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"Are you better off"; Ronald Reagan, Louisiana, and the 1980 Presidential election

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“ARE YOU BETTER OFF”;
RONALD REAGAN, LOUISIANA, AND THE 1980 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts

in

The Department of History

By
Matthew David Caillet
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ABSTRACT

This thesis describes how Ronald Reagan succeeded in carrying Louisiana in the 1980 Presidential election. Initially, pundits predicted the election, both statewide and nationwide, would be a “dead heat” between Reagan and President Jimmy Carter. Southern voters supported Carter, despite his many blunders; many American voters wondered if Reagan would be a competent leader. Reagan had a well-organized campaign and spent plenty of time in Louisiana, considered a pivotal “swing state.” His campaign team prepared speeches, explained issues, and received information and support from state Republican leaders, including Governor David Treen and Congressmen Robert Livingston and Henson Moore. Good local support, coordinated by the national campaign, paid real dividends.

This thesis utilizes the Ronald Reagan Campaign Papers at the Reagan Presidential Library, Simi Valley, California. These papers were first made available for research in 2008, and include correspondence among campaign staffers, politicians, and some supporters. In addition, this thesis uses network newscasts from the Vanderbilt University Television News Archive. Finally, numerous Louisiana newspapers, including those from rural, suburban, and urban areas, were used for research.

Reagan’s victory in the 1980 election marked the beginning of a new form of conservatism that stressed economic and social reform via lower taxes, smaller federal government, strong national defense, and opposition to both abortion and homosexual lifestyles. In Louisiana, his win boosted the state’s Republican Party, once considered a small minority party with little power in local and state leadership. In addition, the 1980 campaign served as a trial run in Louisiana for Governor Treen, who served as Reagan’s Louisiana honorary campaign chair, and former Democratic Governor Edwin Edwards, who served as Carter’s Louisiana

honorary campaign chair, as these two men faced each other in the 1983 gubernatorial election. Thanks to Reagan's legacy, Louisiana's Republican Party has transformed itself into a strong second party that currently holds most statewide elected offices, federal Congressional seats, and both houses of the state legislature. Though not clear in 1980, today it is clear that the conservative Republican resurgence in American politics defined itself in Louisiana in choices offered by Ronald Reagan in achieving an impressive electoral victory.

INTRODUCTION

Louisiana was a swing state during the latter part of the twentieth century. From 1972 until 2004, voters elected the winner in each Presidential election, a feat not accomplished in any other Deep South state. In 1980, Ronald Reagan's presidential campaign devoted much attention to Louisiana by appealing to citizens in North Louisiana, South Louisiana, and New Orleans.

If one looks at Louisiana voter registration during these years, it would not seem that a Republican would have had a strong chance of carrying the state. In 1980, over 90 percent of the electorate belonged to the Democratic Party; however, in the late 1970s, the Republican Party began increasing in membership. This can be attributed to the 1975 change in the primary law, which enabled every candidate, regardless of party, to run on a single ballot and for all voters to cast a vote. This system broke Democratic control of Louisiana and proved beneficial for the Republican Party, as many Democrats vied for the same office leaving, oftentimes, a single Republican opposing many Democrats. Intraparty factionalism in the Democratic Party enabled David Treen and Henson Moore to win their first congressional elections in 1972 and 1974, respectively, and because of the "open" primary, voters elected Robert "Bob" Livingston in 1977, a popular representative who rarely faced serious reelection battles. For the first time since Reconstruction, Louisiana elected a Republican for governor in 1979—Congressman Treen.

Reagan benefitted from having strong support of Governor Treen and Congressmen Moore and Livingston. These men accompanied the California governor on campaign visits and stumped for him in rallies throughout the state; they also provided Reagan with notes and analysis about the state and strategies to employ for campaigning. Treen served as the honorary chair for Reagan's Louisiana Campaign Operations. This strong support system helped Reagan win Louisiana's ten electoral votes. President Jimmy Carter did not have strong support from

Louisiana's Democratic delegation. Former Governor Edwin Edwards led his campaign, but many pundits questioned their relationship as Edwards, while governor, frequently criticized Carter's policies. Aside from some moderate support from New Orleans Mayor Ernest "Dutch" Morial and Congresswoman Lindy Boggs, no other Louisiana politician assisted Carter, even though some Democratic congressional representatives had the time and resources to do so.

Reagan carried Louisiana because of his strong campaign support system in the state, as well as his persuasive conservative message and grasp of issues that appealed to voters in North and South Louisiana. His victory ushered in a form of conservatism in Louisiana still seen today—focusing on economic and social issues, not on race. This has made it difficult for a Democrat, even a moderate or conservative one, to succeed in winning statewide office.

I have consulted an array of sources, both published and unpublished, in writing this thesis. Particularly helpful are the holdings of the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library in Simi Valley, California. In 2008, the library opened its records from the 1980 Election for research; I hired a research assistant, with the support of the LSU Foundation and LSU Department of History, to research, photograph, and photocopy pertinent records. This information provides an introspective examination of how Reagan ran his campaign in Louisiana, and includes strategies used for campaigning. These records also include correspondence from Louisiana citizens and politicians. I also used the Vanderbilt Television News Archive, now increasingly available online, to obtain national television coverage of Governor Reagan's campaign visits in Louisiana. These national television stories illustrate the importance of visual media in shaping national perceptions of Louisiana politics. I attempted to consult Governor Treen's personal papers housed at Tulane University, but they are currently unavailable as they sustained damage during Hurricane Katrina.

I have also consulted an array of Louisiana newspapers for my research. I examined articles and editorials from large city newspapers, such as *The Times-Picayune* of New Orleans, *The Morning Advocate* and *State-Times* of Baton Rouge, and *The Times* and *Shreveport Journal* of Shreveport. These papers are located in Government Documents on microfilm in Middleton Library, and, in addition, *The Times-Picayune* is available on America's Historical Newspapers database by Newsbank. In addition, I researched several small town papers around Louisiana. While some newspapers provided little information about the campaign, election, or Louisiana politics in general, others like *The West Carroll Gazette* from Northeast Louisiana, *The St. Bernard Voice* from suburban New Orleans, and *The Denham Springs and Livingston Parish News* from suburban Baton Rouge provided insightful analysis and editorials about the election and political issues facing Louisiana. These papers are located in the Special Collections of Hill Memorial Library at LSU. For the rural papers, I concentrated on those from parishes that went overwhelmingly for Reagan, overwhelmingly for Carter, or "flip-flopped" to Reagan after supporting Carter in 1976.

CHAPTER ONE: “LOUISIANA POLITICS AND ECONOMICS—AN OVERVIEW”

In the 1970s, Louisiana underwent several changes in its political and economic climate. Like the rest of the South, Louisiana’s Democratic Party lost its stronghold on local, state and national politics mostly because of Lyndon Johnson’s support for the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Voting Rights Act of 1965. Economically, Louisiana benefitted from oil and gas exploration and refinement, especially during the OPEC Oil Embargo of 1973 and Iranian Revolution of 1979. Jimmy Carter narrowly carried Louisiana in 1976 as a Baptist Southerner, yet many citizens throughout the state harshly criticized his energy and economic policies, particularly the state’s congressional delegation and the charismatic Governor Edwin Edwards, who served as governor from 1972 to 1980. Edwards, like Carter, was a Southern Democrat elected after the Civil Rights Movement. Louisiana suffered from high interest and inflation rates as well as gasoline lines and shortages, though not nearly as severe as in other states.

One must view Louisiana as part of the Solid South to explain its political transformation. Throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the Democratic Party held a monopoly on the southern politics due to the Republican Party’s legacy of Radical Reconstruction.¹ From 1880 to 1944, the Democratic nominee for president carried the all of the region’s electoral votes with two exceptions: Republican Warren G. Harding’s “return to normalcy” appealed to Tennessee voters in 1920, and Herbert Hoover prevailed in Virginia, Tennessee, North Carolina, Texas, and Florida in 1928 when he ran against New York Governor Alfred Smith, an anti-Prohibitionist Catholic.² The Deep South remained in the Democratic

¹ “The South,” means the eleven ex-Confederate states: Virginia, North Carolina, Tennessee, Arkansas, Florida, Texas, Louisiana, Alabama, Mississippi, Georgia, and South Carolina. The “Deep South” states are five of the first six states that left the Union in 1860 and early 1861: Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, and South Carolina.

² Charles S. Bullock III and Mark J. Rozell, Ed., *The New Politics of the Old South*, 3rd Ed. (Lanham, Md.: Rowman and Littlefield, 2007), 2.

column throughout this era with its presidential nominees generally winning landslide victories over Republican and third party opponents.³

The Democratic Party's southern stronghold began to experience hairline cracks in the late 1940s. In 1948, Minneapolis Mayor and LSU alumnus Hubert Humphrey delivered a stirring speech at the Democratic National Convention imploring the party to adopt a Civil Rights platform. This speech compelled many southerners to walk out the convention and form their own party and platform, the States' Rights Democratic (Dixiecrat) Party. South Carolina Senator J. Strom Thurmond served as the party's nominee in 1948, and his sole electoral votes came from the five Deep South states except Georgia.

In the 1950s, the Republican Party's economic platform translated into gains in the South for the first time since Reconstruction. Dwight D. Eisenhower carried Virginia, Florida, and Tennessee in 1952, and these states, along with Texas and Louisiana, were part of the "we like Ike" movement in 1956. During Eisenhower's presidency, North Carolina, Florida, Texas, and Virginia elected Republicans to the House of Representatives for the first time in decades.⁴

The Civil Rights movement of the 1960s broke the Democratic Party's stronghold on the South. President Lyndon Johnson of Texas parted with the South's support of Jim Crow Laws by signing the 1964 Civil Rights Act. When signing the act into law, he told his aide, "We have lost the South for a generation."⁵ His prediction came true as Senator Thurmond joined the Republican Party in 1964. That same year, Senator Barry Goldwater of Arizona, who opposed the Civil Rights Act because he viewed it "as an unconstitutional invasion of states' rights,"

³ David Leip, "United States Presidential Election Results," Dave Leip's Atlas of U.S. Presidential Election Results, 2005, <http://uselectionatlas.org/RESULTS>.

⁴ Bullock and Rozell 3.

⁵ Sidney Blumenthal, "A Southern, a liberal, Lady," *Salon*, July 13, 2007, http://www.salon.com/news/opinion/blumenthal/2007/07/13/lady_bird.

carried the five Deep South states, along with his native Arizona, in the Presidential Election—the first time a Republican carried the entire Deep South in history. Alabama, Georgia, and Mississippi became the first Deep South states to elect Republicans to the House of Representatives since Reconstruction in 1964.⁶ President Johnson’s support of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 caused him to lose additional support from the South.

Vice President Richard Nixon needed the South to win the 1968 Presidential Election. Alabama Governor George Wallace held control over most of the Deep South by running as a third party (American Independent) candidate in the election. Seeking to appeal to beleaguered southerners without using explicit racism, Nixon, along with Senator Thurmond and political strategist Harry Dent, devised the Southern Strategy, in which Nixon would campaign as a “law and order” candidate. Dent’s protégé, Lee Atwater, who worked on George H. W. Bush’s 1988 campaign, described the strategy by saying

You start out in 1954 by saying, “Nigger, nigger, nigger.” By 1968 you can't say “nigger”—that hurts you. Backfires. So you say stuff like forced busing, states' rights and all that stuff. You're getting so abstract now [that] you're talking about cutting taxes, and all these things you're talking about are totally economic things and a byproduct of them is [that] blacks get hurt worse than whites.⁷

Nixon’s Southern Strategy proved successful. Although Wallace carried Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia and Hubert Humphrey carried Texas, Nixon prevailed in Virginia, Tennessee, Florida, and the Carolinas. Without these states, he would not have secured the necessary 270 electoral votes such that either Humphrey would have won, or the House of Representatives would have decided the election.

⁶ Bullock and Rozell 3.

⁷ Bob Herbert, “Impossible, Ridiculous, Repugnant,” *The New York Times*, October 6, 2005, <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9C04E6DF1E30F935A35753C1A9639C8B63>.

The Republican Party continued to make gains in the South during the 1970s. Nixon had no trouble carrying the region in 1972, and Republicans captured the governorship in South Carolina and Louisiana during this decade. In 1973, forty percent of the South's senators were Republican (up from approximately five percent a decade earlier), and approximately thirty percent of the South's Congressional Representatives were Republican (up from less than ten percent a decade earlier).⁸ The party experienced a setback in the mid 1970s due to the Watergate scandal, President Gerald Ford's pardoning of Nixon, and Jimmy Carter. Democrat Carter, who served as Georgia's governor, appealed to southerners as a fellow southerner and Baptist. He carried the entire region's electoral votes except for Virginia.⁹ By the end of his first term, however, Carter, the "leaf man," did not have the stronghold he once did on the region. While some southerners continued to support him because of his southern roots, Ronald Reagan's criticism of the Carter presidency and his message of smaller government appealed to many voters in the region. Today, the Republican Party has a stronghold over most of the region, except for some urban and rural areas.

Louisiana continues towards being full-fledged Republican territory, yet its transformation process has been more "drawn-out" than the rest of the region. This state became the first Deep South state to vote for a Republican presidential candidate—Eisenhower in 1956. Eisenhower's economic message appealed to a vast array of Louisianians, such that he defeated Adlai Stevenson in all of the urban parishes (East Baton Rouge, Caddo, Lafayette, Calcasieu, and even Orleans), as well as in many suburban parishes (Jefferson, Plaquemines, St. Bernard, Bossier, St. Tammany, and the River Parishes—St. John, St. James, and St. Charles, among

⁸ Bullock and Rozell 3 and 5.

⁹ Leip.

others).¹⁰ Goldwater's opposition to the Civil Rights Act appealed to voters in suburban New Orleans, the Florida Parishes, and North Louisiana such that he carried this state with no trouble in 1964, and Nixon carried every parish except West Feliciana in 1972.

Louisiana became the second Deep South state to elect a Republican governor with David Treen's victory in 1979. On the other hand, this state was the last of the Deep South states to send a Republican to both congressional houses, not sending Treen to the House of Representatives until 1972 and David Vitter to the Senate until 2004. To date, Vitter remains the only Republican Louisiana elected to the senate and, therefore, is the only state in the Deep South not to have two Republican senators in Washington.

One can attribute Louisiana's political makeup to its geography and demographics. Political rifts have marked Louisiana politics for decades with examples including North versus South, Catholic versus Protestant, rich versus poor, and, more recently, white versus black. Historians and political scientists divide Louisiana into three regions: North Louisiana, South Louisiana, and New Orleans. A. J. Liebling, journalist for *The New Yorker*, compares Louisiana's unique political makeup to that in Lebanon: "The balance between the Catholics in southern Louisiana and the Protestants in northern Louisiana is as delicate as that between the Moslems and the Christians in Lebanon and is respected by the same convention of balanced tickets." He continues by writing, "In Louisiana there is a substantial Negro vote—about a hundred and fifty thousand [1960 numbers]—that no candidate can afford to discourage privately or to solicit publicly. In the sister Arab republic, Moslem and Christian candidates alike need the Druse vote."¹¹ North Louisiana, like the rest of the Deep South, boasts a large Northern European (Anglo-Saxon), Baptist population. Political scientist Wayne Parent describes the

¹⁰ "Louisiana Results," *The Times-Picayune*, New Orleans, November 7, 1956, Page 14.

¹¹ A. J. Liebling, *The Earl of Louisiana* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1998), 18.

region as “more chicken-fried steak and barbeque than jambalaya and etouffée.”¹² Citizens of this region generally possess conservative, traditionalistic ideologies such that they usually support Blue Laws on alcohol sales and oppose gambling.

South Louisiana serves as an anomaly for the Deep South as its residents are of Southern European (French), Roman Catholic background. Southern Louisianians usually have a liberal attitude on some social issues, such as race, gambling and alcohol sales. Before the Civil Rights Movement, the few African-Americans in the South eligible to vote lived in South Louisiana, and in 1964, Lyndon Johnson, riding on the coattails of recently assassinated John Kennedy, carried virtually every Cajun South Louisiana parish, except for Pointe Coupee and Iberia. Voters in this region heavily supported the 1974 Constitution as it provided state support for parochial schools and an equal rights provision, while voters in North Louisiana generally opposed it.¹³ As evidenced in the 1980 election and in later state and federal elections, South Louisiana has become more conservative on social issues, especially as the Republican Party and Catholic Church continue to take stances against abortion and same-sex marriage.¹⁴ This transition has helped the Republican Party succeed in Louisiana.

One cannot discuss New Orleans without mentioning its dominant African-American population. African-American voter registration increased dramatically in Louisiana because of the 1944 Supreme Court case *Smith v. Allwright*, which outlawed white-only primaries. In 1944, only .3 percent of the black adult population registered to vote in Louisiana; this percentage

¹² Wayne Parent, *Inside the Carnival: Unmasking Louisiana Politics* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2004), 12.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 18.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 53.

jumped to twenty-two in 1948.¹⁵ In 1980, Louisiana ranked third in African-American population, and today, African-Americans constitute approximately one-third of the state's electorate.¹⁶ Their "lack of trust of the majority political establishment and a desire and need to advance the group as a whole" has been largely responsible for keeping the Democratic Party viable in this state.¹⁷ Parent writes, "Generalized support by African Americans in New Orleans has benefitted the Democratic Party in Louisiana even more than black votes have aided the party elsewhere in the South. The fact that a much larger proportion of African Americans live in an urban setting makes it easier for them to organize, participate, and avoid discrimination."¹⁸ In 1967, Ernest N. "Dutch" Morial made history by becoming the first African-American elected to the Louisiana State House of Representatives since Reconstruction and, in 1977, by becoming the first African-American mayor of New Orleans. The latter event led to an increase in black voter registration, as approximately 52,000 new African-Americans registered to vote between 1977 and 1980.¹⁹

Like the rest of the South, the Republican Party was virtually nonexistent in Louisiana from Reconstruction until the early 1960s due to disillusion with the Party of Lincoln over Radical Reconstruction, the disenfranchisement of Republican voters and officeholders during the Bourbon era of the late 1800s, and the state's closed primary system. With Louisiana's primary system, it was almost mandatory for a voter to be registered Democrat as the Democratic Party's primary served as the "de-facto" election. In virtually every local, state, and federal

¹⁵ Wayne Parent and Huey Perry, "Louisiana: African Americans, Republicans and Party Competition" in Charles S. Bullock III and Mark J. Rozell, Ed., *The New Politics of the Old South*, 3rd Ed. (Lanham, Md.: Rowman and Littlefield, 2007), 132.

¹⁶ Michael Barone and Grant Ujifusa, *Almanac of American Politics 1982* (Washington: Barone and Company, 1981), 424.

¹⁷ Parent 15.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 54.

¹⁹ Parent and Perry 134.

election during the early twentieth century, the winner of the Democratic primary and, if necessary, runoff elections translated into a victory for the desired office. Rarely did a Republican, independent, or third party candidate run for office, so few general elections occurred.

Although a strong Republican Party did not exist in Louisiana until the 1960s, Huey Long planted the seeds for a viable second party in Louisiana in the 1930s. Long appealed to the oft-overlooked poor and lower class voters such that he won the governor's race in 1928 after narrowly losing four year earlier. His Populist appeal challenged the old Bourbon establishment and attracted many supporters and opponents such that the Louisiana Democratic Party factionalized following his 1935 assassination. During the late 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s, pro-Long governors, such as Oscar K. Allen, Richard W. Leche, James K. Noe, and Earl Long faced challenges from anti-Long governors like Sam Houston Jones, Robert Kennon, and Jimmie Davis. The Long vs. anti-Long battle died with Earl Long in 1960. Despite the ending of these factions, pundits see the state's modern Republican Party as a descendant of the old anti-Long faction.

The Louisiana Republican Party first became a threat to the Democratic establishment during the 1960s. In 1964, Republican Charlton "Big Papa" Lyons, a Shreveport oilman, challenged John J. McKeithen in the gubernatorial general election. McKeithen faced a tough race in the Democratic primary and runoff, having narrowly defeated New Orleans Mayor deLesseps S. "Chep" Morrison, who placed first in the primary, in the runoff, and facing a Republican in a general election was a novelty in Louisiana politics.²⁰ While McKeithen won

²⁰ Milburn Calhoun, ed., *Louisiana Almanac: 2006-2007 Edition* (Gretna, La.: Pelican Publishing Company, 2006), 549.

the general election, Lyons polled a respectable 39 percent of the popular vote.²¹ Lyons's race also attracted some big-name Republican support—Ronald Reagan visited the state to campaign on his behalf, and, in 1980, he credited the campaign visit as starting his relationship with Louisiana.²² In 1968, David Treen of Metairie challenged twenty-two year veteran Hale Boggs for his seat in the Second Congressional District as Boggs supported Johnson's Civil Rights agenda. Treen earned nearly forty-eight percent of the vote in the general election, receiving about 4,000 fewer votes than Boggs.²³

The 1970s saw big changes in Louisiana that worked to the Republican Party's advantage. The Republican brand name became appealing to Louisiana voters "due to the going disenchantment of many white people with the increasing influence of blacks in the state and national Democratic parties. The Louisiana Republican party did not engage in racist appeals, but its conservative philosophy and strong support for state's rights won many converts among traditionally Democratic voters."²⁴ The party made its biggest gains in suburban areas, especially in suburban Shreveport (Caddo and Bossier Parishes), Baton Rouge (East Baton Rouge and eventually Livingston Parishes), and New Orleans (Jefferson, St. Tammany, Plaquemines, and St. Bernard Parishes). During this decade, the Republican Party began to have Congressional representation in the state.

²¹ "'Cajun' Primary Draws Interest," *American Press*, Lake Charles, LA, October 27, 2003, retrieved from Capital Watch: Your Guide to Louisiana State Government, <http://capitolwatch.reallouisiana.com/html/A75E1178-828D-4719-8077-E42A0AA2B4C3.shtml>.

²² Don Buchanan, "Reagan campaign costs in Louisiana Penny ante," *The Morning Advocate*, Baton Rouge, April 2, 1980, 9-A. The Manship family publishes *The Advocate* for Baton Rouge. Until 1991, it was called *The Morning Advocate* as the family published *The State Times* for the afternoons. They called their Sunday issue *The Sunday Advocate*.

²³ Calhoun 542. Treen also challenged Boggs in 1962 and 1964 but polled smaller numbers—approximately 38 percent in 1962 and about 44 percent in 1964.

²⁴ Michael L. Kurtz, "The Era of Edwin Edwards" in *Louisiana: A History*, edited by Bennett H. Wall (Wheeling, IL: Harlan Davidson, Inc., 2002), 384-5.

In early 1972, Dave Treen returned to challenge Edwin Edwards in the general gubernatorial election, and he polled about 42.8 percent of the votes.²⁵ Later that year, he became the first Republican Congressman from Louisiana since Reconstruction when he won the Third Congressional District seat, representing the Bayou Lafourche area and sections of suburban New Orleans.²⁶ He benefitted from a tough Democratic primary between J. Louis Watkins and Carl Bauer as they fought to replace outgoing Representative Patrick T. Caffery. Party fratricide allowed Treen to prevail in the general election against Watkins, as he received fifty-four percent of the vote.²⁷ His victory also stunned pundits because he, as a suburbanite Methodist of Anglo-Saxon background, prevailed in heavily rural Cajun Catholic South Louisiana. In 1974, 1976, and 1978, he faced few reelection problems.

In 1974, the Republican Party captured the Sixth Congressional District, which included of Baton Rouge and some of its suburbs.²⁸ Jeff LaCaze, a liberal, challenged incumbent Congressman John Rarick, a staunch conservative, for the Democratic nomination. LaCaze bested Rarick in the Democratic runoff due to strong union and African-American support; however, Henson Moore, like Treen, benefitted from the tough primary race to become

²⁵ Calhoun 550.

²⁶ Louisiana's Third Congressional District included parts of suburban Jefferson Parish (including Metairie and Kenner) as well as the cities of Houma, Thibodaux, Morgan City, and New Iberia. Parishes in this district included: Jefferson, St. Charles, Lafourche, Terrebonne, St. Mary, Iberia, and the southern part of St. Martin. Republican David Treen represented this district from 1973 until he became governor in March 1980. Billy Tauzin served this district from May 1980 until 2005. Elected as a conservative Democrat, he switched his party affiliation to Republican in 1995.

²⁷ Calhoun 542-3.

²⁸ During this period, Louisiana's Sixth Congressional District included Baton Rouge, as well as most of the Florida Parishes. Parishes in this district included: Washington, Tangipahoa, St. Helena, East Feliciana, East Baton Rouge, most of Livingston, and part of West Feliciana. Republican Henson Moore represented this district from 1975 until 1987. He resigned to run for the senate seat vacated by Russell Long in 1986 but lost the election to John Breaux.

Louisiana's second Republican Congressman.²⁹ In later elections, Moore won reelection easily, usually facing only token opposition.

The biggest change in Louisiana politics came with the nonpartisan blanket (also known as a jungle or "open") primary in 1975. Abandoning the closed partisan primaries, Governor Edwin Edwards lobbied for a new election system in which every candidate, regardless of party, runs on one ballot with the top two vote getters facing each other in a runoff unless one receives a majority (50 percent plus 1) of the votes in the primary. John Maginnis argues that Edwards and the Democratic legislature wanted the new primary to suppress the Republican Party's political gains: "The bald intent was that with an overwhelming Democratic registration, the top two votegetters would almost always be Democrats and the Republicans would be shut out before the race really began. The Democrats could save time and money while maintaining their political dominance in the state."³⁰ Maginnis, however, suggests that Edwards also had personal, ulterior motives in passing this primary by writing,

You can picture Edwin Edwards in his first day in the Mansion in 1972, looking out over Capital Lake from the bay windows in his den/office and asking himself, "How do I get back here in 1984?" "Simple," the little voice in the back of his mind says. "See that Dave Treen gets elected in 1979." "Yes," says Edwards, "but I'll have to make it look like I'm trying to destroy him instead." "Of course," answers the voice. "Have you ever thought of an open primary law?"³¹

The open primary law passed despite objections from state and local party officials. Maginnis praised it by writing, "The open primary is so simple, so direct, so of the people, that of course party leaders view it as dangerous. The beauty and terror of it are that it gives the people exactly

²⁹ John Rarick did run for President in 1980 as a member of the American Independent Party; however, his role in the election was trivial. He placed seventh in the general election, receiving 40,906 votes. In Louisiana, he won 10,333 votes; however, his placement on the ballot did not spoil or otherwise cause dramatic changes to the race between Carter and Reagan. The 1974 general election had to occur again in January 1975 because a voting machine malfunctioned, and Moore's margin over LaCaze was only fourteen votes. In the 1975 special election, Moore defeated LaCaze with 54.1 percent to LaCaze's 45.9 percent.

³⁰ John Maginnis, *The Last Hayride* (Baton Rouge: Gris Gris Press, 1984), 39

³¹ *Ibid.*, 40.

what they ask for without filtering by political parties.”³² Other political pundits disagree with him as “Outside commentators ridicule Louisiana’s ‘peculiar,’ ‘screwball,’ even ‘dangerous’ election process, as though it were a French mutant perversion of the Magna Carta.”³³

The open primary made the Republican Party a viable second party in Louisiana politics. Party registration went from 12,000 in 1971 to nearly 40,000 in 1975 to near 150,000 (7.4 percent of the state’s electorate) in 1980.³⁴ The primary also translated into additional victories for Republicans in the state. In the 1977 special election for the First Congressional District, Republican Robert L. “Bob” Livingston” prevailed over Democrat Ron Faucheux.³⁵ One year earlier, he came within 5,000 votes of defeating Democrat Richard A. Tonry, who later resigned because of voter fraud. Following the 1977 election, Livingston, like Moore and Treen, had no reelection troubles.

The most significant Republican Party victory in Louisiana occurred in 1979. As Edwards was term-limited, Congressman Treen ran for governor, as did five Democrats: Lieutenant Governor Jimmy Fitzmorris, Secretary of State Paul Hardy, Public Service Commissioner Louis Lambert, House Speaker E. L. “Bubba” Henry, and State Senator Edgar G. “Sonny” Mouton. In the open primary, Treen polled 297,469 votes with Lambert receiving 282,708 and Fitzmorris finishing in a close third with 280,412.³⁶ Fitzmorris filed a lawsuit

³² John Maginnis, *Cross to Bear* (Baton Rouge: Darkhorse Press, 1992), 105.

³³ *Ibid.*, 104-5.

³⁴ Maginnis, *The Last Hayride*, 39 and Public Affairs Research Council of Louisiana, “Presidential Election November 1980” (Baton Rouge: PAR, 1980), 3. The open primary also led many Louisianians to register with a third party or as independent. According to the Public Affairs Research Council, registration in “other” parties jumped from 32,462 (1.8 percent) in 1975 to 121,034 (6 percent) in 1980.

³⁵ Calhoun 544. Louisiana’s First Congressional District contained the residential and port areas in New Orleans, as well as, the suburban area north, east, and south of New Orleans. It included St. Tammany, St. Bernard, and Plaquemines Parishes, as well as most of Orleans. Voters elected Republican Bob Livingston to Congress in 1977 following Richard Tonry, who resigned due to voter fraud. Livingston served this seat until 1999 when he resigned over a sexual scandal.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 550.

against Lambert, charging election fraud; the courts ruled in favor of Lambert. Fitzmorris, Henry, Mouton, and Hardy all eventually endorsed Treen in the runoff over Lambert. As a result, Treen won the runoff, though by only 9,000 votes thanks to African-American support for Lambert. He became the first Republican governor of Louisiana and the second Deep South Republican governor since Reconstruction. By 1980, Republicans began to win offices in the state legislature—at the start of the decade, ten of 105 state representatives were Republican.³⁷

Treen's victory resulted in a number of responses from Louisianians. Fred Ferrington, news editor of *The Concordia Sentinel* in Ferriday, predicted accurately that Treen's win, coupled with the presidential preference primary, would bring a two-party system to Louisiana. He writes, "Most observers feel there is going to be a great upsurge in party changes in the next few weeks as the intricacies of the [1980 Presidential] primary are made clear. With a Republican in the Mansion and choice of which primary to take part in, this state is probably going to see the greatest move toward a true two party system ever."³⁸

The state Democratic Party took punitive action because of Treen's victory. During the runoff election, the State Democratic Central Committee moved to censure Mouton, Henry, Fitzmorris, and Hardy for supporting Treen. *The Concordia Sentinel* decried the committee, arguing, "The State Central Committee will need to go into an around the clock session to censure those who have endorsed [Treen]. The absurdity of it is that the State Central

³⁷ Barone and Ujifusa 428.

³⁸ Fred Ferrington, "A Two Party System?" *The Concordia Sentinel*, Ferriday, January 3, 1980, Page 2A. *The Concordia Sentinel* was published by Sam Hanna and had a 1980 circulation of 4875 (Concordia's 1980 population was 22,578). It was a biweekly paper, published on Mondays and Thursdays. The paper continues to serve as Concordia Parish's official Parish Journal.

Committee has lost touch with the reality of the typical Louisiana Democrat...Party labels are only that and the Central Committee's censure of Mouton and Henry was tactless."³⁹

The second annual Louisiana Democratic Party Convention in March 1980 evidenced additional factions within the splintered party. First, a debate occurred over censuring Mouton, Henry, Fitzmorris, and Hardy for endorsing Treen, and a revolt occurred among black delegates. Gillis Long of the Eighth Congressional District⁴⁰ moved to condemn the four Treen supporters by saying, "Sleeping dogs can be dangerous. And a sore left untreated can only fester and aggravate you. [Healing the wounds] cannot begin until we admit there has been an injury."⁴¹ A debate endured between some delegates who stressed the need for party unity and others who wanted the party to look forward, not backward. Dr. Frank Rieger of Gonzales stated, "We need unity, and we can't have unity without strength or strength without loyalty. There's no way we can condemn...people who cut our throats."⁴² On the other hand, numerous members booed and taunted several members who urged the convention to drop the matter. State Representative Quentin Dastugue of Metairie urged the party to progress "for the young people of the state. We want young people involved in the process and in the Democratic Party" while members jeered

³⁹ "Democratic Censure," *The Concordia Sentinel*, November 26, 1979, Page 2A. It should be noted that *The Concordia Sentinel* endorsed Bubba Henry for governor, and he carried Concordia Parish in the primary. The four Democrats who endorsed Treen all received positions in his administration. Fitzmorris served as an assistant for industrial development; Hardy served as Secretary of Transportation; Henry became Commissioner of Administration; Mouton served as Treen's gubernatorial counsel.

