in the county. If the White Citizens group considered a merchant to be a staunch segregationist, they would provide him or her with a red, white, and blue sticker that read, “Trade at the Store with the ‘S’ on the Door.” Local business owners who refused to answer the questions or supported pupil placement, parent choice, or other compromises would not receive a sticker. The White Citizens then threatened to orchestrate a boycott of businesses that did not display the emblem. To further emphasize their commitment, members of the Cobb group joined the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan in a pro-segregation motorcade that passed through the southern part of the county.36

The Cobb White Citizens organization and its activities infuriated numerous county commercial and civic leaders. In a unanimous vote, the Cobb County Chamber of

Commerce condemned the group’s calls for an economic boycott of local businesses. Although the Chamber respected the organization’s right to free expression, it deplored its methods. “We reject as morally wrong economic boycotts by any group,” the chamber declared in a strongly-worded press release. Warning of unneeded divisiveness, the Cobb business organization called for a “united front against such coercion.”

Both the Cobb County Times and the Marietta Daily Journal applauded the county’s business community and panned the White Citizens boycott threats. A Times editorial claimed that “virtually all of Cobb’s white businessmen favored continued segregation,” but most did not think total segregation was “worth the price of doing away with public education.” Labeling the White Citizens’ boycott effort “ill advised” and “totally unwarranted,” the Times editorial staff called for its “speedy death for want of support.” Similarly, the Daily Journal applauded the “sane and sensible” business leadership for uniting against coercion from a “misguided pressure group” that threatened to sow seeds of discontent. The paper also published a scathing letter to the editor on its front page. In it, Ruth Inglis, wife of Marietta doctor and Republican activist E.P. Inglis, compared the White Citizens’ tactics to the Spanish Inquisition and Nazi Germany. The Marietta Rotary Club also expressed its opposition to the threatened boycott. “While no one is in a position...to dictate personal policies and principles,” the editorial read, “it is the duty of each thinking citizen to resist suppression of his personal and economic liberties.” The Rotarian contended that regardless of one’s opinion concerning segregation, economic pressure and threats were improper avenues to achieve political aims. The editorial closed with a request that all Cobb businessmen “stand firm against any pressure which they may consider dangerous and not in the best interests of his

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community, his business, and his country.” Racial unrest and the threat of intimidation, economic or otherwise, appalled the majority of commercial and civic leaders in the county. The business community knew all too well that racial strife and political divisiveness were costly expenses.

Just over a year after the Cobb White Citizens’ boycott threats, Malcolm Bryan, the president of the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta, told the Wall Street Journal that “a failure in the South to maintain law and order can cost bitterly in the job opportunities and the wealth that we so much need to increase if our citizens are to be well served.” Well-publicized and notorious incidents like the skirmishes over school integration in Little Rock in 1957 and New Orleans in 1960 could brand southern cities as bad for business. Industrial development, which had been steady before 1957, all but dried up in Little Rock after the contested integration of the capital city’s Central High School.

“There is no way of measuring how many plants we’ve lost or how many we will lose because of racial conditions,” Bryan admitted, “but we know the number has been substantial.” The Cobb business community, including its prominent service clubs, was aware of these and other threats to their continued economic wellbeing, and they sought to enact policies and encourage public behavior that would ensure a maximum level of social stability. Thomas Scott has observed that the Cobb County business community staked a claim to the political center in the ongoing struggle for civil rights and racial equality. Many in local the press and business community were quick to chastise groups...

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38 “Cobb Citizens Should Rise to Quell Boycott Movement,” CCT, 24 March 1960, p. 4; “Leadership Condemns Boycott,” MDJ, 25 March 1960, p. 4; E.P. Inglis, “Will We Allow This to Create Strife?” MDJ, 25 March 1960, p. 1; Scott, Cobb County, Georgia, 283-284; A subsequent letter from Jay V. Roy of Smyrna declared, “This organization, through its rabid viewpoints, will do more harm than good for their cause; mass hysteria has never managed to create anything but havoc.” See, Jay V. Roy, “He Pays for Services, Not Merchant’s Views,” MDJ, 27 March 1961, p. 4; C.L.M., “Editorial,” Rotalight, 8 April 1960, 2.
and organizations, black or white, left or right, that threatened to disturb what many considered to be a peaceful, progressive, and business-friendly community. Indeed, service clubs and their allies understood that a solid reputation was critical for economic growth.\textsuperscript{39} 

Meanwhile, the Republican Party continued to grow in popularity with these same middle- and upper-class Cobb residents. Even with Lyndon B. Johnson, the powerful Senate majority leader from Texas on the Democratic ticket with Massachusetts senator John F. Kennedy, the GOP's share of the presidential vote grew in Cobb County. Like Eisenhower, Nixon promised to 

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\textit{take no state for granted [or]...concede any state to the opposition} in his national convention acceptance speech. Nixon campaigned in Georgia and throughout the South. The Republican vice president believed that his commitment to individual initiative, free market economics, small government, and fervent anticommmunist rhetoric would play well throughout the state and region.\textsuperscript{40}
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Nixon asserted that governmental role and a very important one but the role of government is not to take responsibility from people…is not to dictate to people but to encourage and stimulate the creative productivity of 100 million free Americans.” Nixon echoed the local, state, and national service organization rhetoric. Composed of staunch defenders of the free market, these organizations had long championed positions and policies that advocated individual freedom and initiative. For instance, Rotary

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\item \textsuperscript{40} \textit{Campaign Speeches of American Presidential Candidates,} 1928-1972 (New York: Frederick Unger Publishing Company, 1976), 310.
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International published a symposium in 1957 that asked, “Is Individualism Dying?” A year later William Rastetter Jr. bemoaned “bigness in government, with ever-greater dependence upon it and ever-greater tribute to it.” Rotary’s task, therefore, was “to safeguard the integrity of the individual…immunize him from bigness, and…assure for us and our children the blessings of freedom and human rights.” Bill Mathis, a Marietta Rotarian, editorialized in the club’s bulletin that proposed Democratic legislation to provide the approximately fifteen million Americans eligible for old age survivors’ insurance with expanded medical and nursing care “would do nothing for those who need it most.” He enjoined further that lawmakers should “pause and come up with a plan that will really meet the needs of those who deserve it and not saddle us with more unnecessary taxes and bureaucratic controls for the sake of political expediency.”

Furthermore, Georgia Kiwanians initiated a program to educate Georgians about “our way of life—economically and politically.” Parroting Nixon and the GOP, they warned, “Freedom is up to you” in 1960. Without a doubt, the Republican message was catching on in Cobb County and other bases of growing GOP support.41

Nixon held a late August rally in Atlanta’s Hurt Park. Estimates of attendance ranged from 45,000 to 200,000. In his introductory remarks, Cobb native James Carmichael told Nixon, “I will be honored to work for you in the months to come and vote for you in November.” Carmichael’s endorsement buoyed the spirits of Georgia Republicans. State party chairman William Shartzer claimed, perhaps hyperbolically, that Carmichael’s endorsement meant “400,000 more votes for us in November.” The Atlanta Constitution remarked that “to find a man who once outdrew Gene Talmadge in the total

votes of Democratic primary now speaking up for the Republican nominee shows the growing respectability of the Republican Party” in the state’s urban and industrial centers. Nixon hammered the Democrats’ “rampaging federalism,” increased spending, and high taxes in his Atlanta address. “The South,” Nixon argued, “can never accept such men or such a platform.” Hoping to capitalize on the enthusiasm sparked by Nixon’s rally and Carmichael’s endorsement, the state GOP announced its intent to campaign in the state’s thirty-five largest counties with one simple message: “The national Democratic Party has completely moved away from any philosophies that the people of the South believe in.” Moreover, Georgia Republicans promised to bring GOP heavyweights to campaign throughout the state.42

One such headliner was Arizona Senator Barry Goldwater. Goldwater visited Rome in northwest Georgia where he spoke at a campaign kickoff breakfast for Ralph Ivey, the GOP candidate for the Seventh Congressional District. Goldwater maintained that the Democratic Party refused to adhere to the principles of the Constitution and free enterprise. Goldwater also hammered Kennedy’s proposed welfare programs. “They claim that with this New Frontier nobody will have to work, that they have a money tree in Washington that will turn out money like leaves falling from a tree,” Goldwater jested. He continued by inquiring, “What’s wrong with the old frontier, the Constitution, States’ Rights and principles of free enterprise?” To Goldwater, the Democratic platform promised the “centralization of power and socialism.”43


The Cobb press, which had long mirrored the political sympathies of the county’s service organizations, favored Richard Nixon and the Republican platform. The Cobb County Times ran a Thurman Sensing column that decried the political and economic costs of the one-party Democratic South. Kennedy, Sensing averred, relied on “old pros” and the “magic of Lyndon Johnson” to keep the South Democratic while he assumed a liberal posture to win the backing of northern “left-wingers.” He urged southerners to “decide which candidate best represents the hopes and the aspirations of the South…Our economic progress is dependent on the maintenance of the free enterprise system and the preservation of states’ rights.” In its endorsement, the Republican-leaning Marietta Daily Journal encouraged its readers to vote “Nixon for a better America.” The Kennedy-Johnson ticket’s socioeconomic programs, the editors worried, would go “too far too fast.” The Daily Journal mimicked the service organizations and Republican spokesmen in deriding the Democratic platform as “guided by liberal elements that have little faith in our American system of free enterprise and self-determination.”

Despite the support of the Cobb press as well as much of its commercial-civic elite, Nixon and Lodge lost the county and the state to Kennedy and Johnson. Nixon did, however, improve on Eisenhower’s modest showing. The Republican ticket won 39 percent of Cobb votes. This figure outpaced Nixon’s statewide showing of roughly 37 percent. Like Eisenhower, Nixon ran best in the state’s affluent, growing urban and suburban precincts. In Cobb, the vice president fared best in Marietta and Smyrna where he garnered 40 percent and 44 percent of the votes, respectively. Despite losing Kentucky

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and Louisiana—states won by Eisenhower in 1956—Nixon still managed to win almost half a million more votes than Ike did four years previously.\textsuperscript{45}

Moreover, Matthew Lassiter has observed that the GOP surge that propelled Eisenhower to victory in the 1950s and that almost carried Nixon in 1960 was one of "fiscal conservatism and social moderation that appealed strongly to upwardly mobile white voters who placed economic priorities" above issues related to race. Indeed, Nixon and Kennedy boasted almost identical civil rights platforms, but Kennedy campaigned tirelessly for the support of prominent African American leaders while Nixon downplayed the issue. The political loyalty of African Americans had been trending away from the GOP since the New Deal, but Nixon still won the black vote in Atlanta as well as 56 percent of African Americans throughout the state. This margin, though, was down significantly from 1956 when huge numbers of African American voters flocked to the GOP standard. Some observers, like Barry Goldwater, blamed Nixon's failure to make further inroads in Dixie on Eisenhower's use of federal troops during the 1957 Little Rock Central High School integration crisis as well as Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge's pledge that Nixon would appoint an African American to his cabinet. The more likely explanation, though, was Kennedy's selection of Texan Lyndon Johnson as his vice presidential running mate.\textsuperscript{46}


1960 also marked the first time in half a century that the Republican Party fielded a candidate in the Seventh Congressional District when Rome attorney Ralph Ivey collected eleven thousand signatures to earn a spot on the general election ballot. His opponent was Rome Circuit Court solicitor general and Summerville resident John W. Davis. Although the race was never really close, Ivey generated considerable hype when conservative Republicans Barry Goldwater and Walter Judd of Minnesota visited the district to endorse and campaign for him. Ivey also won the personal endorsement of President Dwight Eisenhower. A former U.S. attorney and future Georgia District Kiwanis president, Ivey sought to make his campaign a referendum against one-party domination. The Rome attorney argued that one-party politics bred a culture of corruption, and Davis, he claimed, would be nothing more than a puppet of an increasingly-liberal national Democratic Party. Davis, on the other hand, campaigned as a traditional southern Democrat who would use his position in Washington to bring federal money and projects to the district. Davis noted the Lockheed factory's increasingly dour employment figures, and he promised that the employment situation would receive his "full attention." In an attempt to counter the well-worn Democratic selling points of seniority and plum committee assignments, Ivey claimed that he would be the senior Republican from Georgia and, therefore, in line for key congressional committee spots of his own.\(^4^7\)

This argument, however, did little to persuade Cobb newspapers and voters. Although both the Times and the Daily Journal applauded the emergence of a functional Republican organization in the region, they endorsed Davis as the more experienced and

\(^{47}\) Scott, Cobb County, Georgia, 475; "Davis Carries 7th District Three to One," CCT, 10 November 1960, p. 1; "Davis Gets Easy Victory for Congress," MDJ, 9 November 1960, p. 1; Jim McElreath, "Davis and Ivey Debate Issues," CCT, 3 November 1960, p. 1, 3.
capable politician. Our southern leaders in Congress have been amazingly successful, in view of the odds against them, in holding back the ultra liberal goals of the left-wingers,” the Daily Journal posited, “They have done so as Democrats, not as Republicans.” Many members of the Cobb County press had made the case for a viable Republican Party and a vibrant two-party system, but the mere presence of a Republican on the ballot did not guarantee that candidate their support or that of the white commercial-civic elite for whom it so often spoke.48

Cobb commercial and civic leaders were willing to endorse the policies and candidacies of moderate, business-oriented Republicans at the presidential level, but they often demurred at the congressional level and below. Cobb commercial and civic leaders understood that their economic livelihood depended on sustained federal money and programs. Lockheed relied primarily on defense contracts, and the payroll dollars from Dobbins Air Force Base came from American taxpayers. Cobb service club members and other commercial-civic elites contended the best way to guarantee the continued operation of the county’s military-industrial apparatus was to elect representatives willing and able to direct federal funds and military contracts to the area. It was simply impractical to elect a Republican representative who would have been a freshman member of the minority party. Political ideology, for Cobb service clubs and prominent leaders in the county’s business and civic community, took a backseat to practicality and expediency in political races beneath the top of the ticket. Ivey’s three-to-one drubbing is a testament to this.

