**California's Conservative Crusader: William Knowland and the Republican Party’s Turn to the Right**

**Abstract**

In 1958, moderate and conservatives were competing for the heart and soul of the California Republican Party. Continuing the middle-of-the-road tradition established by former Republican governors, Hiram Johnson and Earl Warren, Lieutenant Governor Goodwin Knight was the presumptive nominee—until conservatives within the party ousted him in favor of William Knowland. Knowland, a native Californian, was serving as a U.S. Senator when he decided to challenge Knight for the party’s nomination. Pushed by the conservative faction in the party and aspirations for higher office, Knowland succeeded in defeating Knight for the nomination. However, Knowland would lose dramatically to Democrat Pat Brown, who in turn, would lead California down a path of unabashed liberalism. I demonstrate how Knowland’s failed gubernatorial bid helped install a liberal regime headed by Brown. Brown’s policies would galvanize conservatives who, instead of retreating after the 1958 defeat, strengthened their hold on the California Republican Party so that by 1966, they would enjoy their first victory—the ascent of Ronald Reagan to the governorship. In this article, I will explore the context in which Knowland rose to prominence and explain how his candidacy was a watershed moment, moving the California and national Republican Party to the right. I focus not only on the shift to the right on economic policies but also on civil rights, in addition to a key electoral procedure—cross-filing—that needed to be abolished before conservatives could capture the California Republican Party.

**Keywords:** California history, California politics, California Republicans, California Democrats, cross-filing

*If you had to choose a single individual to typify the Republican Party, the best choice nowadays would surely be William F. Knowland. Knowland’s situation in California beautifully typifies the situations of all the Republicans who are running for election this year.* Joseph Alsop, syndicated newspaper columnist, April 21, 1958*[[1]](#endnote-1)*

*…labor is so aroused against him, and his party is so angry with his intervention into an almost surely victorious situation that most experts think he will soon join…the ranks of the able Republicans whose ambition overwhelmed their judgment.* James Reston, *New York Times* writer, October 17, 1958.*[[2]](#endnote-2)*

United States Senator from California and 1958 gubernatorial candidate, William “Bill” Knowland, is an often forgotten figure in the narrative of the parties’ realignment on race issues. Historians and political scientists have focused on Barry Goldwater’s 1964 presidential campaign as the watershed moment for conservatism within the Republican Party. However, I argue that Knowland’s capture of the Republican nomination played a pivotal role in the realignment of the Republican Party, both in California and nationally. While Knowland’s campaign made little mention of race issues, his economic conservatism and influence within the Republican Party created opportunities for Barry Goldwater and Ronald Reagan to rise to power within the Republican ranks, and package their conservative principles with their anti-civil rights views. The movement of the Republican elite from the center to the right on race would then, in turn, attract race conservatives away from the Democratic Party in the late 1960s and 1970s, thus completing the realignment on race.

When reviewing his family history, it is unsurprising that Knowland would emerge as a pivotal figure in the conservative movement within the Republican Party. His father, Joseph R. (J.R.) Knowland, who had served in the House of Representatives for five terms, was politically active through *The Oakland Tribune.* In 1915, the elder Knowland purchased and became editor of the *Tribune,* turning it into an ideologically conservative publication. The *Tribune* exerted its influence through endorsements of desired candidates for local and state offices. One beneficiary of Knowland’s *Tribune* endorsements was Earl Warren. When Warren was vying to become District Attorney of Alameda County, Knowland used his influence on Warren’s behalf, helping him secure the appointment by a three to two vote of the Alameda County Board of Supervisors in 1925. Warren would remain in Knowland’s favor throughout the years. In 1932, Knowland supported Warren as the California Republican Party’s new chairman. In a statement, Knowland said, “Earl represents the younger group and is a man of splendid character and the kind of leader we could well put to the front this year.” McNab withdrew from the contest, ensuring Warren’s election as chairman.[[3]](#endnote-3) Knowland would also back Warren when he ran for Attorney General in 1938, and later for the governorship in 1942. According to William Knowland’s biographers, Warren consulted J.R. Knowland before running for governor: “Warren certainly respected the elder Knowland’s power and would not have taken such a step without his approval.”[[4]](#endnote-4) Warren would soon repay J.R. for his support.

In 1945, J.R.’s son, William, was considering a run for the U.S. Senate, even though incumbent Senator Hiram Johnson already announced that he would seek re-election. However, on August 6, 1945, Johnson died, ending a 37-year career in the Senate. Just a week after Johnson’s passing, Warren appointed his friend and benefactor’s son, William Knowland, to the vacant seat.[[5]](#endnote-5) Though Knowland would win election to the Senate in 1946 and re-election in 1952, he thought of running for president in 1956 but withdrew from consideration when President Eisenhower decided to run again.[[6]](#endnote-6) In 1957, however, Knowland made a fateful decision that altered the trajectory of partisan politics not only in California but nationally as well. Knowland believed that the easiest path to the White House was through the Governor’s Mansion.[[7]](#endnote-7) Thus, Knowland decided to run for governor in the 1958 contest, ousting the more moderate Republican—and incumbent governor—Goodwin Knight.

Knowland’s decision to run for governor of California and his ultra-conservative platform had three important outcomes. First, the dramatic loss forced Knowland—the prominent conservative in the 1950s—out of politics, leaving the Republican Party without a leader. Barry Goldwater would fill this void in the early 1960s and energize the party’s conservative wing with his 1964 presidential campaign, setting the stage for the national Republican Party to become the home of “white backlash”—that is, race conservative voters. Second, Knowland’s failed bid for the governorship allowed Democrats to take over the California government, which emboldened conservative activists to take action against the increase in liberal policies coming out of Sacramento. The Republican defeat in 1958 left the party more homogenous and more conservative. For the first time, Republican legislators in California were now aligned with their constituents, who had long been displaying conservative preferences. Third, Knowland’s failed candidacy and the landslide victory for California Democrats helped engender feelings of racial resentment among many white Democrats. In response to the liberal policies enacted by both the California Legislature and Congress, and the late 1960s and the growing violence in urban areas, working class whites became increasingly disillusioned with the Democratic Party and its support of civil rights. In addition to the rejection of race liberal policies, white backlash would manifest itself in the election of Ronald Reagan to the California governorship in 1966, and the support of his presidential candidacy in 1976 and 1980.

Knowland’s decision to run for governor was also significant because the 1958 election in California paralleled the 1964 election. Both created environments in which liberals were able to ascend to power, enact race liberal policies, and, in turn, stir up white backlash. Like Knowland’s failed bid for the governorship, Senator Barry Goldwater’s unsuccessful run for president strengthened the Democratic hold on power, incensing conservative Republicans. Conservatives would begin to take over the national party and its nominating conventions so that, by 1976, Ronald Reagan was able to gain the support of white backlash voters when he first ran for the Republican nomination. Reagan would maintain the support of white backlash voters when he succeeded in winning the nomination, and subsequently the presidency, in 1980.[[8]](#endnote-8)

Thus, in the aftermath of Knowland’s 1958 loss, Republican elites in California finally aligned with their conservative base, which had long been demonstrating race conservative preferences at the polls. After 1964, national Republicans similarly shifted from the center to the right on a host of issues, particularly race policies. The move to the right of the Republican elite at both the state and national levels allowed conservative Republicans to rise to power by capitalizing on racially resentful voters in the Democratic Party.

In this article, I argue that Knowland is a critical part of the unfolding story of the partisan transformation on race policies. I demonstrate that conservative leaders and pundits, viewing him as the heir to Mr. Republican (Senator Robert Taft of Ohio), were influential in Knowland’s nomination. I explore Knowland’s impact as conservative leader in the late 1950s, and how his ambitions created an opportunity for Democratic liberalism to take hold. I discuss how critical Knowland’s decision to run for governor was—a decision that a more prudent, calculating politician would not have made, given the dismal outlook for Republicans across the nation in 1958. Knowland also ignored trends in his own state by refusing to concede to a popular incumbent who was all but assured re-election, thus creating an easy victory for the Democrats. I end this article on the consequences of Knowland’s decision—the ascendancy of Pat Brown to the governorship—and the impact that Brown’s liberal policies had on racial realignment. Brown’s persistent support of fair housing—an issue, which by the 1960s, had grown increasingly racialized—engendered feelings of racial resentment among Democratic voters, laying the groundwork for the movement of race conservative Democrats into the Republican Party.