⁴⁰ Louisiana's Eighth Congressional District encompassed portions of central Louisiana and the south and western suburbs of Baton Rouge. Cities in this district included Alexandria and Opelousas. Parishes in this district included: Rapides, Evangeline, Avoyelles, St. Landry, Pointe Coupee, West Baton Rouge, Iberville, Ascension, Assumption, St. James, St. John the Baptist, and most of West Feliciana and part of Livingston. Democrat Gillis Long, a cousin to Governors Huey and Earl Long and Senator Russell Long, represented this district from 1973 until his death in 1985. After the 1990 census, this steam shovel-shaped district was eliminated with areas of this district being reassigned to the third, fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh districts.

⁴¹ Jua Nyla Hutcheson, "La. Demos Blasted for No Loyalty," *The Times-Picayune*, March 22, 1980, Section 1 Page 1. *The Times-Picayune* continues to serve as New Orleans's official newspaper. Until 1980, they called their Sunday issue *Times-Picayune/States-Item* as it combined with *The States-Item*, an afternoon paper. *The States-Item* ceased publication in June 1980, yet the paper called itself *Times-Picayune-the States-Item* until 1986.

⁴² Jua Nyla Hutcheson, "Demos Vote to Condemn 'Traitors,'" *The Times-Picayune*, March 23, 1980, Section 1, Pages 1 and 4.

at him.⁴³ Former Jefferson Parish state senator Jules Mollere told the convention, “We have people sitting in the governor’s office, a Republican governor’s office, who can be of great help to the Democratic Party if we bring them back.”⁴⁴ Even Mark Montgomery, who worked on Lambert’s campaign, opposed censure by saying, “Ladies and gentlemen, we’re looking backward. Don’t be that way.”⁴⁵ Despite pleas not to censure, a measure passed “affirming” the State Central Committee’s “condemnation” of Hardy, Henry, Mouton, and Fitzmorris by calling their respective endorsements of Treen, “reprehensible and...a betrayal of the trust placed upon them by the Democratic voters of the state.”⁴⁶

The convention also experienced major issues with its African-American members. Many blacks became upset as few received prominent roles at the convention. A protest erupted after many delegates ignored an African-American minister after he delivered the opening invocation, and several delegates walked out of the convention. Fortunately, State Representative Alphonse Jackson of Shreveport pacified members from erupting into a major protest by telling members that few blacks served on parish committees or the state central committee. Certainly, this event signifies the wish for African-Americans to have a voice and role in the state Democratic Party.⁴⁷

The condemnation of Fitzmorris, Hardy, Henry, and Mouton, coupled with black protest, suggests that Louisiana’s Democratic Party in 1980, while still dominant in local, state, and federal office and voter registration, was losing its position, and took drastic measures to punish “traitors.” In calling for party unity, they viewed the neophyte Republican Party as a threat to

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ Iris Kelso, “Black Demos in Revolt,” *The Times-Picayune*, March 23, 1980, Section 1, Pages 1 and 4.

their political prowess. With Treen's victory, the Democratic Party began seeing party identification as a major item in determining and supporting apt candidates.

In 1980, three political battles in Louisiana pitted Democrats against Republicans. The first one was, of course, the presidential preference primary in April, and the third was the presidential election between Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan in November. The second event was the special election for Louisiana's Third Congressional District (Treen's old seat) that occurred in May. Jim Donelon of Jefferson Parish, who unsuccessfully ran for Lieutenant Governor in 1979, switched his party affiliation to Republican to solicit support from the governor and the small Republican establishment. Democratic State Representative and floor leader Wilbert "Billy" Tauzin of Lafourche Parish ran with the backing of Edwin Edwards. Although Donelon had several similar characteristics to Treen as a fellow suburbanite from New Orleans, Tauzin won the special election due to his appeal as a Cajun Catholic conservative. While this election proved victorious for Tauzin, some pundits viewed it as a test between an eventual race between Edwards and Treen.⁴⁸

During the 1970s, Louisiana underwent major economic changes. Louisiana moved to the forefront of energy debates while America endured severe gas shortages and oil embargos in America. Louisiana ranked second in the United States in both oil and natural gas production during the 1970s and early 1980s.⁴⁹ The state's economy blossomed due to increased drilling and exploration in the state and in the Gulf of Mexico. Changes in computing the oil severance tax brought unprecedented revenue to the state treasury. Ronald Reagan's presidential team

⁴⁸ Sam Hanna, "Tauzin Victory," *The Concordia Sentinel*, May 22, 1980, Page 2A.

⁴⁹ "Louisiana Ranks 2nd in Mineral Value," *St. Bernard Voice*, Aabi, July 8, 1977, 7. *The St. Bernard Voice* was published on Fridays by Edwin M. Roy, Jr. It had a 1980 circulation of 2706 (St. Bernard Parish's population was 51,185). This paper continues to serve as the parish's official journal.

stressed that energy and economics were the two most important issues affecting Louisiana voters.⁵⁰

“Oil is to Louisiana what money is to a roulette game,” A. J. Liebling famously observed, “It’s what makes the wheel go round. It’s the reason there are so many big bank rolls available to stake any politician who has a Formosa Chairman’s chance to get into office.”⁵¹ This observation underscores the importance of oil in Louisiana society and politics. Since the first discovery of oil in 1901 near Jennings, the industry has played a pivotal role in shaping both the state’s economy and government throughout the twentieth century. Edward Haas, in *Louisiana: A History*, explains that the petrochemical industry developed rapidly in Louisiana by 1920, and it brought unprecedented growth to Baton Rouge, Monroe, Shreveport, and Lake Charles. “Abundant supplies of fossil fuels,” he writes, “also stimulated expansion of utilities, pipelines, railroads, and forms of water transportation.”⁵²

Parent and Maginnis further argue that oil production and revenue created a successful populist state government in Louisiana with residents paying little taxes. Parent writes, “With the influx of oil and gas severance taxes into the state’s budget, there was no need to tax the people, and politicians could behave like Santa Claus. For the average citizen it was the politics of representation without taxation.”⁵³ Maginnis elaborates on this argument by saying, “Louisiana keeps electing colorful, populist rogues because it can afford them, or perhaps, can’t afford to do without them. Louisiana government is based on high services, low efficiency, and colorful theater for two basic reasons: 1) a built-in constituency for population, that is, lots of

⁵⁰ Kenny Klinge, Louisiana Political Information, September 18, 1980, Folder “States—Louisiana—State Information,” Box 361, Research Unit, Ronald Reagan’s Personal Papers, Ronald Reagan Library [hereafter PP-RRL], Simi Valley, Ca.

⁵¹ Liebling *The Earl of Louisiana* 71.

⁵² Edward F. Haas, *Louisiana: A History*, ed. Bennett H. Wall (Wheeling, Il.: Harlan Press, 2002), 264.

⁵³ Parent, 24-5.

poor folks, and 2) a middle class that doesn't have to pay the bill. The oil companies do.”⁵⁴

Citizens throughout the state reaped the benefits of an oil-based economy through abundant roads and bridges, free textbooks for schools, and lower taxes, and they kept electing populist governors like Huey and Earl Long and Edwin Edwards, who provided such services.

Every congressional district represented citizens and companies with oil interests, whether offshore or land-based drilling. The 1982 *Almanac of American Politics* describes most of Louisiana's eight congressional districts with oil imagery. The First District contained “oozy land below sea level, as well as “rich oil and sulphur country, with large offshore deposits.”⁵⁵ The Second Congressional District included the Port of New Orleans, responsible for many oil shipments. In the Third District, Big Oil played a vital role in preserving Cajun culture while ushering a transition to the Republican Party. The almanac describes this district as “traditionally Democratic, but with the influence of the oil industry...the example of success and prosperity oil production has brought here, has made the area more Republican in recent years.”⁵⁶ The Fourth and Fifth Congressional Districts of North Louisiana had a large quantity of oil and natural gas land-based wells, and the Sixth District sported the major Exxon Refinery as well as several other refineries and petrochemical plants along the Mississippi River that brought prosperity to Baton Rouge.⁵⁷ Despite the prominence of oil production around Baton Rouge, residents in the district generally distrusted the oil companies. According to Reagan's

⁵⁴ John Maginnis, *The Last Hayride*, 6.

⁵⁵ Barone and Ujifusa 432.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 436.

⁵⁷ Louisiana's Fourth Congressional District encompassed northwestern Louisiana including the city of Shreveport. Parishes in this district included: Caddo, Bossier, Webster, Claiborne, De Soto, Red River, Sabine, and Vernon. Democrat Joe Waggoner represented this district from 1961 until he retired in 1979. His chosen successor, Democrat Claude “Buddy” Leach served from 1979 until 1981. Plagued by accusations of voter fraud from Republican challenger Jimmy Wilson, voters elected Democrat Charles “Buddy” Roemer to this seat in 1981, and he served until he became governor in 1987. Roemer became a Republican in 1991 during the final year of his gubernatorial term.

political brief for his visit to Baton Rouge, “despite the presence of a large Exxon refinery in Baton Rouge, and the important role of oil and gas in the economy generally, many in the area are suspicious of the oil companies. They feel they are being gouged.”⁵⁸ The Seventh Congressional District, containing most of Cajun Southwest Louisiana (Acadiana), included major oil exploration with “petroleum, in plenteous quantities under the swampy soil, with even more below the Gulf a few miles out to sea. Oil and attendant industries provide jobs here while the rest of the country suffers through recession, and they have provided money to keep all the Cajuns who wish to remain in their homeland.”⁵⁹ Last, the steam shovel-shaped Eighth Congressional District included major oil industry with refineries and petrochemical plants, as well as some land and sea-based exploration.

Throughout the 1970s, many members of Louisiana’s congressional delegation served on federal energy-related committees, as well as taxation committees. Russell Long, Louisiana’s senior senator, held the most powerful position in the senate: Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee in which he shaped tax bills to benefit those in the state’s energy industry.⁶⁰ Representative Moore served on the House Ways and Means Committee. Louisiana’s junior senator, J. Bennett Johnson, served on the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, as well as several energy-related subcommittees including Energy Regulation Energy Research and Development; Parks, Recreation, and Renewable Resources; and Energy and Mineral

⁵⁸ Baton Rouge Political Brief, Folder “Louisiana—Baton Rouge,” Box 410, Research Unit, PP-RRL, Simi Valley, Ca.

⁵⁹ Barone and Ujifusa 444. Louisiana’s Seventh Congressional District encompassed most of southwestern Louisiana, including the cities of Lafayette and Lake Charles. Parishes in this district included: Cameron, Calcasieu, Beauregard, Jefferson Davis, Acadia, Lafayette, Vermilion, the northern part of St. Martin, and most of Allen. Democrat John Breaux served this district from 1973 until 1987. He resigned to run for the senate seat vacated by Russell Long in 1986, and after winning, served as senator from 1987 until 2005.

⁶⁰ Democrat Russell Long, the son of Governor and Senator Huey Long, served as one of Louisiana’s senators from 1948 until 1987. Many consider him one of the most powerful senators Louisiana had in Washington during the twentieth century.

Resources.⁶¹ In the House of Representatives, Lindy Boggs of Louisiana's Second Congressional District⁶² served on the Energy and Water Development Subcommittee; Jerry Huckaby of the Fifth Congressional District⁶³ served on the Energy and Environment Subcommittee; Gillis Long served on the Subcommittee of Energy and International Economics.⁶⁴ Billy Tauzin served on the Energy and Commerce Committee after his election in 1980.

The energy industry provided plenty of new jobs for Louisianians. Haas states that the economic upturns fostered by the oil and petrochemical industries "created thousands of new jobs, not only in the new industries themselves but in construction, service occupations, retail sales, and state and local government." These jobs generally paid well, required little formal education, and brought prosperity to previously impoverished areas, such as the Cajun region of South Louisiana. Frank Simoneaux, Secretary of the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources, acknowledged, "In 1980, 151,000 citizens of Louisiana earned their living in the oil and gas industry—directly employed in production, refining, chemicals, oil products, gas utilities and marketing. Based on the average family of four persons, that means that more than 600,000 Louisianians are members of oil related families."⁶⁵ He added that the industry's payroll exceeded 3 billion dollars each year. LSU economic professor James Richardson noted that,

⁶¹ Democrat J. Bennett Johnston served as one of Louisiana's senators from 1972 until 1997.

⁶² Louisiana's Second Congressional District included southern New Orleans (including the French Quarter) and most of Jefferson Parish (not including Metairie). Voters elected Democrat Lindy Boggs to this seat in 1973 following the disappearance of her husband, Hale Boggs. She served until 1991.

⁶³ Louisiana's Fifth Congressional District, the most rural of the districts, encompassed most of northeastern Louisiana, including the cities of Monroe and Natchitoches. Parishes in this rural district included: West and East Carroll, Morehouse, Union, Lincoln, Bienville, Jackson, Winn, Natchitoches, Grant, La Salle, Catahoula, Concordia, Caldwell, Ouachita, Richland, Madison, Tensas, and Franklin. Democrat Jerry Huckaby served this district from 1977 until 1993. This district was also the site of heavy natural gas production north of Monroe.

⁶⁴ Michael Barone, Grant Ujifusa, Douglas Matthews, *The Almanac of American Politics 1980* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1979), 349-363.

⁶⁵ Frank P. Simoneaux, "The Changing Energy Picture for Louisiana," *1982 PAR Conference: Energy and the Economic Future of Louisiana* (Baton Rouge, PAR Analysis, 1982), 3.

“from 1970 to 1980, mining employment grew by 72 percent, compared with growth of nonagricultural employment of 50 percent; and [in the early 1980s], over 40 percent of Louisiana’s manufacturing sector is related to chemicals and petroleum.”⁶⁶ Employment in the energy industry grew by 35 percent between 1975 and 1980.⁶⁷

The increased quantity of oil exploration, drilling, and refining did not compromise the seafood and other ecological industries. According to a Reagan campaign briefing, “Environmental questions are obviously answered by that fact that in 33 years of Louisiana’s offshore oil industry, the offshore ecology has thrived. The value of the Gulf Seafood catch has increased every year since the first well was drilled, and every Louisiana fisherman knows that the fishing is best around the offshore rigs.”⁶⁸

Labor reforms affected employment in the state in the 1970s. Before 1976, the AFL-CIO, under the direction of Victor Bussie, was one of the strongest lobbying groups in Louisiana’s legislature serving on behalf of the workers; however, that changed with the passage of the Louisiana Right-to-Work Law in 1976. This act allowed workers to refrain from joining a labor union. Parent states that this law allowed the Louisiana Association of Business and Industry (LABI), under the leadership of Ed Steimel, to become a powerful lobbying group in Louisiana politics.⁶⁹ While most of Louisiana took advantage of the Right-to-Work Law, some areas, particularly Lake Charles, remained heavily unionized.

Louisiana’s energy industry played a pivotal role in ameliorating the national crisis of the 1970s. The United States turned to Louisiana and other oil-producing states to alleviate the

⁶⁶ James A. Richardson, “Energy and Louisiana’s Financial Future,” *1982 PAR Conference: Energy and the Economic Future of Louisiana* (Baton Rouge, PAR Analysis, 1982), 17-8.

⁶⁷ Calhoun 447.

⁶⁸ Paul, “Current Oil and Gas Issues in Louisiana,” Folder “State Political Files—Louisiana,” Box 482, Research Unit, PP-RRL, Simi Valley, Ca.

⁶⁹ Parent, 132. The LABI formed in 1975.

crunch put upon the country by OPEC's embargo in 1973 and 1974. According to Richardson, in 1979, Louisiana had 16 percent of all active oilrigs in the United States, and 37 percent of all natural gas extracted and produced in the United States came from Louisiana. Simoneaux added that in 1981, over 4,000 different oil and gas companies conducted business within Louisiana.⁷⁰ In 1980, Louisiana had 12,188 natural gas wells and 21,886 crude oil wells operating throughout the state.⁷¹ In the same year, the state produced over 10 million barrels of oil, over 111 billion cubic feet of natural gas, and over 1 million barrels of plant liquids.⁷²

Louisiana's state government reaped greater benefits in the 1970s from energy than in previous decades. In *Louisiana: A History*, Michael Kurtz writes, "Edwin Edwards greatly increased state revenues, by raising the severance tax on crude oil by 30 percent and on natural gas by 50 percent, and he doubled the state income tax on corporations." Edwards also altered the method of computing oil's severance tax by taxing value as opposed to volume. As this change occurred shortly before the OPEC embargo, state revenues increased dramatically.⁷³ According to the *Louisiana Almanac*, Louisiana oil and gas leases netted billions for the federal government annually in the late 1970s, with the state collecting over one billion dollars in leases each fiscal year from 1976 until 1981. Louisiana netted multimillion incomes each year in leasing and royalty with the state, and they collected between \$400 and \$500 million each year in oil and gas severance taxes, as well.⁷⁴

Energy was at the center of Louisiana's political and economical structures. The industry employed thousands of residents in good-paying jobs, and extracted resources netted

⁷⁰ Simoneaux, 3.

⁷¹ Calhoun, 442-3. Data in the Almanac erroneously had 21,885 crude oil wells listed instead of 21,886. Data before 1980 is unavailable.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 440.

⁷³ Michael L. Kurtz, *Louisiana: A History*, ed. Bennett H. Wall (Wheeling, IL: Harlan Press, 2002), 379.

⁷⁴ Calhoun, 439-445.

billions of dollars for the state's treasury. Jimmy Carter's conservation policies, as well as dissatisfaction with the strict regulations on energy within Washington's bureaucracy, became pivotal issues in the 1980 election for Louisiana. In his campaign visits to the state, Ronald Reagan repeatedly stressed the importance of energy deregulation and linked energy to numerous other failures in the Carter presidency, both domestic and foreign, such as inflation, unemployment, and Iran Hostage Crisis.

Louisiana attracted some national attention from its first presidential preference primary held on April 6, 1980. The event merited visits from Governor Reagan and Ambassador George Bush, as well as Rosalynn Carter.

CHAPTER TWO: “LOUISIANA’S ‘HO-HUM’ 1980 PRESIDENTIAL PREFERENCE PRIMARY”

For the 1980 presidential election, Louisiana adopted the closed primary method in selecting party delegates for the national conventions, having used caucuses in previous elections. Although Louisiana adopted the unique “open” jungle primary for its local and state elections in 1975, their “closed” presidential primary harkened back to the original primary system they used throughout the early to mid-twentieth century in that it was available only to registered party members, as was the case in states such as Pennsylvania, Florida, and Maryland.⁷⁵

Senate Bill 75, passed unanimously during the 1979 legislative session, established a “statewide presidential preference primary” held on the first Saturday of April 1980 (April 5). Political parties with at least 40,000 registered voters could use this method in choosing a preferred candidate. Parties would be responsible for allocating convention delegates based on the results. Voting could only occur along party lines with no crossover voting (i.e. registered Democrats could not vote in the Republican primary nor could registered Republicans vote in the Democratic primary).⁷⁶ Third party and independent voters could not participate. In order to appear on the ballot, a candidate had to pay a \$500 registration fee and either be qualified as the nominee in two other states or obtain a petition with at least 3000 signatures from residents of each of Louisiana’s eight congressional districts.⁷⁷

Viewing the 1980 Democratic field as “limited,” conservative (then Democratic) state representative Louis “Woody” Jenkins successfully lobbied for an amendment to add an

⁷⁵ Parent, *Inside the Carnival*, 150.

⁷⁶ Digest: Louisiana Senate Bill Number 75, 1979, Regional Political Files, Folder “States—Louisiana—State Information,” Box 387, Research Unit, PP-RRL, Simi Valley, Ca.

⁷⁷ Don Buchanan, “Presidential Primary Bill Adopted,” unknown date or newspaper, Charles Black Files, Folder “States,” Box 98, Research Unit, PP-RRL, Simi Valley, Ca.

“uncommitted” delegate option to the ballots. The Reagan for President Team disliked this, insisting, “The purpose of this bill is to give Louisiana citizens a voice in choosing their next president. To allow these [uncommitted] slates totally clouds the issue.” They also noted that the amendment abided by Democratic Party rules, which used a proportion-based system in allocating delegates as opposed to the Republican Party’s “winner-take-all” method. Finally, they believed that having “uncommitted” slates on the ballot would turn the primary into a farce.⁷⁸

The Republican Party allocated thirty-one Louisiana delegates—three from each of the eight congressional districts and seven “at-large.” Ed Anderson of *The Times-Picayune* explained that the national Republican Party allocated thirty-one delegates for Louisiana based on local voter registration, as well as having a Republican governor and congressmen. The state party held a caucus in early 1980 to determine the potential convention delegates committed to Reagan, Bush, Texas Governor John Connally, and other Republicans. The Republican primarily was “winner-take-all” by district such that the candidate with the highest percentage of votes per district would get all three of its delegates. The seven “at-large” delegates were apportioned based on the percentage candidates received on the statewide level.⁷⁹

Republican Party officials criticized the primary. In a June 1979 letter written to Charles Black of the Reagan for President Committee, Republican State Campaign Chair John Cade described the potential primary as “a beauty contest only, and would not be binding on the party...With us, it is wide open. Our Central Committee could vote to ignore the beauty contest and continue to pick delegates as we always have, but the pressure would be enormous not to do

⁷⁸ Key Points in Senate Bill Number 75 as Passed by the Senate, 1979, Regional Political Files, Folder “States—Louisiana—State Information,” Box 361, Research Unit, PP-RRL, Simi Valley, Ca.

⁷⁹ Ed Anderson, “Attitude is Blah Toward April 5 La. Primary,” *The Times-Picayune*, March 14, 1980, Section 1, Page 10.

this.” Cade, however, thought that the primary could have some benefits if the Reagan campaign conducted a grassroots effort to gain traction against Texas Governor John Connally, thought to have a lock on Louisiana’s Republican delegates in late 1979 and early 1980.⁸⁰ Responding to his letter, Black thought that a primary would be better for Louisiana than a convention.⁸¹

Louisiana’s politicians gave various reasons for adopting the primary. The legislature argued that the primary “will give more people a chance to participate. It allows, for the first time, an accurate reflection of the preferences of Louisiana’s citizens... We will have a chance to have our next president understand something about our needs prior to the general election.”⁸² An anonymous proponent of the bill envisioned the primary would see candidates “walking the streets of Louisiana, getting the sense of the people of this state.”⁸³ *The Concordia Sentinel* believed that presidents would have had a better grasp on Louisiana issues had the state used a primary in previous elections, writing, “If candidate Jimmy Carter had spent more time campaigning in Louisiana, the President might have a better handle on the energy problems. He could have greater insight if he had spent more time with Gov. Edwin Edwards, who may not be right about a lot of things but he had proved to be right on energy.”⁸⁴ The paper hoped that by visiting the state, candidates could take a Louisiana viewpoint with them to the White House. In

⁸⁰ Letter to Charles Black from John H. Cade, June 6, 1979, Charles Black Files, Folder “Louisiana,” Box 98, Research Unit, PP-RRL, Simi Valley, Ca. Black cofounded the National Conservative Political Action Committee (NCPAC) in 1975 and served as a campaign advisor for Ronald Reagan, George H. W. Bush, George W. Bush, and John McCain. One of his first hires while working for Reagan was Lee Atwater, who served as the elder Bush’s campaign manager in 1988 and helped create the infamous “Willie Horton” political advertisement.

⁸¹ Letter to John H. Cade from Charles Black, June 11, 1979, Charles Black Files, Folder “Louisiana,” Box 98, Research Unit, PP-RRL, Simi Valley, Ca. John Hamilton Cade was a businessman from Alexandria, who served as Louisiana’s Republican Party Chair from 1976 to 1978. He served as Dave Treen’s campaign manager in his congressional and gubernatorial races, and, notably, split with Treen over the 1976 election when Treen supported Gerald Ford and Cade, Ronald Reagan. Dying in 1988, Treen and several other Republicans eulogized Cade as a pioneer for the Republican Party in Louisiana.

⁸² Key Points in Senate Bill Number 75 as Passed by the Senate, 1979, Regional Political Files, Folder “States—Louisiana—State Information,” Box 361, Research Unit, PP-RRL, Simi Valley, Ca.

⁸³ “Primary Post Mortem,” *The Times-Picayune*, April 8, 1980, Section 1, Page 10.

⁸⁴ “Presidential Primaries,” *The Concordia Sentinel*, July 12, 1979, Page 2A.

a January 1980 column, the paper's Editor Publisher Sam Hanna, a critic of the primary due to its confusion, warned that the primary would be a useless endeavor unless presidential candidates visited the state. He did, however, offer hope by writing, "The primary, however, will give the average citizen a chance to say whom he wants representing him at the national convention, thus giving that voter a voice in the convention. That's somewhat better than before."⁸⁵

State Senator Henry Braden of New Orleans, one of the two senators to introduce the bill, hoped that the Louisiana primary would rival New Hampshire's with media coverage. When interviewed on the *CBS Evening News*, Braden said, "So many other states have them. We weren't getting any attention from the national candidates of either party in Louisiana."⁸⁶ He added that no major Democratic presidential candidate came to Louisiana in 1976 before the convention.

Like 1976, no major Democratic presidential candidate visited Louisiana before the April 5 primary. President Carter, using the "Rose Garden Strategy," sent his wife to campaign in New Orleans, and Senator Ted Kennedy, despite his ties to the prominent Reggie family of Acadia Parish, sent his children to Louisiana while he spent most of his own time and resources campaigning in the larger Pennsylvania primary.⁸⁷ George Bush spent Thursday, April 3, in New Orleans, and his wife, Barbara, visited the state earlier that week.

Of the presidential candidates, Ronald Reagan spent the most time and effort in Louisiana before the primary. The records from the Ronald Reagan 1980 Presidential Campaign Papers provide a thorough analysis of Louisiana's primary, as well as information regarding the

⁸⁵ Sam Hanna, "A Confusing Primary," *The Concordia Sentinel*, January 21, 1980, Page 2A.

⁸⁶ Eric Engberg, "Campaign '80/Louisiana Primary," *CBS Evening News*, CBS, April 5, 1980, accessed from the Vanderbilt Television News Archive. Bob Schieffer served as anchor for the April 5 *CBS Evening News* telecast. Engberg served as a CBS news correspondent from 1976 to 2003.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.* The "Rose Garden Strategy" refers to the president staying at the White House as opposed to travelling throughout the country. Carter used this strategy during the Iran Hostage Crisis and during the 1980 election, limiting his canvassing throughout the country to deal with economic, energy, and foreign policy issues.

California governor's campaign in Louisiana (speeches, campaign briefings, campaign strategies, lists of important issues, and correspondence with constituents and local lawmakers). Reagan created a draft game plan in late 1979 to create a grassroots effort in Louisiana, opening a local headquarters in Louisiana following the New Hampshire primary (see Figure 1). For early March, he began phone banking catered to Republican voters.⁸⁸

REAGAN FOR PRESIDENT Draft Plan-Louisiana	
August 10, 1979	Filing deadline for State Central Committee
August 15, 1979	Begin contacting Congressional District leadership
August 20, 1979	Leadership meeting for State Central Committee targeting
September 1, 1979	Finance Chairman selected and begin Finance Committee Select Steering Committee
September 15, 1979	Begin contacting Parish leadership Finish Congressional District leadership
October 1, 1979	Print guide ballots where necessary
October 15, 1979	Reagan mailing on State Central Committee in selected districts
October 27, 1979	First Primary (State Central Committee election day)
November 1-10, 1979	Steering Committee meeting <i>Ballot by GOP 4/1000-5000</i> <i>Turnaround April to determine rules.</i>
November 20, 1979	Parish leadership recruited
December 8, 1979	Run-off election
December 9, 1979	Move on Treen organization
December 15, 1979	Begin contacting for Reagan delegates Steering Committee meeting-discuss rules for primary Steering Committee begins communicating rules to State Central Committee Begin re-planning campaign

REAGAN FOR PRESIDENT Draft Plan-Louisiana Page 2	
January 1, 1980	Open state headquarters Hire field staff
January 5, 1980	Rules selected by State Central Committee for primary
January 10-18, 1980	Congressional District meetings on delegates
January 15, 1980	All Parish Chairmen selected
January 25, 1980	Have delegates selected
February 1, 1980	Announce local Parish Chairmen Begin public campaign
February 15, 1980	Open local headquarters Begin Hostess phoning in parishes (except New Orleans area, Baton Rouge, Shreveport and Monroe) Bulk mailing following New Hampshire primary
March, 1980	Local visits by Governor Reagan during March
March 5, 1980	Begin telephone banks to GOP voters (New Orleans, <i>Lafayette</i> area, Baton Rouge, Monroe and Shreveport)
April 5, 1980	Primary

Figure 1: This document outlines Ronald Reagan's Louisiana primary campaign timetable from August 10, 1979 to April 5, 1980, the date of the primary. *Source:* Ronald Reagan Presidential Papers, Ronald Reagan Library.

⁸⁸ Reagan for President—Draft Plan--Louisiana, 1979, Regional Political Files, Folder "States—Louisiana—State Information," Box 361, Research Unit, PP-RRL, Simi Valley, Ca.

Reagan visited the state on April 1 and 2, stopping at Monroe, New Orleans, Baton Rouge, Shreveport, and Lafayette. Not every event was free and open to the public—his private events included a delegate breakfast in Baton Rouge, a meeting with Governor Treen, and a fundraising reception in both Shreveport and Lafayette. Other events, such as a Jaycees luncheon in Shreveport and a jambalaya dinner in New Orleans charged nominal admission fees. He held at least one public event in each city he visited except for Baton Rouge.⁸⁹

Reagan's campaign papers offer detailed information about his many stops throughout the state during April 1 and 2. These papers give a glimpse into his well-organized campaign. Each briefing explains the type of event, its purpose, number of people expected, ticket price (if a fundraiser), event location, those seated at the head table, and expected VIPs. Each briefing lists a "who's who" of prominent Louisiana Republicans with their commitments to a candidate: Regional Program Director Kenny Klinge⁹⁰, State Campaign Chairman John Cade, as well Republican State Chairman George Despot⁹¹, Vice Chairman Debi Bowland⁹², National Committeeman Frank Spooner⁹³, and National Committeewoman Ginny Martinez.⁹⁴ In addition,

⁸⁹ Various Louisiana Campaign Briefings, Folder "California Headquarters—Briefings for Campaign Appearances, 3/30/80-4/1/80," Box 54, Research Unit, PP-RRL, Simi Valley, Ca.

⁹⁰ J. Kenneth Klinge of Alexandria, VA, served as Executive Director of the Republican Party of Virginia from 1973-1974. In the 1980 campaign, he served as Reagan's Regional Coordinator for Louisiana, Mississippi, Arkansas, and Missouri. He currently serves as a lobbyist in the general Washington, DC area and works as a Republican strategist, often specializing in Virginia state politics.

⁹¹ George Despot served as Chairman of the Louisiana Republican Party from 1978-1985. As chair, he pushed for caucuses in which the state party would endorse one Republican for a particular office if multiple Republicans were on the open primary ballot. Pat Robertson and the "Religious Right" removed Despot as chair in 1985, as he came under scrutiny for his stance on social issues like abortion and homosexuality. Accordingly, Despot's removal brought disastrous results for the state Republican Party in the early 1990s, as the party experienced setbacks in state elections.

⁹² Debi Bowland served as Louisiana Secretary of Labor under Governor Treen and headed Treen's election in 1979 and Reagan's in 1980 for Louisiana. Reagan offered her several political appointments during his second term as a reward for working on his campaign, and she worked in the United States Department of Labor under George Bush. She served as Ohio's Secretary of Labor under Governor George Voinovich, and George W. Bush considered her for Assistant Secretary of Labor before she suffered a stroke.