From at least 1952 until 1964, the GOP was the presidential party of the state’s moderate and affluent white voters. Even after the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* decision and Eisenhower’s use of federal troops in Little Rock in 1957, moderate, business-oriented white southerners living in affluent and growing communities like Cobb County voted for Republican presidential candidates in growing numbers. The national GOP’s brand of social and economic conservatism in the 1950s and early 1960s appealed to Cobb service organizations and other members of the county’s white commercial-civic elite. Moreover, many businessmen and professionals living in and around Cobb County remained segregationists well into the 1960s, but they abhorred racial turmoil. To them, strict racial segregation took a backseat to more important economic issues. In short, Cobb County service club conservatives cast their lot with candidates and positions that would best guarantee social order and economic growth. This political approach put many service club members and other business-minded voters at odds with other conservatives as the GOP grew more ideologically-rigid during the 1960s, culminating in the 1964 presidential campaign of Barry Goldwater.\(^{49}\)

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CHAPTER 4

IN GOLDWATER’S WAKE: THE CLASH OF IDEOLOGY AND PRACTICALITY

The national Democratic Party confirmed its intent to reform the nation’s social
and political landscapes by undoing white supremacy and Jim Crow segregation in the
South in the early 1960s. In 1962, federal courts ordered the reapportionment of
numerous state legislatures and banned the use of discriminatory electoral systems like
the county unit system, which violated the principle of “one person, one vote.” The
passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the subsequent Voting Rights Act of 1965
confirmed the resolve of national Democrats to end segregation in the region. Their
commitment to civil rights legislation angered many, especially rural, white southerners.
These voters sought to nominate and elect a conservative candidate who both understood
and sympathized with the South. Republican Barry Goldwater, the arch-conservative
Arizona senator, offered himself as just such a candidate. Goldwater’s extreme rhetoric,
erratic campaign, and attraction of racially-conservative supporters, however, troubled
many business-minded voters in places like Cobb County. Some worried that Goldwater
would jeopardize their safety and livelihood. Moreover, members of Cobb County’s
white commercial-civic elite opposed Goldwater’s brand of ideologically-rigid
conservatism that, they argued, put principle ahead of progress.¹

Goldwater had been the unabashed champion of his party’s conservative wing
since the late 1950s. Strict conservatives in the Republican Party—many still bitter over

¹ For a thoughtful political biography of Goldwater see, Robert Alan Goldberg, *Barry Goldwater* (New
Ike’s 1952 convention defeat of Ohio senator Robert Taft—had opposed much of Eisenhower’s domestic agenda. They refused to consider anyone who would expand social security, propose government-sponsored health care initiatives, and send federal troops to settle local integration disputes to be a true conservative. Several of these anti-Eisenhower Republicans proposed Goldwater as an alternative to Richard Nixon in 1960, but he withdrew from consideration and campaigned faithfully for the party’s moderate nominee. Goldwater delivered more than one hundred stump speeches for Nixon and many more for other Republican candidates up and down the ticket. He used this publicity to build name recognition and spread his conservative message of individual responsibility, small government, and unfettered free market capitalism across the country. His tireless efforts during and after the 1960 campaign not only enhanced the organizational strength of the GOP’s conservative wing but also put him in contention for the 1964 Republican presidential nomination along with prominent moderate Republican governors like Nelson A. Rockefeller of New York, George W. Romney of Michigan, and William W. Scranton of Pennsylvania.²

Aware that he would need support of southern delegates to overcome his opponents’ eastern and midwestern bases, Goldwater devoted a great deal of time and resources to cultivate support in the region. As early as the mid-1950s, Goldwater had

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cast himself as a southern sympathizer. –While I am a westerner by birth,” he remarked to Dixie Business magazine, –long ago adopted the South by spending four years in school down there, so I can lay some claim to my qualification as a Southerner.” In a 1961 Atlanta address, he argued that the GOP was not going to win –the Negro vote as a bloc in 1964 or 1968, so we ought to go hunting where the ducks are.” Additionally, the senator‘s vociferous opposition to President Lyndon Johnson‘s civil rights program attracted the support of many disenchanted white, southern Democrats. Although Goldwater’s opposition to federal civil rights legislation was rooted in a commitment to states‘ rights and limited federal government and not necessarily racism, many white southerners did not concern themselves with such distinctions. Indeed, political pundits Rowland Evans and Robert Novak noted that many of these new Goldwater adherents were –all out segregationists.” This development troubled many establishment Republicans inside and outside the state. The majority of Georgia‘s establishment GOP leadership was racially moderate. Individuals like Georgia National Republican Committee chairman Robert R. Snodgrass were ardent supporters of Dwight Eisenhower‘s centrist approach. These Georgia Republicans had labored throughout the 1950s and early 1960s to forge a moderately-conservative alternative to the Democratic Party. Snodgrass feared that Goldwater‘s statements and positions would trigger an influx of racial extremists that would further alienate the GOP from African Americans and racial moderates.3

In mid-March 1964, Savannah state senator Joseph J. Tribble announced that he would seek the state party chairmanship at the GOP state convention in May. This set the stage for an internal power struggle between the moderate and conservative wings of the Georgia Republican Party. Tribble had abandoned the Democrats in 1960 because, in his opinion, the party had moved away from “the individualistic principles of Thomas Jefferson.” He was also unhappy with the slow growth of Republican strength in the state. He promised to make the state—a Democratic bastion—a toss-up in the upcoming presidential election if he were elected chairman. Another conservative, Roscoe T. Pickett of Jasper, sought Snodgrass’s old national committeeman post. Pickett, a staunch segregationist who had supported Robert Taft over Eisenhower during the 1952 Republican National Convention, had long been an opponent of the moderate Republican establishment. Both Tribble and Pickett were prominent Goldwater supporters. Tribble even chaired the Georgia Draft Goldwater movement before the Arizonan’s official announcement. Indeed, many of the state GOP’s newest and most energetic members backed Barry Goldwater, and the Arizona senator’s address to the state GOP convention certainly helped to elect Tribble and Pickett over their moderate opponents. Their victories marked the conservative capture of the Georgia Republican Party.4

Scenes like this played out all over the South as strict racial conservatives purged moderates and seized control of the region’s Republican machinery. Although this certainly improved Goldwater’s chances of winning both the party’s nomination and southern states in general election, the purge came at a steep price. Staunch

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segregationists alienated liberal and moderate Republicans as well as independent voters. In a speech to the Atlanta Rotary Club, Robert Snodgrass denounced his party’s new leaders, “The Republican Party of Georgia cannot afford—and it must not be led by—hatemongers like the Ku Kluxers, the John Birchites, and the cast-offs and has-beens of the Democrat [sic] Party.” Snodgrass, who claimed to have received over one hundred requests for him to form a “Republicans for Johnson” group, argued that the lily-white direction of the state party would alienate not only African Americans but also many of the affluent businessmen and professionals who had been drawn to the moderate GOP of Dwight Eisenhower.5

In Cobb County, a group of two dozen or so Republicans including Lockheed mathematician and Marietta Rotarian Warren Herron, Dr. Peter and Ruth Inglis, C.M. McCutcheon, Frank Wilson, Jr., and Kiwanian Lawson Yow chartered the Cobb County Republican Association in April 1961. Thomas Scott has indicated that many of these individuals gravitated toward the GOP for its conservative economic policies and strong stance on national defense. Like local service clubs, they also disdained the one-party system. Unlike many of the newcomers to the state GOP, however, early Cobb Republicans were relatively moderate on issues of race. Some, like the Inglises, had taken strong public stances against closing the public schools and other forms of white racial reaction during the 1950s and early 1960s. Despite the influx of racially conservative

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segregationists into the state party, Cobb Republicans cited their dismay over the decline in individual initiative and the concomitant growth of federal power in their endorsement of Barry Goldwater during their 1964 county convention.  

Analyzing the shifting political atmosphere in the area, Conley Ingram, a judge and prominent Marietta Rotarian, noted that many local Democrats were growing increasingly dissatisfied with the “liberal president.” Kennedy, he argued, seemed intent on using federal dictate and punitive civil rights legislation to rush social change and stymie free enterprise. Ingram agreed that segregation’s time had passed and that Jim Crow was unlawful, but he maintained, “Our Boston President doesn’t seem to understand and appreciate that his big civil rights push is taking the entire nation a little too fast.” Many southerners believed that Goldwater was the “answer for the South,” but Ingram was less sure. “At this point we cannot be certain that he is the most desirable,” Ingram wrote. It was up to voters to research candidates and make informed decisions based on the issues rather than on an adherence to party labels.

Service organizations at all levels, it seemed, were growing more strident in their opposition to the increasingly liberal and expensive socioeconomic policies of the national Democratic Party. In May 1964, the Rotarian, the national publication of Rotary International, published a symposium on “Big Government” that included a piece by Texas Republican senator John G. Tower. Tower compared the centralization of government to “social engineering” and “dictatorship.” At the state level, Georgia Kiwanians pledged to rededicate themselves to upholding and espousing “the principles

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6 Scott, Cobb County, Georgia, 476, 483; Bass and DeVries, The Transformation of Southern Politics, 26. Bass and DeVries considered “reformers” to be a very small portion of early postwar Republicans in the South; “Cobb GOP Hits County Government; Calls for Election Law Revision,” CCT, 27 February 1964, p. 5.
7 C.I., “Where Do We Go from Here?” Rotolight, 16 August 1963, 2.
of a free competition system as an indispensable part of the life and strength of our countries [sic].” The Public and Business Affairs Committee of the Georgia District of Kiwanis International instructed its members to work to achieve “financial stability in government” in order to preserve the free enterprise system. W. Kelley Mosley, that committee’s chairman, demanded that government stop seeking to provide services that could otherwise be provided by private enterprise.8

The new state GOP used similar language to persuade Georgia voters to abandon the Democratic Party. Newly-elected state party chairman Joseph Tribble derided national Democrats as “socialist planners.” “Socialists,” Tribble averred, were not adherents of “the states’ rights principles set down by Thomas Jefferson.” This rhetoric foreshadowed an inversion in the base of support for the Republican Party in Georgia during the 1964 Johnson-Goldwater contest. Goldwater continued to promote his pro-free market, pro-freedom, anti-communist bona fides, but he ran his campaign in Georgia and the rest of the South to appeal to rural, white Democrats who opposed the Johnson’s civil rights stance. He and his campaign staff believed that the more racially-moderate urban and suburban core of the party would remain loyal in spite of this tactic.9

Indeed, constant appeals to “states’ rights,” a thinly veiled code for the politics of race and segregation, worked to great effect in the Georgia Black Belt region, but it proved less effective in the state’s cities and suburbs. Unlike the Black Belt, where African-Americans constituted a majority of the population, Cobb County’s dwindling


black population made up less than ten percent of its total population by 1960, and the
blatant strategy did relatively little to energize substantial support for the Arizona
Republican in Cobb’s largest population centers.\textsuperscript{10}

These issues of race and civil rights, however, were front and center during the
Republican National Convention in San Francisco. After defeating his proposals to
strengthen the party’s civil rights platform plank, Governor William Scranton of
Pennsylvania lambasted the John Birch Society and other extremist elements in the party.
Scranton also likened Goldwater’s vote against the 1964 Civil Rights Act as tantamount
to a vote for segregation and white supremacy. The nomination of an ideologically-rigid
conservative like Goldwater, the Pennsylvanian told the staunchly pro-Goldwater
convention, marked an “hour of crisis” for party and country. Another moderate
Republican, Governor Nelson Rockefeller of New York, began the debate in favor of
Scranton’s civil rights plank by recommending a blanket denunciation of all extremist
groups from the John Birch Society and the Ku Klux Klan to the Communist Party. Later
in his convention speech, Rockefeller lashed out against the “goon squads and Nazi
tactics” of the conservative Goldwater supporters.\textsuperscript{11}

When Goldwater finally took the stage, he chided the American public for
“following false prophets” and called for a return to the principles of hard work,
individual rights, and smaller government in his nationally-televised acceptance speech.
In the speech’s most memorable line, Goldwater proclaimed, “I would remind you that
extremism in the defense of liberty is no vice...[and] moderation in the pursuit of justice

is no virtue.” Goldwater’s address thrilled the Cow Palace crowd but it did little to persuade independent and undecided voters. A flurry of negative reviews criticizing the convention debacle and Goldwater’s extreme rhetoric flooded the press. Furthermore, Goldwater’s habit of making unpopular speeches at inopportune locations hobbled his campaign. For example, Goldwater defended his calls to privatize the Tennessee Valley Authority during a speech in Knoxville, Tennessee where the TVA headquarters was located. In fact, Goldwater activist Stephen Shadegg has claimed that, by the fall, the majority of American voters saw the Republican nominee as “the dangerous radical, the advocate of drastic change, the proponent of policies which might take the nation into a nuclear war, alter the domestic economy, destroy Social Security, and bring an abrupt halt to the program of farm subsidy.” To be sure, Goldwater’s political style was certainly sincere and straightforward, but this troubled many voters.  