**William F. Knowland: The New “Mr. Republican”**

While some scholars have emphasized Barry Goldwater’s contribution to the conservative movement within the Republican Party[[9]](#endnote-9)—first with his book, *The Conscience of a Conservative* in 1960 and later his 1964 presidential run, William Knowland was pivotal in the conservative movement both in California and nationally in the 1950s. Knowland was viewed as the new conservative leader within the Republican Party, inheriting the legacy left by his friend and colleague Senator Robert Taft of Ohio, who died unexpectedly in 1953.[[10]](#endnote-10)

Knowland stood apart from the typical moderate Republican in California. Within the party, Governor Earl Warren was the Republican that was farthest to the left on a host of issues.[[11]](#endnote-11) Warren was supportive of fair employment practices, anti-McCarthy, and worked across the aisle to do what he believed was best, which was often not aligned with conservatives’ preferences. He accepted the main tenets of the New Deal and did not seek to balance the state budget,[[12]](#endnote-12) opting instead to request more money from the legislature to accommodate the growing population with more housing, health care, and education opportunities.[[13]](#endnote-13) Warren’s lieutenant governor (who would become governor in 1953), Goodwin Knight, was more moderate. He held strong anti-communist beliefs and was often critical of Warren’s more liberal leanings. Knight criticized Warren for being “nothing but a New Dealer.”[[14]](#endnote-14) Knight, however, would also clash with the more conservative Knowland, who pushed for the anti-labor right-to-work proposition in 1958. By the late 1950s, Knowland was the most conservative leader of the Republican Party, not only in California but also in the country, allowing his economic conservative principles to preclude support for the New Deal and civil rights.

Knowland was able to come to power as Senate majority leader when Taft passed away in 1953. In the Senate, Knowland built a solidly conservative record, and was viewed by many as the heir to Taft’s status as “Mr. Republican.”[[15]](#endnote-15) In an article published on April 21, 1948, Joseph Alsop, a syndicated newspaper columnist, informed readers across the country that Knowland was indeed the new “Mr. Republican.” Like Taft, Knowland was a steadfast critic of big labor and corruption. Taft pushed the 1947 Taft-Hartley Act through Congress, which curtailed union strength and resources. Taking a cue from Taft, Knowland would center his gubernatorial campaign on labor reform and the right-to-work, or voluntary unionism, issue.[[16]](#endnote-16) Another syndicated columnist, George Sokolsky, also acknowledged Knowland’s critical role in his party.

The Republican Party needs the kind of leadership that Senator Knowland has given it. It is responsible leadership which some men call conservative, but which, in fact, is a revolt against opportunism, against the betrayal of the American tradition of personal freedom and freedom of opportunity by those who advocate statism in any guise. Senator Knowland was quite young when Senator Robert A. Taft selected Knowland as his successor to the leadership. As the years passed, it was obvious that Taft’s insight into the man’s character was indeed precise.[[17]](#endnote-17)

Knowland made such an impact in just a few years in the Senate that some conservatives within the national party even wanted him to be the Republican nominee for president as early as 1956. One prominent conservative who supported Knowland was Senator Joseph McCarthy (R-WI). McCarthy urged Knowland to run for president. McCarthy wanted to rally conservative support so he could help Knowland defeat the moderate Eisenhower for the nomination.[[18]](#endnote-18)

Besides McCarthy, Knowland received support from conservative pundits and intellectuals who desperately wanted to move the party to the right of Eisenhower moderatism.[[19]](#endnote-19) Many members of conservative groups also encouraged Knowland to run for president against Eisenhower in 1956.[[20]](#endnote-20) The group, For America, the precursor to the John Birch Society, supported a Knowland bid. R.B. Snowden of Arkansas, a member of For America, wrote to Knowland, “It is now time to get all the right-wingers on one side, and all the left wingers on the other, and you are the man the right-wingers want, and I hope and pray for your success.”[[21]](#endnote-21)

Editors of *The National Review* also viewed Knowland as the conservative leader of the Republican Party in 1956. For its first issue in November 1955, the editors were debating whether or not to include an article that would endorse Knowland for president. Ultimately, they decided against the endorsement—not because they had another candidate in mind—but because founder William Buckley Jr. and co-editor William Schlamm agreed that the first issue should steer clear of any endorsements so that the publication would not be seen “simply [as] a journalistic tool of one among several factions in the Republican Party.” The editors claimed they would eventually support Knowland, just not in the first issue.[[22]](#endnote-22) Despite the calculation not to endorse a Knowland candidacy, chief editor William Buckley Jr. encouraged Knowland to run when it appeared as though Eisenhower would not seek re-election due to a heart attack in late 1955.[[23]](#endnote-23) Buckley also convinced Knowland to write an article for the first issue. This article gave Knowland a national platform to criticize the Eisenhower administration for negotiating with the Soviet Union.[[24]](#endnote-24)

Knowland’s reputation as the heir to Taft and leader of the conservative faction within the Republican Party is significant because, though he gave up his dark horse candidacy in 1956, he did have aspirations for higher office that he would act on in 1958.[[25]](#endnote-25) His failed candidacy for governor had long-term effects on California and national partisan politics. His humiliating defeat caused him to fade into the background, creating an opening for Barry Goldwater to seize control of the national party and move it closer to the right with his 1964 presidential bid. Further, Knowland’s loss allowed Democrats to sweep into the California Legislature in 1958. These Democrats would not hesitate in enacting race liberal legislation, like FEPC and fair housing. The failed Knowland run also strengthened California conservatives within the Republican Party, who coalesced behind conservative principles to counter the growing liberal administration. The movement of conservatives to the right not only aligned California elites with Republican voters, who had been displaying conservative preferences since the 1940s, but also afforded racially resentful Democratic voters—those who believed that African Americans were asking for “too much too fast”[[26]](#endnote-26)—an alternative to the increasingly liberal Democratic Party. Thus, in the aftermath of the Knowland campaign, a critical component of racial realignment occurs: the move from the center to the right of the Republican elite—a necessary precursor for the realignment of the Democratic base.

**1958: An Inauspicious Time for Republicans Across the Nation**

William Knowland became the Republican nominee for governor with support from the party’s right and “kingmaker” newspaper publishers in California, including his own father and the *Los Angeles Times’* Kyle Palmer.[[27]](#endnote-27) Due to the progressive-era reforms that weakened the party system in California, policy demanders and others external to the formal party structure were influential in determining the parties’ nominees. According to James Q. Wilson, in the absence of party strength,

…any number of persons, groups, and community organizations seek to fill the void and that in the effort to establish themselves, these forces endeavor not so much to wrest power from those who hold it as to create power where none has existed before. The search for power in this fluid situation, in which the formal party apparatus is both incomplete and fragmented, is an extraordinarily difficult and taxing enterprise. But it offers great rewards to skillful men who have the ability to manipulate large groups of people and the energy to struggle for intangible ends in a highly uncertain situation.[[28]](#endnote-28)

Seth Masket’s comprehensive study of informal party organizations (IPOs) adds to the understanding that actors outside of the formal party structure are the “heart, soul, and backbone” of contemporary political parties. Activists are the main players in these IPOs and they seek the most ideologically extreme candidate who can also appeal to voters in the general election.[[29]](#endnote-29)

Despite having the backing of conservative activists, Knowland could not have picked a less propitious time to run as a Republican for any state or national office. Republicans would be voted out of, and denied, power across the board in 1958. In keeping with political trends, the president’s party lost seats in both the Senate and the House of Representatives at the midterm election in 1958.[[30]](#endnote-30) However, the Republican Party lost a larger number of seats in Congress than usual, allowing the Democrats to gain the greatest congressional majority since the 1930s.[[31]](#endnote-31) The Republicans lost 48 seats in the House, giving the Democrats a commanding majority: 283-153. The Republicans also lost 15 Senate seats, resulting in a 65-35 Democratic majority.[[32]](#endnote-32) Furthermore, in 34 of the gubernatorial elections held in 1958 (28 of which were held outside of the Democratic South), only 8 Republicans won. With the exception of Paul Fannin (AZ), seven of those Republican victors were moderates or progressives, such as Nelson Rockefeller (NY), Mark Hatfield (OR), and Robert T. Stafford (VT).[[33]](#endnote-33)

Of the more immediate reasons why Republicans suffered at the polls was the economic recession that preceded the midterm election. Relative to other recessions over the past half century, the decline in gross domestic product (GDP) experienced in the first quarter of 1958 was worse than any other recession—even more drastic than the most recent downturn in the fourth quarter of 2008.[[34]](#endnote-34) The dire economic situation contributed to the national party’s electoral misfortune in 1958, helping to expose internal weaknesses and ideological differences.