⁹³ Frank Spooner was an oilman from Monroe who served as Louisiana's National Republican Committeeman. In 1976, he became the first Republican of the twentieth century to run for Congress in Louisiana's Fifth Congressional

the briefings include the names of all local leaders (regardless of party), city demographics (such as population, industry, transportation, communications, federal, medical, cultural and educational facilities, and sports), and salient pages from the 1980 edition of *The Almanac of American Politics* about the corresponding congressional district. For some locations, a short history of the community or region is included; for example, the Lafayette campaign briefing includes an excerpt from a Louisiana history book about Lafayette with a paragraph about the history of the Cajuns marked for importance.⁹⁵

When visiting the state, Reagan confronted numerous issues including possible running mates, and energy, and other domestic and foreign policies. In Monroe, Reagan was asked if he would consider a Southerner as vice president, and he replied, “I haven’t ruled out anyone or any area of this country.” In New Orleans, a woman who attended his rally at the Rivergate Convention Center suggested he choose President Ford as his running mate, yet the crowds booed and taunted her suggestion with Reagan graciously replying, “I don’t know how you ask a man who’s been president.”⁹⁶ According to *The Times-Picayune*, Reagan received the biggest ovation in New Orleans when he told the crowd, “I think when you interrupt a pregnancy, you are taking a human life.”⁹⁷

Energy was Reagan’s major topic during his brief visit to the state. In Monroe, he blamed energy shortages on government regulation by saying “a few years ago the government injected itself into the energy industry at virtually every level—from wellhead price controls, to

District. He ran against Jerry Huckaby, and his race attracted visits from Ronald Reagan and John Connally. Spooner lost the general election winning 47.5 percent to Huckaby’s 52.5 percent,

⁹⁴ Virginia Morse Martinez served as Louisiana’s National Republican Committeewoman from 1977 until her death in 1992. She successfully lobbied to have the 1988 National Republican Convention occur at the Louisiana Superdome in New Orleans.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

⁹⁶ Don Buchanan, “Reagan barnstorms state, makes stopover in BR,” *Morning Advocate*, April 1, 1980, 1-A.

⁹⁷ Iris Kelso and Ed Anderson, “Reagan Is Seeking Big Win in Louisiana,” *The Times-Picayune*, April 1, 1980, Section 1 Page 10.

distribution, to the allocating of where fuel would be used, to telling the refiners what they would refine it into and controlling it at retail price.”⁹⁸ He criticized Carter’s presidency by saying, “When he first took office, he said there were two major crises—inflation and energy. Now, for Carter, there are two major disasters—inflation and energy.”⁹⁹ Appealing to the regular citizenry, he lamented, “We have been told we have to turn our thermostats down if you live up there where the snow is, or up when you are down here where there’s heat—anyway be uncomfortable. You can’t drive as much, or (told to) drive slower or don’t drive at all. And it is all because energy has been pumped out of the ground to the place that we are now dependent on those OPEC nations.”¹⁰⁰

Reagan blamed excessive federal oversight for the economic and national problems America faced. He received enthusiastic support from crowds when he expressed his wish to reduce the size of federal government while building a strong national defense. He blamed the bearish economy on high taxes, and in Shreveport, he told a crowd that the United States needs to “start whacking away at the cost of government,” as citizens are overtaxed and over governed.¹⁰¹ He expressed support for phasing out the newly created Departments of Energy and Education. He blamed inflation on the government by arguing, “Inflation is caused by the government, and government alone can make it go away...In the first 24 hours [as president], if I have the opportunity, I would like to put a freeze on the hiring of federal employees to replace those who retire and turn off those printing presses that have been grinding out that imitation money.”¹⁰² Adopting part of Nixon’s Southern Strategy, he expressed support for the Ninth

⁹⁸ Buchanan 1-A.

⁹⁹ Kelso and Anderson Section 1 Page 10.

¹⁰⁰ Buchanan 1-A.

¹⁰¹ Judy Pace, “Reagan backs tax cuts, reduction in government,” *Shreveport Times*, Shreveport, April 2, 1980, 1-A.

¹⁰² Kelso and Anderson, Section 1 Page 10.

Amendment by suggesting the return of some federal powers, like welfare and taxation, to the states, saying, “Stop that expensive round trip of taking our money from us to Washington, deducting a carrying charge and then sending a portion of it back as a gift from the federal government.”¹⁰³

On foreign policy, Reagan stressed the importance of building a strong national defense using a strong, well-equipped, all-volunteer military “to the point where nobody would dare lift a hand against it.”¹⁰⁴ Reagan also told voters that he had initially supported the United States’ boycott of the Summer Olympic Games in Moscow but changed his mind, believing that individual athletes should make the decision of competing and that the government should not withhold their visas. Regarding the Iran Hostage Crisis, Reagan candidly stated, “There comes a moment when negotiating with people of this kind where you have to say, ‘No, this is our last offer.’ There does come a point at which you say, ‘We’ve done all the talking that’s going to be done.’” He also spoke out against the SALT II Treaty between the Soviet Union and United States regarding arms control by saying, “This treaty should be neatly torn in half and sent back to the Soviet Union.”¹⁰⁵

Shortly before the primary, Reagan picked up an endorsement from Congressman Bob Livingston of the First Congressional District. Livingston, not laying it on too thick, called Reagan a “good, decent, honest viable leader for our times.” Believing that Carter had a lock on the Democratic Party’s nomination, he implored fellow Republicans to “unify the party around

¹⁰³ Pace 1-A.

¹⁰⁴ Buchanan 2-A.

¹⁰⁵ Pace 1-A and 6-A.

one candidate...to make him the next president. We can't afford to have four more years like we've last had."¹⁰⁶ No other Louisiana politician publicly endorsed Reagan before the primary.

Louisiana's Secretary of State James Brown predicted a low 25-35 percent voter turnout for the primary; however, actual turnout was even lower. Approximately 350,000 out of 1.9 million voters participated. Some cities and communities boasted higher turnouts due to concurrent municipal elections, but others like Baton Rouge saw a turnout between 10 and 15 percent.¹⁰⁷ Approximately thirty-nine percent of those registered Republican participated while about twenty percent of registered Democrats did so. The results were not surprising, as Reagan won 74 percent of the Republican vote to Bush's 19 percent, and Carter won 55 percent of the vote to Kennedy's 22 percent.¹⁰⁸ Reagan even won the delegates in the First and Second Congressional Districts where pundits predicted Bush would win.

On April 5, a *Times-Picayune* editorial called on citizens to vote, warning, "Louisiana voters are pretty independent folk not noted for any sense of the insignificance of their ballots. We would hope that we do not draw national attention to our primary for its apathy rather than for its interest."¹⁰⁹ The Louisiana primary did indeed receive national attention for to its apathy.

Of the "Big Three" networks, only CBS gave the primary significant coverage. NBC included a ten-second blurb from its studio explaining that Carter and Reagan were expected to sweep the primary and add to their delegate totals, and ABC waited until the day after the primary to announce Carter and Reagan's respective victories from its studio.¹¹⁰ CBS's coverage

¹⁰⁶ Ed Anderson, "Reagan Endorsed by Livingston," *The Times-Picayune*, March 23, 1980, Section 1, Page 4.

¹⁰⁷ Candace Lee, "Carter, Reagan Sweep La.," *Sunday Advocate*, Baton Rouge, April 6, 1980, 1-A.

¹⁰⁸ Bill McMahon, "Low Turnout Marks Primary," *Sunday Advocate*, April 6, 1980, 1-A.

¹⁰⁹ "It's Election Day—Vote!," *The Times-Picayune*, April 5, 1980, Section 1, Page 14.

¹¹⁰ "ABC Evening News for Sunday, Apr 06, 1980," Vanderbilt Television News Archive, <http://tvnews.vanderbilt.edu/libezp.lib.lsu.edu/diglib-fulldisplay.pl?SID=201101206896972&code=tvn&RC=65336&Row=1> & "NBC Evening News for Saturday, Apr

of the primary traded in the stereotypes. Reporter Eric Engberg's coverage begins by depicting an African-American couple fishing on the Mississippi River across from New Orleans (see Figure 2), while he explains that politicians are calling it the "ho-hum primary, as candidates joined with voters in resisting the effort to make Louisiana a major battleground state."



Figure 2: CBS began its primary coverage showing this scene of an African-American couple fishing. *Source: CBS Evening News*, April 5, 1980, accessed from Vanderbilt Television News Archive.



Figure 3: CBS depicted Governor David Treen voting in the garage of a resident, further showing the primitiveness of Louisiana's primary. *Source: CBS Evening News*, April 5, 1980, accessed from Vanderbilt Television News Archive.

Following an interview with State Senator Braden, Engberg explained that the Democratic candidates did not make personal appearances while Republicans came but only briefly. The report included a small quotation from former United Nations Ambassador George Bush when he jabbed at Reagan by saying, "Everyone considers it a Reagan state because he's been here forever and ever and ever and ever and ever, I might add." CBS depicted a Reagan rally minus a sound bite. The report continued by showing several polling places; while one appeared to be in a school gymnasium, the others were in some unsophisticated spots, like garages and dilapidated buildings. Governor Treen was shown casting his vote in someone's

garage (see Figure 3). To illustrate the low turnout, CBS showed an elderly poll worker talking to a colleague while crocheting. Engberg added that politicians contemplated abandoning the primary system. Despot, in an interview said, “I think in Louisiana at least we need to very seriously examine whether we want to have another one or whether we want to continue with this process.” Governor Treen attributed the dullness of the primary to a national sentiment: “I think that people are beginning to wonder if the primary system is the best way to nominate candidates.” Coverage ended with Engberg in front of Jackson Square explaining, “Echoing the view of many Americans in this strange campaign year, another Louisiana politician marveled, ‘Who would have thought last year that things would be this dull this soon?’” Aside from the couple fishing and State Senator Braden’s interview, CBS did not depict any African-Americans in its news coverage.¹¹¹

Pundits and politicians throughout the state attributed the “ho-hum” primary’s failure to numerous reasons. Architects of the primary blamed the poor turnout to bad timing. The major Wisconsin and Pennsylvania primaries overshadowed Louisiana’s. By April, it became apparent that Reagan and Carter would each secure their respective party’s nominations. Before the general primary season, Louisiana pundits believed John Connally would be a formidable candidate in the Republican primary given his Texas roots (explaining why Cade urged Black to consider a grassroots campaign for Reagan in 1979), but he withdrew from the race after a dismal showing in South Carolina’s primary. The *Times-Picayune* lamented, “A closer fight in both parties surely would have added impact to Louisiana’s first primary and heightened voter

¹¹¹ Eric Engberg, “Campaign ‘80/Louisiana Primary,” *CBS Evening News*, CBS, April 5, 1980, accessed from the Vanderbilt Television News Archive.

interest.”¹¹² The New Orleans paper also suggested moving the primary to an earlier time, such as late February or early March.¹¹³

Despite fair weather, the primary occurred over Easter weekend; few citizens included voting in their plans. A Calcasieu Parish Clerk of Court worker said, “Everybody was out trying to go fishing. Everybody had Good Friday (holidays) and there are a lot of Catholics down here. They are just not going to sit around Easter weekend waiting to vote.”¹¹⁴ Obviously, CBS used the fishing theme in its report.

Others in the state attributed the low turnout to the confusing primary rules. Because of no crossover voting, many registered Democrats were unhappy they could not participate in the Republican primary. The *Times-Picayune* suggested that lawmakers make the primary “open” and allow crossover voting as “Such a change would not only be consistent with Louisiana’s open primary system for state and local elections, but it would also enliven the contest.”¹¹⁵ The *West Carroll Gazette* also argued for open primaries, attributing the poor turnout solely to the ban on crossover voting and writing, “In the general election this fall, voters will be able to make their choice among all candidates, regardless of party, and that election will be proof of the pudding.”¹¹⁶ Sam Hanna, on the other hand, believed the novelty of the primary confused the people.¹¹⁷ Kay Maher of the League of Women Voters in New Orleans concurred by explaining

¹¹² “Primary Post Mortem,” *The Times-Picayune*, April 8, 1980, Section 1, Page 10.

¹¹³ The State of Louisiana moved its presidential preference primaries to the second Saturday of March for the 1988 election, after holding the Democratic Primary in early May 1984. The state also held primaries on that date for 1992, 1996, and 2000 before moving the primary to the second Saturday in February (right after “Super Tuesday”) starting in 2004.

¹¹⁴ Candace Lee, “Carter, Reagan Sweep La.,” *Sunday Advocate*, April 6, 1980, 1-A.

¹¹⁵ “Primary Post Mortem,” *The Times-Picayune*, April 8, 1980, Section 1, Page 10.

¹¹⁶ “Contrasting Elections,” *The West Carroll Gazette*, Oak Grove, April 17, 1980, 2. Thomas H. Brackett published *The West Carroll Gazette* on Fridays. The paper continues to serve as West Carroll Parish’s official parish journal, and had a 1980 circulation of 3099 (parish population: 13,028).

¹¹⁷ Sam Hanna, “Primary a Waste,” *The West Carroll Gazette*, April 17, 1980, 2.

her organization received dozens of furious phone calls from elderly voters who could not vote for their favorite candidate.¹¹⁸

Others in Louisiana thought the primary drained too much money and energy out of the candidates and electorate. George Despot stated, “People are election-weary” due to the drain caused by the 1979 gubernatorial election that occurred six months earlier such that they “are past the point where they have an interest.”¹¹⁹ In a *West Carroll Gazette* editorial, the newspaper argued that the primary extends the presidential campaign season to unnecessary lengths and costs more money.¹²⁰ Hanna, less candid, supported abolishing the primary by saying, “the people aren’t any better off than they were before, and the state is out of the cost of handling it. The legislature will want to abolish it—and the sooner, the better. It was worth a try, at least.”¹²¹

Ronald Reagan’s two-day tour around the state proved that he took the primary seriously. In his canvassing throughout the state, he appealed to a variety of citizens who warmly greeted him at convention and civic centers (Shreveport and New Orleans) and airport hangars (Monroe and Lafayette). In addition, he achieved victory in Louisiana by doing something few candidates in the state (especially for state and local office) do—being spendthrift. *The Morning Advocate* reported that the cost of Reagan’s April visit to the state was minimal—approximately \$25,000 to \$30,000. By comparison, the gubernatorial candidates spent a cumulative total of \$6 million campaigning in 1979, and that election was, at the time, Louisiana’s most expensive.¹²²

¹¹⁸ Ed Anderson, “Carter, Reagan Sweep Louisiana Primaries,” *The Times-Picayune*, April 6, 1980, Section 1, Page 8.

¹¹⁹ Ed Anderson, “Officials Predicting Light Voter Turnout,” *Times-Picayune*, April 2, 1980, Section 1, Page 8.

¹²⁰ “About Primaries,” *The West Carroll Gazette*, La., April 17, 1980, 2.

¹²¹ Sam Hanna, “Primary a Waste,” *The West Carroll Gazette*, April 17, 1980, 2.

¹²² Don Buchanan, “Reagan campaign costs in Louisiana Penny ante,” *Morning Advocate*, April 2, 1980, 1-A.



Figure 4: From the February 21, 1980 of *The Concordia Sentinel*, this Cartoon by John Chase illustrates the multitude of political elections Louisiana faced during 1980, supporting the hypothesis that Louisianians were election-weary by the time of the primary.

The low turnout in the Louisiana primary led many pundits to predict a similar response to the general election. With Reagan's extensive campaigning during the general campaign season, however, voters became enticed by the California governor's conservative messages and, therefore, proved these pundits wrong by netting a much higher turnout, even higher than the national average.

CHAPTER THREE: "REAGAN AND THE ISSUES"

Ronald Reagan sailed through the remaining primaries in spring 1980 to become the Republican Party's presidential nominee. At the Republican National Convention, in Detroit during July, Reagan chose his primary rival, former United Nations Ambassador George Bush, as his running mate, although party officials also considered ex-President Gerald Ford as his vice-president. Reagan adopted a rather tired slogan, "the time is now for strong leadership," for the campaign.

In late August, the Reagan ticket began actively campaigning in Louisiana following a period of inactive campaigning. Governor David Treen, as well as Congressmen Bob Livingston and Henson Moore, all endorsed the Reagan/Bush ticket. In this state, Reagan touched on issues of importance, such as reducing the size of federal government, while castigating Jimmy Carter's failed presidency. Both Reagan and Carter viewed Louisiana as one of the pivotal "swing states" needed to fulfill the 270 electoral vote requirement. This classification created a novel feeling, for Louisianians generally united in one of the political columns in previous elections. Both candidates had good reason for viewing Louisiana as a "swing state." A poll conducted on August 28 showed the race to be a "dead heat," with Reagan and Carter each winning 39 percent of the vote.¹²³ Kenny Klinge, Reagan's Regional Coordinator, said, "It is a state we want to win. The fact that he came here [New Orleans] early indicated what we feel about Louisiana."¹²⁴

¹²³ Eddie Stikes, handwritten notes regarding Louisiana, Folder "Research—State Political Files--Louisiana," Box 482, Research Unit, PP-RRL, Simi Valley, Ca.

¹²⁴ Ed Anderson, "Reagan Troops 'Must Work Hard' to Carry State," *The Times-Picayune/The States-Item*, September 5, 1980, Section 1, Page 18.

Congressman Moore suggested that Reagan “should attack, attack, attack Carter’s record on defense and the economy,” or Carter would carry the state.¹²⁵ In no visit to the state did Reagan neglect to do this. His campaign was a successful one, as he reminded voters of Carter’s policy blunders, allowing Louisianians to move away from the president. Reagan, Bush, Treen, Moore, Livingston, and other supporters blamed Carter for the energy, economic, domestic, and foreign crises that America faced. If someone wants to know the general theme of the Reagan campaign’s rhetoric in this state, he needs to look no further than the California governor’s October 30 comment he delivered in New Orleans: “The conduct of the presidency of Mr. Carter has become a tragic comedy of errors. In place of competence, he has given us ineptitude. In place of steadiness, we have gotten vacillation. While America looks for confidence, he has given us fear. His multitude of promises so richly pledged in 1976 have fallen by the wayside in the shambles of his administration.”¹²⁶

While campaign visits were a key to Reagan’s success in Louisiana, the campaign also employed other ways to spread the California governor’s message, focusing campaigning in New Orleans and rural areas in the state where Carter fared best in 1976. The campaign established a two-fold system: door-to-door campaigning and telephoning. It used door-to-door in urban and suburban areas, and the campaign established telephone banks in New Orleans, Jefferson, Monroe, Lafayette, Alexandria, Shreveport, Bossier City, Lake Charles, and Baton Rouge to cater to rural voters, estimating that the phone calls would reach up to 1.3 million of Louisiana’s 1.8 million registered voters.¹²⁷ According to October 30 statistics, only about 334,000 phone

¹²⁵ Congressman Henson Moore on Gov. Reagan’s Visit to New Orleans, August 26, 1980, Box 482 Research Unit, PP-RRL, Simi Valley, Ca.

¹²⁶ Remarks by Governor Ronald Reagan—New Orleans, Louisiana, October 30, 1980, Folder “Speech Files, New Orleans, La. 10/30/80 (Garick),” Box 435, Research Unit, PP-RRL, Simi Valley, Ca.

¹²⁷ Eddie Stikes, Phone Banks: Louisiana, Box 482, Research Unit, PP-RRL, Simi Valley, Ca.

calls took place; the results were promising: fifty-three percent of those called favored Reagan; thirty-three percent were undecided, and thirteen percent favored Carter.¹²⁸

Throughout September and October, the Reagan campaign team made numerous visits to sections of Louisiana. First, Reagan and Barbara Bush visited New Orleans on September 4. Reagan spoke on a Mississippi River boat; Bush visited the campaign headquarters of Republican Rob Couhig, who ran a long shot campaign against incumbent Congresswoman Lindy Boggs. Reagan visited Baton Rouge on September 23, speaking at Louisiana State University, and he spoke at Centenary College in Shreveport on October 22. He again visited New Orleans on October 30. George Bush came to New Orleans on September 29; Baton Rouge on October 8; and Lake Charles on October 31. Jimmy Carter visited Louisiana but once: he spoke at Jackson Square in New Orleans on October 21.¹²⁹

Most of these Republican visits included campaign speeches attacking of Jimmy Carter's record. One vague speech, "A Secure Freedom," occurred at LSU on September 23. Reagan did not offer any specific plans or facts, making the speech rather superficial. This event produced the largest crowd in the state campaign and received national coverage by all three networks, with CBS calling the speech a "somewhat ponderous civics lesson."¹³⁰ The LSU rally was

¹²⁸ Louisiana—15 Phone Centers—Cumulative Report, Folder "Political Ops—Programs and Analysis—State Phone Banks—Louisiana (Carmen)," Box 415, Research Unit, PP-RRL, Simi Valley, Ca.

¹²⁹ Iris Kelso, "Congressmen for Carter," *The Times-Picayune*, October 9, 1980, Section 1 Page 11. A copy of Carter's New Orleans speech appeared in Reagan's Election Papers.

¹³⁰ Bill Plante, "Campaign '80 / Carter / Reagan," *CBS Evening News*, CBS, September 23, 1980, accessed from the Vanderbilt Television News Archive. A letter from Lewis A. Norgress of Denham Springs from October 20 appears in the Reagan files regarding the September 23 speech. Norgress donated \$15 to the campaign, but his letter was critical of the event and full of typographical errors. He writes: "You came to LSU where everybody was expecting you to make a 'Truman' type speech discussing the Carter administration 'limb by limb.' What do you do—you talk on 'Freedom'. Jimmie Carter labels you as the candidate of war—it sticks. You laugh it off. Who the hell is advertising you?" Norgress then typed a "mock speech" of what Reagan did say, suggesting he attack Carter for giving away the Panama Canal, double digit inflation and interest rates, 8 to 10 percent unemployment, the Iran Hostage situation, Castro's "illegal alien invasion of the USA," the hostage rescue attempt, broken, budget deficits and huge bureaucracy, and the Billy Carter debacle. Norgress concludes by writing: "This type of speech will get you votes. Your namby-pamby laugh off of Carter's charges aint gonna do it. I predicted Goldwater's defeat;

controversial because Southern University's band performance occasioned protests from Southern students who did not support Reagan.

Reagan's campaign papers include information given to the governor and/or Bush. As depicted in figures 6 and 7, these briefings, similar to the ones from the primaries, offer information about the event location, anecdotes about prominent individuals attending, as well as issues to address and ignore. The papers also offered short summaries on how each issue affected Louisiana and how to address it.

Newspapers from both urban and rural areas play a prominent role in explaining logistics behind numerous issues affecting Louisiana. In many cases, small-town papers, although published weekly or biweekly, provided deeply felt analysis and commentary. Many small-town papers syndicated and reprinted columns from other papers; for example, Sam Hanna of *The Concordia Sentinel* in Ferriday, located in East Central Louisiana, wrote a biweekly column, which also appeared in newspapers in West Carroll, East Carroll, Winn, and Livingston Parishes. In addition, Bob Livingston and Jerry Huckaby, among other Congressmen, wrote weekly columns that appeared in small-town newspapers throughout their districts that presented their opinions about events occurring in Washington and their views on important issues. Not every small-town newspaper offered the same quality analysis. While *The Concordia Sentinel*, *Denham Springs and Livingston Parish News* of suburban Baton Rouge, *The St. Bernard Voice* of suburban New Orleans, and *The West Carroll Gazette* of northeast Louisiana provide the

Nixon's defeat; Ford's defeat and now yours unless you start hitting back hard." This speech was found in Box 387 at the Reagan Library.

GOVERNOR RONALD REAGAN'S
VISIT TO
NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA
Thursday, October 30th, 1980

<u>Expected Weather Upon Arrival</u>	<u>EVENT</u>
Mid 50's	Reagan For President Airport Rally Attendance: 4,000
10 % Chance of Rain	

Dress
Men's Business Suit
Ladies' Afternoon Dress

Advance
Allen Hall Lead Advance
Ted Garrish Advance
Amy Harvey Advance
Keith Fastin Press Advance

AS OF 8 pm
10/29/80
PAGE 1

GOVERNOR REAGAN
DETAILED SCHEDULE
FOR TRIP TO
NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 30, 1980

11:30 am CST Governor Reagan arrives New Orleans
Lakefront Airport, Aero Services, East Hangar
CONTACT: MIKE BRILL
504/245-1140

(OPEN PRESS COVERAGE)
OPEN TO PUBLIC

GOVERNOR REAGAN MET BY
Governor and Mrs. Dave Treen, State of Louisiana

STAFF/PRESS/GUESTS
Staff and Press will be
immediately escorted to
Staff and Press viewing area

11:35 am Governor Reagan, accompanied by Governor Dave Treen,
proceed to platform via rope line

11:40 am Governor Reagan arrives platform

11:45 am Governor Reagan is introduced by Governor Treen

11:50 am GOVERNOR REAGAN BRIEF REMARKS

12:10 pm Governor Reagan concludes and proceeds to
Leadership 80 via rope line

AS OF 8 pm
10/29/80
PAGE 2

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 30, 1980

STAFF/PRESS/GUESTS
Immediately following
remarks to appropriate
aircraft and board

Press filing time in the
Pilot's Lounge. Board
aircraft at 12:40 pm

12:20 pm Governor Reagan boards Leadership 80

12:45 pm CST Governor Reagan departs New Orleans, Louisiana
en route Newark, New Jersey

FLIGHT TIME : 2:30
TIME CHANGE : +1 HOUR
FOOD SERVICE : LUNCH

4:15 pm EST Governor Reagan arrives Newark, New Jersey

Figure 5: This is an example of a campaign visit itinerary found within Ronald Reagan's Personal Paper. This itinerary is for Reagan's October 30 visit to New Orleans, his last visit to the state before the election. *Source:* Ronald Reagan Personal Papers, Ronald Reagan Library.

October 30, 1980

LAKE CHARLES POLITICAL BRIEF

Lake Charles is a city of 77,998 (1970 census) located in Calcasieu ("Kal-ka-shoe") Parish in southwest Louisiana. It is in the 7th Congressional District which is represented by John B. Breaux (D). He was unopposed in the state's open primary, and now thus need not even stand for election this November. A Cajun, Breaux is an accurate reflection of his district which is 44% French-speaking, one of the few Congressional districts in the country in which a plurality of residents have a first language other than English. Although formally endorsing Carter, Breaux has not campaigned for him. Val Marmillion, an aide to Breaux, is running the Carter effort in the state.

Unlike the rest of Louisiana, Lake Charles is a heavily unionized town. A few years ago there was a violent clash on a construction site between the Operating Engineers (AFL-CIO) and the American Federation of Laborers (Independent) in which in addition to major property damage and beatings, a man was killed.

Other than New Orleans, this community is the weakest area for Republicans in the state. There is a very weak GOP organization in Lake Charles. Nevertheless, there are signs things are improving for Republicans. In the 1979 gubernatorial election, the Parish went 29,000 for Democrat Lambard and 26,000 for Republican David Trean. In the neighboring Jefferson Davis Parish, the Republicans actually out-pollled the Democrats in the gubernatorial race by 2000 votes. Finally, a recent poll in the area shows Carter at 46%, Reagan 30% and undecided at 20%, while in Lafayette at the eastern end of the District the polls show Reagan at 51 while Carter at 19.

There are no local races here of any importance. Anderson activity is virtually non-existent.

Secretary of Energy Charles Duncan will be speaking in Lake Charles on the same day as Ambassador Bush's visit but later in the afternoon.

Bush's visit to Lake Charles will be covered by the city's one T.V. station plus media from Lafayette sixty miles away. Because of the closeness of the Beaumont, Port Arthur - Orange area of Texas to this community, media from this area may cover the visit as well.

Figure 6: This is an example of political briefing found within Ronald Reagan's Personal Papers. This particular one came from George Bush's October 30 visit to Lake Charles. *Source:* Ronald Reagan Personal Papers, Ronald Reagan Library.

best analysis, others like *The Donaldsonville Chief* of suburban Baton Rouge, *The St. Tammany Farmer* of suburban New Orleans, and *The St. Helena Echo* of the Florida Parishes offered neither political commentary nor analysis. Figure 7 depicts an example of a small-town newspaper from 1980.

The most prominent issues Reagan addressed in Louisiana were energy, such as oil drilling, production, and exploration; nuclear waste storage in salt domes; the Department of Energy bureaucracy; and economic problems, such as inflation. Reagan also addressed foreign policy concerns, such as the Iran Hostage Crisis, the SALT II Treaty with the Soviet Union, and national defense, including better benefits for veterans and military draft registration; he discussed domestic/social policy, such as abortion, Social Security, desegregation, and busing.

Jimmy Carter's administration dealt tirelessly with the energy problem. Calling the issue "the moral equivalent of war," he advocated the switch to other fuel sources, such as coal, and urged Americans to sacrifice during the oil crisis. In seeking a bipartisan solution, Carter appointed James Schlesinger, who served as Secretary of Defense under Nixon and Ford, as energy czar; Schlesinger served as the first Secretary of Energy in Carter's new Department of Energy, created in August 1977.

Daniel Horowitz feels the nascent department failed to control energy prices and supply because "several cabinet departments and at least five committees in each branch of Congress had jurisdiction over energy policy. Environmentalists and business interests fought over conservation measures, many of which would take years to have an effect."¹³¹ In *Energy Policy in America since 1945*, Richard Vietor states that the Department of Energy "scarcely fulfilled its

¹³¹ Daniel Horowitz, *Jimmy Carter and the Energy Crisis of the 1970s: The "Crisis of Confidence" Speech of July 15, 1979: A Brief History with Documents* (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2005), 11-2, 14.

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Concordia Trade School invaluable to district

The new Concordia Parish Trade School, located in Ferriday on Highway 12 north, will conduct its official open house Friday from 3 p.m. until 5 p.m., and for those who haven't visited the new facility we would encourage them to do so.

Gov. Edwin Edwards is scheduled to speak 4 p.m. at the Trade School.

Basically, the new school offers training in the business field for typing, bookkeeping and secretarial work, as well as nursing, auto mechanics and welding. It serves not only Concordia Parish, but the entire Concordia area.

Most of the students presently enrolled are from Concordia, but many come from Catahoula Parish. Built at a total cost of almost \$2 million, the Trade School is

modern and beautifully designed. It is definitely an asset to Concordia Parish and this entire section of Louisiana.

The director, Johnny G. (Red) Robertson, has many years of experience in the education field, and is a respected man in his community. The new facility couldn't be in better hands. Congratulations are in order for the new Trade School. The people of this area should support it for development of other people who can become producers.

Vocational-technical education is a field that must be utilized in the future to train people to enter a living. In the case of the Concordia Trade School, it can play a vital role in the future of this area.

Unfair criticism

The Ferriday Fire Department came under attack by one of the aldermen during the last regular meeting of the Town Council.

The criticism wasn't justified. The remark that Alderman Elijah Calhoun made during the meeting that Ferriday has no fire department was in error. Ferriday doesn't have a full time fire department, but it has a good volunteer department. It has served well.

It's true that if the town had firemen on hand at the fire station at all hours of the day and night it could make it possible for the firemen to respond a few minutes earlier in some instances. There's no doubt that it would be better than a volunteer

force, but the question is could the town afford it? Alderman Raymond Calhoun says that it can't.

The study requested by the Town Council may reveal if the town can afford a full time firefighting force, a mixture of a regular force and a volunteer force or if it should stay as it is.

Regardless of the outcome, doesn't it seem to you that it's made on different operations of the town, if only to see if there is a room for improvement.

That can do no harm. It could help the council find out if it can afford changes and it could determine if the Town of Ferriday has the best possible fire line since raising that it can.

The Russian invasion

The Russian invasion of Afghanistan has awakened the American public to some degree, with many of the young people who will be affected, stating they are willing to follow the lead and suggestion of the President toward military preparedness or action.

But, there are some who are still crying out that boycotting the Olympics and cutting off grain sales to Russia are too stiff gestures to take. They claim that the sacrifice of athletes, coaches and others are more than should be asked.

One of those who has joined in the cry is Andrew Young, President Carter's former ambassador to the United Nations. But, he has always been one who talked before thinking.

It's true that there are many young athletes who have trained for months for the chance to participate in the Olympics. They may not get to

go to Moscow to compete. Their sacrifices are no greater than young people who gave up plans for their immediate future when they were called by their President in December of 1941.