The Republican ticket, for its part, attempted to disabuse the electorate of this negative perception. New York congressman and Republican vice-presidential candidate William Miller made a late-October campaign stop in Marietta to champion the ticket’s commitment to the defense industry. Fifty-three percent of Cobb County’s registered voters worked at the Lockheed factory and many more relied on its continued operation for their livelihood. Miller told the crowd that claims that Goldwater would close the Warner Robins Air Force Base and the Lockheed-Georgia aircraft plant were “politically dishonest.” It was Johnson, he charged, who had threatened to cut off federal aid and close critical military installations if the South defected to the GOP. In a direct appeal to

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the small business leaders and other supporters of Georgia’s antiunion “right-to-work” laws, Miller suggested that President Johnson would nominate former socialist Walter Reuther to be the next secretary of labor. Due to the high-technology, skill-intensive labor required at the Lockheed plant, however, Marietta and the surrounding communities boasted a large chapter of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAM) union. This sort of claim, it seems, would have been better suited for a stump speech in rural Georgia as opposed to one in the heart of Georgia’s aerospace industry. Still, some Lockheed employees, like Cobb GOP activist Warren Herron, did support the Republican ticket. A pro-Goldwater group of Lockheed employees commissioned a newspaper advertisement that claimed, “The Johnson administration is a threat to the aircraft industry in our area…and the military defense of our nation.” It declared in bold letters, “Protect your job and your country with the Goldwater-Chapin team.” The GOP, it seemed, would not concede the Lockheed vote—a majority of Cobb’s electorate—to the Democrats without a fight.13

The implications of the presidential election on the future of the Lockheed-Georgia factory consumed the local press and business community. The Marietta Daily Journal featured a prominent piece on Lockheed’s contribution to the Cold War defense effort just days before the election. The article revealed that Lockheed led all defense contractors with awards of more than $1.5 billion. The Marietta factory also served as the principle construction site for two of the most lucrative Lockheed products: the C-141A

13 Selby McCash, “Bill Miller Brings Republican Campaign Tour to Cobb County,” CCT, 29 October 1964, p. 1, 11; Remer Tyson, “Georgia, Nation to Go GOP, Miller Predicts,” AC, 27 October 1964, p. 1, 8; Goldwater-Chapin Political Advertisement, MDJ, 2 November 1964, p. 8. The C-130 was programmed and released during the Eisenhower administration, but the Kennedy-Johnson administration released the most recent C-141 contract. This contract reversed job losses at the factory and won the praise of the county’s business and civic leaders.
StarLifter and the C-130E Hercules. Another *Daily Journal* piece inquired how Cobb’s presidential vote would affect business at Lockheed. The article recounted how production at the Lockheed factory had been curtailed and jobs lost during the second Eisenhower administration. Indeed, employment had been declining since the mid-1950s, and it had reached an all-time low of 10,073 in late 1960. This was down nearly fifty percent from a high of almost 20,000 in August 1956. The factory’s fortunes, though, had changed when the Kennedy White House announced in March 1961 that Lockheed had won the contract to manufacture the new C-141 StarLifter jet cargo transport. “Since that time,” the piece read, “the Marietta plant has become the nation’s number one producer of military airlifters.” Lockheed officials, however, warned that the factory needed to win the new CX-HLS jet cargo transport contract to maintain it nearly 20,000-strong workforce. The Seattle-based Boeing and Long Beach-based Douglas Aircraft Company were also in the running for the contract. Both California and Washington, the article stated, were likely Johnson states. This led some to worry that a Goldwater win in Cobb County and Georgia might cost Marietta the contract as well as “its position as the airlift center for the Free World.” Lastly, in its final issue before Election Day, the *Lockheed Southern Star*, the official publication of Lockheed-Georgia, ran a front-page article announcing LBJ’s selection of its economy-sized JetStar as the next Air Force One.\footnote{“Lockheed Tops Defense List,” *MDJ*, 1 November 1964, p. 1; Paul Brookshire, “How Will Cobb County Voting Affect Lockheed’s Business?” *MDJ*, 1 November 1964, sec. A, p. 4; Lord, “Selected Factors,” 11; “President Johnson’s Choice Makes JetStar No. 1 Plane,” *Lockheed Southern Star*, 29 October 1964, 1.}

In fact, the issue of which candidates could best ensure the continued growth and success of Lockheed dominated the 1964 campaign in Cobb County. Republican Edward Y. Chapin III, who challenged Congressman John W. Davis, attempted to paint the incumbent Democrat as a rubber stamp for unpopular Great Society-style programs. This
rhetoric, though, was more late-season political bluster than anything substantive. Although Davis had regularly supported the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, he considered himself a “middle of the road” Democrat. Davis also fought Chapin’s aspersions with a Farm Bureau Federation chart that rated him as a political centrist. The Rotary Club of Marietta also praised Davis for his “middle of the road political philosophy” just before the election.¹⁵

The main issue for the Cobb County business and civic community, though, was Davis’s ability to procure defense contracts, public school assistance, infrastructure subsidies, and other forms of federal aid connected to the county’s military-industrial establishment. Davis disseminated routine press releases that touted his ability to secure the tangible results that could only come from having a well-connected, high ranking Democrat as the county’s representative in Washington. All across the South, one-party dominance and the seniority rule allowed southern Democrats to rise quickly through the party’s ranks and fill seats on important congressional committees. For example, Davis was a ranking member on the House Committee on Science and Aeronautics. This position gave him considerable clout in directing military-industrial projects to Cobb County and the Seventh District. In addition to his work on Lockheed contracts, Davis was instrumental in supporting projects like the proposed NASA space research center at Marietta’s Southern Technical Institute. According to the Marietta Daily Journal, the Davis-Chapin race boiled down to whether the voters wanted to discard Davis and his ability to get things done for the district and its people in order to get more conservative

voting.” Davis promised that “no greater calamity could befall the Seventh District of Georgia than to be represented by a freshman in Congress of the Republican Party with a Democratic majority and a Democratic administration in power.”

As the election drew closer, the local press, which had been trending Republican in the last three presidential elections, refused to endorse Goldwater. The editors of the *Marietta Daily Journal* cited a litany of Goldwater’s irresponsible and provocative statements concerning the use of nuclear weapons and his apparent willingness to escalate the Cold War on a whim as evidence of the Republican’s “frightening” approach to foreign policy. The *Daily Journal* admitted their perceptions may have been erroneous, but they argued the American people could not elect Barry Goldwater and then learn that they were accurate. Their endorsement of Lyndon Johnson’s candidacy should not, however, be construed as a full-throated endorsement of his social and economic policies. Like nuclear war, the *Daily Journal* contended, the Democratic president’s “welfare-statism can and will destroy this nation” unless checked. In a similar vein, Ed W. Hiles warned in an address published in the *Georgia District Kiwanian* that “freedom is not free, and it must not be taken for granted. It can be lost just as surely...tax by tax, subsidy by subsidy, and regulation by regulation as it can bullet by bullet, bomb by bomb, or

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missile by missile.” Despite their significant misgivings with Johnson's socioeconomic policies, Goldwater's irresponsible behavior and style startled moderate voters throughout Cobb County and the country. Johnson may have been a flawed candidate, but he represented the responsible choice for many members of the county's white commercial-civic elite in 1964.17

Likewise, the local press supported Democrat John Davis for Congress. Unlike their tepid endorsement-by-default of Johnson, their support of Davis was enthusiastic and wholehearted. Davis was “a conservative who has respect for the realities of life.” He had also been an invaluable resource for the county and district. In his more than three years in Congress, Davis had delivered Cobb’s share of impact aid funds and helped Lockheed-Georgia cut through “Washington red tape.” The county, the endorsement argued, could not afford to lose Davis’ seniority on the House Committee on Science and Aeronautics because his seat was critical to Lockheed-Georgia’s continued success. The Cobb County Times made essentially the same points in their endorsement of Davis. Davis would simply be more effective at assisting Lockheed-Georgia and the people of Cobb County than Ed Chapin. “The Democratic majority in Congress and the Democratic administration,” the Times concluded, “just don’t cater much to Republican Congressmen.” The Cobb press seemed to speak for the county’s business and service organizations with their endorsements. Influential representatives like John Davis were an investment for the county’s future economic stability. His relationship with Lockheed-Georgia and other powerful Georgia lawmakers like Senator Richard B. Russell and Congressman Carl Vinson helped to guarantee the success of the county’s major

employer and economic base. Many in the county who relied on government defense contracts for their jobs and federal school aid for the children’s educations would have considered it foolhardy to vote out a proven ally like John Davis in favor of an unproven, freshman Republican.18

On Election Day, however, both Johnson and Davis lost in Cobb County. Goldwater won the state by a 54 percent to 46 percent margin. Moreover, with the exception of Marietta, Goldwater carried all of Cobb and defeated Johnson by more than 4,000 votes. Goldwater’s strong performance in the county’s rural and unincorporated areas represented a disruption in partisan voting trends in the state and county. Eisenhower and Nixon had performed best in the state’s urban and suburban areas like Atlanta and Marietta. Across the state, though, Goldwater received his strongest support from disaffected Black Belt Democrats, many of whom crossed party lines for the first time to vote for the conservative Republican. Most of these rural and Black Belt whites no doubt voted for Goldwater because of his strong opposition to federal civil rights legislation. Goldwater, though, also received support from many of the state’s urban and suburban whites. For example, Smyrna and the growing bedroom communities of South and East Cobb supported the Republican. Yet many suburban Cobb countians who supported Goldwater were not necessarily motivated by his blatant appeals to racial politics. They embraced Goldwater for his calls for limited government and individual freedom. Dorsey Dodgen, a charter member of the Cobb County Young Republicans and

18 “We Endorse John Davis,” MDJ, 25 October 1964, p. 4; “John Davis’ Record Fits Him for Another Term in Congress,” CCT, 29 October 1964, p. 4.
the chairman of Goldwater’s campaign in the county, credited Goldwater’s staunch anticommunist and antigovernment stances for his strong showing in their communities.19

Furthermore, political scientists Earl and Merle Black have suggested that white opposition to welfare spending was racially tinged because African Americans were the “highly visible beneficiaries” of the Great Society in the South. Many southern whites saw themselves funding Johnson’s Great Society welfare programs without receiving any of its benefits. These benefits, in their eyes, went to men and women on food stamps, welfare, or some other form of government assistance. Although blatant appeals to race may not have motivated as many white affluent urban and suburban voters as they did in rural Georgia, race was, nonetheless, inseparable from even the most “colorblind” economic issue.20

Johnson, meanwhile, won seven of Marietta’s eight wards. The incumbent president’s appeal transcended race and class as he performed well in the city’s black and white neighborhoods. His strong performance in Marietta was due to a combination of factors. First, in spite of his conservative principles, Goldwater’s erratic campaign style—such as pillorying the space program and military spending despite significant overt support for such programs in his own party platform—was enough to frighten many voters in a community that depended on a steady stream of military contracts, industrial subsidies, and other forms of federal spending. Secondly, Marietta was home to the majority of the county’s African American population. The bulk of black voters in Cobb

threw their support to the Democratic president. Numan Bartley observed that the Democratic Party’s increasingly vocal support for civil rights at the national level and the Republican Party’s complete alienation of African Americans at the state and local levels combined to deny Republican’s a victory in their traditional bases of support like Fulton County. The GOP’s share of Fulton’s vote dropped by over five percentage points from 49.2 in 1960 to 43.9 in 1964. Moreover, political scientist Bernard Cosman has also suggested that the African-American withdrawal from the GOP was almost absolute, giving the Arizonan perhaps a single percent of the South’s total black vote.21

Indeed, the 1964 presidential campaign upended voting patterns throughout the region and nation. Goldwater’s appeal was strongest in the Deep South states of Georgia, South Carolina, Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana, but he failed to carry a single Upper South state. These states and Florida had demonstrated the greatest affinity for the GOP in the region between 1952 and 1960. In all, the Goldwater campaign lost roughly two-thirds of the South’s total electoral vote to LBJ. Although Goldwater won the support of some suburban whites in the Deep South, he performed poorly among suburban voters outside the region. Johnson not only captured the suburbs of the North but also those in the Upper South.22


Furthermore, Ed Chapin rode Goldwater’s coattails to victory in the county. Chapin’s victory in Cobb, though, was narrower than Goldwater’s. Chapin won most of the county’s rural and unincorporated areas, but Davis managed to keep the race close in many of those precincts. Davis won roughly half a dozen precincts and trounced his Republican challenger in Marietta. Marietta gave more than sixty percent of its vote to Davis. When all the votes were counted, Chapin had bested Davis in Cobb by less than five hundred votes. Outside Cobb, Davis ran well in the district’s northern and western counties to defeat Chapin by roughly seven thousand votes.23

Howard ―Bo‖ Callaway, a former Democrat from Harris County in west-central Georgia’s Third Congressional District, was the only Georgia GOP congressional candidate able to capitalize on Goldwater’s statewide victory. His district was an old Talmadge stronghold where Goldwater had carried roughly 61 percent of the vote. Callaway exploited the Arizonan’s popularity to defeat former lieutenant governor Garland T. Byrd in the predominantly rural district. Callaway’s victory made him the first Republican to represent the state in Congress in nearly a century.24

In addition to backing Goldwater and Chapin, Cobb elected its first Republican state representative in 1964. ―Big‖ Ben Jordan, a sales executive at the Sloan Paper Company, lived in Mableton in South Cobb. The relatively young Jordan had served a recent term as the president of the Cobb County Young Republicans and as the director of the South Cobb Jaycees. Running against veteran Democrat Robert Flournoy, Jordan

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23 Pascal Grubbs, ―Davis Wins Over Chapin By 7,000,‖ MDI, 4 November 1964, sec. A, p. 1, 2; ―Consolidated Election Returns for Cobb County,‖ p. 9; Scott, Cobb County, Georgia, 484.
24 ―Election Shatters Georgia Tradition,‖ p. 2; Scott, Cobb County, Georgia, 482; Ben Chester, ―Georgia GOP Claims First Representative,‖ Atlanta Times, 4 November 1964, sec. A, p. 1, 4; ―Callaway Predicts Conservative Win,‖ Macon Telegraph, 26 November 1964, p. 1; ―Callaway Urges GOP Drive in ‘66,‖ SMN, 27 November 1964, sec. A, p. 10.
branded himself a conservative Republican and successfully tethered his political fortunes to those of Goldwater and Chapin.25