The main source of division separating conservatives from moderates and progressives in the national Republican Party was the power of the Federal Government. Eisenhower espoused a “middle way” or “Modern Republicanism” that sought to redefine the party’s anti-government principles by accepting a larger role for the Federal Government in the social and economic realms.[[35]](#endnote-35) Conservatives criticized Modern Republicanism as indistinguishable from liberal Democratic policies. Even though moderates tried to differentiate themselves from the Democrats by claiming that they were more conscious of balanced budgets and would encourage state and local solutions to problems before turning to the Federal Government, conservatives lamented the leftward tilt of their party.[[36]](#endnote-36)

By the late 1940s and 1950s, conservative activists in the Republican Party were growing tired of passively accepting the core tenets of the New Deal. The wedge between conservative and the more moderate and progressive factions first became evident in 1944 when Thomas Dewey and Robert Taft were fighting for control over the party machinery that controlled the presidential nominations. Taft, leader of the conservative wing, and Dewey, a popular progressive Republican, would come into conflict up until Taft’s unexpected death in 1953. Lacking a strong leader, the conservative faction was sidelined after Taft’s death, and had to watch Dwight Eisenhower’s middle way take over the party. However, Dewey’s progressive and Eisenhower’s moderate approaches only angered conservatives, who would take over the party machinery in 1964 and nominate Barry Goldwater for president in 1964.[[37]](#endnote-37)

The split between the two factions was perhaps most apparent in the aftermath of the 1948 presidential election between Democrat and incumbent President Harry Truman and Republican Thomas Dewey, the progressive governor of New York. Truman won by a slim margin but Republicans still took the loss hard. Now having lost five consecutive presidential contests, conservative Republicans put the blame on the party’s progressives and moderates, who strayed away from “Old Guard” principles of economic conservatism to advance FEPC and fair housing legislation. In their view, middle-of-the-road Republicans did not provide voters with a clear alternative to the Democrats. Dewey, himself, endorsed New York’s enforceable FEPC, and espoused a “forward-looking” strategy for the Republican Party and the country. On the other hand, Dewey’s advisors blamed conservatives for the loss in 1948. According to their argument, congressional conservatives ruined the party’s chances when they passed the anti-labor Taft-Hartley Act a year earlier.[[38]](#endnote-38)

Conservatives’ discontent would continue throughout President Eisenhower’s administration. For example, future presidential candidate and conservative leader Barry Goldwater criticized President Eisenhower for being lured by “the siren song of socialism.”[[39]](#endnote-39) Goldwater, following in the tradition of Senator Taft, was critical of President Eisenhower’s acceptance of the New Deal, and attempted to position himself as a possible presidential nominee once Eisenhower’s tenure was over. By 1960, Goldwater had succeeded in becoming an “icon for the Republican Right.”[[40]](#endnote-40) Despite Goldwater’s emergence as the conservative leader, the more moderate wing of the Republican Party would overtake both Goldwater and the eventual nominee, Richard Nixon, in a contentious debate over the inclusion of a civil rights plank in the Republican platform. Nelson Rockefeller threatened a floor fight at the party’s convention unless a strong, pro-civil rights plank was included in the 1960 platform. Nixon conceded, and the 1960 Republican platform was just as supportive of civil rights as the Democrats’ platform. The Republican platform stated that “civil rights is a responsibility not only of states and localities; it is a national problem and a national responsibility.”[[41]](#endnote-41) Goldwater would later chastise the party, claiming that the insertion of “radical pro-civil rights language” caused Nixon to lose conservative support. Goldwater’s criticism of the 1960 platform helped propel him to the nomination in 1964.[[42]](#endnote-42)

In addition to the economic differences and the division over how to handle civil rights, foreign policy differences also drove a wedge between moderate and conservative Republicans. Members of the party conflicted over appeasement and the United Nations (U.N.). Conservatives viewed Eisenhower and the moderates’ internationalist, multi-lateral beliefs as ineffectual and weak. After the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, conservative Republicans abandoned their isolationist views, and adopted a unilateral position in which the U.S. would “go it alone.” Because of this view, they recoiled at Eisenhower’s willingness to compromise U.S. foreign policy in order to work with the U.N. Eisenhower believed that the U.S. could not act without the help of other countries or the U.N., which further drove a wedge between himself and Taft. Furthermore, conservatives viewed the 1953 armistice with the North Koreans and Chinese Communists as the worst kind of appeasement. It portrayed Americans as weak and non-confrontational. Conservatives also rebuked Eisenhower’s nomination of Charles Bohlen as ambassador to Moscow. They were angered that the president would nominate the man who accompanied President Franklin D. Roosevelt to the 1945 Yalta Conference. To the conservatives, Yalta had become the “Great Betrayal,” as they believed that FDR conceded Eastern Europe and parts of Asia to the Soviets in exchange for help in fighting the war. Conservative Republicans were frustrated with Bohlen’s statements that the problem at Yalta was not President Roosevelt, but that Stalin betrayed the agreement.[[43]](#endnote-43)

Perhaps one of the defining issues that separated Republican conservatives and moderates was how to deal with the potential of communist infiltration in America. Wisconsin Senator Joseph McCarthy and a few other congressmen from the party’s right wing conducted hearings and investigations to find communists and communist sympathizers in the Federal Government, specifically the State Department. McCarthy began his crusade during Harry Truman’s presidency, and continued when Eisenhower became president. McCarthy did not trust Eisenhower, as he believed that the president was too weak to deal with the communist threat.[[44]](#endnote-44) The McCarthy investigations made the internal division within the party clear, especially to the President. Eisenhower wrote, “[T]he Republican Party has got for once and for all to make up its mind whether to follow the ludicrous partnership of the Old Guarders and the McCarthyites (one of my friends had called it a ‘marriage of convenience’), or whether it is going to stand behind the program of the Administration and the middle-of-the-road philosophy in which we firmly believe.”[[45]](#endnote-45) The “marriage of convenience” between the conservative Old Guarders and the McCarthyites would doom the former when the Senate censured McCarthy in 1954, effectively ending his crusade. Eisenhower, having stayed above the fray—not publicly denouncing McCarthy but working behind the scenes to prevent his committee from gaining access to the executive branch’s records and people—remained popular, while the congressional conservatives that supported McCarthy suffered at the polls in the 1958 and 1960 elections.[[46]](#endnote-46)

Among the conservatives who supported McCarthy were Senators Barry Goldwater and William Knowland.[[47]](#endnote-47) Knowland fought against McCarthy’s censure in 1954, arguing that there was no formal basis for proceeding since McCarthy’s investigations took place during the previous Congress.[[48]](#endnote-48) McCarthy and Knowland were so close that McCarthy thought he should run for president in 1956 to rally conservative support so that he could help Knowland defeat Eisenhower for the nomination.[[49]](#endnote-49) Knowland would be a pivotal conservative figure in California in 1958 when he decided to leave the Senate to run for governor. With the presidency in mind, Knowland wanted to position himself for a 1960 run to wrest power away from the moderate wing of the party.[[50]](#endnote-50) Though he would ultimately lose his bid for governor, along with his presidential hopes, Knowland succeeded in moving the California Republican Party to the right.

A study of Knowland’s campaign for governor, therefore, is necessary to understand the party’s shift from moderate to conservative, not only in California but also within the national party. Knowland’s loss in 1958 left a void in the Republican Party that Barry Goldwater would soon fill. Goldwater would cultivate the white backlash vote, making it ripe for the picking for Richard Nixon in 1968 and Ronald Reagan in 1980. Studying Knowland’s impact on the California Republican Party is also essential since California became an increasingly valuable state for aspiring presidential candidates. With California Republicans now on the right in the aftermath of Knowland’s loss, the national party would inevitably move from Eisenhower’s middle way to Knowland and Goldwater’s conservative vision, which sought to remove government intervention not only in the economy but also in the realm of civil rights.