There are other sacrifices that will most likely have to be made before the current is concluded. Young men - and maybe young women - may be called on to interrupt plans for advanced education, the starting of families and other plans for their immediate future. Parents may be asked to sacrifice their children to the military, or even to the battlefield.

We have reached a time when the nation as a whole is faced with an uncertain period.

It is a time when sacrifices are going to have to be made by the entire population. Young athletes aren't being asked to make sacrifices alone. We are in it together.

The Concordia Sentinel is the official journal of the Concordia Parish Police Jury, the Concordia Parish School Board, the Fifth District Levee Board, Town of Ferriday, Vidalia, Clayton and Ridgeway.

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Sam Hanna



One Man's Opinion

Louisiana's delegation

Louisiana's congressional delegation has changed drastically since the early 1970s, but in all probability will change again since the Legislature reapportioned the congressional districts.

That'll come about in 1981 based on the 1980 federal census. The 1982 congressional elections will be the first in the new districts.

Needless to say, politics will play a dominant factor when the Legislature gets around to drawing the districts, especially since at the time Louisiana will have a Republican governor.

The Republicans, with three members of the delegation already, will about this year for the Fourth District where Congressman Buddy Leach won a close election over a Republican opponent. Leach had to fight off federal charges to hold his seat in Congress.

Gov. elect Dave Treen's seat in the House will be a party fight this year also. Reapportionment could evolve around Congressman G. Long's Eighth District seat, since Long is one of the more liberal members of the delegation and a target of conservatives and Republicans.

Already there is speculation that Long's home base of Alexandria will be moved into the Fifth District with Monroe or into the Sixth District with Shreveport. Long backed Louis Lambert for governor, opposing the move for a movement to do him in when the 1982 election rolls around.

Since South Louisiana is

out-growing North Louisiana in population, it is logical to assume that the two districts in North Louisiana will be expanded. The Fourth District could be enlarged to take in parts of the present Fifth District, and if that happened Jerry Huckaby of the Fifth

District could lose his home base in the Fourth District. Huckaby, who established an apartment in Monroe shortly after his first election, is paying a great deal of attention to the Monroe area, obviously realizing that he could lose the western part of

his district. He's not leaving many stones unturned around the Alexandria area either.

In the House South Louisiana is represented by John Breaux, Benson Moore, Bob Livingston and Lindy Bogg. But the pivotal district is Long's Eighth, which borders both South Louisiana and North Louisiana.

Long will be in the hot spot, since the death of Sen. Allen J. Ellender, U.S. Sen. Russell B. Long has been the senior member of the delegation. He faces re-election this year.

With Treen stepping down to become governor, G. Long and Lindy Bogg have been around Washington longer than any of the rest.

But Bennett Johnston has been there now eight years, and he, too, is beginning to earn his spurs in Washington. Johnston, still only 47, has surrounded himself with an excellent staff and in time could become the senior member of the delegation.

But members of Congress don't go untested in this modern day of American politics in the days when they went to Washington and were forgotten about by the people.

The American people are plugged in to Congress now, and regardless of their records and service members of Congress will have to fight to stay there.

In Louisiana the 1980 census will be the beginning of new congressional districts, and that will give the delegation another new link for the decade.



In the News

R.T. Bonnette

It was a beautiful wedding. It was performed in Jonesville at the First Methodist Church. It went off like clockwork. My niece, Susan Lanier, was the bride. I beamed with pride as I watched her come up the aisle toward the altar beside her father.

I had my camera with me, and was taking some pictures of the ceremonies. So was my son, Mark, and Brett Powell was taking the official wedding photos.

The bride's sister, Joann Helms of Dallas, and her daughter, Jackie had preceded her to the altar. I was sitting on the front row.

"Uncle Travis!" I thought it a little strange that Joann decided to speak to me while in front of the

visitors. I looked up - smiled and sort of nodded my head to let her know I heard. "Uncle Travis!" she whispered a little louder while beckoning me with her finger. I slipped up by her. She whispered, "I left the ring in my coat pocket. Would you get it for me?"

She told me the coat was in the lobby. I went quietly down the side aisle into the lobby and there it was - her coat. But, which one was hers? The lobby was lined with ladies coats from one side of the building to the other.

I proceeded to search. I started at one end. Hands in one pocket then the other.

Do you have any idea what ladies carry in their coat pockets?

I went down the line, searching coat pocket. As I searched, I thought to myself, "It will be just my luck that I won't find it until I get to the last coat."

Sure enough, I searched down to the last coat. I reached my hand in one pocket - nothing. It would even be the last pocket. But it wasn't there, either.

Did I miss one? I began back the opposite direction, searching every coat again as I came to it.

What would I say if someone came in the lobby about that ring wasn't here. Then, I noticed a coat that seemed to have two different colors about midway of the lobby. Could it be? A coat under a coat that I hadn't seen?

It was. I searched one pocket of the coat underneath. Nothing. I searched the other - and felt a little box. I pulled it out, opened it. There was the groom's ring.

I came back down the side aisle to it. I didn't.

I just continued ramming my hand in coat pockets back down the line. Since I was at the end again - and I had found no ring.

About then, I began to wonder if the left is in her coat pocket. Maybe she left it at the house.

I pondered having to go back in and assume that the ring wasn't here. Then, I noticed a coat that seemed to have two different colors about midway of the lobby. Could it be? A coat under a coat that I hadn't seen?

It was. I searched one pocket of the coat underneath. Nothing. I searched the other - and felt a little box. I pulled it out, opened it. There was the groom's ring.

I came back down the side aisle to it. I didn't.

Congressional Gumbo

Kenneth Allen

One reason this country faces rising inflation is too many in Congress support a large and costly government here in Washington that keeps growing.

However, Capitol Hill isn't the only Washington-based citadel of big-government support, and we taxpayers aren't doing too much to stem the tide.

President Carter has sent Capitol Hill a fiscal year 1981 budget that's bigger than any peace-time package in the history of the United States - \$167 billion and change.

However, the figure doesn't seem to upset too many folks on the Hill, at the White House

or on the home front. The first week in January, I reported in this column that Sen. Russell B. Long and J. Bennett Johnston helped fuel inflation by setting their part of a new government spending record. They paid their personal-office staffs \$678,112.31 (more than one-half million taxpayer dollars) for nine-month work in 1979.

However, the two senators have been setting one six-month spending record after another for at least the entire six years this column has been written. They aren't unique among congressional spenders, and Congress does not seem really ready to change

any record-setting trends. Capitol Hill politicians once ironically blamed wage increases and price hikes for inflation. Then when "voluntary guidelines" were established, the blame shifted to OPEC oil prices.

However, weren't both explanations wrong? Government policy, such as paying for deficit spending by creating money out of thin air, is responsible for inflation.

However, this-air money debases the currency, making every dollar, every penny, nickel, dime, quarter, half-dollar and pentadime "silver dollar" worth less and less.

This-air money causes in-

flation, not private-business wage and price increases or controls, which in themselves are only a symptom of the real cause. OPEC oil didn't cause inflation, either.

However, inflation grows as we continue to spend "this" United States money on OPEC oil, while OPEC members keep raising the price of their product, which is continuously "thinner" money.

If foreign oil prices caused inflation, Germany and Japan would have double-digit inflation just as we do. West Germany imports about 97 percent of its oil, and 88

(Continued to Page 3A)

Figure 7: Here is an example of a small-town rural newspaper opinion page. This is the February 23, 1980 issue of *The Concordia Sentinel* from Ferriday. Sam Hanna, Editor/Publisher of the paper, typically wrote a biweekly column that often appeared in other small-town papers throughout the state.

promise of coherence, coordination, and efficiency. [Officials] were busy defending the Department's actions before increasingly hostile oversight committees.”¹³² Carter also drafted a National Energy Plan (NEP) that required America to establish a strategic petroleum reserve, cut oil imports, increase coal production, insulate new homes and buildings, and foster solar power, yet this plan failed to pass Congress.¹³³ One component of this plan included deregulating domestic oil by bringing prices to world levels; a conflict emerged between Carter and Senator Long over issuing rebates to offset additional costs: Carter wanted rebates to go to consumers, but Long wanted rebates to go to oil companies. Long's opposition successfully killed this plan.¹³⁴ With the exception of creating the Department of Energy, Carter's energy policies failed to receive support in 1977.

The Iranian Revolution in 1979 caused oil prices to rise sharply: the average price for a barrel of oil went from \$16 to \$30, a more dramatic increase than the OPEC Embargo of 1973-1974. According to the *Congressional Quarterly*, “Energy costs fueled inflation. Of the 13.3 percent increase in consumer prices, 2.5 percentage points were due to rising energy prices. By the end of the year, a dollar for a gallon of gasoline was a good price.”¹³⁵ As many gasoline buyers experienced long queues and supply shortages, conservation occurred in all regions of America, as Carter signed an executive order allowing governors to ration gas in their states. In 1979, the average daily oil consumption decreased to 18.4 million barrels from 18.8 million a year earlier, making the United States the only industrialized nation to consume less oil than the

¹³² Richard H. K. Vietor, *Energy Policy in America since 1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 322-3.

¹³³ Stan Benjamin, “Carter's Theme: Sacrifice or Else,” *The Times-Picayune*, April 19, 1977, Section 1 Page 1.

¹³⁴ John L. Moore, Ed. *President Carter 1978* (Washington: Congressional Quarterly, 1979), 30.

¹³⁵ John L. Moore, Ed. *President Carter 1979* (Washington: Congressional Quarterly, 1980), 59.

previous year.¹³⁶ The fledgling Department of Energy encountered attacks from all sides for failing to foresee this crisis; when Carter created new policies and organizations to solve the new energy crisis, he did not place them in the department's jurisdiction.

On July 15, 1979, Carter delivered a memorable speech, the "Crisis of Confidence" or "National Malaise" speech. He viewed the energy crisis as a "Crisis that strikes at the very heart and soul and spirit of our national will," and he chastised his fellow citizens for their extravagance, despite increasing pessimism from millions of Americans who feared they could no longer afford goods and services they wanted or needed.¹³⁷ Carter proposed several new benchmarks to address the crisis. He would ensure the United States would never use a greater amount of foreign oil than it used in 1977 by setting import quotas; he allocated money for researching alternative sources of energy; and he wanted utility companies to cut their oil usage by 50 percent within the next decade. He also endorsed the creation of an Energy Mobilization Board to catalyze development of new energy sources, and mandated that all thermostats in federal government buildings be set at 78 degrees in the summer and 65 degrees in the winter.

In 1979, Carter supported a gradual deregulation of oil prices that had been in place since the earlier part of the decade. To recover lost revenue from fluctuations in oil prices, he proposed a windfall profit tax on oil companies. Congress approved one of the largest taxes ever levied on an American industry on March 27, 1980. The final version of this tax called for taxing "30 to 70 percent of the difference between the controlled price of oil and the selling price after decontrol."¹³⁸ The tax intended to produce more than \$227 billion in revenue throughout

¹³⁶ Margaret Thompson, Ed. *President Carter 1980* (Washington: Congressional Quarterly, 1981), 32.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, 13.

¹³⁸ Moore, *President Carter 1979*, 64.

the 1980s”¹³⁹ The tax would expire after either the government levied the \$227 billion or on January 1, 1988—whichever came first.¹⁴⁰ Oil companies howled in anger.¹⁴¹

Nuclear power played a minor role with Carter’s energy policies. The President endorsed this energy source, calling it “critical if we are to free our country from its overdependence on unstable sources of high-priced foreign oil.”¹⁴² He supported licensing for new nuclear power plants; however, in March 1979, a meltdown occurred at the Three Mile Island reactor in Pennsylvania, leading the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to place a moratorium on licensing new power plants while investigating plant safety. Carter urged the agency to finish its work quickly, and in 1980, reorganized the commission to place more authority in the hands of its chairperson.

Many Louisiana politicians and newspaper editors detested Carter’s energy plans. Politicians and energy officials alike lambasted the president’s policies. Although Louisiana had a heavily Democratic delegation, Carter received little support from most of Louisiana’s representatives.¹⁴³

Many in Louisiana criticized Carter’s 1977 NEP because it expanded government and hindered domestic production of oil and natural gas. Congressman Joe Waggoner of

¹³⁹ Thompson, 36.

¹⁴⁰ Gary J. Hebert, “Senator Long writes about windfall profits tax...” *Iberville South*, Plaquemine, March 25, 1980, 2. Hebert published the *Iberville South* in Plaquemine, the *Greater Plaquemine Post*, and *White Castle Times* in nearby White Castle in 1980. *Iberville South* ran on Tuesdays with a circulation of 3281, *Greater Plaquemine Post* ran on Thursdays with a circulation of 4675, and the *White Castle Times* ran on Fridays with a circulation of 1196. The combined circulation of these three papers reached 9152 of Iberville Parish’s 30,746 residents in 1980. In 1981, the *Iberville South* combined with the *Greater Plaquemine Post* to form the *Plaquemine Post Iberville South*, and *The White Castle Times* ceased publication in 1984. These three papers formed the *Plaquemine Post South*, which is still published and serves as Iberville Parish’s official parish journal.

¹⁴¹ Reagan and Congress repealed the windfall profits tax in August 1988. Congress repealed the tax as it did not generate as much revenue as predicted, and they believed the tax kept the nation dependent on foreign oil.

¹⁴² Moore, *President Carter 1979*, 66.

¹⁴³ The *Congressional Quarterly* issues of 1978-1980 scored each senator and congressional representative’s support and opposition score to President Carter’s policies. See Appendix 1 for more information regarding Louisiana’s Congressional Delegation support for Carter.

Louisiana's Fourth District called the President's plan "very shortsighted" because it necessitated more regulation with the assumption that "only government can do this thing." He viewed Carter's plan of distributing tax rebates to offset higher energy costs as a way of "redistributing the wealth" and his gasoline tax as a hopeless means of curbing conservation.¹⁴⁴ Harry Barsh, the Washington attorney for Louisiana's energy matters, viewed Carter's plan as terrible for Louisiana because "[local] industries with long-range planning will move to regions where coal is mined, and producers will have no incentive for new ventures."¹⁴⁵ Senator Long echoed Barsh's concerns by calling Carter's proposed energy plan an "unmitigated disaster," as it did not include incentives for industries to produce new energy. He went further by warning [correctly] that if Carter did not succeed in solving the energy crisis, he would lose reelection in 1980.¹⁴⁶ The Louisiana Association of Business and Industry (LABI) warned that the NEP would severely cripple Louisiana's economy, producing a loss of 40,000 jobs and probably "the permanent shutdown of a substantial segment of the state's sugar industry" because "the heavy concentration of chemical manufacturing, refining and paper manufacturing in Louisiana—all dependent on large amounts of natural gas for industry—all segments of Louisiana would be more seriously harmed than in any other state of the nation." LABI predicted that the NEP would cause a \$500 million loss for Louisiana, including \$200 million in salaries and wages.¹⁴⁷

Those representing the electrical companies throughout the state spoke out against Carter's policies, especially concerning coal usage. Louisiana Power and Light (LP&L) expressed reservations on Carter's plan, saying that converting generator plants to coal burners

¹⁴⁴ Kenneth A. Weiss, "Waggoner: Energy Plan is Shortsighted," *Times-Picayune*, April 22, 1977, Section 1 Pages 1 & 12.

¹⁴⁵ Associated Press, "Carter's Plan May Hurt La.," *Times-Picayune*, April 23, 1977, Section 1 Page 1.

¹⁴⁶ Kenneth A. Weiss, "Sen. Long is Critical of Demo Congress," *Times-Picayune*, July 17, 1977, Section 1 Page 6.

¹⁴⁷ "LABI Faults Energy Program," *Times-Picayune*, September 25, 1977, Section 2 Page 15.

would cause local electricity prices to jump “two to three times.” While LP&L president J. M. Wyatt agreed with Carter on energy conservation, he criticized the President for “asking those of us whose economy is based on relatively cheap and accessible oil and gas to bear the heaviest burden of the higher energy costs.” He also faulted Carter for not offering incentives on increased production of new and old energy sources, like nuclear reactors.¹⁴⁸ Two electric cooperatives in North Louisiana, Bossier Rural Electric Membership Corporation and Valley Electric Membership Corporation, took out an advertisement explaining that electrical costs would be higher because they had to convert their power plants to generate “coal hauled all the way from Wyoming to St. Louis, and down the Mississippi River to co-op power plants at New Roads.” They argued that two-thirds of the cost of coal would come from transporting it to Louisiana, and costs would go higher because they would have to construct new multi-million dollar power plants that met strict environmental standards. They warned, “Costs, as you will see, will increase. So, use all the electricity you need wisely.”¹⁴⁹ Kaiser Aluminum Chemical Corporation of St. Bernard Parish also warned of a major catastrophe as the federal government stalled on allowing domestic production and new power plants. With a nighttime picture of the Statue of Liberty in the background, their ad urged readers to “speak out and demand [new technology for energy] [...] because if we don’t, our future’s going to look dark indeed.”¹⁵⁰

Carter’s Department of Energy initially met mixed reviews in Louisiana. The *Times-Picayune*’s Editorial Board supported the creation of the department, saying “If one had been in place 20—or even 10—years ago we might well have avoided the energy crisis of 1974. If one

¹⁴⁸ “LP&L: Coal to Cost Users,” *Times-Picayune*, April 22, 1977, Section 1 Page 19.

¹⁴⁹ “The Hard Coal Facts about Generating Power in Louisiana,” *The Coushatta Citizen*, Coushatta, September 18, 1980, 4B. *The Coushatta Citizen* in Red River Parish had a circulation of 2872 (Red River Parish’s population was 9226 in 1980), and was published on Thursdays by Gordon Nelson. This paper continues to serve as Red River’s official parish journal.

¹⁵⁰ Kaiser Aluminum, “What do we do if the Light Goes Out?” *St. Bernard Voice*, July 13, 1979, 3.

had come into being immediately after the crisis, the country would have coped better.”¹⁵¹ It viewed the proposed department as one that would easily solve the current energy crisis and prevent new ones from occurring. Although the House of Representatives approved the creation of the new department with a 310 to 20 vote, Congressman David Treen opposed the new department’s creation, claiming it would “institutionalize federal involvement in all aspects of energy production and use” and would “feed upon itself and our hopes for returning to a productive free market system with regard to oil, gas and other forms of energy [would] be shattered.”¹⁵² He predicted that the new department would undergo transitional issues after its creation that would prolong finding any solutions to the crisis. The *St. Bernard Voice* expressed skepticism over the new department, saying “Good can flow from the new department only if Congress enacts an energy policy with due emphasis on conservation and production,” and they called any proposed departmental plan that did not include the free market as part of the solution “mischief.”¹⁵³ By 1979, most Americans and Louisianians disapproved of the new department. Congressman Bob Livingston took a swipe at Secretary James Schlesinger saying, “Schlesinger looks every inch the university professor. Puffing his pipe and nodding sagely, he gives the appearance of a tower of intellect. In fact, he’s rude, arrogant—and incompetent. Congress has developed such a dislike for him, it won’t take his word for anything, even on those occasions when he may be right.”¹⁵⁴ In August 1979, Charles Duncan replaced Schlesinger as Energy Secretary.

In June 1980, the Department of Energy’s Economic Regulatory Administration required all oil companies, regardless of size, to keep a separate “central verification file” for new oil

¹⁵¹ “Let’s Get on With Energy,” *Times-Picayune*, March 4, 1977, Section 1 Page 12.

¹⁵² Kenneth A. Weiss, “Treen Warns House of New Energy Unit,” *Times-Picayune*, June 4, 1977, Section 1 Page 11.

¹⁵³ ““Mischief” on energy front,” *St. Bernard Voice*, June 3, 1977, 6.

¹⁵⁴ Bob Livingston, “Your Congressman Reports,” *St. Bernard Voice*, April 27, 1979, 2.

wells. The file had to include information on each well, simply duplicating records the company already kept for state agencies and its own business use, adding more red tape.¹⁵⁵ Sam Hanna wrote a column explaining that the Environmental Protection Agency sent a package to *The Concordia Sentinel*'s office containing numerous files the paper had to fill out describing, in detail, if they handled toxic wastes properly. He said the EPA was out of its place, instead, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) was responsible. Explaining that the newspaper business does not handle toxic waste, he wondered what the government's definition of "toxic" waste was, writing, "But first I've got to find out what a toxic waste is. You smell anything? Me too. It's coming from Washington."¹⁵⁶

The President's 1979 Crisis of Confidence speech initially got a favorable response from Louisiana newspapers. An editorial in the Baton Rouge *Morning Advocate* praised the speech and told readers, "It's time to quit pleading and start leading."¹⁵⁷ The Shreveport *Journal* strongly agreed with Carter's speech, calling it "the best of his presidency," and went further to say "Americans have spent the last generation on a binge of consumptive self-indulgence. We have grown fat and lazy, and we lack moral direction. Jimmy Carter has given us the opportunity to act again as a nation. He has called upon all of us to act in the common interest rather than in the narrow self-interest that has characterized our recent history."¹⁵⁸

While Louisiana's congressional delegation gave Carter high marks for his delivery and style, they faulted him for providing inadequate solutions to the energy crisis. Congresswoman

¹⁵⁵ Current Oil and Gas Issues in Louisiana, Folder "Research—State Political Files--Louisiana," Box 482, Research Unit, PP-RRL, Simi Valley, Ca.

¹⁵⁶ Sam Hanna, "You Understand?" *The Concordia Sentinel*, June 30, 1980, Page 2A.

¹⁵⁷ "Not Only Time to Walk But Also to Get Going," *Morning Advocate*, July 16, 1979, 14-A.

¹⁵⁸ "Carter Asserts Moral, Energy Leadership," *Shreveport Journal*, Shreveport, July 16, 1979, 4A. The *Shreveport Journal* served as Shreveport's afternoon newspaper before ceasing publication in 1991. In its last 15 years of service, the paper became very liberal, rarely endorsing Republican candidates under the leadership of "liberal Republican" Charles T. Beard.

Boggs gave him the strongest approval by calling his speech excellent. She endorsed his goals: “Carter called for only a 50 percent switch by utilities to coal from oil, explaining that this would permit states where oil and gas supplies are at hand—and where it therefore makes sense to use them—to go on using them at existing plants.” She also supported the creation of an energy mobilization board. Congressman Gillis Long commended Carter for recognizing the seriousness of the energy crisis, but he did not provide any further specifics. Congressman Livingston stated, “The president was at his most dynamic self—he’s to be commended for his presentation...for trying to blame his problems on the American public.” He believed the energy mobilization board was an example of creeping bureaucracy and challenged the president to emphasize more energy production goals. While Congressman Henson Moore agreed with Livingston on the need for immediate production goals, he endorsed the idea of an energy mobilization board along with tax incentives for energy production. Congressman Treen wanted “the marketplace set our house in order” in solving the energy crisis. Congressman John Breaux criticized Carter’s speech, dismissing it as “just another call for more federal involvement. In that sense, it’s in the wrong direction.” Congressman Jerry Huckaby urged Carter to lift drilling bans, such as in Alaska’s Arctic National Wildlife Range. While Senator Russell Long agreed with most of Carter’s speech, he expressed disappointment in the president for putting too much emphasis on conservation and too little on production, and Senator Bennett Johnston praised the proposed energy board because it would bypass existing bureaucracy.¹⁵⁹

Carter’s gasoline rationing policy proved intensely unpopular in Louisiana. Senator Johnston observed that the President’s regulations turned the gasoline market into a “theater for

¹⁵⁹ “La. Dazzled by Carter, but...” *Times-Picayune*, July 17, 1979, Section 1 Page 2 & John McKinney, “La. Congressmen Give Carter High Marks—For Speech,” *Morning Advocate*, July 17, 1979, 2A.

the absurd.”¹⁶⁰ He found Carter’s uniform rationing proposal unfair because it did not account for motorists who travelled more often than average out of necessity.¹⁶¹ Senator Long delivered a strong warning to the President, saying “It seems to be me that what you’re saying is that the administration’s plan is to let the oil companies produce just enough to keep us dependent on the Arabs for as long you’re in government, which may not be very long.”¹⁶² Governor Edwin Edwards snubbed Carter’s rationing order by saying, “Louisiana is producing everything it can. This is an unrealistic national problem, and I’m not going to volunteer Louisiana for any kind of rationing program.”¹⁶³ Congressman Livingston attacked Carter’s rationing plan, calling it “an additional economic dictatorship” that would “protect certain groups of citizens...No plan other than the free market should dictate who should get gas and who shouldn’t equitably.”¹⁶⁴ Livingston urged the government to start decontrolling oil prices immediately.¹⁶⁵ *The Concordia Sentinel* also criticized Carter’s gasoline policies, noting that gasoline costs about one quarter per gallon in oil-producing nations like Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, whereas in oil-dependent nations in Europe, it cost about three dollars per gallon.¹⁶⁶

Louisiana’s delegation opposed the windfall profits tax. Although Congressman Moore added a major amendment to the House version of the bill to encourage domestic oil production, Congressman Livingston believed the windfall profits tax discouraged oil production, believing gas prices could be lower with fewer regulations and taxes.¹⁶⁷ After the tax became effective on May 15, 1980 with a companion 10 cent a gallon Gasoline Conservation (or Oil Import) Fee, he

¹⁶⁰ “Abolish Controls for Gas Pricing, Johnston Urges,” *Times-Picayune*, March 26, 1979, Section 1 Page 6.

¹⁶¹ Bennett Johnston, “Planning Ahead for an Energy Emergency,” *St. Bernard Voice*, March 16, 1979, 2.

¹⁶² George Hager, “Sen. Long Blasts Energy Policy,” *Times-Picayune*, May 8, 1979, Section 1 Page 1.

¹⁶³ “Edwards Snubs Gas Sale Rules,” *Times-Picayune*, May 30, 1979, Section 1 Page 1 & 6.

¹⁶⁴ Ed Anderson, “Gas Ration Plan Blasted,” *Times-Picayune*, August 7, 1979, Section 1 Page 4.

¹⁶⁵ Bob Livingston, “Your Congressman Reports,” *St. Bernard Voice*, March 2, 1979, 2.

¹⁶⁶ R. T. Bonnette, “Twenty Cent Gas,” *The Concordia Sentinel*, January 17, 1980, 2A.

¹⁶⁷ Comments about Congressman Moore, Folder “State Political File—Louisiana,” Box 482, Research Unit, PP-RRL, Simi Valley, Ca. and Bob Livingston, “Your Congressman Reports,” *St. Bernard Voice*, March 2, 1979, 2.

referred to the plan as “the worst energy proposal from the Carter administration” as it could add .075 percent to the skyrocketing inflation rate but not increase gasoline supplies.¹⁶⁸ An editorial in the *St. Bernard Voice* expressed concerns about the tax, saying that, although it would help balance the federal budget, it would “push the federal tax burden to nearly 22 percent of the gross national product.”¹⁶⁹

Opponents of Carter’s gas policies used special appeals in rural North Louisiana. Dumas Oil Company, Carroll Oil Company, and Sims Gulf Distributor took out an advertisement in the *West Carroll Gazette* calling May 15 “a bad day for America” as Carter’s Oil Import Fee would “be felt most severely in rural America, in the nation’s farming communities and among small businesses—the segment of Americans that can least afford it.” These oil companies predicted the new fee would result in supply shortages in agricultural communities and consequently raise food prices for all Americans, put a disproportionate economic burden on low-income families, increase inflation, and constitute taxation without representation.¹⁷⁰ Congressman Huckaby viewed the fee as an “ill-conceived attempt to force the American public to reduce its consumption of gasoline” as the United States was the only industrialized nation to consume less oil in 1979 than it did a year earlier. He, too, emphasized that the tax would place a larger burden on rural areas without the luxury of mass transportation, and he promised his constituents that he would try to nullify the fee.¹⁷¹

Carter’s nuclear power policies came under attack from Louisiana newspapers. Newspaper owner and columnist Sam Hanna lamented that Louisiana Power and Light had to

¹⁶⁸ Bob Livingston, “Your Congressman Reports,” *St. Bernard Voice*, May 23, 1980, A-10. Congress moved to kill the Oil Import Fee such that Carter vetoed the measure. In June 1980, Congress overrode Carter’s veto on the Oil Import Fee, the first time a Democratic president had his veto overridden since Truman in 1952.

¹⁶⁹ “GOP Cuts, Democratic Taxes,” *St. Bernard Voice*, April 18, 1980, A-4.

¹⁷⁰ “May 15, 1980: A Bad Day for America” advertisement, *West Carroll Gazette*, May 8, 1980, 11.

¹⁷¹ Jerry Huckaby, “Washington Report,” *West Carroll Gazette*, May 15, 1980, 4.

slow production on their new Waterford 3 Nuclear Power Plant in St. Charles Parish because they had to wait to obtain an operating license because of the Three Mile Island meltdown and protests from local environmentalists. This delay, according to LP&L, would push back their operating date a year. Hanna wrote that regulations crippled energy production as “the nation’s politics and government regulations have throttled progress...it’s unrealistic for this country to have such problems in that the nation’s resources are plentiful and its capabilities are great.”¹⁷² The *West Carroll Gazette* also appealed to nuclear power, quoting Richard E. Balzhiser of the California-based Electric Power Research Institute who said, “The strongest argument for nuclear is (protection of) the environment” as nuclear plants generate less pollution than coal.¹⁷³

Governor Edwards delivered a critical farewell address on Carter’s energy policy as his second term ended in 1979. Edwards told the state session, “The lack of leadership in Washington is causing a coming recession and gasoline shortages. The twin evils of shortages and spiraling inflation can be solved if our leaders will face reality. I reject the idea of gasoline rationing for we would end up with the biggest black market even seen in this country. Leadership is probably the shortest thing in supply in Washington today.”¹⁷⁴ One could read the speech and think a Republican delivered it as a rebuttal to a Carter State of the Union Address; however, it suggests that Louisianians disapproved of the policies of the man they elected in 1976.

¹⁷² Sam Hanna, “Energy Production Crippled,” *Lake Providence Banner-Democrat*, Lake Providence, May 8, 1980, 4. The *Banner-Democrat* was published by Lamar Satchfield and had a 1980 circulation of 2150 (East Carroll’s 1980 population was 12,884). The paper was published on Thursdays and competed with the *East Carroll Delta News* until the *Banner-Democrat* absorbed that paper in 1985. Today, the *Banner-Democrat* serves as East Carroll’s official parish journal.

¹⁷³ “Environment: Nuclear Appeal,” *West Carroll Gazette*, May 22, 1980, 2A. Waterford 3 began operations in 1985.

¹⁷⁴ Leo Honeycutt, *Edwin Edwards: Governor of Louisiana* (Baton Rouge: The Lisburn Press, 2009), 183-4.

In most of their visits to Louisiana, Reagan and his supporters devoted time to attacking Carter's policies, especially as to energy. In a campaign stop in New Orleans, Reagan noted that in 1976, Carter promised two cars in every American garage, but today, the cars were "both Japanese and both out of gas."¹⁷⁵ Reagan blamed strong government regulations for hindering domestic energy production and America's way of life and said that Carter reminded him of "someone who can name 50 parts of an automobile but can't drive or fix it."¹⁷⁶

Reagan's selection of oilman George Bush as his running mate helped him win support from energy executives and employees in Louisiana. In a rally in Baton Rouge, Bush assured both energy producers and environmentalists that Reagan established good records in both areas while governor; he also explained that Reagan believed the Environmental Protection Agency and those who enforce the Occupational Health and Safety Act "usurp legislative powers."¹⁷⁷ On October 31, Bush went to oil-rich Lake Charles for a campaign rally. He referred to Carter's energy plan as a "duster," or dry hole, by telling the audience, "No energy policy is better than what Jimmy Carter is proposing."¹⁷⁸ According to the *Lake Charles American Press*, "The biggest applause came when Bush condemned President Carter's decision to burn coal in Louisiana and to ship the state's natural gas to the Northeast."¹⁷⁹ This campaign rally, the only one in Lake Charles, got plenty of support from the 1,000 persons who turned out. Bush's commentary on the Carter energy policies in Lake Charles had a special appeal to not only those affiliated with the oil industry but also commercial fishermen affected by the high cost of oil.

¹⁷⁵ Frank Donze, "Despite Rain, Reaganites Gather to Greet Nominee," *Times-Picayune*, September 5, 1980, Section 1 Page 18.