The result of the Jordan-Flournoy election was strikingly similar to the congressional race between Chapin and Davis. Jordan ran strongest in the same areas as Chapin, and his margins of victory were almost identical. Jordan received the bulk of his support from the rural and unincorporated areas of North and South Cobb, but he also won Smyrna. Flournoy, like Davis, ran best in the county seat of Marietta where he won almost 65 percent of the vote. When the votes were tallied, Jordan had defeated Flournoy by less than two hundred votes or about three-fifths of one percent.26

Jordan’s victory gave the local Republican organization its first foothold in the county and hope for future electoral success. C.M. McCutcheon, the chairman of the Cobb Republican executive committee, declared that Cobb voters would no longer fear that a Republican vote was a wasted one. He argued that more GOP supporters would be willing to donate both time and money to the party now that they understood their contributions would not go “down the drain.” In addition to improving organizational and fundraising efforts, the Jordan coup, Cobb Republicans hoped, would also make it “easier to attract leading men from business and other fields to run under the Republican banner.” The Marietta Daily Journal recognized—more than a little condescendingly—that the Cobb GOP’s “lifelong dream of playing with the big kids on an equal footing in local politics is finally coming true.” A November 1964 federal district court ruling, however, meant that Jordan would only serve a “short” term in the General Assembly. The court had ordered the state’s legislative districts reapportioned to remedy decades of

25 Scott, Cobb County, Georgia, 485; Ben Jordan Campaign Advertisement, CCT, 1 October 1964, p. 2; Consolidated Election Returns for Cobb County,” p. 9.
26 Ibid.; Scott, Cobb County, Georgia, 484.
unfair, rural domination of state government. The ruling also meant that a special election had to be held to elect new representatives under an approved apportionment plan. Jordan, though, defeated Democrat Bill Teague to win reelection.\textsuperscript{27}

In addition to the national, state, and local political races, Cobb voters had the opportunity to cast their ballots in a five-county referendum to decide the fate of rapid transit in the Atlanta metropolitan area. This referendum divided the county’s electorate with urban and industrial areas of the county supporting the measure and the bulk of rural and unincorporated communities demurring. In addition to Cobb’s rural-urban divide, the rapid transit battle, which continued into the summer of 1965, pitted the county’s service organizations and business community against its most ideologically conservative Republican activists.\textsuperscript{28}

The five-county Atlanta metropolitan area’s tremendous population and economic growth had placed an increasingly heavy burden on the region’s transportation infrastructure. The expansion of the military-industrial operations in Cobb County also meant that thousands of commuters from surrounding counties were driving into Cobb on increasingly congested roadways. Additionally, thousands of Cobb residents commuted daily between their suburban bedroom communities and Atlanta. These developments made the region’s roads among the most heavily travelled in the country, and what began as heavy traffic flow had become congestion. This congestion cost commuters both time and money, but the state and local communities also paid a large price by building more and more expressways to deal with the area’s growing traffic problem. By the early


\textsuperscript{28} These five counties are Clayton, Cobb, DeKalb, Gwinnett, and Fulton.
1960s, many metropolitan business leaders began pitching the concept of a rapid transit system as a solution to the congestion that choked the region's major roadways and drained state and local coffers. One such group was the "Rapid Transit Committee of 100." Chaired by former governor Ernest Vandiver, the commercial-civic organization campaigned extensively for the creation of a rapid transit alternative for the Atlanta Metro area. Vandiver argued that the system would "help orderly development and traffic in all quarters." Not only were expressways expensive to build and maintain, they also prevented huge tracts of land from being developed and added to the region's tax rolls. A combined rail-bus system, he contended, would be a relatively inexpensive cure.\(^\text{29}\)

Voters in the five-county area had the opportunity to vote on the creation of a preliminary metropolitan rapid transit authority in November 1964. This referendum required the approval of all five counties for the development of rapid transit to move forward. To ensure its passage, Vandiver and members of the Committee of 100 lobbied the region's business and civic leaders. Vandiver spoke to the Cobb County Chamber of Commerce in late October to explain the amendment. The former governor maintained that a vote in favor did not automatically commit the county to funding the transit system. The transit authority would have no power to impose taxes without county approval, and with almost a million automobiles on the road, Vandiver warned that "we will strangle ourselves with highways" if the rapid transit amendment failed. In short, rapid transit was crucial to continued economic and population growth.\(^\text{30}\)


Indeed, support for rapid transit among the county’s business and civic leaders was strong even before the Committee of 100’s last minute push. In early June, the Chamber of Commerce released a poll that showed over 80 percent of its members favored rapid transit. Similarly, the chamber’s board of directors endorsed the plan by an 11-4 vote. Cobb service organizations, always among the first to support community development projects, endorsed the concept of rapid transit more than a year before the 1964 referendum. A Marietta Rotarian argued that a metropolitan transit system, with its capacity to bring thousands of commuters and visitors into the county from all across the metropolitan area, would work miracles on our downtown areas.”

Cobb service organizations, primarily the prominent Rotary Club of Marietta, increased its vocal support for rapid transit as the vote drew nearer. Rotarian Barney Nunn listed several reasons to support the proposed transit system in the club’s weekly bulletin. Transit would reduce the number of automobiles on the highways and, consequently, save lives and reduce congestion. “It is doubtful than any transit line,” Nunn insisted, “could be more needed, more successful and more apt to pay its own way than a line running from the Atlanta Airport, by the new [Atlanta-Fulton County] stadium, state buildings, downtown…and on to the door of Lockheed in Marietta.” John Weitnauer, another Rotarian, declared bluntly, “We should vote YES for this amendment.” Rapid transit, he maintained, was the only practical solution to cope with the transportation problems caused by the region’s tremendous growth. Rapid transit, therefore, benefitted not only Atlanta and those who planned to ride the trains regularly but everyone in the metropolitan area. Better traffic conditions meant stable insurance

rates. New businesses along the new transit route meant a broadened tax digest for the city and county. Weitnauer, thus, urged his fellow service club members to vote yes because it was vital to the future growth and prosperity of your county.”

Edward Hatfield has argued that the metro-Atlanta rapid transit battle marked the first assertion of suburban identity that was not only separate from, but also in opposition to, the city center.” Indeed, many Cobb residents expressed strong anti-Atlanta sentiments because of pervasive rumors that Atlanta politicians wished to annex portions of rapidly-growing South Cobb. Atlanta officials denied these rumors publicly, but the Fulton County legislative delegation’s efforts to block a proposed constitutional amendment that would have allowed Cobb County to hold a referendum to approve or deny any proposed annexations did little to mollify Cobb residents. During his 1964 campaign for county commissioner, Ernest Barrett called on Cobb citizens to muster whatever defenses we have at hand" to prevent Atlanta from annexing territory on the Cobb side of the Chattahoochee River. Barrett, a Democrat, contended that these defenses should be legal and implemented with a minimum of hysteric” because he understood that the Atlanta issue could and would be used as a political football” in political discourse.33

Rapid transit, though, was too important to members of the county’s commercial-civic elite to allow concerns about Atlanta to prevent the creation of a transit system and stymie the county’s economic development. Howard Atherton, a prominent Kiwanian and Marietta mayor, said the city council had a responsibility to urge its residents to

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support the transit amendment. The stakes were simply too high not to act. Moreover, the Marietta Daily Journal reminded its readers that the federal government had already established a funding scheme for transportation projects like the proposed metropolitan rapid transit system on a two-thirds federal, one-third local basis. A negative vote by any of the five counties would prevent access to these funds and could kill the prospects of rapid transit in the region.34

Transit proponents like the Cobb Chamber of Commerce and the Marietta Rotary Club shared these sentiments. The chamber reminded voters that the November transit amendment was non-restrictive in nature. A yes vote would neither force the county to join the rapid transit authority nor obligate it to have rapid transit lines. These decisions would be left to the voters of the individual counties at a later date. The Marietta Rotary Club maintained further that Cobb citizens could not be forced to commit their county to any expenditure of funds for a rapid transit system” by any other county or municipality because local voters would have a veto at the polls. The Cobb County Times reiterated that the proposed amendment did not commit the county to any future action. “It simply opens the door,” the editorial declared, “and the door must be opened.”35

The 1964 rapid transit amendment won the narrow approval of the Cobb electorate. The measure passed by roughly 400 votes out of more than 28,000 cast. The amendment passed overwhelmingly in the other four metropolitan counties. Rapid transit’s razor-thin margin of victory, however, did not bode well for the future of rapid

transit in Cobb County. Cobb’s transit advocates spent as much time assuring voters that their vote would not lead to higher taxes or closer relations with an increasingly-unpopular Atlanta as they did championing the system’s potential benefits. The fate of rapid transit in Cobb County, therefore, was far from certain.\textsuperscript{36}

Within months, the General Assembly had passed a comprehensive plan outlining the administrative composition of the Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA) during its 1965 legislative session. The scheme consisted of an eleven-member board of directors composed of representatives from each participating MARTA participant. The City of Atlanta would have four seats, DeKalb and Fulton Counties would each have two, and Clayton, Cobb, and Gwinnett would each receive one. This authority would then plan, build, and operate the new metropolitan mass transportation system. The state legislature then sent the new transit amendment to the five-county metro area for its approval. Unlike the 1964 referendum, a negative vote would not kill the entire project. A no vote would only exclude a particular county from the transit authority. This referendum was set for June 16, 1965.\textsuperscript{37}

Marietta Mayor Howard Atherton, one of the few Cobb government officials willing to support rapid transit openly in 1965, argued the system’s prospects had worsened in the county since the first transit referendum the previous fall. Former governor Ernest Vandiver repeated his calls for Cobb to join the rapid transit authority. In Vandiver’s opinion, MARTA represented the surest way for Cobb to remain a vibrant member of the growing metro area. Unlike the 1964 transit referendum, though, the vast


majority of Cobb commercial and civic leaders, including county service clubs, remained relatively silent on the 1965 MARTA amendment. Apart from Atherton, Lockheed-Georgia president Dick Pulver was one of the few prominent members of the Cobb commercial-civic elite to endorse MARTA in 1965.\textsuperscript{38}

Opposition to MARTA, on the other hand, was strident and widespread. The Cobb County Young Republicans led the crusade against the MARTA amendment. The organization approved a resolution opposing Cobb’s participation in the proposed rapid transit authority. Claiming that transit had failed wherever it had been tried, the group argued that the pressing internal needs of the county preclude[d] the expenditures of funds in uncertain public ventures of this nature.” Ben Jordan, a former organization president and the county’s lone GOP state representative, told the Young Republicans simply, “I believe Cobb County has enough problems to solve in providing roads, sewage, education, recreation and other dire necessities without getting into the luxury of rapid transit at this time.”\textsuperscript{39}

Cobb Young Republicans and other transit critics seized on projections that said it would be 1980 or later before rapid transit service would reach the county. The Young Republicans used a full-page ad in the \textit{Marietta Daily Journal} to attack MARTA. They claimed that, if and when the system ever reached the county, no one would use it


\textsuperscript{39} --Wait on Transit,‘ Jordan Tells Cobb,” \textit{CCT}, 20 May 1965, p. 1; --Cobb Young GOP Oppose Transit,” \textit{MDJ}, 21 May 1965, p. 2; Dodgen and Dodgen Meadows Interview. According to Cobb County Republican Party chairman C.M. McCutcheon, the Cobb GOP did not take an official position on the MARTA amendment because of the varied points of view and personal interests of the GOP Executive Committee.” See, --GOP Isn’t Opposing Transit,” \textit{MDJ}, 13 June 1965, sec. A. p. 1, 2. This suggests that the Cobb GOP membership included several individuals who stood to gain, personally or professionally, if the county approved the rapid transit amendment.
because most Cobb residents owned automobiles or used existing alternatives. Moreover, the Young GOP disagreed with what they considered to be unrealistically low cost estimates. In short, the ultraconservative organization called rapid transit “Luxury Cobb Cannot Afford.” Dorsey Dodgen, a prominent young Republican, wrote in a letter to the editor of the *Daily Journal*, “Practically everyone in Cobb County favors convenient, economical, and ‘rapid’ transit transportation. The mass transit proposal to be voted on June 16 offers none of these features.”

The Young Republicans’ favorite anti-MARTA talking point was that the rapid transit system was a “disguised subsidy to the downtown Atlanta governments.” With six of the eleven seats on the proposed MARTA board of directors, transit opponents argued that Atlanta and Fulton County would dominate the system. Transit supporters, the group claimed, were essentially asking Cobb voters to approve a “fraudulent scheme dreamed up by Atlanta, for Atlanta, and run by Atlanta, just so the Atlanta politicians can hold Cobb County DOWN and prop Atlanta up for a few more years.” Dodgen recalled later that MARTA was simply a “socialized transportation system” supported by Atlanta liberals like newspaper publisher Ralph McGill.