**The 1958 Election: Knowland’s Potential and Uphill Battle in California**

Despite national trends that put Republican candidates across the country at a disadvantage, Knowland decided to throw his hat into the gubernatorial race in 1958. However, a popular, moderate Republican akin to Eisenhower—Goodwin Knight—already occupied the governor’s chair. Leading up to the 1958 election, Knight and Knowland would engage in an ideological battle that would redefine the Republican Party. As a moderate, Knight accommodated the state’s union leaders, and believed in the progressive tradition that the Republican Party had historically displayed. As lieutenant governor in 1947, Knight proclaimed, “Our party in this State has always been the party of the people. The Republican party was in control of California for 40 years and its initiative was the most progressive program any State could boast of. We as Republicans in California have a most liberal and progressive history.”[[51]](#endnote-51) Knight, a beneficiary of cross-filing, which allowed Republicans to quell Democratic opposition by running on a moderate platform in both parties’ primaries[[52]](#endnote-52) had thus stayed away from campaigning against labor interests. In 1954, Knight, who had become governor a year earlier when Earl Warren was appointed Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, stated outright that he “shall never approve a law designed to punish labor or to discriminate against labor.”[[53]](#endnote-53) Therefore, when Knowland adopted a right-to-work platform in 1958, he alienated the moderate and progressives in the party since right-to-work broke with pragmatic policies that had, with one exception, kept Republicans in control of the governorship since 1910.[[54]](#endnote-54)

Knowland was able to rise to the nomination with the support of conservative activists and influential “kingmakers” in the state, who disliked Knight’s position on labor. These conservatives were also wary of the growing power of the Federal Government. Newspaper columnist, George Sokolsky, in his support of Knowland in 1958, expressed the sentiment of many conservatives regarding the growing power of the Federal Government at the expense of the states. He wrote, “The encroachment of the Federal Government upon the states since 1933 has been beyond belief. The current Supreme Court presided over by Chief Justice Earl Warren, seems bent upon destroying the authority of the states altogether. Utilizing its taxing power, the Federal Government takes so much of the earned income of the people out of each state as to leave the states without adequate revenue to perform their proper local functions.”[[55]](#endnote-55) In response to increased federal authority, a more vocal conservative faction began to emerge in California. These conservatives wanted Knight out of Sacramento, and they helped Knowland wrest the nomination away from the incumbent Knight.[[56]](#endnote-56) Knight drew conservatives’ ire since he did not support making California a right-to-work state, and claimed that Knowland’s political views were “rooted in antiquated nineteenth-century ideas.”[[57]](#endnote-57) Knight also called right-to-work an “un-Republican” issue.[[58]](#endnote-58)

Conservatives successfully pressured Governor Knight to withdraw his name from consideration in the upcoming election. Kyle Palmer warned Knight that he would not gain the *Los Angeles Times’* support if he ran for reelection.[[59]](#endnote-59) Other conservative editors also claimed that they would not endorse Knight for governor. Without the support of the “triumvirate” of conservative California newspapers—the *Los Angeles* *Times,* the *Oakland Tribune,* and the *San Francisco Chronicle[[60]](#endnote-60)—*and the increasingly powerful conservative faction, Knight bowed out of the race. He decided, however, to run for Knowland’s Senate seat—interestingly, with the support of those who pushed him out of the governorship.[[61]](#endnote-61) Throughout his campaign for the Senate, Knight would maintain his distance from the Knowland campaign. Two weeks prior to the election, Knight said that he did not know whether he would vote for Knowland because of Knowland’s staunch support of right-to-work.[[62]](#endnote-62)

After forcing Knight out of the race, Knowland filed his candidacy and formally began his campaign for governor on March 22, 1958.[[63]](#endnote-63) Right-wing conservatives coalesced behind Knowland because of his strong anti-New Deal beliefs. Key in Knowland’s campaign was his advocacy of what he referred to as “voluntary unionism” but his opponents called “right-to-work,” legislation, which would make union membership voluntary in California. Knowland would refer to Proposition 18, the ballot proposal that would make union membership voluntary, as the “voluntary unionism initiative.” He accused his Democratic opponent, Pat Brown, and labor leaders of “manipulating the title of the initiative” for their benefit.[[64]](#endnote-64) By stressing “voluntary unionism,” Knowland hoped that voters would subscribe to the belief that he was not anti-union, per se, but rather wanted to prevent union leaders from amassing too much power through mandatory union membership. Knowland believed that union leaders were akin to corrupt political bosses. To break free from the tyranny of unions, citizens should have the “basic civil right” of deciding for themselves whether or not to join a union.[[65]](#endnote-65) Knowland and his allies would frame this issue as ensuring freedom from tyranny, which conservatives, particularly in Los Angeles and Orange Counties, would adopt and adapt in subsequent years.[[66]](#endnote-66)

The time seemed ripe for an anti-labor movement in 1958. In a poll published by the *Los Angeles Times* in 1957, a national sample of Americans favored a right-to-work law[[67]](#endnote-67) by an almost 2-1 margin.[[68]](#endnote-68) In an April poll, a slight majority (51%) of Californians claimed they were in favor of right-to-work laws. The results were highly partisan—with 68% of Republicans and only 38% of Democrats—backing right-to-work.[[69]](#endnote-69) Furthermore, support was particularly strong in southern California. In a May poll, 49% of Californians polled believed that workers should not be forced to join a union, while 45% supported mandatory union membership for workers hired for a job covered by that union’s contract. Respondents from the ten southernmost counties supported “right-to-work” at a rate of 55%.[[70]](#endnote-70) In fact, some Democratic leaders in southern California organized to support Knowland, citing his “broad knowledge of the problems of the people, his realistic approach to problems…his courage, honesty, dignity, and forthrightness,” which would appeal to southland Democrats.[[71]](#endnote-71)

Based on mass support, conservatives felt that Knowland could run on the right-to-work issue, which was to appear on the 1958 ballot as Proposition 18. Conservative politicians wanted a right-to-work platform because of their fear of “big labor” and union power. At a Republican luncheon in Los Angeles, Representative Ralph W. Gwinn of New York cautioned California Republicans that the state had been “marked as next in line for capture by labor leaders of the CIO-AFL and the Americans for Democratic Action.” He reasoned that the CIO-AFL would accomplish this by electing a sympathetic governor and Democratic majority to the legislature. Since California would gain seats in the House of Representatives after the 1960 U.S. Census was taken, Gwinn was afraid that these Democrats would have the power to reapportion the state and “add 10 more members to the “labor-Socialist” bloc in the House of Representatives.[[72]](#endnote-72)

Newspaper articles also indicated that Knowland would succeed on the right-to-work issue. Palmer published a series of articles in the *Los Angeles Times* that equated the right to choose or decline union membership was “as fundamental a right as is the right to worship God without forced affiliation with a religious group.” The *Times* also echoed Gwinn’s fears by describing Pat Brown, the Democratic candidate, as an “obsequious yes-man of union political bosses.” In addition to the *Times,* the *Santa Ana Register* served as another source for Knowland’s message. The *Santa Ana Register*, owned by libertarian Raymond Cyrus Holies, did not cover Brown and shed only a favorable light on Knowland’s efforts and ideas.[[73]](#endnote-73)

Knowland attacked Brown for “importing Chicago machine type political organization” to run his campaign. In an address to more than seven hundred members of the Republican state central committee in the Capitol in Sacramento, he called out “Buster Brown,” who has “busted the historic Democratic party and has been the instrumentality by which CIO-COPE [Committee on Political Education] is gaining control over his party. Their ultimate hope is to take over his state, Michigan fashion.” Knowland’s reference to Walter Reuther, United Auto Workers leader, and Michigan’s Democratic Governor G. Mennen Williams did not go unnoticed and he received a thunderous applause. In the same speech, he would take exception to his opponents labeling him as anti-union. He stated, “Mr. Brown and his labor boss supporters charge me with attempting to foster voluntary, as against compulsory, unionism for the objective of curtailing union membership in California. This is the same charge they used against me for supporting the Taft-Hartley act, which they called a ‘slave labor law.’ But the record shows union membership has increased thruout [sic] the nation by 17 per cent since the Taft-Hartley law was passed in 1947.”[[74]](#endnote-74) Throughout his campaign, Knowland would not waver from his right-to-work stance.