¹⁷⁶ Ed Anderson, "Reagan: Deficit Game is Played," *Times-Picayune*, October 31, 1980, Section 1 Pages 1 & 4.

¹⁷⁷ Candace Lee, "Bush Scores Carter Stand," *Morning Advocate*, October 9, 1980, 1-A & 11-A.

¹⁷⁸ John LaPlante, "Bush raps energy policy," *Morning Advocate*, November 1, 1980, 8-A.

¹⁷⁹ Jim Beam, "Residents get taste of Campaign '80," *Lake Charles American Press*, November 1, 1980, 9.

Bush and Governor Treen stressed their dissatisfaction with the Department of Energy during the campaign. Bush told supporters during his visit to Baton Rouge, “There are 20,000 working in the Department of Energy—and there are over 20,000 pages or regulations and guidelines these people have produced since the Carter administration created the DOE. If Jimmy Carter is re-elected, that number is going to multiply, given everything we know about bureaucratic expansion.”¹⁸⁰ In the same visit, Bush told supporters that the department spent 11 billion taxpayer dollars annually but did not produce a drop of new oil.¹⁸¹ Treen, in a local debate about Reagan and Carter in New Orleans, called the incumbent a failure and said he “was dragged kicking and screaming into deregulating the oil and natural gas industries in recent months.”¹⁸² Congressman Livingston also appealed on behalf of Reagan, saying, “I firmly believe we cannot go through another four years like the last four. The president has been led by indecision and public opinion.” He accused Carter of obstructing the American dream.¹⁸³

In his visits, Reagan expressed his wish for dismantling the Department of Energy by telling a crowd in New Orleans that “There is nothing I would rather do than phase out the energy agency which is used to spending billions of dollars.”¹⁸⁴ To solve the energy crisis, he endorsed additional deregulation by turning the energy industry back to the free market where consumers could shop around for the best deals. In addition, he supported easing restrictions on domestic production such that the United States could have less dependence on OPEC and the

¹⁸⁰ Lee, “Bush Scores Carter Stand.”

¹⁸¹ Excerpts of the remarks of Ambassador George Bush before the Rotary Club of Baton Rouge: Baton Rouge, Louisiana, Folder: “Political Ops—Programs and Analysis—[State Briefings—Louisiana] (Carmen),” Box 435, Research Unit, PP-RRL, Simi Valley, Ca.

¹⁸² Ed Anderson, “Boggs and Treen Speak on Merits of Carter, Reagan,” *Times-Picayune*, October 30, 1980, Section 6 Page 27.

¹⁸³ “La. Congressman emphasizes importance of campaign,” *Denham Springs and Livingston Parish News*, Denham Springs, October 20, 1980, 1A. Jeff David published the *Denham Springs and Livingston Parish News* biweekly on Mondays and Thursdays. The paper’s 1980 circulation was 5805 (Livingston Parish had a population of 36,511). Today, the paper is known as *The Livingston Parish News* and continues to serve as the parish’s official journal.

¹⁸⁴ “Reagan Seeking Big Win in Louisiana.”

Middle East. When a supporter asked Bush if Reagan planned to repeal the windfall profits tax, the vice presidential nominee said such an act would not immediately occur but “the philosophy of slapping a great big tax on in the industry, we oppose that. We would get rid of it as soon as possible.”¹⁸⁵ In his visit to Shreveport, Reagan expressed support for an amendment proposed by Senators Robert Dole and David Boren intended to provide up to \$1000 in tax credit to royalty owners against their windfall profits tax liability. Reagan emphasized that the windfall profits tax affected not only Big Oil but also the elderly relied on royalty checks: “How can this administration justify taking 36 percent of a \$100 royalty check that a nursing home resident needs to help pay the cost of her care? How can they justify taking the same bite from retired persons who depend on royalty checks to supplement their Social Security checks or farmers who are hard pressed by crop failures and high interest rates?”¹⁸⁶

A minor issue salient to nuclear power involved storing nuclear waste. In the late 1970s, some in the nuclear industry looked at salt domes in Rayburn (Bienville Parish) and Vacherie (St. James Parish) as potential sites to dump their radioactive waste materials underground. The Department of Energy had been conducting tests on Louisiana salt domes as a viable storage location; however, Edwards received a commitment from Carter and Secretary Schlesinger that the government would not store waste in Louisiana without the state’s consent.¹⁸⁷

The nuclear storage issue received limited coverage in Louisiana newspapers; however, it was a significant internal issue within the Reagan campaign. Treen wanted reassurance that Reagan would also honor a no-storage commitment, more specifically, a “veto” power over any

¹⁸⁵ Lee, “Bush Scores Carter Stand.”

¹⁸⁶ Statement by Governor Ronald Reagan—Shreveport, Louisiana, Folder “Shreveport, La.—Centenary College,” Box 435, Research Unit, PP-RRL, Simi Valley, Ca.

¹⁸⁷ State Issues—Louisiana, Folder “State Briefing Papers—Louisiana,” Box 413, Research Unit, PP-RRL, Simi Valley, Ca.

nuclear waste placement in the state. Reagan did not want to issue a statement at first because it could require the government to issue veto powers to every state, eliminating any potential storage sites, and because Secretary of Energy Charles Duncan questioned the legality of the commitment Edwards received in 1978. Treen even used it as a bargaining chip to serve as Honorary Chair, potentially refusing to assist Reagan until he received such a commitment.¹⁸⁸

Eventually, Reagan gave Treen a statement, in Western Union telegram, stating, “The government ‘will not construct any nuclear waste repository in Louisiana if the state objects.’”¹⁸⁹ In some talking points about the subject, the campaign files included the following statements: “I believe that the federal government should live up to its commitments that it makes to states as well as individuals” and “reprocessing nuclear waste both reduces the volume of waste and the time required before it loses its toxicity. We should reverse the Carter Administration’s opposition to reprocessing, carefully promoting it instead.”¹⁹⁰ The Reagan campaign prepared to address the issue in events throughout the state; however, it rarely came up in speeches.

The second major issue Reagan addressed in Louisiana was the economy, specifically, inflation and unemployment. Inflation was Carter’s albatross, as double-digit rates plagued the second half of his presidency, averaging 11.22 percent in 1979 and 13.58 percent in 1980.¹⁹¹ Throughout Carter’s presidency, the unemployment rate fluctuated from a 5.6 percent low in

¹⁸⁸ Salt Domes Controversy Political Statement, Folder “Advance/Scheduling: Schedules—Mrs. Bush, 9/3-9/4/1980 (New Orleans; Shreveport LA),” Box 260, Research Unit, PP-RRL, Simi Valley, Ca.

¹⁸⁹ Norma Dyess, “Treen Tough as a Republican Elephant” *Winn Parish Enterprise and Winnfield News-American*, Winnfield, September 24, 1980, 4-A. Pineland Publishing Corporation published *Winn Parish Enterprise and Winnfield News-American* in 1980 on Wednesdays with a circulation of 3500 (Winn Parish’s population was 16,369). The merger of two old papers, *The Winn Parish Enterprise* and *Winnfield News-American*, the paper is currently known as *Winn Parish Enterprise* and is the parish’s official journal.

¹⁹⁰ Talking Points—Nuclear Waste Storage, Folder “States—Louisiana,” Box 386, Research Unit, PP-RRL, Simi Valley, Ca.

¹⁹¹ Bureau of Labor Statistics, “Historical Inflation Rates,” Capital Professional Services, LLC: 2010, http://inflationdata.com/inflation/inflation_rate/HistoricalInflation.aspx?dsInflation_currentPage=2.

May 1979 to a 7.8 percent high in July 1980.¹⁹² Stagflation (high stagnation and inflation) occurred in 1980 bringing recession to the United States. In 1976, Carter used the “misery index” (the sum of inflation and unemployment rates) when running against Ford. Claiming Ford had no right to consider being president because he presided over a high misery index of 13 percent, Carter presided over a 20 percent misery index in 1980.¹⁹³ Union leaders cited the high July 1980 unemployment rate as a reason for plenty of blue-collar Reagan support; although most labor unions reluctantly supported Carter, one major union, the International Association of Mechanists, supported Reagan.¹⁹⁴ Throughout Louisiana, politicians and newspaper columnists blamed inflation on high oil prices, as well as the overbearing federal bureaucracy.

On April 15, 1977, Jimmy Carter unveiled an anti-inflation program. This program intended to obtain a balanced budget by the 1981 fiscal year with fiscal discipline, consultation between government and business leaders over job creation and inflation control, tax reform, healthcare reform, increased productivity in business and agriculture, and strict enforcement of antitrade laws.¹⁹⁵ Some politicians thought the OPEC price hike of 1979 wrecked this program. Congressman Huckaby blamed the OPEC price increase during the 1979 Iranian Revolution for massive inflation. “The increase in oil prices by OPEC,” he noted, “will cause inflation to race ahead at a pace faster than that anticipated by the planners of the President’s program. Part of the inflation problem stems from a deficit trade balance. The oil price increase is sure to increase

¹⁹² U. S. Department of Labor, “The United States Unemployment Rate: January 1948 to December 2010,” NPA Services, 2010, <http://www.miseryindex.us/urbymonth.asp>.

¹⁹³ Thompson 7-8.

¹⁹⁴ Kenneth R. Allen, “Blue-Collar Support for Reagan,” *Winn Parish Enterprise and Winnfield News-American*, July 2, 1980, Page 4-A, and Thompson 11.

¹⁹⁵ Jimmy Carter, “Anti-Inflation Program Statement Outlining Administrative Actions,” April 15, 1977 retrieved from John T. Woolley and Gerhard Peters, *The American Presidency Project*, Santa Barbara, CA, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=7356>.

that deficit and fuel the fires of inflation.”¹⁹⁶ *The West Carroll Gazette* (from his Congressional district) explained inflation came from three areas: increases in the federal budget and spending, higher taxes for Americans, especially as they received raises to offset higher costs of living, and new unemployment measures requiring jobless pay benefits and welfare due to the recession caused by it. The newspaper suggested tax cuts and federal spending reductions as ways to combat inflation.¹⁹⁷

Many newspapers and politicians blamed the federal government as the source of inflation. The *St. Bernard Voice* viewed wasteful spending as the cause of inflation, saying, “Why not talk about the Justice Department’s new estimate that as much as 10 percent of the federal budget is going down the drain through waste, mismanagement and outright fraud? That amounts to about \$50 billion—enough to wipe out the deficit and then some.”¹⁹⁸ Congressman Livingston estimated that the average American had to pay \$200 more in taxes because of inflation, and he proposed cutting the federal budget and establishing a stable, sound monetary policy to combat the problem.¹⁹⁹ The *Ouachita Citizen* and *West Carroll Gazette* urged factories to get back into production to combat inflation, saying, “Carter’s witch-doctor policies are not curing the serious afflictions that ail this nation. Had he adhered to good economic health practies [*sic*] when he took office, instead of relying on voodoo first aid, he might have been a successful president running for smooth re-election.”²⁰⁰

¹⁹⁶ Jerry Huckaby, “Washington Report,” *The West Carroll Gazette*, January 11, 1979, Page 18.

¹⁹⁷ “Inflation Syndrome,” *The West Carroll Gazette*, June 25, 1980, Page 2.

¹⁹⁸ “Off-Balance Budget,” *The St. Bernard Voice*, April 6, 1979, 6.

¹⁹⁹ Bob Livingston, “Your Congressman Reports,” *The St. Bernard Voice* September 26, 1980, A-3.

²⁰⁰ “Election Time Dangerous,” *Ouachita Citizen* reprinted in *The West Carroll Gazette*, July 9, 1980, Page 2. The *Ouachita Citizen* of West Monroe was published by former West Monroe Mayor William “Bert” Hatten on Thursdays. The paper had a circulation of 10,000 and serves as Ouachita Parish’s official parish journal, despite the parish being home to Monroe’s *The News Star*, which runs daily and has a larger circulation.

Reagan's team criticized Carter's poor economic policies in Louisiana. Reagan endorsed deregulation in order to curb inflation, as well as "trickle-down economics," intended to foster job growth and prosperity by extending tax cuts to corporations and the wealthy. The campaign team acknowledged inflation as a pivotal local issue; for example, George Bush's campaign briefing for Lake Charles notes, "Locals are very concerned about the high cost of living in the Gulf area."²⁰¹ When campaigning for Reagan in October, Congressman Livingston jokingly said, "Carter has recently been talking about his Renaissance economic plan. If you go back to world history, you find that the Renaissance followed the Dark Ages. High inflation, high interest rates and low productivity have dashed the American dream."²⁰²

When speaking at Louisiana State University, Reagan injected the economy into his "secure freedom" remarks adding, "I envision an America whose economic growth and progress in future years is built on the idea that Americans, working together freely, are the greatest source of economic policy ever known. As President, I am going to do all in my power to see to it that freedom is the driving force of economic growth in the United States." He stressed the importance of philanthropy, noting, "charity begins at home." He told the crowd "I believe we need a new, more encompassing vision of welfare in which private citizens, groups and corporations make an increasing contribution to charitable and philanthropic works. Welfare has got to stop meaning a check in the mail and a way of life."²⁰³

During her September visit to New Orleans, Barbara Bush called Carter a failed president saying, "He has failed working with Congress, a Congress of his own party. He went from 6.4 to

²⁰¹ Local Issues—Lake Charles, Louisiana, October 28, 1980, Folder "State Briefing Papers—Louisiana," Box 413, Research Unit, PP-RRL, Simi Valley, Ca.

²⁰² "La. congressman emphasizes importance of campaign," *Denham Springs and Livingston Parish News*, October 20, 1980, 1.

²⁰³ Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, A Secure Freedom: A Vision of America's Future, First Draft, September 20, 1980, Folder "Meese—Tour Files—Baton Rouge, La./Pensacola, FL—9/23/1980," Box 145, Research Unit, PP-RRL, Simi Valley, Ca.

double-digit inflation. More people are out of jobs. People are frightened. Our defenses are down. There's no question about that."²⁰⁴ She claimed Reagan would fight inflation by offering tax incentives to businesses to create jobs. When her husband visited the city at the end of the month, he claimed Carter was running for president "by running away from his record," as Carter campaigned in 1976 on a platform promising to lower the inflation rate to four percent via competent management. Despite this plan, George Bush claimed, "We got incompetent management at the top so that today it now costs \$1.51 to buy what a dollar brought in 1976."²⁰⁵

During the last week of the campaign, Reagan offered additional information about Carter's faulty inflation plans. He criticized the president for excessive spending and lying to the American people by not passing a "lean and austere budget."²⁰⁶ His campaign published page-long newspaper advertisements in several newspapers in the state, including *The Morning Advocate* in Baton Rouge, *The Advertiser* in Lafayette, and *The St. Helena Echo*, for residents in a parish northeast of Baton Rouge. These ads stressed Reagan's economic agenda. *The Advocate*'s ad lists several items Carter failed to accomplish, such as balancing the budget, lowering the inflation rate to 4 percent, lowering taxes (saying taxes from all sources have increased by 70 percent), and keeping interest and mortgage rates down.²⁰⁷ Another ad concludes by saying, "When any voter compares Governor Reagan's job-creation and anti-inflation programs with the failed policies of Jimmy Carter, the choice is clear. Vote for

²⁰⁴ Don Lewis and Joan Treadway, "Carter Called a Failure by Mrs. Bush In N.O.," *The Times-Picayune*, September 4, 1980, Section 1 Page 14.

²⁰⁵ Ed Anderson, "Bush Rips Carter's Performance," *The Times-Picayune*, September 30, 1980, Section 1 Page 14.

²⁰⁶ Remarks by Governor Ronald Reagan, New Orleans, Louisiana, October 30, 1980, Folder "Speech Files—New Orleans, La. 10/30/80 (Garrick)," Box 435, Research Unit, PP-RRL, Simi Valley, Ca.

²⁰⁷ Reagan for President, "Before You Vote Tomorrow," *The Morning Advocate and State-Times*, November 3, 1980.

Governor Ronald Reagan, he'll make a *great* president.”²⁰⁸ Although energy was the most important issue for Louisianians, the economy, particularly the rising cost of living, was the most common concern among American voters in 1980, which helped Reagan succeed in the election.²⁰⁹

Reagan's campaign team emphasized, to a lesser extent, several domestic issues during his Louisiana campaign. Energy and economics were the most prominent campaign issues; however, Reagan did offer his views on labor, trade, agriculture, desegregation of federal universities, Social Security, and bureaucracy. A New Orleans briefing suggested Reagan make a statement on criminal justice and law enforcement regarding crime, given the salience of the issue there; however, no statement or commentary from either Reagan or Bush has survived.²¹⁰

In 1979, rumors circulated in commodity markets that America would conduct a grain embargo against the Soviet Union because of its Afghanistan invasion. On January 4, 1980, Carter announced that 17 million tons of grain and wheat the Russians planned to buy would not be delivered, thus hindering the increases farmers enjoyed in incomes and productivity had in 1979.²¹¹ A briefing from the Shreveport visit in late October urged Reagan to emphasize his opposition to grain embargoes in order to appeal to farmers and those employed in agriculture, and Eddie Stikes, Reagan's Louisiana campaign director, urged him to come out with a statement supporting the family farm and small farmer.²¹² Ironically, in 1976, Carter accused Ford of

²⁰⁸ Reagan for President, “Can America's families afford four more years of Jimmy Carter? Ronald Reagan says no!” *St. Helena Echo*, Greensburg, October 29, 1980, Page 3. *St. Helena Echo* reached 1440 of its 9937 residents in 1980, and Harrell Griffin published the paper on Wednesdays. This paper continues to serve as St. Helena's official parish journal.

²⁰⁹ Thompson 8.

²¹⁰ Memo from J. Allen Martin to Dan Kuykendall, August 26, 1980, Folder “Research—State Political Files--Louisiana,” Box 482, Research Unit, PP-RRL, Simi Valley, Ca.

²¹¹ Moore, *President Carter 1979*, 97.

²¹² Louisiana Briefing, September 17, and Briefing Paper for Reagan Shreveport Visit, October 22, 1980, Box 482, Research Unit, PP-RRL, Simi Valley, Ca.

On January 20, President Reagan will get America's economy moving again.

What has happened to America's economy?

Jimmy Carter came to office with a string of campaign promises, but with no economic plan that would let him live up to his promises in the first place. The result is that after 5 ill-conceived economic plans, we're worse off on almost every economic front than at any time in recent history.

Inflation has hit record highs of over 18%. Nearly 8 million Americans are out of work. Skyrocketing interest and mortgage rates have turned the dreams of millions of Americans who'd like to buy a home into a nightmare.

Almost everything is up under the Carter economy. Federal spending is up. Federal bureaucracy has grown. Thanks to Jimmy Carter, two massive new multi-billion dollar agencies have been created.

What does all this add up to? The biggest combined budget in U.S. history, the greatest single tax increase in our nation's history and a 28% cut in the purchasing power of the American dollar since Carter took office.

In plain and simple terms, our economy is in great difficulty with all the *wrong* things going up. Thanks to the Carter Administration, the only thing that's down is the purchasing power of your hard-earned dollars.

Can any President turn things around?

Yes. It's not too late. But there's no time to spare. What is needed is a carefully worked out plan. And that's what a Reagan Administration will put into effect on January 20.

1. As President, his first act will be to place an immediate freeze on all federal hiring. The federal government is the single greatest cause of inflation. By starting at the source of the problem... by cutting the growth of the bureaucracy... billions of dollars can be saved in the first year alone.

2. Waste and fraud in Washington will be rooted out and eliminated, resulting in the saving of many more billions of dollars of the taxpayers' hard-earned money.

3. Volunteers from business and labor—America's finest minds and the most dedicated of our citizens—

will be invited to join in a citizens crusade to go over the federal bureaucracy with a fine tooth comb, make recommendations on other ways to make government more efficient, more responsive and more responsible in the spending of every tax dollar.

4. An across the board cut in tax rates, along with an acceleration of depreciation will give incentives to business and workers to invest, to increase productivity, to create new markets in America and around the world. This will create millions of new jobs, jobs that are so desperately needed by America's working men and women.

5. Costly and unnecessary rules and regulations—that frustrate and slow down the expansion of our economy will be removed. This will unleash the great incentive, the ingenuity and the driving force of our free enterprise system.

6. Turning over programs to State and Local government along with the tax revenues to support them, will be a top priority. For too long, the federal government has wasted tax dollars to administer programs that can be handled more efficiently and with the kind of personal, local touch that's so necessary, especially to the elderly, the handicapped and those who are truly in need of a helping hand.

7. Programs and progress in the battle on inflation will be monitored on a day-to-day basis. Things don't get out of control unless you let them get out of control. Control, refinement and adjustment will be at the heart of the monitoring system.

8. Goals will be set and goals will be met. The top economic priority of the Reagan Administration will be to get inflation under control starting on January 20. This will not happen overnight. But no excuses will be accepted in this effort and no time will be lost in implementing anti-inflationary policies. Once this has been accomplished, the long term goal will be to see to it that America never again gets itself in the kind of difficult economic situation it's in now.

9. In his Acceptance Speech to the nation, Governor Reagan spoke of his dream for peace. Peace for all Americans and for the world. He said, "Of all the objectives we seek, first and foremost will be the establishment of lasting world peace." This is a man whose career in public life has been characterized by an uncanny ability to relate to many diverse groups, to smooth over differences that polarize men and women with differing opinions, and to bring them together for the good of all parties and for the good of

the people. He is a man of peace who understands how to attain peace and how to maintain peace.

The time is now for a strong leader with a proven record.

When Ronald Reagan became Governor of California, the State was in financial crisis, spending more than it took in, and the outlook was bleak. Governor Reagan went to work.

He turned a deficit of \$194 million into a \$564 million surplus. He cut in half the growth rate of the California bureaucracy. He reformed the welfare program and increased benefits to the truly needy by more than 40%. He returned \$5.7 billion to the people. His careful management of government enabled him to do much to improve the quality of life in California. He strengthened the State's Medicaid System. He increased unemployment insurance benefits, as well as benefits to injured workers. He increased scholarships to needy students by 500%, aid to the State University by 105%, State Colleges by 164%, Community Colleges by 323%, and the Primary and Secondary Education Systems by 105%.

As Governor of California, Ronald Reagan demonstrated great abilities in compiling a great record. Those same abilities—especially the ability to get things done—will enable him to be a great President.

The time is now for strong leadership.



Reagan

for President

Paid for by the Republican National Committee, Bill Brock, Chairman, William J. McManus, Treasurer. Authorized by the Reagan-Bush Committee, United States Senator Paul Laxalt, Chairman, Ray Buchanan, Treasurer.

Figure 8: Here is an example of a Reagan for President newspaper advertisement. This one appeared in the November 2, 1980 edition of Lafayette's *The Advertiser*.

“unparalleled incompetence” in handling farm matters, but as the grain embargo pinched farmers in 1980, Reagan called Carter’s farm record one of “indifference, incompetence.”²¹³

Issues regarding trade and labor emerged sporadically during the campaign. Given that Louisiana had passed right to work laws in the mid-1970s, the Reagan team had to approach issues regarding union membership cautiously. In Bush’s briefing for Lake Charles, the Reagan for President Team stressed that Lake Charles, unlike the rest of Louisiana, was heavily unionized, noting that in January 1976, a clash occurred there between an independent union and the AFL-CIO, which led to widespread violence resulting in property damage and one death.²¹⁴

For the Reagan team’s New Orleans visits, Congressman Livingston urged the campaign to express support for the Urban Jobs and Enterprise Act, sponsored by New York Congressmen Jack Kemp and Robert Garcia. This act intended to establish “enterprise zones,” which designated the worst sections of communities to encourage job-creation, as well as minimal compliance with pollution guidelines, and less taxes and paperwork. According to Republican Congressman Ben Gilman of New York, “One of the most critical aspects of the new legislation is that instead of depending upon the creation of artificial and meaningless jobs for unskilled workers, it unharnesses the talents and creativity of experts in the field—the entrepreneurs.”²¹⁵

The Reagan team addressed issues regarding trade in both Shreveport and New Orleans. In Shreveport, Reagan expressed support for the Red River Waterway Project, which would make the river navigable to Shreveport, noting that Carter cancelled the project before being

²¹³ Thompson 45.

²¹⁴ Lake Charles Political Brief, October 28, 1980, Folder “State Briefing Papers—Louisiana,” Box 413, Research Unit, PP-RRL, Simi Valley, Ca.

²¹⁵ J. Allen Martin, Louisiana Briefing for Barbara Bush, Folder “Advance/Scheduling—Schedules—Mrs. Bush, 9/3-9/4/1980 (New Orleans; Shreveport, La.),” Box 260, Research Unit, PP-RRL, Simi Valley, Ca.

forced to restore it.²¹⁶ In New Orleans, Congressman Livingston urged Reagan to address building a 55-foot channel from Baton Rouge to the Gulf of Mexico to accommodate more trade—the Carter team predicted it would take eight years to build, while the Port of New Orleans believed it could become a reality in three years. A talking point suggested by Livingston read: “I believe increasing job opportunities for Louisianians through increasing port capability is in the national interest. I believe in opening new overseas markets for our industries is in the national interest. In short, Baton Rouge and New Orleans will receive the 55-foot channel in three years if I am elected.”²¹⁷ Livingston also urged Reagan not to mention trade restrictions or import quotas on foreign vehicles and other commodities that would adversely affect the Port of New Orleans.

Issues regarding desegregation of both public schools and universities emerged in Louisiana during this time. On the national level, Carter created the Cabinet-level Department of Education in 1979 after lobbying from the National Education Association.²¹⁸ The Reagan campaign listed school desegregation as one of the ten issues pertaining to the state because busing was a problem in the northwestern section of the state. In Rapides Parish, U. S. District Judge Nauman Scott closed Forest Hill Elementary School, located southwest of Alexandria, and ordered widespread bussing throughout the parish. When the 1980-1981 school year began, parents seized the closed school and began holding makeshift classes there.²¹⁹ In 1980,

²¹⁶ Briefing Paper for Reagan Shreveport Visit—October 22, 1980, Folder “Research—State Political Files--Louisiana,” Box 482, Research Unit, PP-RRL, Simi Valley, Ca.

²¹⁷ Memo from J. Allen Martin to Dan Kuykendall, August 26, 1980, Folder “Research—State Political Files--Louisiana,” Box 482, Research Unit, PP-RRL, Simi Valley, Ca. This channel has not been built, although Congress did earmark funds for the project in 1985. The project required deepening the Mississippi River from 40 ft. to 55 ft., yet the project has been put on hold, as Louisiana has yet to supply the funds for its half of the bill.

²¹⁸ Moore, *President Carter 1979*, 78.

²¹⁹ State Issues—Louisiana, Folder “State Briefing Papers—Louisiana,” Box 413, Research Unit, PP-RRL, Simi Valley, Ca. One of the Forest Hill Elementary parents, Clyde C. Holloway, ran for Congress in 1985 in the Eighth Congressional District against Judge Scott’s nephew. He was eventually elected in 1987 and became the first and

Shreveport faced a lawsuit opposing more bussing; the campaign urged Reagan to address bussing during his late October visit to that city, but his speech focused more on defense because of Carter's allegations that he was a war hawk.²²⁰

Louisiana's universities, particularly historically black colleges, such as Grambling State University and Southern University, faced desegregation issues, as well. In May 1980, the Department of Justice urged Grambling to "merge" with Louisiana Tech and other universities in Northeast Louisiana, and Southern to "merge" with LSU, much to the universities' chagrin. The plan required, for example, a business education major at Grambling for use by students at Grambling, Louisiana Tech, and Northeast (present-day University of Louisiana—Monroe) such that students at the latter two universities had to attend Grambling to get the degree. *The Concordia Sentinel* decried this plan by arguing that the biggest opponents to this plan were alumni of Southern and Grambling, and the paper suggested that the ultimate plan was to close those two universities.²²¹ Treen discussed this issue with Reagan in Shreveport, and the California governor sided with Louisiana over the desegregation issue.²²²

Social Security and Medicare emerged as minor campaign issues in the state. Eddie Stikes urged Reagan to strengthen Social Security (as opposed to reorganizing it), and the Lake Charles campaign briefing included a provision about reassuring seniors that the Reagan/Bush team endorsed preserving its benefits. In Carter's sole campaign visit to Louisiana, he told voters that he, along with the state's congressional delegation, helped save the program from

only Republican to serve in that seat, serving until the district was dissolved in 1992. Holloway was also the official Republican Party gubernatorial candidate in the 1991 primary but failed to make the runoff between David Duke and Edwin Edwards.

²²⁰ Briefing Papers for Reagan Shreveport Visit—October 22, 1980, Folder "Research—State Political Files--Louisiana," Box 482, Research Unit, PP-RRL, Simi Valley, Ca.

²²¹ "Proposed insanity for universities," *The Concordia Sentinel*, June 9, 1980, Page 2A. In 1980, Carter vetoed a bill that would have halted the Department of Justice's participation in lawsuits regarding court-ordered busing.

²²² Jack Wardlaw, "Reagan Backs State in School Mix Dispute," *The Times-Picayune*, November 4, 1980, Section 1 Page 19.

bankruptcy, and he reminded voters that Reagan began his political career by speaking out against Medicare. He reminded supporters that Democrats supported giving the poor, elderly, working families, ill, and children a better chance at life while the Republicans did not.²²³

Key foreign policy themes during the 1980 campaign included the Iranian Revolution and hostage crisis, the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT II) Treaty with the Soviet Union, and military draft registration. The Reagan team did not initially consider defense a major issue in Louisiana; however, Carter repeatedly instilled fear in the local and national electorate that Reagan was a war hawk. As a result, the California governor discussed defense during his state campaign visits, promising to promote a strong defense during the ongoing Cold War.²²⁴

The Iranian Revolution occurred in 1979 when Islamic fundamentalists led by Ayatollah Khomeini overthrew the American-approved shah's dictatorial government. In November 1979, militants seized the American embassy in Tehran, holding more than fifty American workers hostage for 444 days. In April 1980, Carter approved a rescue mission; however, the mission failed when the helicopters broke down in the Iranian desert, killing eight soldiers.²²⁵

Louisianians, as well as many Americans, generally viewed the Iran Hostage Crisis as another trait of a weak, failed Carter presidency. Bert Hatten, publisher of the *Ouachita Citizen* former mayor of West Monroe, penned a hypothetical story discussing President Truman, in heaven, castigating Carter once he entered the pearly gates for his inept foreign policy. Hatten longed for the thirty-fifth president's good leadership by writing, "We miss Harry Truman. He might not have sent the Marines in to rescue the hostages in Iran. And he might not have sent

²²³ Remarks of the President at a Rally—Jackson Square, New Orleans, Louisiana, Folder "Tony Dolan Files—[Carter White House Press Releases, 10/21/80]," Box 888, Research Unit, PP-RRL, Simi Valley, Ca.

²²⁴ Briefing—Louisiana, September 17, 1980, Folder "Research—State Political Files--Louisiana," Box 482, Research Unit, PP-RRL, Simi Valley, Ca.

²²⁵ Thompson 22.

the 101st Airborne into Afghanistan. But you can bet one thing, we wouldn't have been reading so much about the rose garden during such crises had he been in the White House during this period.”²²⁶ Other newspapers, including *The Madison Journal* and *St. Bernard Voice*, viewed the crisis as an indication of the military's weakness and unpreparedness, and Congressman Livingston criticized Carter for cutting the defense budget and for naval aviation equipment.²²⁷

Carter brought defense into the election by questioning his opponent's belligerence. Before the AFL-CIO in California, Carter told the crowd on September 22, “Six weeks from now, the American people will make a very profound choice—a choice not just between two men and two parties, but between two futures, and what you decide on that day, you and those who listen to your voice will determine what kind of life you and your families will have—whether this nation will make progress or go backward, whether we have peace or war.”²²⁸ Reagan called this statement unforgivable, and it compelled him to deliver defense-themed addresses when he visited Pensacola, Florida, and LSU in Baton Rouge on September 23. *CBS Evening News* noted that when a person screamed “no hostages” during Reagan's LSU speech, he took up the cue and responded “you're right,” drawing applause. He elaborated: “the plight for almost a year now of a half-a-hundred Americans still being held hostage is an example of what is wrong with the foreign policy of this administration.”²²⁹ A month later in Shreveport, Reagan referred to Carter's “hawk tag” as a stereotype saying, “I don't think anyone in this

²²⁶ Gary J. Hebert, “In Heaven: Carter talking to Truman,” *The Iberville South*, April 22, 1980, 2.