Despite the heated rhetoric, voting was extremely light on Election Day. The mid-June election date, steady rain, and absence of a presidential election combined to keep voters away from the polls. With just over 12,000 votes cast, turnout was less than half that of the previous November when Cobb voters narrowly approved the first transit

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40 Jim Wynn, “Referendum Deciding Factor on Cobb Transportation,” *MDJ*, 21 May 1965, p. 1; Rapid Transit Truth Committee Political Advertisement, *MDJ*, 13 June 1965, sec. B, p. 3; Republican Leader Opposes Approval of Transit in Cobb,” *MDJ*, 15 June 1965, 4; Dodgen and Dodgen Meadows Interview. The amendment neither gave MARTA the power to levy taxes on the counties nor the powers of eminent domain. Transit opponents mischaracterized or omitted these points.

amendment. This time Cobb voters rejected rapid transit by almost 1,600 votes. This translated into a 57 percent to 43 percent defeat. Rapid transit managed to pass in the heavily populated communities of Marietta and Smyrna, but the margins of victory were not sufficient to overcome the heavy anti-MARTA vote in rural and unincorporated Cobb. Vinings and Merritts, in suburban East Cobb, were the only non-city precincts to approve the amendment. The proposed MARTA line would have run through these particular communities. It seems, therefore, that Cobb voters approved of rapid transit if they saw it as offering tangible benefits close to home. Moreover, Ben Jordan’s reelection efforts benefitted greatly from the transit vote. Jordan’s Democratic opponent endorsed the MARTA amendment, while Jordan was an early opponent. The GOP candidate won every precinct in Cobb with the exception of Marietta.42

Cobb County resident and scholar Thomas Scott has argued that the county’s rejection of MARTA did not reflect an endemic racist desire to prevent African Americans from gaining easy access to the county. No doubt some people did vote against rapid transit because of racist sentiments, he admitted, but this was not the primary motivation of anti-transit advocates like the Young Republicans or even the majority of anti-MARTA voters. Scott cited the absence of direct racist appeals in anti-MARTA advertisements and rhetoric as evidence for this conclusion. The opposition to rapid transit, he has concluded, was rooted in a libertarian desire for less government and a defense of the free enterprise system.43


43 Scott, *Cobb County, Georgia*, 433.
Historian Kevin Kruse and others, though, have argued that race played a significant role in the Atlanta suburbs’ feverish efforts to block attempts by the city to annex suburban communities and extend public transportation into the suburban ring. After all, these same white suburbanites observed other areas annexed under Atlanta’s 1952 Plan of Improvement that had been devastated by the racial changes that come with the city.” Despite claims to the contrary, transit opponents’ conjuring images of socialized transportation in downtown Atlanta had racial connotations.44

Furthermore, historian Dan T. Carter has concluded astutely that economic self-interest cannot be somehow neatly excised” from racial attitudes. Thomas and Mary Edsall, like the Blacks before them, illustrated how race was (and is) deeply ingrained in conservative opposition to the Democratic-sponsored welfare state apparatus. The Blacks have argued that suburban-centric conservatism proved remarkably adaptable to traditional” race-based political appeals. Although most middle-class white southerners articulated their individual opposition to increased taxes and government spending in terms of economic self-interest, many still perceived the government as forcing them to contribute, against their convictions and desires, to programs for which blacks were the highly visible beneficiaries.” These voters believed that a role for government existed, but it was one that aided the common good. Punitive taxes and social welfare programs that reallocated wealth to African Americans and other racial and social minorities, they contended, wasted money and other resources on the least productive and desirable elements in American society to the detriment of average (white) Americans. Thus,

44 Kruse, White Flight, 248.
“colorblind” economic positions and rhetoric may not have been as abhorrent as “traditional” race baiting, but they were by no means “race neutral.”

In the end, Cobb service organizations and the press—the voice of the county’s white commercial-civic elite—reconciled their opposition federal welfare programs and “big government” with their apparent willingness to seek and accept federal defense spending, school aid, and other forms of federal assistance. Members of the county’s commercial-civic elite, Democrat and Republican, could rationalize their support of locally-beneficial federal aid and military expenditures with their strident opposition to the expanded personal welfare programs of the New Frontier and Great Society. These individuals, like Georgia service club members, maintained that the subsidies they received were for the general welfare of the county, state, and nation. The government-supported Lockheed-Georgia plant provided training and high-paying jobs to men and women from all over Georgia. Its products helped keep the nation safe and the communist threat at bay. This sort of aid was altogether different from government handouts to unproductive members of society who were content to live off other citizens’ tax dollars. In an article written for the Georgia state Kiwanis magazine, Reverend Fr. Robert E.H. Peeples claimed, “‘Welfare’ schemes do violence to human personhood. ‘Something for nothing’ is immoral. When ‘welfare’ comes from the state…it debases man.” Diverting economic resources away from public works and defense projects to expand social welfare programs did more harm than good in the eyes of many service club members and other commercial-civic elites in communities like Cobb County.

45 Dan T. Carter, “Is There Still a South?” 94; Edsall and Edsall, Chain Reaction, 7, x, 3-4 ; Black and Black, Politics and Society in the South, 196, 214-215, 213.
46 “Victory over Death,” Georgia District Kiwanian, April 1963, 1.
Ultimately, the rejection of candidates like Barry Goldwater by Cobb’s commercial-civic elite should not be construed as an endorsement of LBJ’s welfare policies or even his stance on aggressive racial integration. In the wake of Goldwater’s crushing nationwide defeat, the *Marietta Daily Journal*, which had endorsed both Eisenhower and Nixon, wrote, “Now that [the people] have voted against extreme conservatism, they got the Great Society of Lyndon Baines Johnson. We can only hope that it will be as moderate and as responsible as he promised on the campaign trail.”

Goldwater’s erratic campaign behavior and constant Cold War saber-rattling troubled Cobb service club members and other white elites. Most importantly, they viewed Goldwater and adherents like Ed Chapin as threats to Lockheed-Georgia and, therefore, the economic stability of Marietta and the entire county. To these individuals, extreme conservatism presented a greater threat to order and stability in Cobb County than Johnson’s Great Society.  

Similarly, Cobb service clubs and business organizations broke with the county’s most hard-line conservative elements on the issue of rapid transit. Groups like the Cobb County Young Republicans based their opposition to rapid transit on ideological grounds. They bristled at the thought of Cobb tax dollars being used to fund an Atlanta-based transportation system. Service and civic groups in Cobb County and around the state, though, had long traditions of supporting infrastructure improvement projects. Indeed, Cobb service organizations supported rapid transit as yet another community enhancement project that would attract prospective employers and residents. The *Daily Journal* recognized that the county’s large and small business operators stood to suffer most if the county entered into a “bad business proposition.” This pragmatism, therefore,

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put county service organizations in direct opposition to ideologically-rigid conservatives. Their concerns about government bureaucracy, increased regulation, taxation, and race were secondary to their intense desire to sustain Cobb County’s affluence and growth. Ultimately, Cobb service clubs and their allies in the white commercial-civic elite could accept conservative policies and politicians, but they would not tolerate reactionary ones that threatened the flow of federal money, capital investment, and the county’s future prosperity.48

48—Well-Based Advice,” *MDJ*, 14 June 1965, p. 4.
CHAPTER 5

THE SEARCH FOR LAW AND ORDER: RESPONSIBLE CONSERVATISM AND
THE ELECTIONS OF 1966 AND 1968

Cobb County’s population more than quadrupled between 1940 and 1970. Much
of this growth was due to the expansion of the military-industrial complex that drew
highly-skilled and well-educated residents into the county to find work at the massive
Lockheed-Georgia plant and other installations. Federal defense contracts for cargo
transports like the C-130 and C-141 precipitated sharp increases in both industrial
employment and residential population in Cobb County. Similar growth occurred when
the Pentagon awarded Lockheed-Georgia the contract to manufacture the world’s largest
aircraft in late 1965. The new C-5A Galaxy swelled Lockheed’s workforce to nearly
33,000 by September 1969. Thus, by 1970, it was the third most populous county in
Georgia. With more than 196,000 residents, Cobb County ranked behind only Fulton and
DeKalb Counties in total population.¹

Furthermore, the county’s service clubs had always been among the first
organizations to rise in the defense of perceived threats to the county’s economic
livelihood. This impulse had placed local service organizations in opposition to Black
Belt politicians, uncompromising defenders of segregation and white supremacy, and

¹ Georgia Official and Statistical Register, 1971-1972, 1078; Scott, Cobb County, Georgia, 535; “A Week
Ago Today,” Rotalight, 6 August 1965, 3; “Rotary News,” Rotalight, 8 October 1965, 2; Scott, Cobb
Country, Georgia, 535-540. Unlike the C-130 and the C-141, the C-5A was an unmitigated disaster for
Lockheed-Georgia. The Galaxy was flawed in many ways, but the most damaging to the Marietta plant
were the unrealistically low initial cost estimates followed by declining government orders as the Vietnam
War drew to a close. By 1978, Lockheed-Georgia’s Marietta facility employed only 8,400 workers. See,
ideologically-rigid adherents of Barry Goldwater-style conservatism. These stances also made Cobb service clubs among the most moderate and progressive elements in Georgia politics. By the mid-1960s, however, the business and civic leaders who filled the ranks of the county's service organizations grew increasingly wary of the leftward trend of the national Democratic Party as well as the increasing radicalism evident in civil disorders. These service organizations condemned the continued growth of the federal government, perceived excesses of the Great Society, and the increasingly aggressive demands and demonstrations of African Americans, college students, and other “radical” elements with increased vigor. These developments had become, in their estimation, the gravest threats to the economic and social stability of their community and country.

Comparisons of the United States to the latter days of the Roman Empire were extremely common during this part of the decade. “The waste in this country is staggering enough to be compared to the excesses of the Romans,” Marietta Rotarian Karl Reinhard exclaimed, “whose ill-used affluence contributed materially to the gradual deterioration and downfall of their empire.” The nation's profligate spending and permissive social policies, club members worried, were endangering the future of the United States. Another Rotarian, Barney Nunn, recognized that his fellow Rotarians lamented the lack of initiative of our people, the socialistic trend of our government, [and] and the increasing burden of free enterprise to finance our ever increasing giveaway programs.” but, he implored, were they sufficiently concerned to do something about it?” Clubs argued, therefore, that businessmen had to become more involved in the political process to reverse these troubling trends. Service organizations argued that government had lost touch with the free enterprise principles of efficiency, individual
initiative, and thrift. Liberal politicians, they argued, had strayed from the concept of an honest day’s work for an honest day’s pay, and this had bred a culture of dependency and permissiveness. In an attempt to woo area businessmen and professionals to the Republican banner, party chairman G. Paul Jones told a Macon-area Optimist club, “We hear businessmen say they cannot afford to become involved…but the government has one had in your pocketbook and the other in your business.” Additionally, the Marietta Rotary Club hosted a guest speaker who informed the group that “the least vocal group in the United States today was the American businessman.” The speaker, an expert on employer-employee relations, suggested that an appropriate epitaph for the moribund American state would be “a civilization died because they didn’t care.”

Indeed, service clubs at all levels had long urged their members to become involved in politics. They worried that liberal policies and the resultant socioeconomic decline would threaten their economic security as well as the sanctity and stability of their communities. This political “call to arms,” though, did not mean that they had abandoned their commitment to moderate, respectable conservatism. Service club members in communities like Cobb County desired the restoration of law and order and a return to smaller government, but they sought a middle road between the political extremes as a path to that end. Responsible conservatism, they reasoned, would best guarantee social stability while maintaining a respectable reputation that would ensure continued economic growth and development. In addition to establishing programs and organizing projects to educate their communities about the perils facing American society

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and what they could do to help prevent the nation’s decline, service organizations sought to elect conservative politicians who shared their values and vision for the future.

Perhaps no issue consumed the political landscape of the mid-to-late 1960s more than the breakdown of law and order across the country. Cobb County superintendent and Marietta Rotarian Alton Crews lamented that Americans would most likely remember the 1960s as a decade “when a belligerent minority, not content with due process, resorted to civil disobedience, street demonstrations and virtual anarchy to attain what they viewed as justifiable change.” Like many Americans, Cobb service club members blamed Warren Court decisions and the liberal social policies of the national Democratic Party for privileging a select minority over the welfare of the majority. Cobb service clubs and similar groups argued that street crime, civil disorders, and campus protest—as well as increased taxation, swelling welfare rolls, and other expressions of big government—were indicative of a pervasive decay in “traditional” American values and institutions.

Increased crime, though, was the most visible and troubling development. The FBI reported that crimes “against persons” had increased by more than one hundred percent between 1960 and 1968. These statistics included offenses like murder, rape, and robbery. According to the Gallup Organization, crime, civil rights, and race relations ranked among the issues most important to American voters during the latter part of the decade. Dan Carter has argued that these issues of “race and disorder were always linked” in the minds of politicians and voters. While this is no doubt true to some extent, political scientist James Sundquist has countered that the connection between issues of crime, disorder, and racism depended primarily on the “perception and intent” of the individual voter. Nevertheless, the issue of race could never truly be separated from
appeals to law and order when so many of the most highly visible perpetrators were young, poor African Americans. Moreover, these calls for law and order went beyond simply arresting law breakers and taking proactive steps to deter future criminal acts. Law and order also meant reining in the perceived excesses of the liberal Great Society that had, in the minds of many Americans, precipitated lawlessness in the first place.³

Service organizations took an active role in trying to restore a respect for law and order during the 1960s. After several well-publicized riots and increasing instances of civil disorder related to the civil rights movement, Rotary International published a symposium on the benefits and costs of civil disobedience. Morris I. Liebman, who wrote about the dangers of civil disobedience, argued that so much of what protestors and their defenders called civil disobedience amounted to nothing more than the wanton disregard of established laws and majority rule. Liebman asserted that civil disobedience was a "harbinger of violence" that no society could sanction if it hoped to survive. "Order," Liebman declared, "is the sine qua non of the constitutional system." Civil disobedience flouted the law, and no individual or group had the right to exact self-determined retribution" for past or present wrongs. In short, governments existed to amend laws and provide restitution for legitimate grievances. This appeal to measured, incremental change appealed to the businessmen and professionals who filled the ranks of Cobb County’s service organizations. Rapid change spawned determined resistance that, in their opinion, created turmoil and social unrest. These developments were bad for

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business. Indeed, ensuring a growth-oriented, business-friendly atmosphere was the 
raison d’être of service organizations in Cobb County during this period.4

The increasing frequency of riots in cities across the country led the Board of Trustees of Kiwanis International to issue a resolution condemning civil disobedience and disorder at their 1967 international convention in Houston, Texas. Kiwanians used the convention as a "rededication to the principles of respect for law and order and support of established law-making procedures and peace-making agencies." The Kiwanis resolution urged their members to work within their communities to alleviate and/or prevent the root causes of social unrest. They demanded that government leaders across the country "take whatever steps necessary to bring riots to an immediate end." Like most members of the modern conservative movement, service clubs supported punitive government action to maintain social order. The use of police and military forces to subdue lawlessness and restore order was, after all, a legitimate function of government. Individual freedom, property rights, and other fundamental elements of the free enterprise system, they asserted, were untenable without social order. Although service clubs and other members of the white commercial-civic elite in places like Cobb County supported the use of force if necessary, they would rather prevent outbreaks of social disorder from occurring in the first place. Police crackdowns and military barricades, after all, were not the best industrial recruitment tools. Service organizations, therefore, sponsored several programs to instill a respect for law and order and obviate outbreaks of civil disorder.5

One of the best places to start, clubs reasoned, was with adolescents and young adults. Since youths were among the most visible participants in acts of social protest and

civil disorder, national, state, and local service organizations intensified their outreach efforts in an attempt to inculcate key values in the nation’s younger generations. The country’s largest service organizations had long concerned themselves with the issues facing America’s youth. For example, Kiwanis International’s “Service to Youth” initiative sought to educate young Americans about their nation’s fundamental values. One particular Georgia Kiwanis club produced a series of lectures for upper-class high school students in 1966. This “great issues” forum included lecture topics like “Lawlessness and Immorality,” “Free Enterprise System—Its Contribution to Our Way of Life,” and “Democracy versus Communism-Fascism-Socialism.”