While the majority of Knowland’s campaign centered on right-to-work, and not civil rights, some of his campaign speeches and literature alluded to welfare and crime, two issues which would become prominent and racialized when Ronald Reagan ran for the governorship in 1966. One of Knowland’s campaign leaflets focused on labor corruption and abuse of welfare. Titled “The Worker and Bill Knowland,” the leaflet showed graphics that depicted a union leader purchasing a car with welfare funds.[[75]](#endnote-75) Knowland used these images to combat union corruption and not welfare programs outright. However, their presence in the 1958 campaign likely stirred negative emotions toward federal welfare programs. Knowland also called on a law and order theme, not in a racialized context, but to convince voters that Brown was ineffective as Attorney General. Knowland asserted that under Brown, the state’s chief law enforcement official, California’s crime rate had risen 76% and narcotics control had deteriorated.[[76]](#endnote-76) Again, Knowland’s discussion of crime was not racialized, as crime would be in Reagan’s 1966 campaign. Thus, while he confronted issues that could have been racialized, Knowland avoided race issues. While Brown called for FEPC “legislation with enforcement powers” to eliminate job discrimination, Knowland refused to declare his position on this issue. Brown challenged Knowland to come out “with a clear cut statement of exactly where he stands with respect to California’s need for a fair employment practices law—together with his reasons for his stand.”[[77]](#endnote-77) According to my investigation of speeches and newspaper articles, Knowland never accepted the challenge.

Despite Knowland’s silence on race issues, particularly on economic civil rights, his position can be inferred by considering conservatives’ view of the limited role for the government in the enforcement of civil rights. Knowland was supportive of non-economic civil rights while in the U.S. Senate, voting in favor of anti-lynching legislation in 1952.[[78]](#endnote-78) As Senate minority leader, he served as floor manager for the 1957 Civil Rights Act, which was primarily a voting rights bill.[[79]](#endnote-79) Knowland embodied the conservative sentiment, which was not against all civil rights. Rather, many conservative Republicans were not supportive of civil rights that would infringe on the free market and employer rights. Later, as a leader of the Goldwater campaign for president, Knowland’s conservative ideology would constrain his support for the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which contained fair housing and fair employment provisions and gave the Federal Government the power to enforce anti-discrimination laws. And while Knowland called to break the filibuster against a 1946 FEPC bill, he did so because it was “preventing the Senate from conducting the public’s business,”[[80]](#endnote-80) not because he supported FEPC. Throughout his career, Knowland would avoid discussing FEPC since such law ran counter to his conservative ideals. The African American publication, the *Los Angeles Sentinel,* reflecting on the possibility of a Knowland victory in 1958, confirmed that Knowland would not have supported FEPC as governor.

If Knowland had been elected I’m sure I’d disagree with EVERYTHING he did and I’d be unhappy with him ALL the time! So would a lot of other people, particularly in our community. Governor Brown has taken a positive stand on FEPC. He has lent an intelligent and sympathetic ear to the de facto school segregation situation. He stands squarely in support of the Rumford Fair Housing Measure. He is actively opposed to capital punishment…Imagine what Knowland’s position would have been on these issues!!![[81]](#endnote-81)

Knowland’s ambivalence toward FEPC was just one of the many problems of his campaign. As a dedicated Senator, he was often out of California in the months before the campaign. According to a *New York Times* article, Knowland put his “strategic eggs in just two baskets: 1) His personal prestige and impetus as a national figure; 2) Labor union reform, including, on the state level, advocacy of a ‘right-to-work’ law making union membership voluntary under all circumstances.” He rarely addressed the state’s other problems, including educational policies, crime prevention, and resolution of a conflict over the state’s division of water resources.[[82]](#endnote-82)

Given the problems with his campaign, it is unsurprising that Knowland lost to Brown by a landslide in 1958 (nearly 20 percentage points).[[83]](#endnote-83) This makes it easy to overlook his contribution to racial realignment. His choice to run for governor, however, had ramifications at both the national and state levels. Knowland’s loss created an opening for Barry Goldwater as the new conservative spokesperson.[[84]](#endnote-84) Goldwater and the conservative wing were outraged with Eisenhower for remaining silent on the right-to-work issue in 1958, and Goldwater would challenge President Eisenhower for the remainder of his presidency.[[85]](#endnote-85) A virtual unknown in the 1956 and 1960 campaigns,[[86]](#endnote-86) Goldwater would take the national party down a similar path as Knowland did the California Republican Party. Goldwater’s failed candidacy in 1964 allowed Democratic President Lyndon B. Johnson to espouse race liberal legislation that would push race conservative white voters out of the Democratic fold. Once these race conservatives joined the Republican ranks, the remaining Democratic base was left more liberal, finally aligning with their national and state representatives who had long supported race liberal policies.

In California, Knowland’s decision to push out the moderate Knight created an opening for the liberal Democrat Pat Brown to run, and ultimately succeed not only in winning the governorship but also in ushering in a host of liberal policies. Legislators who had served during the Knowland-Knight switch have provided valuable insights into that fateful decision:

If the Republican party had not elected to run Good E. Knight for congress and picked Senator Knowland to run for governor, the Republican domination of the office of governor would probably have continued. However, as it turned out, Pat Brown beat Knowland during the “right-to-work” issue and Good E. Knight was defeated as senator. Pat Brown, Democrat, who was elected in that campaign, would probably not have run against Goodwin Knight.[[87]](#endnote-87)

The sentiment among the California elite at the time was that Knowland’s decision was a selfish one, borne out of his desire to be president. It was an unwise decision, since Knight would have likely won reelection.

Knight, at the time, in my opinion, was secure in his position as governor. He had the full support of labor even though he was a Republican…Their lobbyist up here supported him tooth and toenail…I think the consensus was that Knight would have won the governorship.”[[88]](#endnote-88)

However, once Knowland decided to run for governor, the party fell in line. According to Assemblyman MacBride, “Knowland…had Republican party power, and he had the power over the Republican finances, too, and so they decided that they wanted Knowland as president…” The best way to get Knowland to the White House was for him replace Knight as governor.[[89]](#endnote-89)

The Knowland-Knight switch was also imprudent because it convinced Pat Brown, an unabashed liberal, that he could defeat Knowland, who was running on the controversial right-to-work issue.[[90]](#endnote-90) Brown was serving as Attorney General, an office he held since 1946. He was the only Democrat holding a statewide office, and many in his party viewed him as the strongest candidate to win the governorship in 1958.[[91]](#endnote-91) Brown, however, was wary of entering the race against Knight who, it was assumed, would coast to victory. Knowland’s entry into the race, thus, gave the Democrats a “golden opportunity” to win the governorship.[[92]](#endnote-92) Brown labeled Knowland as “a right-wing extremist,” who was engaging in “a ruthless drive to take over the Republican party in California, and after that, the nation.” He warned Democratic delegates at the biennial Democratic state convention that the Democrats had to unite against the “last great charge of American reaction” mounted by the Knowland campaign.[[93]](#endnote-93)

Knowland’s decision, however, had long-term effects. The fight between Knowland and Knight allowed Democrats to capitalize on a fractured Republican Party. In 1958, Democrats won all but one statewide elective offices, including the governorship, control over the State Senate and Assembly, a majority of the congressional delegation, a U.S. Senate seat, and the five-man State Board of Equalization.[[94]](#endnote-94) Furthermore, despite the criticism that blamed Knowland for the “demise of Republican power in the state capital,”[[95]](#endnote-95) Knowland’s campaign helped mobilize conservative organizations.[[96]](#endnote-96) His anti-labor stance rallied conservatives who were looking for a leader. Conservatives grew tired of the “moderate Eisenhower ilk” and wanted to challenge what they perceived as a threat to freedom and an abuse of power in unions. They railed against the legacy of Republican moderatism and acceptance of the Federal Government in both economics and civil rights. Conservatives would blend their traditional views with a clear message of race conservatism to appeal to white Democrats, who were discontent with race liberal legislation coming out of both Sacramento and Washington D.C. Conservatives’ appeal to racially resentful white Democrats proved successful nationally, and in a state where Democratic registrants outnumbered Republican registrants. Despite the large percentage of Democrats in the state, Ronald Reagan would find electoral success in a Democratic state, first as governor in 1966 and later as president in 1980 and 1984.

Regardless of whether or not fellow Republicans agreed with his style—challenging a popular and moderate incumbent governor—or his beliefs—running on the unpopular right-to-work law, Republicans seeking statewide office adopted Knowland’s conservative views.[[97]](#endnote-97) The electorate rejected Proposition 18 with roughly the same percentage in which they voted for Brown and against Knowland for governor: 59.6% against Proposition 18 and 59.8% for Brown; 40.4% in support of Proposition 18 and 40.2% for Knowland.[[98]](#endnote-98) The Knowland campaign was the first step in moving the California Republican Party to the right. Knowland’s ousting of the moderate Knight and the end of the cross-filing system encouraged California Republicans to adopt more conservative policy views, ensuring that conservatives would have a much stronger say in the direction of the Republican Party.[[99]](#endnote-99) The shift to the right in the California Republican Party was only strengthened by the Brown administration and the Democratic legislature. With the Republicans now on the defensive after the Democrats’ overwhelming victory in 1958, conservatives were able to take control of the party apparatus,[[100]](#endnote-100) which in turn created a more partisan tone on all issues, from the economic to the racial. Though Knowland’s campaign did not focus on race, Knowland helped usher in a new type of Republican. This Republican was conservative on *all* issues because of staunch opposition to government intervention, and would not be swayed to support a race issue that was in conflict with their economic ideology.