²²⁷ Bob Livingston, “Your Congressman Reports,” *St. Bernard Voice*, May 9, 1980, 10.

²²⁸ “Campaign '80 / Carter / Reagan / Anderson,” *ABC Evening News*, ABC, September 23, 1980, accessed from the Vanderbilt Television News Archive.

²²⁹ Bill Plante, “Campaign '80 / Carter / Reagan,” *CBS Evening News*, CBS, September 23, 1980, accessed from the Vanderbilt Television News Archive.

country is more in favor of peace than I am. [Carter is] trying to make the issue of this campaign me rather than his record of failures.”²³⁰

Louisiana newspapers downplayed fears regarding Reagan’s hawkishness. *The West Carroll Gazette* summarized Carter’s foreign policy as follows: “the nation has come to be viewed as an impotent, emasculated giant by even the smallest of nations. Our people are held hostage; every nation feels able to tweak Uncle Sam’s nose and kick his rump.” The paper further suggested that a dovish Carter was a greater liability to America’s future than a hawkish Reagan was.²³¹

Throughout the late 1970s, talks between the United States and Soviet Union led to the creation of a new arms reduction treaty known as SALT II. Republicans and Democrats alike believed the treaty would accomplish nothing in ameliorating the nuclear threat. After talks broke down, the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan in December 1979. This action caused Carter to do two things: reinstitute draft registration and boycott the 1980 Summer Olympic Games in Moscow.²³²

Reagan’s opposition to SALT II drew criticism from Carter. He explained that Reagan’s opposition to the treaty “shows lack of understanding of how important it is and what it means.” When Bush spoke in Baton Rouge in early October, he told the crowd that Reagan and Senators Long and Johnston were against the treaty and claimed Reagan would support an arms-control treaty only if it protects America’s security.²³³

²³⁰ “Reagan Calls Carter Incompetent, Says Hawk Tag Hurts Campaign,” *The Times-Picayune/The States-Item*, October 23, 1980, Section 1 Page 1.

²³¹ “Moves to War,” *The West Carroll Gazette*, October 22, 1980, 2.

²³² John Lewis Gaddis, *The Cold War*, (New York: Penguin Press, 2005), 202, 210.

²³³ Excerpts from Remarks of Ambassador George Bush before the Rotary Club of Baton Rouge—Baton Rouge, Louisiana, Folder “Press Section—News releases,” Box 563, Research Unit, PP-RRL, Simi Valley, Ca.

The military draft was a minor issue in the 1980 election. Calls for reinstituting the draft came from various members of Congress soon after the creation of the all-volunteer military following Vietnam. Senator John Stennis of Mississippi advocated its return, citing the volunteer force's failure to meet its recruitment goals as well as military officials' general dissatisfaction with it.²³⁴ Following the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan, Carter approved of draft registration for young men between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five. Most of Louisiana's delegation supported it—Johnston, Livingston, Boggs, Huckaby, Breaux, and Gillis Long voted in favor of it, and Henson Moore was the only Congressman on record for having vote against it.²³⁵

The Concordia Sentinel called draft registration one of Carter's boldest military moves. The paper even criticized youth who also registered to vote presumably against conscription supporters saying, "In a Communist society, the youth don't have the choice for registering for free elections. They can-and do-register to serve in the military."²³⁶ *The West Carroll Gazette* paradoxically advocated a return to the draft so that "slavery" would not return to America by writing, "The rest of [the Vietnam] legacy could make us slaves to safety at the price of freedom, to comfort at the price of slavery, until we do, indeed, become slaves in our own land. America can prevent this by having to re-arm, by reinstalling the draft, by facing up to the responsibility of preserving and protecting this nation."²³⁷ While *The St. Bernard Voice* called registration "unpopular but necessary," the paper blamed Carter's reckless foreign policy for its necessity by

²³⁴ "Military Draft," *The Concordia Sentinel*, January 17, 1980, Page 2A.

²³⁵ Barone and Ujifusa 430, 433, 436, 442, 444, 446, 448. Russell Long did not participate in the draft registration vote because of campaigning. Johnston voted against a bill requiring women to register. It is unknown if Congressman Buddy Leach (LA-4) voted for registration; however, given his ongoing scandal, it is likely he missed the vote, as well. The *Congressional Quarterly* argues that Carter's resuming of draft registration cost him many liberal votes.

²³⁶ "A Bold Move," January 24, 1980, Page 2A and "Carter's Proposal," March 13, 1980, Page 2A, *The Concordia Sentinel*.

²³⁷ "Legacy of Vietnam," *The West Carroll Gazette*, May 22, 1980, Page 2.

saying, “[Registration] is a sober acknowledgement of the dangerously exposed position into which [Carter] has thrust this nation.”²³⁸

Reagan made his position on draft registration clear when he spoke at LSU on September 23. In fact, all three networks discussed his statement on registration, and other politicians, such as Texas Congressman Ron Paul, have since reproduced it in various speeches and books. Reagan told the crowd “I oppose registration for the draft...because I believe the security of freedom can best be achieved by security through freedom.” He expounded, “The All-Volunteer Force is based on the sound and historic American principle of voluntary commitment to the defense of freedom. Mr. Carter obviously disagrees. He believes that the registration of millions of young Americans for the draft will send a message to the Soviet Union.”²³⁹ Obviously, with this comment, Reagan appealed to many in the college-aged population.

The 1980 Presidential Election marked the first time in which the Republican Party took stances on several social issues, such as abortion. The party’s platform went against abortion, but 1980 marked the first time in forty years in which the party’s platform took a non-committed stance on the ERA.²⁴⁰ While the ERA failed to be ratified by its 1982 deadline, abortion continues to serve as a litmus test in choosing candidates for office. Reagan addressed these social issues in Louisiana, albeit in a limited fashion.

In 1978, the Louisiana state legislature adopted an anti-abortion law, considered the nation’s strictest. The law required pregnant women to provide written consent for an abortion, mandated that abortions performed in the second or third trimester occur in hospitals, minors

²³⁸ “Unpopular, but necessary,” *The St. Bernard Voice*, May 16, 1980, Page 2.

²³⁹ Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, A Secure Freedom: A Vision of America’s Future, First Draft, September 20, 1980, Folder “Meese—Tour Files—Baton Rouge, La./Pensacola, FL—9/23/1980,” Box 145, Research Unit, PP-RRL, Simi Valley, Ca.

²⁴⁰ Thompson 65. From 1940 until 1980, the Republican Party’s platform usually included a plank supporting an equal rights amendment.

requesting an abortion have parental consent, and that abortion clinics submit paperwork regarding abortions to the Louisiana Department of Health and Human Resources. In March 1980, U. S. District Judge Robert E. Collins ruled principal provisions of the law unconstitutional.²⁴¹ *The Concordia Sentinel* published a strong editorial criticizing the decision: “Judge Robert Collins struck down every provision of the state law which gave the unborn—those who cannot fight for themselves—a small chance at their right to life. That law was all the unborn in Louisiana had to protect their ‘constitutional rights’—it was little enough—now there is nothing at all.”²⁴²

Reagan, like many pro-lifers, supported a constitutional amendment to ban abortions. He mentioned abortion by name once during his visits to Louisiana—during his primary visit. Given the topicality of Judge Collins’s decision, it is easy to understand why supporters cheered when he expressed his views on the topic. Abortion appeared as an issue on the Reagan for President Louisiana issues list. The Catholic Church leadership took a strict anti-abortion stance right after *Roe vs. Wade* making the issue a sensitive one among South Louisiana Catholics. More specifically, for the Lake Charles briefing, the team urged Bush to emphasize the ticket’s views on abortion and family values to the Cajun community. A Reagan-sponsored anti-abortion ad appeared in *The Crowley Post-Signal* two days before the election: “The time is now to stop the killing of 1,000,000 unborn babies a year through abortion. Ronald Reagan is the only

²⁴¹ George Gsell, “La. Abortion Law is Ruled Illegal,” *The Times-Picayune*, March 4, 1980, Section 1 Pages 1 and 10.

²⁴² “Judge’s decision hits the unborn,” *The Concordia Sentinel*, March 6, 1980, Page 2A.

Presidential candidate who supports a human life amendment to the constitution, which would end abortions in the U. S.”²⁴³

The ERA arose as a minor campaign topic in Louisiana. Thirty-eight states needed to ratify it before becoming part of the Constitution. Within a year of its 1972 passage by Congress, thirty states ratified it; five additional states ratified it during the mid-1970s. In 1972, Louisiana’s State Senate approved the amendment in a 25 to 13 vote. The ratification process began slowing down as states rejected the amendment.²⁴⁴ The Louisiana State House repeatedly attempted to ratify the amendment in its annual sessions, but as controversy amassed, it became a harder task to do.

In the Louisiana House, Representative Manuel Fernandez of St. Bernard Parish served as the leading spokesman for the ERA’s ratification, yet in every session between 1972 and 1979, the legislature rejected the amendment. In 1980, he decided to let his ratification resolution die in committee, deeming it senseless to devote legislative time to defeating the amendment again. *The Winn Parish Enterprise* applauded his decision.²⁴⁵ Furthermore, *The Concordia Sentinel* criticized the national Democratic Party for adopting a pro-ERA platform saying Carter only approved it to receive the extremist and “feminist-gay-libertine” vote.²⁴⁶ Although Ronald Reagan and the Republican Party were against the ERA, the issue did not emerge during the campaign. In fact, Congressman Livingston listed the ERA as one of the “no-no” political issues to avoid, saying, “Louisiana is one of the unratified states and boycott has

²⁴³ Acadia Parish Right to Life—Leaders for Reagan, “Reagan,” *The Crowley Post-Signal*, Crowley, November 2, 1980, Page 2. *The Crowley Post-Signal* was published five days a week (every day except Monday and Saturday). Sister newspapers in Acadia Parish include: *Church Point News* and *Rayne Acadian-Tribune*.

²⁴⁴ Ruth Rosen, *The World Split Open: How the Modern Women’s Movement Changed America*, (New York: Viking, 2000), 332.

²⁴⁵ “ERA is Divisive Issue,” *Winn Parish Enterprise and Winnfield News-American*, July 2, 1980, Page 1.

²⁴⁶ “The ERA Plank,” *The Concordia Sentinel*, August 21, 1980, Page 2A.

been aimed at New Orleans. Our position is not a negative in Louisiana, but still no need to bring up unless asked.”²⁴⁷

Throughout most of their visits to Louisiana, Ronald Reagan and George Bush expounded upon the Carter presidency’s failures, reminding voters that the last four years brought the state gasoline rationing, despite being the home of large oil depositories, higher taxes (both in income and windfall profits), double-digit inflation, increased global threats, and more bureaucracy. The team, noticing that Louisiana was a swing state and could potentially reelect Carter because of his southern roots, invested plenty of personal time and attention in their campaign visits. While the Reagan team generally ran an effective state campaign, the event that increased their election chances higher in Louisiana and America was the 1980 Presidential Debate, which occurred in Cleveland, Ohio on October 28. During his closing statement, Reagan delivered a memorable, speech, since paraphrased by many candidates from both political parties:

Next Tuesday is Election Day. Next Tuesday all of you will go to the polls, will stand there in the polling place and make a decision. I think when you make that decision, it might be well if you would ask yourself, are you better off than you were four years ago? Is it easier for you to go and buy things in the stores than it was four years ago? Is there more or less unemployment in the country than there was four years ago? Is America as respected throughout the world as it was? Do you feel that our security is as safe, that we're as strong as we were four years ago? And if you answer all of those questions yes, why then, I think your choice is very obvious as to whom you will vote for. If you don't agree, if you don't think that this course that we've been on for the last four years is what you would like to see us follow for the next four, then I could suggest another choice that you have. This country doesn't have to be in the shape that it is in. We do not have to go on sharing in scarcity with the country getting worse off, with unemployment growing. We talk about the unemployment lines. If all of the unemployed today were in a single line allowing two feet for each of them, that line would reach

²⁴⁷ Memo from J. Allen Martin to Dan Kuykendall, August 26, 1980, Box 482, Research Unit, PP-RRL, Simi Valley, Ca.

from New York City to Los Angeles, California. All of this can be cured and all of it can be solved.²⁴⁸

This comment helped boost Reagan's popularity among undecided voters so much that so close a race transformed into a landslide victory. Throughout the campaign, although the Reagan team's primary mode was to "attack, attack, attack" Carter's policy blunders, Reagan suggested that Louisiana and, by extension, America, did not have to remain in such dire straits. While he only spent two days in the state for its low-key primary, during the election, Reagan fulfilled the state's wish of seeing candidates "walking the streets of Louisiana, getting the sense of the people of this state" during the general election season.²⁴⁹

²⁴⁸ October 28, 1980 Debate Transcript, Commission on Presidential Debates, 2009, <http://www.debates.org/index.php?page=october-28-1980-debate-transcript>.

²⁴⁹ "Primary Post Mortem," *The Times-Picayune*, April 8, 1980, Section 1, Page 10.

CHAPTER FOUR: “RUNNING A SUCCESSFUL PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN IN LOUISIANA”

Ronald Reagan’s campaign team was skeptical about carrying Louisiana at first. In July 1980, experts feared that while Treen’s governorship boosted the state’s Republican Party, it would not translate into a 1980 election victory for Reagan.²⁵⁰ As an August 1980 poll found Carter and Reagan in a “dead heat” against each other, the Reagan team actively campaigned in Louisiana via visits, rallies, fundraisers, phone banking, and door-to-door canvassing. Reagan succeeded in appealing to both the conservative base and undecided voters, and he also made gains in previously Democratic territory like South Louisiana.

The 1980 Presidential election had a second meaning to Louisianians. Governor David Treen served as Honorary Chair of Reagan’s Louisiana campaign, and former Governor Edwin Edwards served as Carter’s Honorary Chair. These assignments led many political pundits and members of both campaigns to speculate the election would serve as a “warm-up” for the eventual 1983 gubernatorial race between these two men.²⁵¹ Carter told the crowd in New Orleans on October 22, “You may think this contest is between Ronald Reagan and myself, but we’re just surrogates. The real contest is between Edwin Edwards and Dave Treen.”²⁵²

Reagan’s team did not believe its candidate could carry Louisiana at first due to the weakness of the Louisiana Republican Party’s leadership. The neophyte party had a faction between State Chair George Despot and State Campaign Chair John Cade regarding the party’s operations, and a Reagan briefing notes that Treen sided with Cade, and Congressmen Bob

²⁵⁰ Louisiana—Senator Russell Long (Democrat), July 18, 1980, Folder “Research—State Political Files--Louisiana,” Box 482, Research Unit, PP-RRL, Simi Valley, Ca.

²⁵¹ Louisiana Political Brief, September 18, 1980, Folder “Louisiana—Baton Rouge,” Box 410, Research Unit, PP-RRL, Simi Valley, Ca.

²⁵² Honeycutt 192.

Livingston and Henson Moore sided with Despot.²⁵³ Another briefing called the Louisiana Republican Party “not very effective” and noted that Despot did not support Reagan nor did he control his own state committee. Furthermore, the state party had a staff of two people and did not keep a list of registered Republicans.²⁵⁴



Figure 9: This political cartoon appeared in *The Times-Picayune* on September 17, 1980 and illustrates how the presidential election served as a “warm-up” between Governor David Treen and former-Governor Edwin Edwards.

As late as October 15, Reagan’s campaign expressed doubts about his viability. They acknowledged that while state had sound campaign operations, no major newspaper had endorsed Reagan yet (although the *Shreveport Journal* endorsed Carter on October 7). In addition, Reagan’s televised campaign advertisements, which aired infrequently, received little

²⁵³ Bill Dalton, Louisiana State Briefing, August 6, 1980, Folder “Research—State Political Files--Louisiana,” Box 482, Research Unit, PP-RRL, Simi Valley, Ca.

²⁵⁴ Memo from Ken Klinge to Bill Casey on Louisiana General Election Plan, July 1, 1980, Folder “Timmons Files, States—Louisiana,” Box 252, Research Unit, PP-RRL, Simi Valley, Ca.

response from Louisiana voters while Carter's attack commercials received favorable reception.²⁵⁵ During the second half of October, Reagan's fortunes changed.

Despite intra-party factionalism, Louisiana's Republican politicians expressed enthusiastic support for Reagan. Livingston became the state's first prominent Republican to endorse the California governor, doing so shortly before the state's primary. Congressman Moore, too, supported Reagan. These two Congressmen faced token reelection opposition, winning their primary races in September, so they had time and energy to stump for Reagan. The Reagan campaign team chose Governor Treen to serve as their honorary chair as "all power in Louisiana stems from the Governor's office."²⁵⁶ On September 16, Treen agreed to serve as Reagan's honorary campaign chair, calling him "a man of his word" who would "reverse the disastrous economic, defense and foreign policies of the last four years."²⁵⁷

Several state Democratic leaders expressed their support for Reagan during the campaign. On October 29, State Representative Woody Jenkins of Baton Rouge resigned his seat on the Democratic National Committee to endorse Reagan. Jesse Bankston, chair of the Democratic State Central Committee, did not express any surprise at Jenkins's decision but asked him to resign from the State Central Committee, as well.²⁵⁸ State Senator Dan Richey of Ferriday supported Reagan, writing letters to several newspapers throughout the state, explaining, "Jimmy Carter has been an utter failure in strengthening America. He has not provided our nation with

²⁵⁵ Louisiana Political Brief, October 16, 1980, Folder "Louisiana," Box 387, Research Unit, PP-RRL, Simi Valley, Ca.

²⁵⁶ Evaluation of Louisiana, Folder "Briefing Material—Louisiana," Box 520, Research Unit, PP-RRL, Simi Valley, Ca. Treen did not initially assist Reagan's campaign for several reasons. First, his brother, John, headed George Bush's Louisiana primary campaign. Second, intra-party factions between Cade and Despot kept the governor from formally endorsing Reagan. Third, Treen wanted reassurance from Reagan that he would honor Louisiana's objection to serving as a nuclear waste storage site.

²⁵⁷ Jack Wardlaw, "Treen-Edwards Face-Off May Be Here 3 Years Early," *The Times-Picayune*, September 17, 1980, Section 1 Page 1.

²⁵⁸ Charles M. Hargroder, "Jenkins Quits Post, Supports Reagan," *The Times-Picayune/The States-Item*, October 30, 1980, Section 1 Page 16.

the leadership to send a message of strength to our enemies. It's time for a change.”²⁵⁹

According to Eddie Stikes, several New Orleans-area Democrats, including Orleans Parish Civil Sheriff Milton Stire, endorsed Reagan.²⁶⁰ Democratic Congressman Patrick Caffery of New Iberia, who represented the Third Congressional District from 1969-1973 before Treen, also endorsed Reagan.²⁶¹

Reagan also picked up support from various organizations throughout the state. The New Orleans Regular Democratic Organization endorsed Reagan, the first time the organization supported a Republican presidential candidate since Eisenhower.²⁶² The Reagan presidential papers include paperwork from other organizations established in Louisiana to support the California governor. These groups included, but not limited to, the National Black Committee for Reagan and Bush of Baton Rouge, Cosmetologists for Reagan and Bush of Eunice, Farmers for Reagan, National Advisory Committee on Handicapped Persons of Shreveport, Seniors for Reagan of New Orleans, National Advisory Council for Seniors of Shreveport, Lawyers for Reagan/Bush of Metairie, and Realtors for Reagan of Lake Charles.²⁶³

After former Governor Edwin Edwards agreed to run Carter's reelection campaign efforts in Louisiana, many pundits believed he had ulterior motives for helping the president. Initially, Edwards endorsed Texas Governor John Connally in the 1980 primary; when he endorsed Carter

²⁵⁹ Dan Richey, Letter to the Editor of *The State-Times*, October 30, 1980, 3-B. On January 26, 1980, following George Bush's surprise victory in the Iowa Caucus, Senator Richey wrote a letter calling Bush a "Republican Jimmy Carter" because the two men had similar beliefs on abortion, foreign policy, and had similar campaign tactics, rhetoric, and political experience. Richey served as a state senator from 1980 until 1984, left the Democratic Party in 1984 over abortion, and was an independent until becoming a Republican in 1994.

²⁶⁰ Congressman Henson Moore on Gov. Reagan's Visit to New Orleans, August 26, 1980, Box 482, Research Unit, PP-RRL, Simi Valley, Ca.

²⁶¹ Bob Angers, "What the Reagan win means to state politics," *Acadiana Profile*, Vol. 8 No. 6, November/December 1980, 21.

²⁶² Ed Anderson, "Bush Rips Carter's Performance," *The Times-Picayune*, September 30, 1980, Section 1 Page 13.

²⁶³ Political Approval Briefings, Folder "Louisiana," Box 386, Research Unit, PP-RRL, Simi Valley, Ca.

in 1976, he did so reluctantly and at the last minute while his wife, Elaine, endorsed Ford's reelection.²⁶⁴

Some pundits predicted that Edwards agreed to help Carter because the president promised him a higher office. *The Winn Parish Enterprise* speculated that Carter, if reelected, would reward Edwards with a Cabinet position or ambassadorship.²⁶⁵ On the other hand, it is probable that Edwards agreed to help Carter because he would have met a similar fate as Jimmy Fitzmorris, Paul Hardy, Bubba Henry, and Sonny Mouton after they all endorsed Treen over Lambert in the governor's race. Had the presidential election's outcome come down to Louisiana and the state narrowly elected Reagan over Carter without Edwards supporting the president, he would have faced censure and condemnation from the Louisiana (and national) Democratic Party with little chance of getting the party's support in any future campaign.

Regardless of Edwards's motives, Carter expressed satisfaction for having the former governor's support. He contrasted Edwards's colorful, flamboyant, enthusiastic personality to Treen's conservative persona, telling the crowd in his sole Louisiana visit: "I'm also very proud to have as my Louisiana State chairman a man who led this state with good humor, with courage, with confidence, with the utmost fashion in clothes, with a certain debonair attitude and who came out of office with the highest support, I guess, that any governor ever left office with." He elaborated, "I would rather have Edwin Edwards leading my campaign than to be in Governor

²⁶⁴ Iris Kelso, "Edwards May Run Carter Campaign," *The Times-Picayune*, September 13, 1980, Section 1 Page 15 and Norma Dyess, "Mardi-Gras rally greets Carter," *Denham Springs and Livingston Parish News*, October 27, 1980, Page 2A. Leo Honeycutt notes that Edwards accompanied Gerald Ford when he visited the state during the 1976 campaign. A photo in Edwards's biography shows the two men at Barksdale Air Force Base near Shreveport with Edwards wearing an elephant lapel pin.

²⁶⁵ "What's Edwin Edwards up to?" *The Winn Parish Enterprise*, October 8, 1980, Page 4-A.

Reagan's shoes with the Republican governor leading his. That gives me great confidence in the future."²⁶⁶

While Louisiana's small Republican base propelled support for the California governor, the large Democratic base provided little help for President Carter. He received lukewarm support from prominent Democrats in the state; in fact, aside from Edwards, his most vocal supporters were Congresswoman Lindy Boggs and New Orleans Mayor Dutch Morial. Congressman Gillis Long became the first Democrat to endorse Carter's reelection, doing so after the primary ended. He said, "I believe President Carter has what it takes to face up to the overwhelming importance of American commitments—in foreign policy and domestic policy. We need to continue with his steady leadership as our candidate—and then as our President."²⁶⁷ Long, however, did not actively campaign for Carter during the general election.

As George Hager noted, "Louisiana Democrats in Washington treat Carter like a mugging victim: they just don't want to get involved." Congressman Billy Tauzin was suitably lukewarm: "I'm going to vote my conscience, and that's all I'm going to do." Congressman John Breaux expressed his feelings with absolute candor: "If I went down there and said I was 100 percent for Carter and agree with everything he's done I'd be a fool."²⁶⁸ Breaux was the only Congressman to face no opposition in 1980, so he had the time and resources to campaign for the president. Although he formally endorsed Carter, he did not do any active campaigning but lent his administrative assistant, Valsin Marmillion of Houma, to run Carter's campaign

²⁶⁶ Remarks of the President at a Rally—Jackson Square, New Orleans, Louisiana, Folder "Tony Dolan Files—[Carter White House Press Releases, 10/21/80]," Box 888, Research Unit, PP-RRL, Simi Valley, Ca.

²⁶⁷ "Cong. Gillis Long Endorses Carter," *News-Examiner*, Litcher, Louisiana, April 10, 1980, Page 8. Wilbur Reynaud published the *News-Examiner* on Thursdays with a 1980 circulation of 4072 (St. James Parish's 1980 population was 19,773). The paper continues to serve as St. James Parish's official journal.

²⁶⁸ George Hager, "No Stumping for Carter," *Times-Picayune*, August 24, 1980, Section 1 Page 24.

operations in the state.²⁶⁹ Neither senator publicly campaigned for Carter's reelection. Senator Russell Long faced a tough primary challenge from Woody Jenkins when seeking a fifth term, so he had to actively campaign for reelection.

On October 1, all of Louisiana's Democratic Congressional Delegation, except Congressman Buddy Leach, met in Washington and agreed to help Carter's Louisiana campaign. The Democrats had varying support for Carter, but they all planned to attend Carter's sole fundraiser in the state on October 22. Tauzin, for example, allowed Edwards to include his name on Carter's steering committee, but he refused to endorse Carter publicly and stated he would only attend the fundraiser if it fit into his schedule.²⁷⁰

Ronald Reagan attempted, without much success, to appeal to Louisiana's large African-American population. The campaign issues list acknowledged that Reagan could win support among black Catholics over abortion.²⁷¹ Michael Giusti, member of the Republican State Central Committee from New Orleans-based District 98, informed the campaign that African-Americans in New Orleans were more concerned about job creation and the economy rather than national defense and social issues. He implored Reagan to stress the importance of the private sector for job creation, or he would not receive much African-American support.²⁷²

Both of Louisiana's Republican Congressmen urged Reagan to appeal to the black population. Congressman Livingston, whose district was the fourth blackest represented by a Republican, told Reagan he could succeed in capturing black support by not compromising his principles. He suggested that Reagan talk "about the new Republican initiatives (tax cuts, urban

²⁶⁹ Kenneth Allen, "Working for Carter," *The Concordia Sentinel*, February 25, 1980, Page 2A.

²⁷⁰ Iris Kelso, "Congressmen for Carter," *The Times-Picayune*, October 9, 1980, Section 1 Page 11.

²⁷¹ State Issues—Louisiana, Folder "State Briefing Papers—Louisiana," Box 413, Research Unit, PP-RRL, Simi Valley, Ca.

²⁷² Letter from Michael J. Giusti to Ray Wilson, July 24, 1980, Folder "Timmons Files, States—Louisiana," Box 252, Research Unit, PP-RRL, Simi Valley, Ca.

free enterprise zones, spending restraints, etc.) and popular old Republican themes (strong national defense, consistent foreign policy, less government interference in business and personal lives).”²⁷³ Congressman Moore criticized Reagan for not attending the NAACP convention in July. Feeling that blacks were not firmly committed to Carter, Moore wrote, “I am finding that in my Congressional District, which has a population of about one-third blacks, that a number of blacks are beginning to realize that social programs have done very little to improve their standard of living. What they want is an opportunity to own a business or to have a good job which can only come from an expanding economy.”²⁷⁴

Reagan committed several gaffes when trying to appeal to the African-American population in Louisiana and throughout the nation. On Labor Day, Reagan pointed out to a crowd in Detroit that Carter chose to begin his campaign in Tuscumbia, Alabama, “the city that gave birth to and is the parent body of the Ku Klux Klan.”²⁷⁵ Papers in Louisiana criticized Reagan’s remark and noted that he made himself, not Carter’s policy blunders, the main theme of the campaign, by injecting race into the campaign. *The Concordia Sentinel* warned that regionalism could cause Carter to carry the South in 1976, even though he was not as popular there as in 1976. As expected, Carter jumped on Reagan’s KKK comment, leaving the *Ferriday* paper to write, “The President is making an obvious pitch to black Americans, who have been

²⁷³ Memo from J. Allen Martin to Dan Kuykendall, August 26, 1980, Folder “Research—State Political Files--Louisiana,” Box 482, Research Unit, PP-RRL, Simi Valley, Ca. One-third of the First Congressional District’s black population voted for Livingston in 1977, and 70 percent supported him in 1978.

²⁷⁴ Letter from Congressman Henson Moore to Governor Ronald Reagan, July 21, 1980, Folder “Timmons Files, States—Louisiana,” Box 252, Research Unit, PP-RRL, Simi Valley, Ca.

²⁷⁵ “Reagan Off to Wobbly Start,” *The Times-Picayune*, September 4, 1980, Section 1 Page 10. The same editorial noted that Reagan committed a geographical mistake with his statement, as the KKK was founded in Pulaski, Tennessee, about 50 miles north of Tuscumbia.

critical of him since he's been in the White House. Reagan wants that support too. If Reagan didn't, he wouldn't have even uttered the name of the Ku Klux Klan.”²⁷⁶

The most controversial race-related event that occurred during Reagan's campaign in Louisiana happened when the California governor spoke at LSU in Baton Rouge on September 23. Approximately 175 Southern University students protested their school band's performance at the event because contractual obligations forced the band members to play against their will. Some students temporarily blocked the band's busses from leaving campus. One student said, “How come Ronald Reagan couldn't come to Southern? Southern does not support Ronald Reagan. By playing at the rally, it shows the world we support him. We do not.”²⁷⁷ Vernon English, a member of the United People Organization on Southern's campus, criticized the band's involvement at the event by saying, “[Southern's administrators] were being pulled and puppeted around...They gave us (the band) uniforms for our looks, but what about our books? They're trying to say ‘Keep us as entertainers, but not as leaders.’ We're being made fools out of.”²⁷⁸

Southern's campus police cleared the protestors, and the band performed at the LSU rally. Reagan acknowledged their presence and commended them for attending. While there were no protests on LSU's campus, the Southern University's *Weekly Digest* claimed, “it was heard (at the LSU Assembly Center) that some of the audience said that white people like to see niggers clown.”²⁷⁹ The paper also explained that while some LSU students supported Southern's

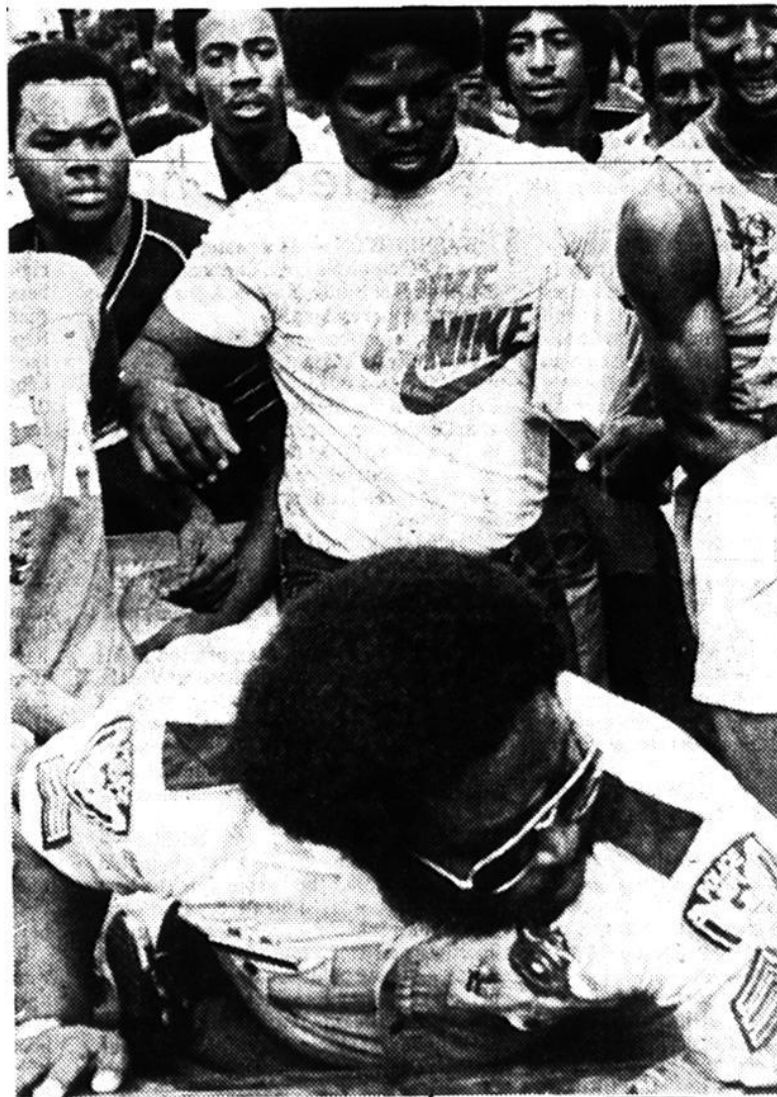
²⁷⁶ “Carter on Racism,” *The Concordia Sentinel*, September 22, 1980, Page 2.