Cobb County service clubs also implemented their own youth outreach programs. For example, the Rotary Club of Marietta founded Interact Clubs in four county high schools between 1966 and 1968. According to the Rotarians, the partnership between Rotary International and Interact was “dedicated to the realization of a future with citizens and leaders capable of insuring the survival of mankind with freedom for the individual, stability for the economy, integrity for the nation and peace for the world.”

After a visit to the club’s Sprayberry High Interact Club, Rotarian Karl Reinhard reported that “you come away with a very warm and secure feeling that not all our teenagers are hippies and dope addicts, and there are a great number who spend their free time in worthwhile activities.” Organizations like the Marietta Rotary Club reasoned that if Americans could be taught to appreciate and defend values like law and order and the

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6 “Washington Kiwanians Promote ‘Great Issues’ Forum,” Georgia District Kiwanian, May 1966, 2. Michael H. Mescon, the Ramsey Chair of Private Enterprise at Georgia State College in Atlanta, delivered this final lecture. Mescon had considered running for Congress as a Republican in the late 1960s, and he was a regular contributor to Bo Callaway’s 1966 gubernatorial campaign. Callaway supported Mescon’s chairmanship at Georgia State. See, Craig E. Aronoff, interview by Thomas Allan Scott, 15 December 2004, interview KSU Oral History Series No. 23, transcript, Kennesaw State Oral History Project, Horace W. Sturgis Library, Kennesaw, GA.
free enterprise system at a young age then the future of our country will be in good
hands…when these young people take over leadership.”

Indeed, these clubs saw themselves as playing a vital role in the edification of
young Americans. Robert Hays, the chairman of the English Department at Southern
Tech in Marietta, addressed the city’s Rotary club on the failure of American business
and professional people to communicate effectively the “American way of life” to its
young people. Hays warned that service organizations ran the risk of allowing
discrediting groups” like socialists and communists to influence and control the nation’s
youngest and most vulnerable generation if they failed to fulfill their proper roles. To
emphasize his point, Hays cited an obscure poll that claimed some 37 percent of Cobb
County residents, mostly young people, considered “socialism as a desirable dream
instead of…the American way as a dream of accomplishment.”

On more than one occasion, the local Cobb media promoted the efforts of service
organizations to curb crime and restore order and “traditional” values. For instance,
Rotary organized a panel of international legal experts at their 1968 conference in
Mexico City to discuss the causes of and solutions to the “general eruption of
lawlessness” that was plaguing communities worldwide. Excerpts from the panel
discussion were carried by media outlets around the world, and Cobb County was no
exception. The Marietta Daily Journal ran an editorial that congratulated the business
and professional men’s organization for calling the public’s attention to the threats posed

7 Rotary Club of Marietta, Georgia, A Brief History and Roster of the Rotary Club of Marietta, GA, USA
(Marietta, GA: Publisher Unknown, 1970), 3. These schools were Joseph Wheeler High School (1966-67),
Sprayberry High School (1966-67), Marietta High School (1967-1968), and North Cobb High School
(1968-1969). The Marietta Rotarians founded the “Cogs Club” at Marietta High School in 1938, but the
chapter was discontinued after the start of World War II. See, Rotary Club of Marietta, Sixty Years of
Service (Marietta, GA: Publisher Unknown, 1980); “Have You Heard—About Interact?” Rotalight, 28
by the militancy of young people.” Organizations like Rotary, Kiwanis, and Lions, the paper declared, had ready-made vehicles for reaching many youth through the high school clubs they sponsor in many communities,” including Cobb County.\(^9\)

The three major service organizations had created their respective high school outreach programs in an effort to share their values with younger generations. Kiwanis led the way when they established the first Key Club in Sacramento, California in 1925. Lions Clubs International launched its first Leo Club in Glenside, Pennsylvania in 1957, and Rotary founded the first Interact group in Melbourne, Florida in 1960. These programs took on new meaning and significance during the latter part of the 1960s as service organizations joined the fight against civil disobedience, lawlessness, and general disorder. Motivated by their sponsor clubs, the Georgia District of Key Clubs International adopted a resolution condemning the lack of respect for law and order in early 1968. “This disobedience directly opposes the principles of freedom, justice, and democracy,” the convention resolution argued. The Key clubs continued, “Those who commit such acts of defiance are mistaking liberty for license and…those trying to uphold the law should be commended.”\(^10\)

State and local service clubs, however, did not limit themselves to school age adolescents and young adults. Georgia Kiwanians, for example, designated a week

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between August and September as "Free Enterprise Week." Kiwanians suggested that individual clubs work closely with chambers of commerce and other business and professional organizations to educate the public about the role of freedom of enterprise in our way of life and our responsibility for maintaining and strengthening it.” Kiwanians had long been among the staunchest defenders of and advocates for free market capitalism. The Georgia Kiwanis organization directed its clubs to take every opportunity to exhibit the dependence of the community upon freedom of enterprise [and] the necessity of profit in a sound economy.” Kiwanis and other service organizations feared that the nation would decline without a strong and vibrant free enterprise system.11

One tactic used by Cobb service clubs was to promote the observance May 1st as National Law Day. First proclaimed in 1958 by President Dwight Eisenhower, Law Day was meant to serve as a counterbalance to communist May Day celebrations. Passed into law in 1961, Law Day called on all Americans to rededicate themselves to the concepts of equal justice under the law and to cultivate the respect for the law that is so vital to the democratic way of life.” The Marietta Rotary Club’s Civic Affairs Committee organized annual observances of Law Day throughout the county. For instance, in 1966, the club hosted a speaker who explored the links between poverty and crime in metropolitan Atlanta. After his address, the club bulletin stressed Rotary’s role in crime prevention and developing a respect for law…in an area growing as fast as the Atlanta Metro.” The next year, the club welcomed a speaker who asked the Cobb business and civic leaders whose Americanism” they were defending. Is it the Americanism of the “far out groups,” the speaker inquired, or is it the brand of Americanism practiced in Cobb County, which has produced many men who have contributed highly in the

community, state, and nation?” Rotary taught the Americanism of patriotism, individual responsibility, and free enterprise. These values, the bulletin asserted, were on the decline throughout the country. The challenge, then, was for Rotarians to speak out [and] give us back the Americanism as taught by Rotary.”

These same principles were at the forefront of service club members’ minds during the 1966 gubernatorial campaign. This election pitted Georgia’s lone Republican congressman, Howard “Bo” Callaway, against a race-baiting restaurateur-turned-furniture salesman Democrat named Lester Maddox. Both candidates ran their campaigns as conservatives who would fight for the principles that service club members in Cobb County and throughout the state championed: free enterprise, limited government, the sanctity of private property, and law and order. The key differences in the hotly-contested campaign were the candidates’ divergent backgrounds, campaign styles, and target audiences. Callaway, a millionaire textile heir and West Point graduate, ran a sedate, rigid, campaign targeted at the state’s white upper-status, business-minded conservatives. Maddox, on the other hand, was a high school dropout who placed a high priority on strict racial segregation and appealed to rural and lower-status whites.

At the outset, Callaway’s prospects for victory seemed quite good. He had emerged from his 1964 victory over former lieutenant governor Garland Byrd for Georgia’s Third Congressional District seat as the titular leader of the Georgia Republican Party and the GOP’s best hope to win the governor’s mansion for the first time.

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time since Reconstruction. The West Georgia Republican was certainly an attractive candidate. He was young, articulate, well-educated, and had served in Korea after graduating from the United States Military Academy. As heir to a sizable textile fortune, he could easily finance a potent gubernatorial campaign. Perhaps most importantly, though, Callaway was an avowed and unabashed conservative. During his one term in the U.S. House of Representatives, Callaway voted against not only civil and voting rights legislation but also aid to education, urban renewal assistance, and an increased federal minimum wage. In fact, he earned a near-perfect rating from the conservative group Americans for Constitutional Action, securing the title of Georgia’s most conservative lawmaker in 1965. Indeed, Callaway’s conservative policies and rhetoric put him in direct opposition to Lyndon Johnson’s Great Society. This, according to the New York Times, won him the admiration of many white Georgians who were concerned that government was ‘growing too big’ and that [the] Negro was ‘pushing too hard.’ Believing that he had excellent statewide name recognition and strong support from the chambers of commerce and other business and professional organizations, Callaway decided to become a candidate for governor in early 1966. As the only Republican in the race, Callaway only needed the signatures of slightly more than five percent of the state’s registered voters to qualify for the general election ballot.14

The path to the November general election, however, was not so simple for Georgia Democrats. Both former governor Ernest Vandiver and Senator Herman

Talmadge declined to run for governor in 1966, leaving the race for the Democratic gubernatorial nomination wide open. Eventually, six candidates sought the party’s nomination. The primary campaign included former governor Ellis Arnall, Garland Byrd, state party chairman James H. Gray, state senator and future president, Jimmy Carter, perennial candidate Hoke O’Kelley, and Lester Maddox.¹⁵

Ellis Arnall, with past experience in state government, strong name recognition, and a long list of political connections, was the obvious frontrunner for the party’s nomination. Arnall’s weaknesses as a candidate, however, prevented him from pulling away from his opponents. For instance, Arnall campaigned as an avowed progressive. In addition to supporting expanded public services for the elderly and veterans, he openly solicited African American votes, and his candidacy no doubt received a severe blow when a race riot erupted in Atlanta just days before the September primary. Moreover, the former governor declared in a campaign speech, “I am a local Democrat. I am a state Democrat. I am a national Democrat. And those who don’t like it can go to hell” precisely at a time when the national Democratic Party of Lyndon Johnson was extremely unpopular throughout much of Georgia. Arnall had also been out of state politics for almost two decades. His political clout was not what it once was, and his old-fashioned campaign style did not translate well to television. Lastly, the presence of another social and economic moderate in the field hurt Arnall chances. Jimmy Carter, a young state senator from Sumter County in South Georgia, ran as moderate alternative to Arnall and siphoned votes away from the former governor.¹⁶

Unlike Arnall, few political observers believed that Lester Maddox had a legitimate shot at winning the nomination in 1966. Maddox, though, was not a complete political novice. He had run for mayor of Atlanta in 1957 against William B. Hartsfield, and he had reached a runoff with Peter Zack Geer in the 1962 race for lieutenant governor. Maddox, however, had lost both elections. He was best known in Georgia and throughout the nation for his acerbic attacks against federal civil rights legislation and near-violent confrontations with African American protestors at his downtown Atlanta Pickrick restaurant. *Life* magazine had featured a photograph of a gun-toting Lester Maddox and his pick-handle-wielding son chasing away protestors who had attempted to test the recently-passed 1964 Civil Rights Act at the Pickrick. Eventually, Maddox sold his restaurant to avoid court orders to serve customers regardless of race. Thus, Maddox entered the 1966 Democratic gubernatorial primary as the unabashed advocate for unyielding opposition to desegregation, civil rights legislation, and the liberal social agenda. Although these stances won him the support of fellow-diehard segregationists and lower-status whites, it did little to win him the support of the state’s commercial and civic establishments. Democrats who supported efforts to maintain racial segregation also had other candidates like James Gray and Garland Byrd to champion their cause.  

No candidate won a majority in September 14 Democratic primary. As expected, Arnall led all candidates with 29.4 percent of the vote. He received his strongest support

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from affluent whites and African Americans living in the state’s largest urban and suburban counties. His support among middle- and lower-income whites, especially in rural areas, was anemic. Maddox, though, ran extremely well in these demographic groups, and a strong showing propelled him into second place with 23.5 percent of the vote. In Cobb County, Jimmy Carter earned roughly 8,000 votes to finish ahead of both Ellis Arnall and Lester Maddox. Carter surprised many political observers in the county. He had failed to appoint a county campaign chairman or even open a campaign headquarters in Cobb. Thomas Scott has suggested that many Cobb residents viewed Carter as an alternative to the forthrightly-liberal Arnall, and this is most likely correct. Carter ran well in the same wards and precincts that Arnall would have been expected to carry in a two-man race against a conservative opponent. In the end, Arnall’s support among the county’s public officials was not enough to overcome Carter’s pluralities in Marietta and Smyrna. Maddox swept the Cobb’s rural areas to finish in second place behind Carter.\(^\text{18}\)

Arnall and Maddox met two weeks later in a runoff election. Their bases of support were similar to previous election, but Maddox was able to combine his robust rural base with an impressive showing among the state’s lower-class and middle-class white voters to win the Democratic nomination with 54 percent of the vote. This translated into a 70,000 vote win over the former governor. In Cobb County, Maddox

swept the county’s rural and unincorporated communities while Arnall won Marietta and some precincts in suburban East Cobb.  