**Conclusion: The Liberal Takeover and the Foundation for White Backlash**

With the support of conservative policy demanders, Knowland’s decision to run for the Republican nomination prevented the popular Republican Goodwin Knight from winning reelection (thereby keeping the governorship under Republican control), and thus allowed Democrats across the state to ride into office on Pat Brown’s coattails.[[101]](#endnote-101) Knowland’s unwavering support for right-to-work[[102]](#endnote-102) energized union and liberal voters to overwhelmingly rejected both Knowland and Proposition 18.[[103]](#endnote-103) According to Milton Marks, the only new Republican elected in 1958,[[104]](#endnote-104) “the Democrats should have erected a monument to Knowland because he did more to help the Democrats than any man in the history of the state of California”[[105]](#endnote-105) by alienating voters with the right-to-work platform.

Governor Brown came into office with FEPC legislation at the top of his agenda.[[106]](#endnote-106) Unlike his Republican predecessors Warren and Knight, whom black leaders viewed as indifferent to FEPC, Brown maintained the support of the black community by acting quickly on the issue.[[107]](#endnote-107) Furthermore, Brown declared that his administration would stand behind the original bill—not a weakened version that would require a formal complaint before any action was taken, taking away the commission’s initiative.[[108]](#endnote-108) After the Democrats succeeded with the passage of FEPC in 1959, they would see other civil rights victories during Brown’s first term, such as urban renewal projects, the Hawkins Act to prohibit discrimination in public housing, and the Unruh Civil Rights Act, which banned discrimination in all business establishments and established the legal principle that “all persons within the jurisdiction of this state are free and equal.”[[109]](#endnote-109) In his second term, Brown and his liberal allies won another victory with the passage of the Rumford Act, which barred racial discrimination in housing. Brown was elated with the bill’s passage. He would later refer to it as “one of the greatest victories” of his career.[[110]](#endnote-110)

In addition to FEPC and fair housing, a key goal for Brown upon entering office was the abolition of cross-filing.[[111]](#endnote-111) Cross-filing had almost been abolished by Proposition 13 (1952) and was essentially rendered ineffective with the passage of Proposition 7 (1952). Proposition 7 required that cross-filers state their party identification in the primary elections, and eliminated the incentive Republicans had to cross-file. The media coverage of this bill emphasized that cross-filing widely favored Republicans. Newspaper articles pointed out, “California’s Republicans, outnumbered [in registration] for the last twenty-seven years, capitalized on cross-filing to maintain a half century’s domination of state politics.”[[112]](#endnote-112) Furthermore, incumbents had been able to maximize support by running on both primary tickets, keeping Republicans in power until 1959, which saw the first Democratic Legislature since 1898.[[113]](#endnote-113)

The abolition of cross-filing in 1959 was the final nail in the coffin that ended the tradition of nonpartisanship in California government since the beginning of the twentieth century. Even though the Republican Party enjoyed a majority of registered voters and therefore dominated state offices, Republican governors and legislators tended to adopt nonpartisan policies. When, in 1934, Democrats began to lead in voter registration, the Republican Party—both cross-filers and non-cross-filers—forced Republican officials to be more moderate both in the primaries, and in general elections to gain a share of the growing population of Democrats in the state, perpetuating a nonpartisan spirit from the 1930s until the 1950s. Evidence of Republican moderatism could be seen in legislators’ support of Warren’s middle-of-the-road policies. When, for example, Governor Warren proposed the largest budget in the history of the state of California in 1945, Republican legislators supported him. Republican Albert C. Wollenberg (San Francisco) stated that the governor’s budget “shows the important increases in appropriations are all in departments with definite social significance—agencies which provide direct service to the people, such as public health, industrial welfare, institutions, corrections and the schools, colleges and universities.”[[114]](#endnote-114) However, when cross-filing ended, candidates stopped appealing to the median voter and instead had to please their policy demanders since they needed activists’ approval and resources to win their party’s nomination.[[115]](#endnote-115)

In addition to the abolition of cross-filing, the primary force driving Republicans to the right was a series of events that sparked the emergence of white backlash. The defeat of Knowland and the rise of Goldwater allowed unabashed liberal administrations to impose civil rights and integration policies, incensing and galvanizing conservative activists who were able to shift the Republican Party to the right. Liberal policies and the racial tensions of the 1960s also alienated working class race conservatives. Republican politicians, who were shifting away from the center, were able to win the support of white backlash voters by packing their conservative principles with opposition to civil rights in the late 1960s and 1970s. When backlash voters left the Democratic Party, the Democrats’ base of support became much more liberal, having been purged of the race conservative faction. The Republican Party welcomed these former Democrats and thus transformed into the race conservative party.

1. Joseph Alsop, “Matter of Fact…The New ‘Mr. Republican,” *Washington Post* and *Times Herald*, April 21, 1958, A13. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. James Reston, “Knowland’s Gamble: Californian is Risking his Career With a Characteristic Stubbornness,” *New York Times,* October 17, 1958, 17. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Gayle Montgomery and James Johnson, *One Step from the White House* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1998)*,* 25. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. Montgomery and Johnson, *One Step from the White House*, 30. [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. Montgomery and Johnson, *One Step from the White House,* 9. According to the authors, Warren denied discussing the appointment with J.R. Knowland. However, Warren would later acknowledge the *Tribune’s* role in helping advance his career, particularly in his bid for district attorney. Thus, while Warren never stated outright that he appointed Bill Knowland as a favor to J.R., the authors contend that Warren’s deeds spoke louder than words. [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. “Knowland Remains Mum on Plans and Awaits Decision of President,” *Los Angeles Times,* February 1956, 7; “Knight, Knowland, Nixon Close Ranks: Californians Agree to Form United Delegation if President Runs Again,” *Los Angeles Times,* February 24, 1956, 1. For an examination of Knowland’s personal and political career, see Montgomery and Johnson, *Rise and Fall of Senator William F. Knowland.* [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. As recalled by Assemblyman Thomas J. MacBride, “…Knowland was the [U.S.] Senate majority leader, but the rumor was that he wanted to be president of the United States, and he felt that being governor of California would be a better platform for him to spring from into a presidential campaign than would be by just being a Senate majority leader. That was his belief, whether it worked or not…nevertheless, that was Knowland’s feeling, that the governorship of California was the way to go.” Oral History Interview with Hon. Thomas J. MacBride, April 21, 1987, State Government Oral History Program, 51. MacBride served as a California State Assemblyman from 1956-1960; Lou Cannon, who chronicled Ronald Reagan’s career as governor, stated outright, “Knowland wanted to be president. Governors in those days controlled state delegations at national conventions, and Knowland reasoned that Sacramento was his biggest route to the White House.” Lou Cannon, *Governor Reagan: His Rise to Power* (New York, NY: Perseus Books, 2003), 130. [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. White backlash can be traced back to the 1964 presidential election. In an article in the *Los Angeles Times,* it was declared, “the phenomenon of the white backlashers is that members of the white minority ethnic groups, normally steadfast Democrats, are so exercised about the Negro revolution that they will vote for Goldwater.” According to the article, the Republican Party in 1964 did not deny, but did not actively court the white backlash vote. “Current Tactics May Transform GOP,” *Los Angeles Times*, August 17, 1964, 2. [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
9. Mary Brennan, *Turning Right in the Sixties: The Conservative Capture of the GOP* (Raleigh, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1995); Niels Bjerre-Poulsen, *Right Face: Organizing the American Conservative Movement, 1945-1965* (Copenhagen, Denmark: Museum Tusculanum Press, 2002). [↑](#endnote-ref-9)
10. Taft himself wanted Knowland to succeed him as the party’s conservative leader. According to Montgomery and Johnson, Taft “saw promise in the brash Californian. He also knew that the Republicans had to develop new leadership and naturally was predisposed to favor Knowland, who really had been a Taft man during the 1952 Republican convention.” Montgomery and Johnson*, One Step From the White House,* 124. [↑](#endnote-ref-10)
11. In 1945, Warren’s legislative agenda, in particular his compulsory healthcare proposal, drew the ire of conservative Republicans who were “perturbed over the governor’s legislative message on the ground it went too far in the liberal direction.” He was also criticized by Democrats as trying to “out New Deal the New Deal,” revealing just how liberal some of his policies were. “Wide Variety of Bills Is Introduced in First Week’s Session of State Legislature,” *Sacramento Bee*, January 18, 1945, 1. [↑](#endnote-ref-11)
12. In 1945, Warren’s budget was declared—by the governor himself—as “the largest since the admission of our state to the Union.” “Warren’s State Budget of $683,710,643 for 1945-47 Sets Record,” *Sacramento Bee*, January 22, 1945, 1. For a thorough account of Warren’s health care plan, see Daniel Mitchell, “Earl Warren’s California Health Insurance Plan: What Might Have Been,” *Southern California Quarterly,* Vol. 85, No. 2 (2003), 205-228. [↑](#endnote-ref-12)
13. The supportive sentiment toward the New Deal can best be summarized by Warren’s defense of Roosevelt’s programs. In 1951, Warren stated, “We do not propose to deny the progress that has been made during the last decade…Neither do we aim to repeal it.” He proceeded to condemn “those who would freeze our nation in the status-quo, with whatever inequalities go with it, and…have our country return to what they look back to nostalgically and affectionately as the good old days.” Quoted in Henderson, “Earl Warren and California Politics,” 357. [↑](#endnote-ref-13)
14. James Worthen, *The Young Nixon and His Rivals: Four California Republicans Eye the White House, 1946-1958* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2010), 83. [↑](#endnote-ref-14)
15. Ethan Rarick. *California Rising:* *The Life and Times of Pat Brown* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2005), 88. [↑](#endnote-ref-15)
16. Joseph Alsop, “Matter of Fact…The New ‘Mr. Republican,” *Washington Post* and *Times Herald*, April 21, 1958, A13. [↑](#endnote-ref-16)
17. George E. Sokolsky, “These Days…Bill Knowland and California Campaign,” *Washington Post and Times Herald*, May 8, 1958, A13. [↑](#endnote-ref-17)
18. Arthur Herman, *Joseph McCarthy: Reexamining the Life and Legacy of America’s Most*