²⁷⁷ Steven Wheeler and Edward Pratt, “Reagan visit sparks SU scuffle,” *The State-Times*, Baton Rouge, September 24, 1980, Page 1-A.

²⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁷⁹ Sherrill Grimes, “Band performs at LSU; students express anger,” *The Weekly Digest*, Southern University, Baton Rouge, September 26, 1980, Volume 53, Archives Department, John B. Cade Library, Southern University and A&M College. It should be noted that John B. Cade, for whom Southern's library is named, is of no relation to John Cade, Louisiana's Republican Party Campaign Chair.

protest, jeers greeted Southern students who attended the rally to protest and chant slogans referring to the band's presence. Southern's authorities prohibited band members from commenting on the event once they returned to campus.



Photos by Bevil Knapp and Steve Wheeler

Students pin security officer to car

Figure 10: From *The State-Times* in Baton Rouge, this photograph by Bevil Knapp and Steve Wheeler shows the Southern University protest in which students pinned a security officer to a car. *Source:* September 24, 1980 issue of *The State-Times*.

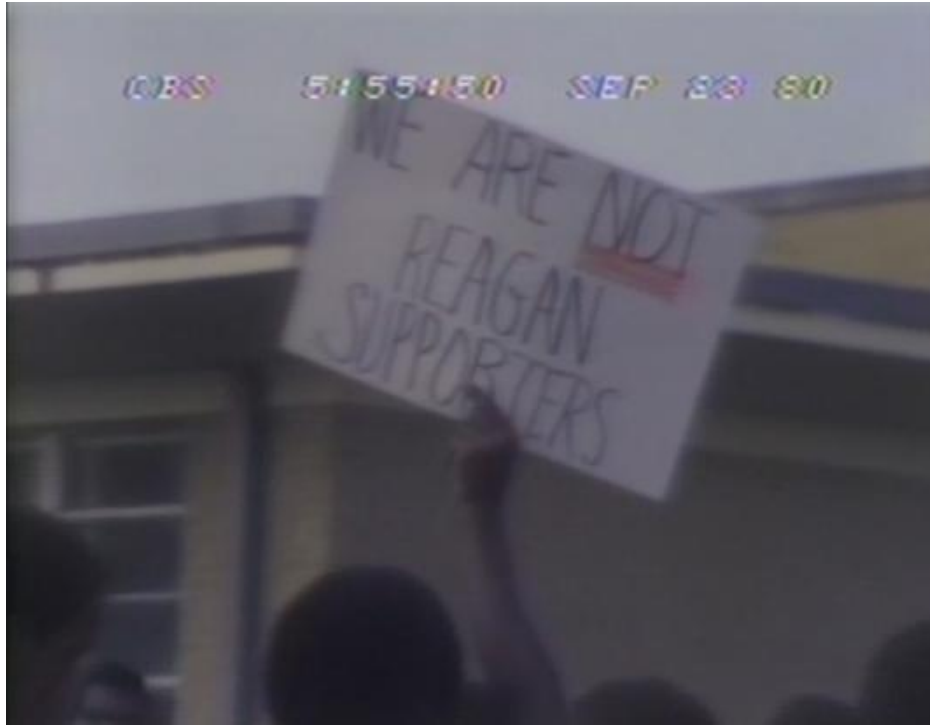


Figure 11: From the September 23, 1980 edition of the *CBS Evening News*, this was the opening shot of the network’s story and coverage of the Southern University protest. *Source: CBS Evening News*, accessed from the Vanderbilt Television News Archive.

According to *The Daily Reveille*, Governor Treen initially invited the LSU Tiger Band to perform at Reagan’s event, but LSU band director Frank Wickes declined. Wickes explained that he lacked the authority to excuse band members from classes and could not accommodate the performance with the burden of work and practice the band faced. Due to the Tiger Band’s unavailability, Treen contacted Southern’s band director, Dr. Isaac Greggs, to have his band perform.²⁸⁰

Both ABC and CBS covered the Southern University protest during their nightly newscasts using footage from WBRZ and WAFB, Baton Rouge’s ABC and CBS affiliates, respectively. ABC/WBRZ’s coverage of the protest was brief and included no sound bites from

²⁸⁰ “Wickes Declined Invitation to Rally,” *The Daily Reveille*, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, September 24, 1980, 1.

any Southern protestor or anyone from Reagan's team about the event. The news footage showed one student lying on the ground in front of a car and then kicking police officers and other students who came close to him. ABC reporter Barry Serafin noted that Reagan praised the band's courage for attending the event.²⁸¹

CBS and WAFB presented better footage and commentary on the Southern Band protest. Beginning with a shot of a poster reading, "we are not Reagan supporters," (see figure 11) reporter Bruce Hall said that about 200 Southern students protested the band's performance. He said that some students explained that campus police used mace to disperse the crowd and that the students were chanting, "We are not backing Reagan, and we are not going to allow our band to be forced to play at a Reagan speech." CBS included a sound bite from English, who said, "98 percent of the band did not want to go [but went] because of scholarships, BEOG (Basic Educational Grants), work study jobs, they was manipulated into going." In a separate interview, John Cade stated that neither he nor anyone connected to Reagan's campaign coerced Southern's band to attend. The news coverage ended with a shot of the band performing with band director Greggs enthusiastically smiling and clapping.²⁸²

Despite Cade's assurance that neither he nor anyone in Reagan's campaign coerced Southern's band to perform, some in the state viewed the Southern band's protest as another Reagan blunder. The *Winn Parish Enterprise* viewed the band's presence as a ploy to drum up

²⁸¹ Barry Serafin, "Campaign '80/Carter/Reagan/Anderson," *ABC World News Tonight*, ABC, September 23, 1980, accessed from the Vanderbilt Television News Archive. ABC's anchor for September 23 was Max Robinson, the first African-American broadcast network news anchor. Although NBC covered Reagan's campaign visit to LSU, the network was the only one that did not mention anything about the Southern University band protest—this may be because Baton Rouge's NBC affiliate, WRBT-TV, did not have a strong news department compared to WAFB and WBRZ or did not send a news crew to Southern University.

²⁸² Bruce Hall, "Campaign '80 / Carter / Reagan," *CBS Evening News*, CBS, September 23, 1980, accessed from the Vanderbilt Television News Archive. Walter Cronkite served as the anchor for CBS's September 23 newscast. The news clip did not acknowledge Vernon English by name; however, an article about the protest from the Baton Rouge *State-Times* confirms that English was the student speaking.

black support for Reagan, criticizing the performance as “window-dressing at a rally that was attended by only a handful of blacks in a crowd of several thousand” that “smacks of tokenism to the state’s black voters.” Furthermore, the paper viewed blunders like the Southern band fiasco as hindering Reagan’s opportunity to build a surmountable lead against “perhaps the most incompetent president in modern times.”²⁸³

An October 9 memo indicates that the Reagan campaign team made some effort to hold rallies catering to the African-American population. On October 11, a black caucus meeting occurred in Monroe, and on October 16, former Kansas state senator George Haley, brother of *Roots* author Alex Haley, spoke at an African-American cocktail reception in New Orleans, as well as at political forums at Dillard University and Southern University. The campaign requested the names of several known blacks who could come to the state for a talk show and cocktail reception.²⁸⁴

In Louisiana, Haley explained that Jimmy Carter was taking his so-called secret weapon, the black vote, for granted. Campaigning for Reagan/Bush, he told supporters, “we need to think about what is in our best interest when we vote, and we must consider how the Democratic Party headed by Jimmy Carter views the support which we have so frequently given to Democratic candidates.” Haley explained that Reagan’s support for enterprise zones compelled him to endorse Reagan, and he thought that Reagan offered better leadership than Carter did. He told black voters to be careful that “one party does not take us for granted and that the other party does not write us off.”²⁸⁵

²⁸³ “Southern Band Hits Sour Note,” *Winn Parish Enterprise*, October 8, 1980, Page 4-A.

²⁸⁴ Ed Buckhalter, State—Louisiana, October 9, 1980, Folder “Blacks—State Files, Louisiana (Hugel),” Box 322, Research Unit, PP-RRL, Simi Valley, Ca.

²⁸⁵ “Brother of *Roots* author says in Louisiana that Carter is taking his so-called secret weapon—the black vote—for granted,” October 17, 1980, Folder “Louisiana,” Box 387, Research Unit, PP-RRL, Simi Valley, Ca.

Dr. Herbert Eddington, the Chairman of the Republican Party of Louisiana's Minority Division, wrote a letter to many Louisiana newspapers imploring black Louisianians to support Reagan. He reminded readers that Carter's presidency brought high unemployment and inflation that especially hurt black Americans. He writes, "I submit to you, Black America, that Governor Ronald Reagan deserves your support in 1980, if no more than to say to Mr. Carter, 'we have not forgotten your promises even if you did', and to let all politicians know that we, as a People, are not bought and paid for by the actions of the few that sit in the council of the High-Mighty of the land."²⁸⁶

Despite appeals to the African-American population, the majority of black voters in Louisiana remained committed to Carter. Treen acknowledged shortly before the election that Reagan would do better in Louisiana if black turnout were light.²⁸⁷ Shortly before the presidential election, the *St. Francisville Democrat* in West Feliciana Parish interviewed various residents asking about the candidates they supported. The African-Americans interviewed all supported Carter. One man, a clerk, said he was voting for Carter because "Reagan is against blacks," while a fisherman supported Carter because of his Democratic Party affiliation, and an African-American housewife said she supported Carter because "I think he'll do more for us."²⁸⁸

In the Greater New Orleans area, Reagan's appeal helped to boost Republican Party affiliation. Congressman Livingston served as chair of a voter registration drive for the Louisiana Republicans during 1980. The Orleans Parish Registrar of Voters, A. E. Papale, noted a dramatic spike in voter registration between August 31 and October 4 (the last day to register

²⁸⁶ Herbert H. Eddington, Letter to the Editor of *The West Carroll Gazette*, October 29, 1980, Page 3.

²⁸⁷ Allan Katz, "La. Vote is Close, Two Say," *The Times-Picayune*, October 3, 1980, Section 1 Page 13.

²⁸⁸ Rod Dreher, "Who are you going to vote for in the Presidential election?" *The St. Francisville Democrat*, St. Francisville, October 30, 1980, Page 3A. David M. Goff published *The St. Francisville Democrat* on Thursdays with a 1980 circulation of 2906 (West Feliciana Parish's population was 11,376). Today, the paper serves as West Feliciana Parish's official journal.

to vote in the presidential election). He explained that approximately 5,200 new Democrats registered in Orleans Parish (an increase of 2.62 percent), over 2,300 new Republicans registered (an increase of 13.17 percent), and 2,200 independent/third party members registered (an increase of 15.87 percent).²⁸⁹ James Gillis of *The Times-Picayune* notes that the number of new Democratic voters statewide during this same period was roughly 26,000, an increase of 1.51 percent. Nearly 25,000 new Republican voters, an increase of 19.91 percent, and an increase of 15.41 percent (just over 16,000) independent/third party voters registered between late August and early October.²⁹⁰ An example of a new Republican voter was Elissa Gomez, who was crowned LSU's homecoming queen in 1980. When interviewed by *The Morning Advocate*, she explained that she registered Republican along with her friends and supported Reagan because "[his] stand on economic issues and his concern for the inflation problems which we now have are reasons that voters of all ages will support the Reagan Bush team."²⁹¹

Reagan's conservative message appealed to some of the blue-collar population throughout Louisiana and the United States. According to Kenneth R. Allen, labor leaders in Baton Rouge cited dissatisfaction regarding Carter's anti-inflation policies, believing it helped increase unemployment, as one reason why blue-collar workers liked Reagan. In addition, they supported his hard-line foreign policy and general optimism.²⁹²

In South Louisiana, the Reagan team made special efforts to appeal to the Cajun French population. George Bush had a special tie to the Greater Lake Charles area, as he had an office in nearby Cameron when working in the oil industry—he acknowledged that he felt like he was

²⁸⁹ James H. Gillis, "Registration Surprise," *The Times-Picayune*, October 11, 1980, Section 1 Page 11.

²⁹⁰ James H. Gillis, "GOP Trend is Statewide," *The Times-Picayune*, October 31, 1980, Section 1 Page 13.

²⁹¹ "Reagan Bush Youth Chairman is LSU's Homecoming Queen: Says Youth will Vote Republican in Nov.," *The Morning Advocate*, Folder "Louisiana," Box 387, Research Unit, PP-RRL, Simi Valley, Ca.

²⁹² Kenneth R. Allen, "Blue-Collar Support for Reagan Increases," *Winn Parish Enterprise*, July 2, 1980, Page 4-A.

coming home when visiting Lake Charles on October 30, and he commended the city for its compassion following Hurricane Audrey in 1957. Reagan's support for family values and an anti-abortion constitutional amendment played favorably to the large Catholic population in the region. Eddie Stikes suggested Reagan air commercials in French to cater to the region, but this never occurred, as these advertisements would have cut into the ones already airing in English.²⁹³

Reagan had the support of many Louisiana newspapers, which either endorsed him or rallied its readers to vote in the election. In endorsing the California governor, the *State Times*, Baton Rouge's afternoon newspaper, writes, "Mr. Carter promised four years ago to decontrol natural gas prices; once in office he actively opposed decontrol of natural gas prices, and now he is bragging that decontrol of natural gas prices, reluctantly accepted by him, is a positive step in reducing our dependence upon foreign energy sources." The paper further suggests: "Mr. Reagan's ability to deal with a Congress of an opposing party can surely be no worse than the record Mr. Carter achieved with a Congress of his own party."²⁹⁴ Baton Rouge's morning newspaper, *The Morning Advocate*, also endorsed Reagan by citing Carter's failure to work with a Democratic congress, saying he "succeeded only in producing a fragmented program because he was unable to work with that Congress. In fact early on during his current term of office, President Carter managed to alienate Congress completely." The paper praised Reagan's tenure as governor, citing his ability to work with a Democratic legislature and saving California from financial and political morass.²⁹⁵

Reagan also received support from Shreveport's *The Times*. The newspaper initially refused to endorse a candidate, but Reagan impressed the paper's staff when he met with them.

²⁹³ Memo regarding Radio advertisements in Louisiana, October 4, 1980, Folder "Louisiana," Box 387, Research Unit, PP-RRL, Simi Valley, Ca.

²⁹⁴ "Ronald Reagan for President," *State Times*, October 27, 1980, 2-B.

²⁹⁵ "Republican win would serve nation's interests," *Sunday Advocate*, October 26, 1980, 2-B.

They write, “What we expected was a snow job. What we got was an honest, reasonable, candid—and above all else, encouraging—picture of a man who is, indeed presidential material: serious, thoughtful, given to logical approaches instead of smart retorts.”²⁹⁶

Reagan also picked up endorsements from two South Louisiana newspapers: *The Advertiser* of Lafayette and *The Crowley Post-Signal* of Acadia Parish. *The Advertiser* cited Reagan’s ponderous “are you better off” debate question as one reason to support his candidacy. The paper also criticized Carter for his broken promises and his poor energy record. Contrasting the two, the editorial board writes, “Carter, unlike Reagan, believes in government playing Big Brother and controlling practically every aspect of our lives. As Reagan pointed out, in one example, the quality of the nation’s schools has steadily eroded since federal intervention.”²⁹⁷ *The Crowley Post-Signal* endorsed Reagan for his defense policies, saying that Carter kept only campaign promise—continuing Ford’s policy of pardoning and granting amnesty to Vietnam War draft dodgers. The paper debunked Carter’s accusation of Reagan being a warmonger by noting that World Wars I and II, Korea, and Vietnam occurred while Democrats held the presidency. The editorial states, “The words of Ronald Reagan, even the stumbles in some of his talks, ring true enough of every Acadia Parish voter to compare before Election Day. Reagan wants to end waste, giveaways, weakness, dependence on foreign nations for our lives, and he asks us to give him the chance to do for the USA what he did for California, as governor when he put the state in the black.”²⁹⁸ The Crowley newspaper’s endorsement is an interesting one as

²⁹⁶ “Times Endorses Ronald Reagan,” *The Times*, Shreveport, October 26, 1980, Page 2-B. *The Times* endorsed a presidential candidate in every election between 1928 and 1980 except 1940 and 1944. Aside from endorsing Alfred Smith in 1928, Thomas Dewey in 1948, Richard Nixon in 1960, and Barry Goldwater in 1964, they endorsed the winning candidate in every election.

²⁹⁷ “Reagan for President,” *The Sunday Advertiser*, Lafayette, November 2, 1980, Page 1.

²⁹⁸ “Ronald Reagan: A Good Choice for President,” *The Crowley Post-Signal*, November 2, 1980, Page 1.

two prominent Louisiana politicians (and Carter supporters), Congressman Breaux and Governor Edwards, resided there.

At least three small-town newspapers throughout the state reproduced syndicated comments from John Rutledge, economics professor at Claremont McKenna College in California, who speculated what a new Carter and a Reagan term would look like. For Reagan, “The business sector [increased] production and expansion” due to lower labor costs and “Saudi Arabia, seeing the purchasing power of the United States dollar strengthening, slowed the skyrocketing cost of oil. At the end of 1984, imported crude oil had only risen to \$56.15 a barrel.”²⁹⁹ A week later, he speculated a second Carter term in which, “along with the high level of inflation and the consequent weakening of the United States dollar in international trade, imported oil rose in price to a record \$87.13 per barrel in December 1984. Fearing a lack of American support and not wanting to become a second Iran, Saudi Arabia (long a moderating force at OPEC), went along with price increases that averaged 26.5 percent per year.”³⁰⁰

Although Reagan had a significant backing from Louisiana newspapers, not every paper endorsed the California governor. The state’s largest paper, *The Times-Picayune*, opted not to endorse either candidate, and numerous large and small town papers remained neutral on the presidential decision. One of these papers, *The News Examiner* of Litcher in St. James Parish, sympathized with the New Orleans paper in its decision not to endorse a candidate. The paper criticized Carter for his lackluster performance as president but doubted Reagan’s ability to lead due to his inconsistency in campaign speeches, suggesting instead that readers vote their

²⁹⁹ Carroll Regan, “Reagan Offers Hope,” *Lake Providence Banner-Democrat*, October 23, 1980, 2-A.

³⁰⁰ Carroll Regan, “Carter’s Second Term,” *Lake Providence Banner-Democrat*, October 30, 1980, 2-A.

conscience.³⁰¹ *Louisiana Weekly*, New Orleans's black newspaper, also said it favored neither candidate.³⁰²

The Shreveport Journal, the first Louisiana urban newspaper to endorse a candidate in the 1980 election, urged its readers to vote for Carter. The paper praised the president's peace-seeking foreign policy record, citing the Camp David Accords and creating treaties with Panama and China. The paper also commended Carter for challenging "pork barrel" spending. On the contrary, the newspaper saw a dramatic contrast between Carter and Reagan's respective policies. The editorial called Reagan's ideas "simplistic and naïve," and described Reagan's worldview as one that had, "the prospective of nostalgia, which sees the American position as a storybook way that never was. He does not possess the depth of mind nor understanding to deal with the complexities of global politics. To employ his shoot-from-the-hip, Wild West diplomacy in such a volatile international environment would be to invite confrontation at every corner of the world." The paper contrasted Reagan's "past" vision to Carter's which looked ahead to the future.³⁰³ The Reagan team noted the paper's endorsement and described Shreveport's media saying, "While the *Shreveport Journal* is anti-Reagan, the *Times* is more balanced in its coverage as are the local TV stations. Governor Reagan was here during the primary, was well received and got generally good coverage."³⁰⁴ The *Journal's* early endorsement compelled Reagan to meet with *The Times's* staff when he visited Shreveport in mid-October.

³⁰¹ "No Clear Cut Choice for President," *The News-Examiner*, Litcher, October 23, 1980, Page 2.

³⁰² Iris Kelso, "Louisiana in the Thick," *The Times-Picayune*, November 2, 1980, Section 1 Page 11.

³⁰³ "A Vote for Carter," *Shreveport Journal*, October 7, 1980, 4A. Between 1928 and 1980, the *Shreveport Journal* endorsed candidates in every election except during the Roosevelt administration, 1952, and 1960. In 1972, the *Journal* endorsed Richard Nixon's reelection, the only time the paper endorsed the winning candidate. On the state level, the paper endorsed Dave Treen for governor over Edwards in 1971, leading Edwards to say, "*The Shreveport Journal* has the uncanny ability to endorse losers" (Leo Honeycutt, *Edwin Edwards: Governor of Louisiana*, 90).

³⁰⁴ Shreveport Political Brief, Folder "Political Ops—Programs + Analysis—[States]—Louisiana—Shreveport (Carmen)," Box 413, Research Unit, PP-RRL, Simi Valley, Ca.

Although Reagan's campaign worried that Carter would recapture the state in 1980, Reagan attracted many voters, especially those in Cajun Catholic South Louisiana and in suburban parishes throughout the state, which improved his chances. The sole presidential debate between Reagan and Carter proved to change many people's minds about the California governor. A state poll conducted by the Reagan campaign occurred in Louisiana following the debate: of 490 undecided voters, seventy-one (or 17.7 percent) people thought the debate changed their minds; likewise, of the 103 unfavorable people called, twenty-six (32.1 percent) people thought the debate changed their mind.³⁰⁵

Louisiana officials predicted a respectable voter turnout on Election Day. State Representative Ron Faucheux, a political consultant who ran against Livingston in 1977, predicted that 10 percent of Louisiana voters would ultimately decide the election for Reagan or Carter, and he hypothesized that the state could give a sizeable vote to a third party candidate. He believed Louisianians "will vote on the basis of whether Carter is a nice guy and competent or whether Reagan is competent and can handle the job."³⁰⁶ Secretary of State Jim Brown forecasted a 60 to 65 percent turnout statewide, down from 1976's turnout but up from his initial prediction of approximately 50 to 55 percent. He cited good "get out the vote" efforts, as well as heavy absentee voting from university students as reasons for raising his prediction, but he predicted a modest turnout based on lighter votes from groups who traditionally vote by mail.³⁰⁷ Lucius Patterson, Clerk of Court of Livingston Parish, believed only 40 percent of his parish's voters would participate in the election, citing the small number of absentee and early ballots that

³⁰⁵ Post Debate Polls—Louisiana, Folder "Louisiana," Box 386, Research Unit, PP-RRL, Simi Valley, Ca.

³⁰⁶ Iris Kelso, "State is Whisker Close," *The Times-Picayune*, September 30, 1980, Section 1 Page ((GET PAGE NUMBER!!!))

³⁰⁷ "Brown Forecasts 60-65 Percent Turnout," *The Crowley Post-Signal*, November 2, 1980, Page 2.

arrived at his office during October.³⁰⁸ Although Reagan and, to a lesser extent, Carter invested plenty of resources in the state, pundits looked at the poor turnout in the April primary and some people's dissatisfaction with the two candidates as reasons for a potentially low turnout. Norma Dyess, for example, writes in her column "Capital Review," that some voters viewed the election as "a combination of dread, nausea and relief that the whole grueling roadshow is finally, at long last, over."³⁰⁹

Jack Wardlaw of *The Times-Picayune* believed "flip-flop" parishes would decide the election in Louisiana. He noted that Acadia, St. Bernard, St. Martin, St. Mary, Beauregard, and Lafourche (all South Louisiana parishes) all supported Carter in 1976 and Treen in 1979, while Webster, Caldwell, Morehouse, Franklin, and Claiborne (all North Louisiana parishes) supported Ford in 1976 and Lambert in 1979. Wardlaw predicted that the Second, Seventh, and Eighth Congressional Districts would support Carter, the First, Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth would support Reagan, and the Third District would be a battleground. He concluded that Carter needed to hold onto New Orleans, the River Parishes, southwest Louisiana, and be formidable in rural Louisiana to get Louisiana's electoral votes, or Reagan needed to poll huge majorities in suburban areas (New Orleans, Baton Rouge, Shreveport-Bossier City, Monroe, and Lafayette), the Florida Parishes, and hold ground in the Cajun region if he were to succeed. Wardlaw concluded with Congressman Moore's assumption that if turnout were low, Reagan would win as his support was "hard" while Carter's was "soft."³¹⁰

Louisiana joined forty-three other states in giving its electoral votes to Ronald Reagan. Reagan benefitted by the record turnout in the state with 76.8 percent of registered voters

³⁰⁸ "Low Turnout Predicted," *Denham Springs and Livingston Parish News*, November 3, 1980, 1A.

³⁰⁹ Norma Dyess, "Time to go to the polls," *Denham Springs and Livingston Parish News*, November 3, 1980, 2A.

³¹⁰ Jack Wardlaw, "Flip-Flop Parishes May Break Election Tie," *The Times-Picayune*, November 3, 1980, Section 1 Page 15.

participating in the election, slightly above the national average of 76.5 percent. This marked an increase from 69 percent who participated in 1976. Only Idaho saw a greater increase in participation in 1980 than in 1976. Nationally, the 1980 election had a slightly lower turnout than it did in 1976, so Louisiana went against the norm and against most state officials' turnout predictions.³¹¹ Nationally, Reagan received 489 electoral votes; Carter, 49. In 1976, Carter carried every southern state except Virginia; in 1980, Reagan carried every southern state except for Carter's own Georgia.

The United States Senate became majority Republican with Reagan's victory—fifty-three Republicans in the Senate for the 97th Congress, up from forty-two in 1978. This happened partially because the “Moral Majority,” an evangelical Christian lobbying group headed by Jerry Falwell, successfully targeted eleven Senate seats held by liberal Democrats. The group successfully helped to unseat George McGovern of South Dakota, Mike Gravel of Alaska, and Birch Bayh of Indiana, bringing in new Republicans, such as James Abdnor, Frank Murkowski, and Dan Quayle, to Washington. Although the House of Representatives remained majority Democratic, Republicans in the 97th Congress numbered 191, up from 158 in 1978.

Reagan received Louisiana's ten electoral votes by winning 51.2 percent of the state's popular vote to Carter's 45.75 percent.³¹² A majority of parishes throughout the state experienced record turnouts. St. James Parish ranked first in voter turnout with 84.6 percent of

³¹¹ David Leip, “United States Presidential Election Results,” Dave Leip's Atlas of U.S. Presidential Election Results, 2005, <http://uselectionatlas.org/RESULTS/national.php?year=1980&off=0&f=1>.

³¹² Other candidates on Louisiana's included Independent John Anderson, who received 1.7 percent of the vote, as well as American Independent John Rarick, who served as Congressman for Louisiana's Sixth District from 1967 to 1975, Edward Clark of the Libertarian Party, Barry Commoner of the Citizens Party, and Clifton DeBerry of the Socialist Workers Party. Rarick, Clark, Commoner, and DeBerry each received less than one percent of the total vote in Louisiana. Anderson's children made one campaign visit to Louisiana—visiting the University of New Orleans on September 17. Despite his Louisiana roots, Rarick's candidacy received little mention in newspapers—only the *St. Francisville Democrat* ran a profile on him and his running mate, Eileen Shearer. Despite coming from West Feliciana Parish, Rarick did not spoil the election results in any Louisiana parish or the state as a whole in 1980.

its voters participating while East Carroll Parish ranked last with a respectable 66.1 percent turnout. Of the “flip-flop” parishes Wardlaw mentioned, Reagan outpolled Carter in all except St. Martin, St. Mary, and Beauregard. Reagan carried every parish that Gerald Ford won did in 1976, but he also outpolled Carter in several parishes in rural North Louisiana that the president carried four years earlier: Catahoula, Concordia, Rapides, Grant, Winn, Jackson, and West Carroll. In 1976, Ford carried the following South Louisiana parishes: East Baton Rouge, Lafayette, Iberia, Terrebonne, Plaquemines, Jefferson, and St. Tammany; in 1980, Reagan carried those seven parishes along with Acadia, Avoyelles, Evangeline, Vermilion, Lafourche, and St. Bernard. Carter, however, still performed well in various rural parishes in West Louisiana, South Louisiana, and in many of the Florida Parishes due to his southern roots. Of the eight congressional districts, every district except the Second and Eighth went for Reagan.³¹³

The most profound increase in Reagan support in the state came from the oil producing and blue-collar regions. In Louisiana and America, Reagan broke up the New Deal coalition by winning over 50 percent of the blue-collar vote. Sixty percent of the voters in the Third Congressional District voted for Reagan in 1980, and no other Louisiana district gave him a higher percentage.³¹⁴ Although not every parish in this district supported Reagan, he received a higher percentage of the vote in every parish than Ford did in 1976. The Fourth Congressional District, also involved in oil production in North Louisiana, gave Reagan 54 percent of the vote; the First Congressional district gave Reagan 51 percent.³¹⁵ The *Crowley Post-Signal* notes that

³¹³ Michael Barone and Grant Ujifusa, *Almanac of American Politics 1982* (Washington: Barone and Company, 1981), 431-448. In the Seventh Congressional District, Reagan received a plurality of the votes—in the other five that went for him, he received a majority. In 1976, Carter carried every congressional district except the Third, Fourth, and Fifth.

³¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 436-7.

³¹⁵ Plaquemines Parish, which is part of the First District, boasted a stronger voting percentage for Carter in 1980 than 1976. Reagan still carried the parish with 54.5 percent of the vote; however, Carter received 42.8 percent of the vote, up from 29.5 percent in 1976. Plaquemines Parish was the only parish in Louisiana in which Carter improved

Reagan “also drew considerable support in oil-rich Lafayette, the corporate headquarters of hundreds of companies cashing in on a booming offshore oil industry.”³¹⁶ The Seventh Congressional district gave Reagan 49 percent of the vote, having given Carter 59 percent of the vote four years earlier.³¹⁷ Carter experienced some of his most dramatic losses here, as he polled more than 10 percent less of the total votes in Vermilion, Acadia, Cameron, and Jefferson Davis Parishes than he did in 1976. Reagan also benefitted from high voter turnout in suburban areas; St. Bernard, Caddo, East Baton Rouge, Ouachita, and Jefferson Parishes all ranked in the top ten for voter turnout in Louisiana.³¹⁸ Morehouse and Webster Parishes, located in North Louisiana and the site of numerous oil and gas wells, also ranked in the top ten. Reagan bested Carter in every suburban area of the state, except for Lake Charles. He made some profound gains in South Louisiana where pundits expected he would not perform well—his economic conservative message of smaller government and energy deregulation coupled with his social message for family values and right-to-life appealed to South Louisiana voters.

Reagan’s victory did not come without costs. Because the Republican Party recaptured the Senate for the first time since Eisenhower’s administration, Senators Long and Johnston became less powerful in senatorial committees, receiving minority positions. Long lost his chairmanship of the Senate Finance Committee, and Johnston, next in line to head the Energy

by more than 5 percent from 1976. This parish, heavy in oil and gas production, had an influential parish council that usually endorsed candidates in the parish’s weekly newspaper, *The Plaquemines Gazette*. When Judge Leander Perez handled operations in this parish until his 1967 death, he often used the paper to profess his views. In every election before 1980, the paper endorsed a candidate or, in 1956 and 1960, unpledged States Rights delegates, and in each of these elections, the parish gave commanding percentages to the endorsed candidates or delegates. In 1976, the paper endorsed Gerald Ford; however, in 1980, it did not endorse Reagan or Carter. Since 1976, the parish and paper have never endorsed a candidate, and the paper does not include as much political commentary and analysis as it once did during the tenure of Judge Perez.