Therefore, the unlikeliest of candidates, Lester Garfield Maddox, won the Democratic nomination and prepared to meet Bo Callaway in the November general election. Callaway, not unreasonably, had expected Ellis Arnall to emerge victorious from the Democratic primary. Maddox’s nomination meant the loss of countless rural conservatives and segregationist voters who would have otherwise voted for Callaway in a race against the liberal Arnall. Bruce Galphin, a former writer with the *Atlanta Journal* and *Constitution*, noted correctly that these same voters had carried the state for Goldwater in 1964, and they would have carried it for Callaway in 1966 had Maddox not been in the race.  

Both Callaway and Maddox deplored the civil rights movement and Great Society. Callaway had opposed the Voting Rights Act of 1965 as well as other prominent pieces of civil rights legislation during his term in Congress, and Maddox’s racist antics were legendary. This has led historians like Numan Bartley to label the 1966 gubernatorial campaign between Callaway and Maddox as a race between a “rich-folk segregationist” and a “poor-folk segregationist.” This assertion is certainly how some—namely white liberals and African Americans—in Georgia would have viewed the contest at the time. For example, Charles L. Weltner, a Democratic congressman from Atlanta, declared, “Howard Callaway is a silk-stockinged segregationist who is no better

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19 Bartley, *From Thurmond to Wallace*, 74-75; Hathorn, “The Frustration of Opportunity,” 40; Scott, *Cobb County, Georgia*, 487-488. Rumors persisted that Republicans crossed over to propel Maddox to victory in the Democratic runoff. This is unlikely given the small number of straight-line Republicans in the state. The more likely explanation is that most Georgia Democrats opposed Arnall’s liberal tone and embrace of the national Democratic Party.

than Maddox.” This sentiment led to the formation of the “Write-In Georgia” movement after Maddox’s victory over Arnall. This group, composed of African Americans and white liberals, concurred with statements made by Charles Weltner and others. Callaway, they argued, was no different than Lester Maddox in terms of his adherence to extreme conservatism and racial intolerance. Write-In Georgia beseeched voters to defeat the conservatives by writing in Ellis Arnall for governor. In the end, the write-in efforts secured over 50,000 votes for the former governor and, some have argued, denied Bo Callaway a victory.21

In the opinion individuals like service club members and other elements of the state’s white commercial-civic elite, however, the difference between Bo Callaway and Lester Maddox was immense. Many leading commercial and civic leaders worried that “Maddox’s election would destroy Georgia’s image for industrial development.” Although Callaway and Maddox were both staunch social conservatives, many Georgians made the distinction between Callaway’s “responsible conservatism” and the “axe handle diplomacy” of Lester Maddox.22

Callaway stumped the state with his message of responsible, respectable conservatism during the latter stages of the 1966 gubernatorial campaign. For example, Callaway sought to distance himself from Maddox on the issue of race. In a speech to a group of Atlanta-area Kiwanians, the Republican softened his tone on segregation,

describing himself simply as "not an integrationist." Furthermore, Callaway claimed that some skilled workers from out-of-state had refused to move to Georgia to work at Marietta's Lockheed plant if Lester Maddox became governor. Callaway's responsible conservatism earned him the endorsements of some of Georgia's most prominent business and civic leaders. James Carmichael endorsed Callaway over Maddox because he feared Maddox's election would result in anarchy and mob rule." John A. Sibley, whose committee had recommended preserving public education during the Vandiver administration, also endorsed Bo Callaway. Sibley framed the choice between Callaway and Maddox as one between ability or lack of it, between responsibility or lack of it, between stability or the lack of it, between law and order and the lack of it." Sibley recognized the growing spirit of lawlessness around the county; the solution, though, was not to elect a person like Maddox who had so flagrantly defied the laws of the land and common decency when he owned and operated the Pickrick. Sibley worried that, as governor, Maddox would resort to means outside of and in violation of the law to carry out his purposes...[and] subdue his opposition." The only course of action was for Georgia voters to cast their vote for the state's continued progress" and Bo Callaway.23

Sibley's endorsement came during a luncheon sponsored by the Democrats for Callaway organization. In addition to John Sibley, the group included other prominent civic leaders like former governor Ernest Vandiver. Historian Tim Boyd has recognized that this moderate organization illustrated what he called the ambiguity of the white

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23 Bob Cohn, "Callaway Segregationist? Answer: "Not Integrationist,"
"SMN, 26 October 1966, sec. A, p. 1; Bob Cohn, "Bo Links Maddox with "Great Society,""
backlash.” The Democrats for Callaway group supported the Republican congressman, in large part, for his ability to prevent further lawlessness and social disorder. Appeals to law and order, Boyd asserted, have often been considered thinly-veiled references to African American street crime and race riots. In this case, however, Sibley and other members of the state’s commercial-civic elite used the tactic to appeal to voters’ fears of white-instigated violence that may have erupted if the arch-segregationist Lester Maddox won the governor’s race. Although Sibley and other likeminded individuals had little sympathy for liberal protestors and rioters, they also condemned reactionary mobs of white supremacists. These Georgians considered both to be manifestations of disorder that had to be squelched if the state was to maintain its positive national image and continue its industrial and economic growth.24

In Cobb County, the local press gave their unequivocal endorsement to Bo Callaway the day after Maddox defeated Ellis Arnall. “Both men are conservatives,” the Marietta Daily Journal wrote, but “Callaway is a responsible conservative whose weapons are logic and reason. Maddox is a sincere but irresponsible racist whose weapons are ax handles and intemperate epithets.” The Cobb paper also argued that Callaway would continue a program of “progressive conservatism” that would safeguard Georgia’s reputation. Maddox “could only set us back.” The paper reminded voters on the eve of Election Day that Callaway had the support of “dedicated state leaders in business, education and other fields.” Maddox, on the other hand, had the backing of the

24 Boyd, “The 1966 Election in Georgia,” 329-330. Boyd’s argument may be extended back to the 1950s and early 1960s when individuals like Sibley and other white commercial and civic leaders denounced white racism and attempts to stifle public education and economic development. Boyd recognized that Sibley and Vandiver returned to the Democratic Party in 1970 to support moderate Jimmy Carter’s gubernatorial campaign, but he made no mention of how these individuals voted at the national level. See, Henderson, The Politics of Change in Georgia, 236. Ellis Arnall voiced similar concerns during his runoff campaign against Maddox.
despised crony crowd of bygone days.” To Cobb’s service club members and other business-minded voters, Callaway represented the reasonable choice in the 1966 Georgia gubernatorial election. The Rotary Club of Marietta encouraged its members to use the methods of Lockheed or “any other successful private enterprise” to select their next governor. Conley Ingram implored his fellow club members to be “aggressive, searching and analytical” in making their decision. The community could not afford an uninformed, indiscriminate vote.25

When the votes were tallied, neither Callaway nor Maddox had earned enough to claim an outright majority. Callaway won 453,665 votes to Maddox’s 450,626. Ellis Arnall received almost 53,000 write-in votes. The results showed that Callaway had the solid support of upper- and middle-class whites in the state’s urban and suburban areas. Maddox, meanwhile, won the backing of lower-class whites in these communities and rural whites at all socioeconomic levels. In a return to traditional voting patterns, the Republican Callaway ran strongest in the state’s urban and suburban areas while Maddox racked up heavy majorities in the state’s rural communities. State law, however, required a majority of votes for a candidate to take office. After several rounds of legal squabbling, the United States Supreme Court ruled that the election could be settled in the Georgia state legislature despite concerns that it remained partially malapportioned. Although Callaway led in the popular vote, Maddox won more counties and had the added benefit of the Democratic Party label. In the end, the heavily-Democratic state

legislature appointed Lester Maddox and denied Callaway and the GOP the governorship.\(^ {26} \)

Cobb voters gave Callaway a slim victory in their county. Out of more than 30,000 ballots cast, Callaway won by 255 votes. He ran strongest in suburban East Cobb as well as in Marietta and Smyrna. Maddox, conversely, dominated the county’s rural precincts. Although the Write-In Georgia movement did not gain much traction in Cobb, Arnall still managed to pick up 945 votes. These may have been enough to deny Callaway a larger margin of victory. Indeed, more than three-fourths of all the write-in votes in Cobb County were cast in precincts won by Callaway. Cobb voters, especially its business and professional class, feared that Maddox’s erratic, extreme behavior would negatively affect their reputation and ability to lure new employers to the area. They threw their support to Callaway—himself a businessman—in the hope that he could maintain and, perhaps, improve the state’s business-friendly image. When given the choice between two extremes—the liberal Arnall and the irresponsible and incendiary conservative Maddox—individuals like service club members and other affiliates of the county’s white commercial-civic elite chose the candidate who presented the most moderate, responsible choice. In 1966, that candidate was Republican Bo Callaway.\(^ {27} \)

The 1968 presidential election presented voters with another three-person race, and, once again, service organizations and other commercial and civic-minded groups supported the candidate they considered to be the embodiment of responsible, respectable


\(^ {27} \) 1966 Gubernatorial Election Totals—Cobb County, *MDJ*, 9 November 1966, sec. A, p. 12; Scott, *Cobb County, Georgia*, 490; Bernd, "Georgia,” 348. Callaway’s success did not trickle down the ticket in Cobb County. Every GOP candidate, including incumbent state legislator Ben Jordan, went down in defeat.
conservatism: Republican Richard Nixon. According to Dan Carter, Nixon began shaping his national strategy in the wake of Barry Goldwater's disastrous 1964 presidential campaign. Just days after the Goldwater debacle, Nixon told reporters that the American people had repudiated the GOP because it had strayed too far right. To be successful at the national level, Nixon argued, the Republican Party had to “avoid the extremes of the left and the right.” Essentially, the party needed a centrist candidate like Nixon. The former vice president recognized that one of the key failures of Goldwater’s candidacy, and there were many, was the Arizonan’s willingness to tolerate and even encourage the support of ardent segregationists and race baiters. Leading up to the 1968 presidential election, Nixon sought to establish himself as a candidate who was acceptable to both southerners and non-southerners alike on the issue of race. “The Republican opportunity in the South is golden; but Republicans must not go prospecting for the fool’s gold of racist votes,” Nixon wrote in his nationally-syndicated column. “Southern Republicans,” he declared, “must not climb aboard the sinking ship of racial injustice.” To win a national election, the Republican Party had to abandon blatant appeals to racial intolerance and prejudice that had offended and alienated so many moderate voters across the country in 1964.28

The presence of Democrat Hubert H. Humphrey and Democrat-turned-American Independent George C. Wallace on the ballot simplified Nixon’s task. Due to the liberal socioeconomic policies of John Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson, the majority of white southerners viewed the national Democratic Party as the party of forced integration, high

taxes, and lax morality. Hubert Humphrey did little to disabuse the southern electorate of this perception. After all, it was Humphrey who had delivered the speech calling for the strong pro-civil rights platform plank that drove the Dixiecrats from the 1948 Democratic National Convention. At the other end of the socio-political spectrum was former Alabama governor George Wallace. With his school house-door antics and harsh recriminations against civil rights advocates, Wallace was the nation’s most famous, or perhaps infamous, champion of racial segregation. Nixon, therefore, played the role of the “professional centrist” in the three-way presidential race.29

As a native southerner, Wallace was Nixon’s chief competition for the South’s white votes in 1968. Wallace had long been a champion of the white working class, and the Alabaman attempted to capitalize on these voters’ fears of rampant crime and antipathy toward African Americans, student protestors, liberal intellectuals, and unproductive welfare recipients during his run for the White House. These appeals were especially successful with lower-status, and less-educated whites both inside and outside the South. Furthermore, like Lester Maddox, Wallace’s economic program appealed strongly to lower-status and working-class whites. During his tenure as governor, Wallace had enacted policies to improve Alabama’s health and housing systems to benefit the state’s lower-income residents. In Georgia, these voters—who had supported Goldwater in 1964 and Maddox in 1966—were among the most socially conservative and, thus, receptive to Wallace’s brand of incendiary, sometimes insulting, rhetoric. Thus, by the summer of 1968, when Wallace was at the height of his popularity, Nixon

told reporters that the American Independent’s candidacy had complicated his bid to win the region’s crucial electoral votes.30

As like Callaway’s, Nixon’s political appeal was strongest in Georgia’s affluent, urban and suburban white precincts. The Republican candidate’s blend of fiscal conservatism and appeals for law and order resonated well with an electorate concerned with economic and social stability. Voters in these communities had little use for Humphrey’s liberalism or Wallace’s hysterics. They considered both to be detrimental to their way of life. Nixon, however, offered a reasonable course of action. For example, the former vice president adopted Bo Callaway’s position on civil rights legislation and enforcement. Nixon promised to enforce all current civil rights laws, but he would not push for the passage of any new ones. Nixon, though, was a cunning political force. He utilized surrogates like vice presidential nominee Spiro Agnew and South Carolina senator Strom Thurmond to bolster his credibility among the state’s segregationists in an attempt to undercut Wallace’s third party appeal. These Nixon deputies made his opposition to forced busing and other extensive civil rights programs abundantly clear to white southern voters. For example, Strom Thurmond claimed that Nixon and Wallace both shared grave concerns about the Johnson-Humphrey administration’s school integration guidelines as well as its use of civil rights as a justification for “the encroachment of big government on private enterprise” during visits to Albany and Columbus. Nixon also supported parents’ freedom of choice plans for public schools that assured little more than token integration in most school systems. Thurmond, thus,

reassured his Georgia audiences that the GOP presidential candidate steadfastly opposed forced integration of schools. These voters, Thurmond suggested, could count on Nixon to have a sympathetic attitude toward issues like racial integration.\textsuperscript{31}