    *Hated Senator* (New York, NY: The Free Press, 2000), 298 [↑](#endnote-ref-18)
19. Michael Bowen, “Getting to Goldwater: Robert A. Taft, William F. Knowland, and the

    Rightward Drift of the Republican Party,” in *Barry Goldwater and the Remaking of the American Political Landscape,* ed. Elizabeth Tandy Shermer (Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press, 2013), 105. [↑](#endnote-ref-19)
20. Clouatre writes that “Many conservatives saw him as successor to the moderate Eisenhower” in 1956. Douglas Clouatre, *Presidential Upsets: Dark Horses, Underdogs, and Corrupt Bargains* (Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger Press, 2013), 10. [↑](#endnote-ref-20)
21. Bowen, “Getting to Goldwater,” 106. [↑](#endnote-ref-21)
22. Carl Bogus, *Buckley: William F. Buckley Jr. and the Rise of American Conservatism*

    (New York, NY: Bloomsbury Press, 2011), 131. [↑](#endnote-ref-22)
23. Kurt Schuparra, *Triumph of the Right: The Rise of the California Conservative Movement, 1945-1966*. (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, Inc., 1998), 25; Bjerre-Poulsen, *Right Face,* 122; Bogus, *Buckley,* 107, 143. [↑](#endnote-ref-23)
24. William F. Knowland, “Peace—With Honor.” *The National Review,* Vol. 1, No. 1 (November 1955), 9-13. [↑](#endnote-ref-24)
25. Knowland left the Senate because he wanted to run for president in 1960. Governors, not senators, tended to be successful in recent presidential elections, thus winning the governorship of a populous state would position him nicely for a presidential run. Worthen, *The Young Nixon and His Rivals,* 170. Schiesl concurs with this view of Knowland’s ambitions, stating: “Knowland believed that state leadership would do more to improve his presidential prospects than a senatorial seat.” Martin Schiesl, “Pat Brown: The Making of a Reformer,” in *Responsible Liberalism: Edmund G. “Pat” Brown and Reform Government in California, 1958-1967*, ed. Martin Schiesl (Edmund G. “Pat” Brown Institute of Public Affairs, 2003), 5. [↑](#endnote-ref-25)
26. Michael Tesler and David Sears, *Obama’s Race: The 2008 Election and the Dream of a*