³¹⁶ “Reagan Cashes in on La.,” *The Crowley Post-Signal*, November 5, 1980, 1-A. The paper had “oil-rice” instead of “oil-rich,” but this is likely a typo.

³¹⁷ Barone and Ujifusa 444-6.

³¹⁸ Public Affairs Research Council of Louisiana, “Presidential Election November 1980” (Baton Rouge: PAR, 1980), 12. Reagan benefitted from higher turnout; however, not every parish in the top ten list of voter turnout went for him; Ascension, St. James (which had the highest turnout percentage), and Bienville all supported Carter.

Committee did not receive the appointment. With Carter's defeat, former New Orleans Mayor Moon Landrieu also lost his Cabinet position as Secretary of Housing and Urban Development.

Ironically, the timing of Louisiana's open primary and the presidential election saved Senator Russell Long from potential defeat. In October, Long defeated Woody Jenkins in the open primary with 57.6 percent of the vote. Had Long not secured a majority vote in the primary, he would have needed to compete in a runoff on November 4 during the presidential election against Jenkins. Former Governor John McKeithen speculated that had a runoff election been needed, Long possibly would have not won a fifth term, saying, "If Russell Long had run with Carter, he probably would have been defeated."³¹⁹ Likewise, had Long chosen to endorse Carter and campaign for him during the election season, he probably would have polled smaller numbers or faced defeat in the primary.

When dissecting the results by race, Carter outperformed Reagan in predominantly black neighborhoods. *The Times-Picayune* notes that in East Jefferson, where there were more African-Americans and labor unions, Carter beat Reagan by huge margins. In suburban, affluent neighborhoods, Reagan beat Carter by significant margins.³²⁰ In North Louisiana, the *West Carroll Gazette* implored black leaders to rethink their positions because of Reagan's win. The paper said, "They exerted far less influence on the past election than in any time in the past four presidential elections. Welfarism, unemployment benefits and Federal grants will not end, but they will face much stiffer legislative tests and tighter regulation in the immediate future."³²¹

³¹⁹ Honeycutt 192. In terms of congressional elections, the most significant loss occurred in the Fourth Congressional District where Charles "Buddy" Roemer, a conservative Democrat, defeated Claude "Buddy" Leach for his seat while the incumbent faced accusations of voter fraud from Republican challenger Jimmy Wilson in 1978. Roemer served a term as governor from 1988-1992 and became a Republican near the end of his term. Leach currently serves as Louisiana's national committeeman for the Democratic Party.

³²⁰ Allan Katz, "Race was Factor in N.O. Results," *The Times-Picayune*, November 6, 1980, Section 1 Page 1.

³²¹ "Election Observations," *The West Carroll Gazette*, November 12, 1980, Page 2.

Many Louisiana politicians, lobbyists, and newspaper editors viewed Reagan's win as a beneficial event for Louisiana's energy-based economy. Congressman Livingston considered Reagan's win a boon for the oil business. He hoped America would "see a return to free-market economics in coming to grips with our energy problem." He predicted that Reagan would use a "concerted effort to further decontrol oil and gas prices, to speed up leasing of federal lands on which petroleum is believed located, and to sharply reduce the energy bureaucracy in Washington or possibly even abolish the Federal Energy Department."³²² Governor David Treen noted that Louisiana would benefit by having "a very good relationship" and "a very sympathetic ear" in the Reagan White House.³²³ Edwin Edwards viewed the election as a wake-up call: "The coalition which has supported the Democratic Party in the past—Catholics, Southerners, Jews, black votes and labor—has fragmented."³²⁴ Congressman Huckaby said, "I'm pleased with the conservative shift the nation has taken," citing himself as an asset in a new, conservative Washington due to his moderate voting record.³²⁵

Gary Hebert, editor of *The White Castle Times* of Iberville Parish, saw Reagan's win as beneficial, despite Carter winning the highest percent of the vote in Iberville Parish than any other. He included a French-influenced "envie list" of things Americans yearned for, explaining that President-Elect Reagan had the best solutions. Reagan opposed abortion, supported a constitutional amendment to protect life, opposed the ERA, "gay lifestyles," universal service, making women register for Selective Service, and the Department of Energy; he supported an amendment allowing voluntary prayer in public schools, as well as various new weapons for

³²² Bob Livingston, "Your Congressman Reports," *St. Bernard Voice*, November 14, 1980, A-6.

³²³ Jack Wardlaw and Charles M. Hargroder, "Treen: La. Will Have Friend in White House," *The Times-Picayune/The States Item*, November 5, 1980, Section 1 Page 13.

³²⁴ "Bouquets and Barbs Greet Reagan in La.," *The Times-Picayune*, November 6, 1980, Section 1 Page 13.

³²⁵ Lanny Keller, "Conservative forces gain edge in Congress," *News-Star-World*, Monroe, November 6, 1980, Section B Page 1.

defense. Hebert referred to Reagan as “a man who has become personified as the deliverer of every ‘envie’ of the American people.”³²⁶

The two opposing labor lobbies also concurred that Reagan’s election would boost Louisiana’s economy. The AFL-CIO’s Victor Bussie replied, “I think if the new president lives up to his promises this state will benefit greatly,” because “Union members are just as affected by high inflation and unemployment as anyone else.” Ed Steimel of the Louisiana Association of Business and Industry (LABI) expressed his satisfaction with Reagan’s win saying, “The most critical problem facing this state is the availability of energy products. We are the most energy-intensive place in the world; our economic health depends on it. Congress has been dabbling with taking that away from us in years.”³²⁷ He expressed hope that Reagan would help pass legislation allowing the state to keep its indigenous energy resources.

Reagan succeeded in Louisiana and, by extension, the United States because of voter dissatisfaction with an overreaching, intrusive big government bureaucracy. Jeff M. David, editor of the *Denham Springs and Livingston Parish News*, viewed the election as a mandate for change by writing, “Nobody expects miracles. But the mandate is clear. Balance the budget. Lower taxes. Stop the proliferation of government programs and government regulations. Leave people relatively free to produce and to reap a just award for their production. Take a tougher stand on foreign policy.”³²⁸ The *Winn Parish Enterprise* viewed Reagan’s victory as an American revolution, saying, “Middle-class America—long the silent majority—finally spoke up, and its voice was heard from county courthouses to the White House...from the Deep South

³²⁶ Gary J. Hebert, “Happy days are here again, we hope!” *The White Castle Times*, November 7, 1980, Page 2. “Envie” is French for “envy,” meaning a want or desire.

³²⁷ Norma Dyess, “Democrats Despair,” *Denham Springs and Livingston Parish News*, November 10, 1980, 2A and 9A.

³²⁸ Jeff M. David, “Pollsters couldn’t believe,” *Denham Springs and Livingston Parish News*, November 6, 1980, 2A.

to New England and the West Coast. The sword of voter discontent cut deeply into the country's political establishment."³²⁹

Some Louisiana newspapers also cited religious reasons for Reagan's victory. *The West Carroll Gazette* acknowledged the role of the Moral Majority in the presidential election by writing, "The Evangelical Christian movement had a definite and direct impact upon the outcome of the election. We think this group, if it remains active, will continue to exercise a growing influence in American politics, and an influence that will be for the better."³³⁰ The *Pointe Coupee Banner* reproduced comments from Bishop Joseph V. Sullivan of the Catholic Diocese of Baton Rouge, who criticized the Democratic National Convention for adopting a platform that endorsed federal funding for abortions. He warned, "I must now pastorally admonish Catholics, that, if they vote to elect pro-abortion candidates, they participate in the practical implementation of the continuance or expansion in the United States. They must ultimately answer to God for their part of the massacre of the holy innocent, and it cannot be said of them that they know not what they do."³³¹ This comment probably influenced some undecided Catholic voters into supporting Reagan.

Finally, some Louisiana pundits viewed Reagan's win as a sign of the emerging two-party system in Louisiana, already ongoing during the late 1970s. Bob Angers of the *Acadiana Profile* argues that the election "pegged" Louisiana's congressional delegation such that "there will be a more intense search than ever before to find opponents to oppose those who sided either

³²⁹ "Conservatives Win American Revolution," *Winn Parish Enterprise*, November 12, 1980, Page 4-A. This column also appeared in the *Coushatta Citizen* in Red River Parish.

³³⁰ "Election Observations," *The West Carroll Gazette*, November 12, 1980, Page 2.

³³¹ Bernard Curet, "Fricassee," *The Pointe Coupee Banner*, New Roads, November 13, 1980, Page 2. Lynn and Marshal Roy published *The Pointe Coupee Banner* on Thursdays with a circulation of 4126 (Pointe Coupee Parish's population was 22,002). The paper continues to serve as Pointe Coupee's official parish journal.

with Carter or Reagan.”³³² Angers predicted that there would eventually be strong Republicans who would challenge Gillis Long or Lindy Boggs for their seats, or strong Democrats who would challenge Bob Livingston or Henson Moore for their seats. In Acadia Parish, *The Crowley Post-Signal* viewed a two-party system as a “cure” for political leadership. The paper writes, “Democrats, for decades, have acted as though they had the ‘copyright’ for good politics, for good candidates, for good improvement in government. Now, after years of slow growth, the Republicans have apparently earned the respect of many Democrats. Democratic leadership feels it has a ring in every nose of every Democrat in Acadia Parish and the other parishes too.”³³³ Iris Kelso of the *Times-Picayune* believed that Reagan’s win would boost Treen’s reelection chances in 1983, and because Moon Landrieu was out of a job, he would challenge Dutch Morial for the New Orleans Mayor’s seat.

On November 4, 1980, voters sent Washington a message by electing Ronald Reagan. Jimmy Carter became the only Democratic President to lose reelection in the twentieth century. Although he did have some minute successes, such as beginning the deregulation process for oil and the Camp David Accords, Reagan successfully appealed to voters in Louisiana and other regions in America to become the fortieth President of the United States.

³³² Angers 21.

³³³ “Two-Party Politics is Real State Need,” *The Crowley Post-Signal*, November 9, 1980, Page 4.

CONCLUSION

Ronald Reagan utilized a successful campaign strategy in Louisiana for 1980. He had a knowledgeable campaign staff that kept him abreast during his visits, supplying him with lists of issues to address and avoid, political leadership on the state and local levels, and even historical information and weather forecasts. Focusing his energy on attacking Jimmy Carter, Reagan successfully persuaded Louisianians he was a viable candidate who could deliver strong leadership that the incumbent president failed to do.

The 1980 Presidential election marked the beginning of the “Reagan Revolution,” a period of new conservatism focusing both on economic issues, such as lower taxes, “trickle-down” economics, and a smaller federal government; and on social issues, such as family values and opposition to same-sex marriage and abortion. This revolution continues today. Many Republican politicians invoke President Reagan as a hero and role model for a successful presidency.

The Republican Party succeeded in electing a conservative candidate in 1980 after failing to do so in 1964. In 1968, 1972, and 1976, the party nominated moderate candidates. Nixon, for example, created the Environmental Protection Agency, passed the National Maximum Speed Law, and both he and Ford took a passive attitude towards *Roe v. Wade*.

While Reagan did object to certain “big government” policies, his record of reducing the size of the government is uncertain at best. He failed to abolish the Departments of Energy and Education, and recent Republican Party platforms have jettisoned those goals. Selective Service registration remained in place during his presidency and continues today; he did not repeal the National Maximum Speed Law (although Congress allowed states to raise the speed limit on some highways to sixty-five miles per hour from fifty-five in 1987).

Reagan deregulated the banking industry, as well as the media, auto, and chemical industries. He reduced federal standards for emissions and auto safety regulations and eliminated the Fairness Doctrine and National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) Code. The 1987 suspension of the Fairness Doctrine gave conservative entertainers and commentators, such as Rush Limbaugh, Sean Hannity, Glenn Beck, Laura Ingraham, and Ann Coulter unlimited access to radio and television. Ironically, despite his support for family values, Reagan worked to abolish the NAB Code in 1983, which enabled broadcasters to air programs with increased profanity, violence, and sex, with less opposition from the Federal Communications Commission.

Congress passed most of Reagan's tax cuts during his first hundred days in office. He capped the top income tax rate at 28 percent and cut corporate income taxes, capital gains taxes, and gift and inheritance taxes. Reagan's tax cuts fostered consumption of foreign-made consumer and luxury items. The national debt tripled from about \$900 billion to almost \$2.7 trillion during his two terms as president, with yearly deficits running between \$200-\$300 billion.³³⁴ Average inflation rates fell during Reagan's presidency, from a high of 10.35 percent in 1981 to a low of 1.91 percent in 1987.³³⁵ The unemployment rate increased during most of Reagan's first term, up to 10.8 percent in November and December 1982, before declining throughout the mid 1980s. Reagan left office with an unemployment rate of 5.4 percent in January 1989.³³⁶

³³⁴ Stephen Bloch, "U. S. Federal Deficits and Presidents," September 30, 2010, <http://home.adelphi.edu/sbloch/deficits.html>.

³³⁵ Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Historical Inflation Rates," Capital Professional Services, 2010, http://inflationdata.com/inflation/inflation_rate/HistoricalInflation.aspx?dsInflation_currentPage=2.

³³⁶ U. S. Department of Labor, "The United States Unemployment Rate: January 1948 to December 2010," NPA Services, 2010, <http://www.miseryindex.us/urbymonth.asp>. Reagan presided over the highest unemployment rates in the second half of the twentieth century. Only in 2009 did the unemployment rate rival the ones Reagan faced in 1982.

Reagan enjoyed considerable success in foreign policy. In *The Cold War: A New History*, John Lewis Gaddis describes Reagan as the only nuclear abolitionist ever to serve as president of the United States. “He made no secret of this,” Gaddis observes, “but the possibility that a right-wing Republican anti-communist pro-military chief executive could also be an anti-nuclear activist defied so many stereotypes that hardly anyone noticed Reagan’s repeated promises.”³³⁷ In his “evil empire” speech, Reagan promised, “to keep America strong and free, while we negotiate real and verifiable reductions in the world’s nuclear arsenals and one day, with God’s help, their total elimination.”³³⁸ Reagan kept his promise of a strong national defense by increasing the Department of Defense’s budget from \$171 billion in 1981 to \$368 billion in 1986.³³⁹ Near the end of his second term, Reagan and Soviet Union leader Mikhail Gorbachev agreed to remove and destroy all intermediate-range missiles. Reagan responded to the opportunity to end the Cold War. His successor, George Bush, enjoyed foreign policy successes early in his term, including the fall of the Berlin Wall, the Soviet Union, and the successful Persian Gulf War.

Reagan has left a legacy that has touched both sides of the political spectrum. He helped the modern Republican Party transform into a truly conservative party such that presidential candidates seeking the party’s nomination appeal to the most conservative of the electorate. Since 1988, his question of “are you better off” has been used in numerous elections. Vice President George Bush, when accepting the Republican Party presidential nomination in 1988, famously promised not to raise taxes in his “read my lips” speech; nevertheless, he approved a massive tax hike during the 1990. In 1992, Bill Clinton aired a political advertisement using a

³³⁷ John Lewis Gaddis, *The Cold War: A New History*, (New York: The Penguin Press, 2005), 226-7.

³³⁸ *Ibid.*, 227.

³³⁹ Syeda Jaleela Batool, “The U.S. Military Budget,” *Pakistan Times*, <http://pakistantimes.net/pt/detail.php?newsId=13014>.

sound bite from Bush when he told Americans in 1988 that they would be better off four years later before the Clinton commercial concluded with the question “how’re you doing?”³⁴⁰ This commercial helped voters to forget about Bush’s foreign policy successes by focusing on “the economy, stupid.” In the most recent political election, the Democratic National Committee released a campaign advertisement ridiculing John McCain when he, during a Republican Party debate, obviously explained that the United States was better off in 2008 than in 2000, citing low unemployment, low inflation, and job creation, even though the other candidates and official statistics disagreed.³⁴¹ Although a political moderate, McCain repeatedly assured the electorate that he was a “foot soldier” in Reagan’s army, and in the presidential debates, invoked his admiration for the fortieth president.

In Louisiana, Reagan’s victory helped the state’s Republican Party thanks to the president’s appeal to the majority of the state’s voters. Republican Party registration in Louisiana increased from 7.5 percent of the voter population in 1980 to 21 percent in 1996.³⁴² Today, only 50.3 percent of Louisiana’s registered voters are Democratic while 26.6 percent are Republican, and 23.1 percent are third party or independent.³⁴³

For Louisiana, energy deregulation came at a price. In 1982, the price of oil bottomed out, which translated into major budget deficits and job losses within the state. This gave Edwin Edwards political ammunition in 1983 when he challenged David Treen for the governor’s seat.

³⁴⁰ Democratic National Committee, “Democrat ‘Attack Ad’ 1992,” YouTube, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PpsKuwclpWw>.

³⁴¹ Democratic National Committee, “DNC Ad: Better Off?,” April 18, 2008, YouTube, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TFDc4M_PMNk.

³⁴² Wayne Parent and Huey Perry, “Louisiana: African Americans, Republicans and Party Competition” in Charles S. Bullock III and Mark J. Rozell, Ed., *The New Politics of the Old South*, 3rd Ed. (Lanham, Md.: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2007), 118. The percent of registered Democrats in 1980 was 86.5 percent and 65.4 percent in 1996.

³⁴³ Louisiana Secretary of State, “Statewide Report of Registered Voters,” February 1, 2011, <http://www.sos.louisiana.gov/RegistrationStatisticsStatewide/tabid/758/Default.aspx>.

Attacking Treen by saying, “it takes him an hour and a half to watch *60 Minutes*” and comparing Louisiana’s economy under the governor’s watch to the sinking of the *Titanic*, Edwards won a landslide reelection victory, only to spend most of his third term on trial and without the prosperity the state enjoyed during his first two terms. While pundits in 1979 and 1980 correctly predicted an eventual Edwards versus Treen battle in 1983, the charismatic Cajun governor soundly defeated Treen, who received approximately 36.4 percent of the popular vote in 1983, far less than the 42.8 percent he received as an unknown in the 1972 general election.

Ronald Reagan easily won reelection in 1984 and had no trouble carrying Louisiana. He won 60.77 percent of the vote and carried every parish except for Madison, East Carroll, Allen, Pointe Coupee, West Feliciana, West Baton Rouge, Iberville, St. James, St. Helena, and Orleans. Despite Michael Dukakis performing his best in Louisiana compared to other southern states, George Bush also had little trouble carrying the state in 1988, winning 54.27 percent of the vote; Bush carried most parishes in North Louisiana, even some Reagan did not carry in 1980, and did better than his predecessor did in the West Florida parishes, but he did not perform as well as Reagan did in South Louisiana. Bill Clinton, however, made gains in the state due to his southern roots, winning Louisiana electoral votes in 1992 and 1996. The 2000 presidential election was the last election in which Louisiana was a “swing state,” as both George W. Bush and Al Gore aired advertisements in the state throughout the campaign. Bush carried this state with 52.55 percent of the vote compared to Gore’s 44.88 percent—had Gore carried Louisiana, he would have won the presidency regardless of Florida. Candidates in the 2004 and 2008 elections viewed Louisiana as Republican territory; therefore, neither the Democratic nor Republican Party’s nominee spent much time campaigning in the state during the general election—Bush received 56.72 percent of the vote in 2004, and John McCain received 58.56

percent in 2008.³⁴⁴ Louisiana has lost some political power in Washington since the Reagan years. Following the 1990 Census, the state lost one Congressional District, and after the 2010 census, Louisiana will only have six Congressional Districts and, therefore, only eight electoral votes in future presidential elections.

In the late 1980s into the 1990s, local and state politicians converted to the Republican Party and began winning office as Republicans. Paul Hardy became a Republican in 1987 to run for Lieutenant Governor, and he became the first post-Reconstruction Republican to hold that slot. In 1991, Buddy Roemer changed his party affiliation while governor. In 1994, Woody Jenkins became a Republican and came within 7,000 votes of becoming Louisiana's first Republican Senator in 1996. In 1995, Congressman Tauzin switched parties during the "Contract with America" period. In addition, little-known state senator Murphy J. "Mike" Foster joined the Republican Party when he ran for governor in 1995 and became, to date, the only Louisiana Republican governor to serve two terms.

The legacy of Ronald Reagan still lives on in Louisiana, and the Republican Party continues to increase its dominance in state, federal, and some local politics. In 2008, an uncommitted delegate slate called "Pro-Life, Pro-Family" participated in the Republican Party caucus. This platform sought to "win one for the gipper" by invoking Ronald Reagan's agenda and included Jenkins and future congressman Jeff Landry among its delegates. This slate won the caucus, besting delegate slates committed to John McCain, Ron Paul, Mitt Romney, and Mike Huckabee. The Republican Party of Louisiana calls itself "your home for limited

³⁴⁴ David Leip, "United States Presidential Election Results," Dave Leip's Atlas of U.S. Presidential Election Results, 2005, <http://uselectionatlas.org/RESULTS>. It is interesting to note that although John McCain carried Louisiana with little difficulty in 2008, Barack Obama carried several parishes that Reagan did in 1980. Caddo and East Baton Rouge Parish supported Obama. Interestingly, East Baton Rouge was an "island" in 1980 surrounded by Carter parishes; in 2008, every neighboring parish except Iberville and St. Helena supported McCain.

government, family values, and a strong national defense.”³⁴⁵ Even in the recent lieutenant governor’s race, a robocall circulated from state party chair and candidate Roger Villere claiming the frontrunner, Jay Dardenne, spoke like Ronald Reagan but voted like Barack Obama.

Today, the Louisiana Republican Party holds the governorship, lieutenant governorship, most elected state cabinet offices (including Commissioner of Insurance, Treasurer, Commissioner of Agriculture, and Attorney General), six of the seven Congressional district seats, one of the senatorial seats, and, as of February 2011, a majority in both state legislative branches. Since 1980, each congressional district has been in Republican hands for at least two years. Today, Senator Mary Landrieu remains the only statewide-elected Democrat from Louisiana, facing tough elections in 1996, 2002, and 2008. Republicans continue to make gains in the formerly Democratic Solid South, a testament to the party’s ever-increasing size, candidate strength, and appeal to the region’s conservative values. During 2010 and 2011, many local and state politicians originally elected as Democrats switched parties. By the end of this decade, it is likely that Republicans will continue to hold most statewide offices, and in 2014, Landrieu could face another reelection battle, potentially causing the state to have two Republican senators. Louisiana will likely continue to have Republicans occupy most, but not all, of its congressional seats, as federal law mandates a majority-minority-based district in the state.

Did Reagan create a modern Republican party in Louisiana? Was it inevitable after 1980? Of course not. Inevitable is a poor way of analyzing the present in terms of selected facts from the past. But Reagan’s sunny confidence, his belief that conservative measures meant good government and a functioning society found ample support in Louisiana, even if most black voters continue to vote solidly Democratic in Louisiana.

³⁴⁵ LAGOP, Republican Party of Louisiana, 2011, <http://lagop.com>.

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Ronald Reagan Presidential Library, Simi Valley, Ca.

The papers found here provide a thorough analysis of Louisiana's government, salient issues, as well as information regarding the California governor's campaign in Louisiana (speeches, campaign briefings, campaign strategies, lists of important issues, and correspondence with constituents and local lawmakers). These papers also include campaign information throughout America as a whole, ways Reagan targeted special groups, such as African-Americans and the elderly, and campaign briefings from other states. These files are located at the Reagan Presidential Library in Simi Valley, California, and they document the work done by Reagan's national campaign organizations in Washington, DC and Los Angeles. The 1980 campaign papers inventory is accessible online. The inventory website is: <http://www.reagan.utexas.edu/archives/textual/Personal%20Papers/1980%20Campaign%20inventory.htm>, and it lists the files divided by series, subseries, and boxes. In order to obtain the necessary materials, I hired a research assistant—James de Haan of California Lutheran University—using funds from the LSU Foundation and LSU's Department of History. I asked Mr. de Haan to first document several boxes I found of interest in order to expound upon the general inventory posted online, and I then requested he photocopy salient documents in the files. While these papers have provided invaluable information for me in conducting this project, I have only used a very small percent of the files found among the papers. Those interested in conducting research on Ronald Reagan should consult his presidential library, and they can seek numerous accessible files for research—not only on the 1980 election but also from the White House Office and Management Records (WHORM), White House Staff and Office Files, Reagan's Governor's Papers, and some federal records. Additionally, the library has Reagan's "public papers" online, accessible by month and year, which include remarks he made at receptions, ceremonies, and fundraisers, as well as executive orders and nomination lists from his presidency.

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APPENDIX 1: LOUISIANA CONGRESSIONAL SUPPORT OF JIMMY CARTER

Delegate	District	95th Support	1979 Support	1980 Support
Russell Long	Senate	58%	60%	45%
J. Bennett Johnston	Senate	46%	60%	70%
Bob Livingston	1	32%	21%	41%
Lindy Boggs	2	61%	64%	63%
David Treen	3	32%	18%	N/A
Billy Tauzin	3	N/A	N/A	49%
Joe Waggonner	4	29%	N/A	N/A
Claude "Buddy" Leach	4	N/A	28%	38%
Jerry Huckaby	5	36%	44%	54%
Henson Moore	6	35%	28%	38%
John Breaux	7	31%	37%	58%
Gillis Long	8	59%	60%	79%

Source: President Carter 1978, President Carter 1979, and President Carter 1980 by the Congressional Quarterly. Individuals marked in blue are Democrats; in red, Republicans. “95th Support” represents how often delegates supported Jimmy Carter during the entire 95th Congress, from January 1977 until January 1979. “1979 Support” represents how often delegates supported Carter during the 1979 calendar year, and “1980 Support” represents how often delegates supported Carter in the 1980 calendar year.

APPENDIX 2: PARISH-BY-PARISH ELECTION RESULTS, 1980

Parish	Dis.	1980 Reagan	1980 Carter	Reagan rank	Turnout	Turnout Rank	1976 Carter	Difference	Difference Rank
Acadia	7	52.2	45	24	70.4	59	61.3	-16.3	3
Allen	7,8	34.8	63.3	61	77.3	21	70	-6.7	28
Ascension	8	35.8	61.3	58	79.1	10	65.1	-3.8	41
Assumption	8	44.1	51.6	45	77.5	18	57.1	-5.5	34
Avoyelles	8	51.1	44.6	26	73.1	50	60.9	-16.3	4
Beauregard	7	47.5	50.2	35	75.2	33	60.6	-10.4	16
Bienville	5	45.2	53.1	40	80.6	4	56.6	-3.5	47
Bossier	4	62.7	35.6	4	77.2	22	39.4	-3.8	42
Caddo	4	57.4	40.8	11	81.3	3	41.2	-0.4	55
Calcasieu	7	42.6	54.7	51	75.4	31	64.6	-9.9	17
Caldwell	5	57.9	39	10	69.6	61	48.1	-9.1	20
Cameron	7	38.2	58.5	56	67.8	62	72.9	-14.4	5
Catahoula	5	53.2	43.6	22	74.2	41	53.4	-9.8	18
Claiborne	4	50	48.7	30	77.2	23	46.6	2.1	60
Concordia	5	54.2	43.5	20	73.2	47	49.2	-5.7	32
De Soto	4	42.1	56.8	52	75.7	29	55.5	1.3	58
East Baton Rouge	6	53.4	43.1	21	80.3	5	48.1	-5	36
East Carroll	5	44.1	54	46	66.1	64	56.9	-2.9	49
East Feliciana	6	38.6	58.7	55	71.4	58	65.5	-6.8	27
Evangeline	8	51.3	46.5	25	67.2	63	65.6	-19.1	1
Franklin	5	54.4	42.9	19	72.4	52	47.9	-5	37
Grant	5	50.5	46	28	73.3	45	59.8	-13.8	7
Iberia	3	57	38.7	13	78.3	14	48.1	-9.4	19
Iberville	8	31.6	66.2	63	76.2	27	63.7	2.5	61
Jackson	5	50.8	46.7	27	77.4	20	51.1	-4.4	38
Jefferson	2, 3	64.1	32.8	1	79.8	8	41.8	-9	21
Jefferson Davis	7	46.7	50.6	38	73.8	44	62	-11.4	13
Lafayette	7	58.7	36.8	7	73.3	46	45.6	-8.8	22
Lafourche	3	48.5	46.2	32	78	16	53.8	-7.6	24
LaSalle	5	57.2	40.2	12	71.5	57	46.9	-6.7	29
Lincoln	5	55.8	41.6	14	76.5	26	41.5	0.1	56
Livingston	6, 8	47.2	50.1	36	74.9	37	62.1	-12	12
Madison	5	42.7	55.1	50	73	51	69.2	-14.1	6
Morehouse	5	58.5	39.2	8	80.3	6	41.4	-2.2	51

Natchitoches	5	47	50.1	37	75.1	34	53.9	-3.8	43
Orleans	1, 2	39.5	56.9	54	77.5	19	55.3	1.6	59
Ouachita	5	63	34.5	3	80.3	7	38.9	-4.4	39
Plaquemines	1	54.5	42.8	18	76.7	25	29.5	13.3	64
Pointe Coupee	8	35.7	62.3	59	76.9	24	65.4	-3.1	48
Rapides	5, 8	55.2	42	16	75.1	35	53.1	-11.1	14
Red River	4	43.1	55.7	49	75	36	51.4	4.3	63
Richland	5	54.6	42.8	17	79.1	11	48.1	-5.3	35
Sabine	4	44.5	53.2	44	72.1	54	54.5	-1.3	54
St. Bernard	1	60.5	35.5	5	82.8	2	48.9	-13.4	10
St. Charles	3	44.8	52.2	41	78.3	15	59.7	-7.5	25
St. Helena	6	31.6	65.6	64	71.9	55	69.2	-3.6	45
St. James	8	34.9	63.2	60	84.6	1	60.7	2.5	62
St. John	8	42	55.2	53	78.8	12	59.3	-4.1	40
St. Landry	8	45.7	52.4	39	74.7	39	59.5	-7.1	26
St. Martin	3, 7	44.6	51.6	42	71.8	56	64.3	-12.7	11
St. Mary	3	48	48.6	34	74.2	42	50.3	-1.7	52
St. Tammany	1	63.7	33.2	2	74.6	40	46.8	-13.6	9
Tangipahoa	6	48.5	48.7	33	73.2	48	59.4	-10.7	15
Tensas	5	43.5	54.1	48	74.2	43	56.6	-2.5	50
Terrebonne	3	58	37.7	9	74.9	38	43.8	-6.1	31
Union	5	55.8	41.8	15	77.8	17	45.5	-3.7	44
Vermilion	7	49	45.5	31	75.7	30	63	-17.5	2
Vernon	4	43.7	53.6	47	72.2	53	59.3	-5.7	33
Washington	6	44.6	53.5	43	69.7	60	62.2	-8.7	23
Webster	4	50.2	48.6	29	79.5	9	48.5	0.1	57
West Baton Rouge	8	36.5	61.1	57	78.7	13	64.7	-3.6	46
West Carroll	5	60.1	37.1	6	75.9	28	50.8	-13.7	8
West Feliciana	6, 8	33.2	62.9	62	73.2	49	64.6	-1.7	53
Winn	5	52.3	45.2	23	75.3	32	51.4	-6.2	30

Column A (“Dis”) represents Congressional District (ie. Acadia is in the 7th district, parts of Allen are located in the 7th district and others in 8th), “1980 Reagan” represents the parish vote percent earned by Ronald Reagan in 1980, “1980 Carter” represents parish vote earned by Jimmy Carter, “Reagan Rank” represents the rank of each parish in Reagan support (ie. Jefferson Parish is ranked 1st because it gave Reagan 64.1% of the vote), “Turnout” represents the parish voter turnout, and “Turnout Rank” ranking the turnout (St. James is ranked 1st as 84.6% of registered voters participated), “1976 Carter” represents the vote earned by Jimmy Carter in 1976, “Difference” represents the difference in support earned by Carter from 1980 and 1976. “Difference Rank” ranks the parishes by the most profound differences (Evangeline Parish is ranked 1st as Carter received 19.1% less of the vote in 1980 than he did in 1976). Sources: *Almanac of American Politics* 1980, www.uselectionatlas.org, and “Presidential Election November 1980” by Public Affairs Research Council of Louisiana.

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