Nixon used his acceptance speech at the Republican National Convention in Miami Beach, Florida to outline his vision for America. Claiming to speak for great majority of Americans, the forgotten Americans, the non-shouters, the non-demonstrators,’ Nixon denounced the deleterious effects of the Great Society. Mimicking service club rhetoric, Nixon declared, ‘For the past five years, we have been deluged by government programs, and we have reaped from these programs an ugly harvest of frustration, violence and failure across the land.’ Nixon insisted that the federal government had a legitimate role to play in the daily lives of the American people, but this role did not include distributing jobs and welfare checks. In a direct appeal to American business and professional leaders, Nixon advocated reforming the nation’s tax and credit policies to assist the greatest engine for of progress ever developed in the history men—American private enterprise.’\textsuperscript{32}

Nixon also decried the rampant lawlessness that had seemingly engulfed the nation. ‘As we look at America,’ the GOP candidate told his convention audience, ‘we see cities enveloped in smoke and flame. We hear sirens in the night.’ This great majority of Americans, he claimed, found this situation intolerable. It was this group of Americans for whom Nixon claimed to speak. He, like this silent majority of Americans, acknowledged the importance of civil rights laws and their sensible enforcement, but he


\textsuperscript{32} \textit{Campaign Speeches of American Presidential Candidates}, 357, 362-363.
declared, the "first civil right of every American is to be free from domestic violence." Without the reasonable expectation of personal safety, the United States would inevitably decline and fall. Nixon rejected his critics' claims that his law and order rhetoric was a coded appeal to racism. Instead, he argued that his goal was simply "justice for every American." 33

These positions were incredibly attractive to individuals like Cobb County service club members and other business-oriented voters. One club published a "statement of concern" from the Georgia Chamber of Commerce a few weeks before the election. Much like Nixon, the state's largest business organization bemoaned the nation's descent into chaos and lawlessness. They criticized increasingly insistent and hostile civil rights protestors for using "righteous aims" as the "disguise and justification for flouting the law." These protestors' "undisciplined demands for "freedom,"" the chamber wrote, "are infringing upon and denying the equally important freedom of their fellow citizens." For a well-ordered society to survive and thrive, all its citizens had to respect authority and the established laws of the land. This statement echoed an earlier proclamation made by Marietta textile magnate Guy H. Northcutt: "We the people have the right to expect our elected officials to place constitutional rights of all and law enforcement for all above political expediency." 34

With these issues in mind, the Rotary Club of Marietta ran an editorial endorsing, at least indirectly, Richard Nixon for president. Northcutt warned his fellow club members that a strong showing for George Wallace in Deep South states like Georgia could prevent either major party candidate from obtaining the electoral votes necessary to

33 Ibid.
win the White House. Northcutt reminded the club that such a situation would result in the Democratic-controlled House of Representatives choosing the next president. "What would make Mr. Humphrey happier!" Northcutt proclaimed. The insistence of a minority of voters to cast what amounted to a protest vote in 1966 had resulted in the election of Lester Maddox; Northcutt and many of his fellow Rotarians did not relish the prospect of yet another election decided by a party line vote. "In our current presidential predicament," Northcutt exclaimed in bold letters, "a vote for George Wallace…amounts to a vote for Hubert Humphrey." Since organizational by-laws forbade clubs and club bulletins from endorsing candidates formally, Northcutt explained, "We can only recite the facts as outlined as above." The fact of the matter was that Marietta Rotarians, like the majority of the white commercial-civic elite in the county and state, supported Richard Nixon for president.35

A month later, the Marietta Daily Journal made the same points as the county's oldest service organization. The voters of Cobb County had only two choices: Nixon or Humphrey. George Wallace, it asserted, could not win the required electoral votes to become president. Since the majority of Wallace's votes would have gone to Nixon in a two-man race, a vote for Wallace amounted to a vote for Hubert Humphrey. The paper, the largest in Cobb County, was a routine defender of Nixon and ran several articles and editorials refuting charges that impugned the Republican candidate's stances on issues like integration. In the waning days of the campaign, the Daily Journal referred to Nixon

35 Guy Northcutt, "That Government of the People, By the People, For the People," Rotalight, 10 September 1968, 2.
as the consensus choice, representing neither extreme of the political spectrum but appealing the broad masses of Americans.”

When all the votes were counted, George Wallace won Georgia with a plurality of roughly 43 percent of the vote. Nixon placed second with 30 percent, and Humphrey finished last with barely more than a quarter of the state’s vote. As expected, Wallace swept the white vote in the state’s rural counties and communities. Nixon won only four counties outside of the traditionally Republican North Georgia mountains. Three of these counties, Cobb, DeKalb, and Richmond had large middle- and upper-class white populations. Nixon’s positions on race—moderate relative to Wallace but conservative relative to Humphrey—appealed to these constituencies. The other, Clarke County, was home to Athens and the University System of Georgia’s flagship campus. Vice President Humphrey won the near-unanimous support of Georgia’s African American population. This, along with the support of the state’s small white liberal population, enabled the Democrat to carry Atlanta, Savannah, and a handful of counties with large African American populations.

Cobb County voters gave Nixon a slim plurality of their vote. He received 18,400 votes and defeated Wallace by 653 votes. The Republican ran strongest in Marietta, Smyrna and the suburban communities of East Cobb. Wallace won sizable majorities and pluralities in the county’s rural precincts, but he was unable to draw enough votes from South Cobb to overcome Nixon’s lead. Humphrey managed to win only three wards in

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Marietta—home to more than half the county’s African American—to place a distant third. The Democrat won less than twenty percent of the county’s total vote.38

As in 1966, the bulk of Cobb’s conservative middle- and upper-class residents voted for the relative moderate at the top of the ticket. They were drawn to Nixon not only for his conservative economic policies but also because he took reasonable, temperate stances on issues of civil rights and law and order. Make no mistake: Nixon expressed understanding and compassion for the white South as it transitioned—slowly and grudgingly—into a fully-integrated society. Unlike Wallace, however, Richard Nixon would not stand in school house doors to prevent the implementation of federal civil rights legislation. This unwillingness may have cost him the Deep South, but the Republican understood that the road to the White House lay in appealing to moderate voters’ fears of crime, disorder, and the loss of personal freedom.39

Although service clubs members at all levels had voiced their opposition to the unfettered growth of centralized government and the welfare state for decades, their apprehension had become acute by the mid-to-late 1960s. Middle- and upper-class white voters like Cobb County service club members blamed the increasingly liberal socioeconomic policies of the national Democratic Party for what they considered to be the decay of traditional American values and institutions. Respect for authority, organized religion, free market capitalism, they averred, had all declined. The results were impudence in the home and chaos in the streets. Clubs, thus, implemented

38 Carrol Dadisman, “Cobb GOP Effort Fails, All 6 Bow,” MDJ, 5 November 1966, p. 1, 6; 4968 Presidential Election Totals—Cobb County,” MDJ, 6 November 1968, p. 6; Scott, Cobb County, Georgia, 491-492; Bill Schemmel, “All Cobb Demos Triumph,” MDJ, 5 November 1968, p. 1. As in 1966, a Republican victory at the top of the ticket did not translate into a groundswell of support for local Republicans. Only Gerald Green, a GOP candidate for school board, was successful.
39 Black and Black, The Vital South, 298; Carter, From George Wallace to Newt Gingrich, 30.
cooperative programs with local schools, chambers of commerce, and other commercial and civic organizations to increase citizens’ understanding of and respect for the principles that these groups held dear. These principles, they contended, were the cornerstones of social order and economic success in American society. Additionally, these business and civic leaders tended to back candidates who expressed comparable faith in similar values. Individuals like Republican Bo Callaway, who ran his 1966 gubernatorial campaign on the principles of “God, the individual, and free enterprise,” were ideal candidates. Republicans like Callaway and Richard Nixon also demonstrated a level of respectability that appealed to temperaments of affluent, well-educated conservative white voters in communities like Cobb County. These voters tended to recoil from the extremism and fanaticism of candidates like Lester Maddox and George Wallace. Economic and social stability, they understood, could be threatened just as surely by reactionary extremism on the right as it could by radicalism on the left.40

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40 Charles, *Service Clubs in American Society*, 152; Quoted in Bartley, *From Thurmond to Wallace*, 76.
CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

Ultimately, affluent, business-minded Cobb countians wed service club ideals of progress and prosperity to the economic conservatism that flourished in the postwar urban and suburban communities of the Sunbelt South. Service organizations like the Rotary and Kiwanis clubs of Cobb County adopted a suburban-corporate value system in their attempt to shape local aspirations through the solicitation of federal investment, private enterprise, and pro-growth state policies such as equitable election laws and free and open public school systems. Moreover, club members espoused a strong sense of "traditional" moralism, rooted in Judeo-Christian principles, to not only inculcate young residents with a strong sense of right and wrong but also to draw a stark distinction between the "Godless" collectivism of Soviet communism and the United States' free enterprise system that, ostensibly, respected both the dignity of an individual's work as well as religion's fundamental role in American society. These principles were notable in local, state, and national political developments, and they eventually coalesced with the rhetoric of the modern conservative movement that steered America's rightward political turn during the latter decades of the twentieth century.¹

Throughout the postwar period, Cobb County service organizations espoused a pro-growth ethos that championed individual responsibility, limited government, and free enterprise. These principles led service club members to sympathize increasingly with the Republican Party. Indeed, many white southerners living in the state’s flourishing urban and suburban communities grew more and more distrustful of the national Democratic Party as they liberalized their social and economic policies to conciliate their African American, labor, and urban-ethnic constituencies. As Cobb grew in both population and affluence, its white commercial-civic elite abandoned the national Democrats and joined the Republican Party, at least at the top of the ticket, with increased frequency. The GOP, many reasoned, was the best vehicle for expressing their socioeconomic values and particular vision for the future of their county and country.²

This did not mean, however, that county service clubs and other members of the white commercial-civic elite had simply switched from party-line Democrats to party-line Republicans. On the contrary, these individuals consistently placed a high priority the economic security of their families and communities. These priorities precluded a strict adherence to party labels. For instance, southern Democratic senators and representatives ranked among the most powerful legislators in Washington. The county’s commercial-civic elite, keenly interested in maintaining the steady flow of defense contracts and federal tax dollars into the county, benefitted handsomely by supporting such well-connected and influential representatives. Forsaking these conservative Democratic lawmakers was simply impractical. After all, service clubs—despite their denunciations of government handouts and wasteful spending—lobbied these leaders to support its

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military-industrial establishment, subsidize infrastructure improvement projects, and construct and maintain a first-rate, modern public school system.

Like many business and professional leaders throughout the region during this period, Cobb service club members were well aware that their continued growth and prosperity were heavily dependent upon its image as a moderate, business-friendly community. The preservation of this positive reputation was at the center of almost every program implemented by Cobb’s service organizations between World War II and the turbulent, waning days of the 1960s. In several instances, this rationale led service organizations in communities like Cobb to become the advocates of political, racial, and social moderation. Admittedly, this moderation should not be viewed as necessarily altruistic or else rooted in a sense of social egalitarianism. These individuals’ proclivity towards political and social moderation was firmly rooted in their economic self-interest.

Moreover, many of Cobb’s commercial and civic leaders recoiled from the extreme brand of conservatism espoused by candidates like Barry Goldwater. His erratic, sometimes baffling, campaign behavior and rhetoric frightened these and other moderate voters throughout the country. The Cobb business community, many of whom were members of its service organizations, was unwilling to endorse an ideologically-rigid candidate who might not only endanger their economic livelihood but also push the country to the brink of nuclear war. Guided by a strong sense of pragmatism, Cobb service club members generally supported candidates and issues that would, in their estimation, maintain or improve their communities’ growth, development, and social stability.
Although the vast majority of Cobb business and professional leaders remained avowed segregationists well into the 1960s, many were willing to abandon massive resistance to preserve public education. Many of these same individuals refused to support race-baiting candidates like Lester Maddox and George Wallace. On the other hand, they lambasted liberal politicians, condemned the growth of the welfare state, and branded increasingly-frequent incidents of street crime and civil disobedience to be the fruits of both. Cobb service organizations prized order and stability, and they realized that these could be jeopardized by the extremes of both the left and the right. After all, as the county’s economic and elite, these individuals often had the most to gain and, consequently, the most to lose in this period of postwar growth and affluence. These service organizations not only reflected the political attitudes and positions of these white elites but also served as a vehicle for growth-oriented government policy. Thus, Georgians like these Cobb County service club members imprinted their particular vision on the rise of the Republican Party in the first decades of the post-World War II era.
ABBREVIATIONS

Atlanta Constitution—AC
Atlanta Journal—AJ
Atlanta Journal and Constitution—AJC
Christian Science Monitor—CSM
Cobb County Times—CCT
Marietta Daily Journal—MDJ
New York Times—NYT
Savannah Morning News—SMN
Wall Street Journal—WSJ
Washington Post and Times Herald—WPTH
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CENSUS MATERIAL


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* Cobb County Times*
* Daily Citizen News (Dalton, GA)*
* Dixie Business*
* Harper’s Magazine*
* Lockheed Southern Star*
* Macon Telegraph*
* Manufacturers’ Record*
* Marietta Daily Journal*
* New York Times*
* New York Times Magazine*
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