    *Post-Racial America* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2010), 18. [↑](#endnote-ref-26)
27. Palmer, in particular, has been referred to as a political “kingmaker.” With his endorsement in the *Los Angeles Times,* candidates were almost assured victory. Montgomery and Johnson, *One Step from the White House,* 25. [↑](#endnote-ref-27)
28. James Q. Wilson, *The Amateur Democrat: Club Politics in Three Cities* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1966), 104. [↑](#endnote-ref-28)
29. Seth Masket, *No Middle Ground: How Informal Party Organizations Control Nominations and Polarize Legislatures* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2011), 9. [↑](#endnote-ref-29)
30. Louis Bean argued that the loss from presidential to midterm elections could be attributed to presidential coattails. Congressional candidates ride a presidential candidate’s coattails to victory. When these coattails are not present at the midterm, the president’s party loses seats. Louis Bean, *How to Predict Elections* (New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 1948). [↑](#endnote-ref-30)
31. “Democrats Gain 13 Senate Seats,” *New York Times,* November, 6, 1958, 1. [↑](#endnote-ref-31)
32. “Statistics of the Congressional Election of November 4, 1958,” Office of the Clerk website, <http://clerk.house.gov/member_info/electionInfo/index.aspx>, Accessed April 16, 2014. [↑](#endnote-ref-32)
33. “Gubernatorial General Elections, All States, 1958 Summary,” CQ Voting and Elections Collection, <http://library.cqpress.com/elections/document.php?id=avg1958-4us1&type=hitlist&num=0>, Accessed July 10, 2014. [↑](#endnote-ref-33)
34. National Economic Accounts, Bureau of Economic Analysis website, <http://www.bea.gov/national/index.htm#gdp>, Accessed November 19, 2014. [↑](#endnote-ref-34)
35. According to Robert Mason (2012), Eisenhower “privately harbored beliefs that often aligned him more closely with conservative Republicans.” While serving as president of Columbia University after WWII, Eisenhower warned of the “constant drift toward centralized government” that would lead to a “swarming of bureaucrats over the land.” Mason suggests that Eisenhower moderated his views because they were not popular with the American voters. Robert Mason, *The Republican Party and American Politics from Hoover to Reagan* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 155 [↑](#endnote-ref-35)
36. Mason, *The Republican Party and American Politics from Hoover to Reagan,* 154-155. [↑](#endnote-ref-36)
37. Michael Bowen, *The Roots of Modern Conservatism: Dewey, Taft, and the Battle for the Soul of the Republican Party* (Raleigh, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 2; Gary Donaldson, *The First Modern Campaign: Kennedy, Nixon, and the Election of* 1960 (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2007), 3.For discussions and overviews of Eisenhower’s middle way, or “Modern Republicanism,” see Mason, *The Republican Party and American Politics from Hoover to Reagan;* Worthen, *The Young Nixon and His Rivals;* Schuparra, *Triumph of the Right.* [↑](#endnote-ref-37)
38. According to the more moderate Republicans, Taft-Hartley turned away working-class voters that may have supported Dewey otherwise. According to Wayne Morse, Republican Senator from Oregon, “No extended comment needs to be made about the loss of the labor vote. Everyone knows that the Taft-Hartley Act was a terrific liability to the Republican Party.” Quoted in Bowen, *The Roots of Modern Conservatism,* 76 [↑](#endnote-ref-38)
39. “Republicans: The Look Backward,” *Time,* April 22, 1957, 25-26. [↑](#endnote-ref-39)
40. Jeremy Mayer, *Running on Race: Racial Politics in Presidential Campaigns, 1960-2000* (New York, NY: Random House, Inc., 2002), 23. [↑](#endnote-ref-40)
41. The Republican platform in 1960 dedicated several sentences to civil rights, emphasizing Eisenhower and Nixon’s actions, such as advancing fair employment via executive order and the administration’s support of the 1957 Civil Rights Act. The platform then pledged progress in five realms: voting, desegregation of public schools, fair employment, fair housing, and integration of public facilities. 1960 Republican Party Platform, The American Presidency Project, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=25839>, Accessed April 16, 2014. [↑](#endnote-ref-41)
42. Theodore White, *The Making of the President 1960* (New York, NY: Atheneum, 1961), 203. [↑](#endnote-ref-42)
43. For a discussion of the foreign policy differences between moderate and conservative Republicans, see Donaldson, *The First Modern Campaign,* 10-12. [↑](#endnote-ref-43)
44. The conservatives’ belief that Eisenhower was weak stemmed from the 1952 Republican Convention. The conservatives forced a plank into the platform that called the Democratic Party’s foreign policy of containment “negative, futile and immoral,” because it “abandons countless human beings to a despotism and godless terrorism.” They called instead for “liberation,” which Eisenhower believed was nothing more than invasion. Eisenhower angered conservatives by refusing to adopt the aggressive policy of liberation. Donaldson, *The First Modern Campaign,* 6. [↑](#endnote-ref-44)
45. Quoted in Donaldson, *The First Modern Campaign,* 7. [↑](#endnote-ref-45)
46. Donaldson, *The First Modern Campaign,* 7. [↑](#endnote-ref-46)
47. McCarthy biographer, Arthur Herman, details some of McCarthy’s most ardent supporters—Knowland being one of them. Herman, *Joseph McCarthy,* 50. [↑](#endnote-ref-47)
48. Herman, *Joseph McCarthy,* 289-290. [↑](#endnote-ref-48)
49. Herman, *Joseph McCarthy,* 298. [↑](#endnote-ref-49)
50. Knowland had personal and political reasons for leaving the Senate. According to rumors, his wife was growing tired of Washington and threatened Knowland with divorce if they did not return to California. Knowland also left the Senate because he wanted to run for president in 1960. Governors, not senators, tended to be successful in recent presidential elections, thus winning the governorship of a populous state would position him nicely for a presidential run. Worthen, *The Young Nixon and His Rivals,* 170. [↑](#endnote-ref-50)
51. “Knight Points to G.O.P. Record as 1948 Keynote,” *Los Angeles Times,* September 8, 1947, 1. [↑](#endnote-ref-51)
52. Cross-filing also prevented conservatives from succeeding in Republican primaries, despite attempts to pool resources for conservatives by the California Republican Assembly (CRA). In a state in which Democrats had a 2-to-1 advantage among registered voters, moderate Republicans wanted to keep conservatives out of the running since they would likely lose to Democrats. Thus, the incentive to moderate was quite attractive. Masket, *No Middle Ground,* 71. [↑](#endnote-ref-52)
53. “Knight Says He’ll Veto Laws that ‘Hurt’ Labor,” *Los Angeles Times,* August 24, 1954, 2. [↑](#endnote-ref-53)
54. Culbert Olson was the only Democratic governor between 1910 and 1959. He served one term (1939-1943) before being defeated by Earl Warren. The California Republican Party had a long history of progressivism within the party, which began with Hiram Johnson who first ran as a Republican in 1910 and then later as a Progressive in 1914. This legacy would carry across decades and into Warren’s administration in the 1940s. Warren advocated progressive policies like public health, conservation, and education, in addition to also supporting FEPC legislation in the state legislature. Schuparra, *Triumph of the Right,* 30. [↑](#endnote-ref-54)
55. George E. Sokolsky, “These Days…Bill Knowland and California Campaign,” *Washington Post and Times Herald*, May 8, 1958, A13. [↑](#endnote-ref-55)
56. Knight came into office when Governor Warren resigned to become Chief Justice of the Supreme Court in 1953; as lieutenant governor, Knight was the first in the line of succession. Knight would easily win his own term as governor in 1954. “Goodwill Knight’s Life of Service,” *Los Angeles Times,* May 25, 1970, A6. [↑](#endnote-ref-56)
57. Schuparra, *Triumph of the Right,* xvi. [↑](#endnote-ref-57)
58. Totton Anderson, “The 1958 Elections in California,” *Western Political Quarterly*,Vol. 12, No. 1, Part 2 (1959), 276–300. [↑](#endnote-ref-58)
59. In an interview with Clement Whitaker, he recalled that “Kyle was all for Knowland and all for Goodie getting the hell out of the race…Goodwin never was considered a part of the Los Angeles Republican establishment; he was always a little bit of an outsider. Goodwin was a little too moderate in some of his positions for the *Times* at that time…I think that when Knowland surfaced, Kyle figured that if he could elect Knowland, then the governor would be more responsive to him…” Oral History Interview with Clement Sherman Whitaker, Jr., September 27, 1988, State Government Oral History Program, 54-55. Whitaker was a public relations specialist, who began his career in 1944. Vice-President, and former U.S. Senator from California, Richard Nixon, also threw his endorsement behind Knowland. Perhaps Nixon’s support for Knowland was his retribution against Knight who, in 1956, refused to issue an endorsement of Nixon for vice-president. And even though Knowland initially held a third of California’s delegation (23 delegates) in his name, as did Nixon and Knight, Knowland finally agreed to release his delegates to Nixon, resulting in Nixon’s guaranteed nomination as Eisenhower’s running mate. It would only be when Eisenhower formally declared Nixon as his running mate that Knight begrudgingly agreed to release his delegates to Nixon. Montgomery and Johnson, *One Step from the White House,* 199-200. [↑](#endnote-ref-59)
60. Montgomery and Johnson, *One Step from the White House,* 26. [↑](#endnote-ref-60)
61. For a description of Nixon and Palmer’s roles in the “big switch,” see Halberstam, *The Powers That Be*. It should also be noted that Eisenhower remained silent on this state election. Personally, Eisenhower is said to have regarded Knowland as a “dolt” and “stupid.” Eisenhower, however, would praise his service in an open letter when Knowland left the Senate to run for governor. Schuparra, *Triumph of the Right,* 29. [↑](#endnote-ref-61)
62. “Rift Remains, Knight Says of Knowland,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, October 22, 1958, 2; “Knowland Makes Brown His Target,” *New York Times,* June 16, 1958, 10; “Knowland Drive Called Ruthless,” *New York Times,* August 10, 1958, 66. [↑](#endnote-ref-62)
63. “Knowland Home, Files Candidacy,” *New York Times,* March 22, 1958, 8. [↑](#endnote-ref-63)
64. “Knowland’s Personal Touch,” *Los Angeles Times,* February 14, 1958. [↑](#endnote-ref-64)
65. William Knowland, “Labor Should Be Free in Our Republic,” *The American Mercury,* March 1958, 5-7. [↑](#endnote-ref-65)
66. Schuparra, *Triumph of the Right;* Lisa McGirr, *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002). [↑](#endnote-ref-66)
67. Since commentators, historians, and political scientists refer to this issue as “right-to-work,” I too will adopt this term. For examples of scholarship that uses this phrase instead of “voluntary unionism,” see Schuparra, *Triumph of the Right;* Bjerre-Poulsen, *Right Face;* Jonathan Bell, *California Crucible: The Forging of Modern American Liberalism* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002). [↑](#endnote-ref-67)
68. Totton, “The 1958 Election in California,” 282. [↑](#endnote-ref-68)
69. “Right-to-work Issue: ’Right-To-Work’ Law Presently Favored By Narrow Margin,” The California Poll #231, April 2, 1958, University of California-Berkeley Data website, <http://ucdata.berkeley.edu/pubs/CalPolls/231.pdf>, Accessed June 28, 2014. [↑](#endnote-ref-69)
70. “’Right-to-work’ Issue: Controversial Measure Continues to Divide Public Opinion in State,” The California Poll #235, May 28, 1958, UC Berkeley Data website, <http://ucdata.berkeley.edu/pubs/CalPolls/235.pdf>, Accessed June 28, 2014. Support for “right-to-work” would decline as the November election approached. In August, 46% of Californians said they would vote no on Proposition 18, with only 34% voting yes. “‘Right-to-work’ Measure: Weight of Public Opinion Today Favors ‘No’ Vote on Controversial Proposition 18,” The California Poll #241, August 20, 1958, UC Berkeley Data website, <http://ucdata.berkeley.edu/pubs/CalPolls/241.pdf>, Accessed June 28, 2014. By October, a clear majority of 51% said they would vote against Proposition 18. “‘Right-to-work’ Measure: Latest Survey Shows Growing Sentiment on ‘No’ Side of Proposition 18,” The California Poll #245, October 1, 1958, UC Berkeley Data website, <http://ucdata.berkeley.edu/pubs/CalPolls/245.pdf>, Accessed June 28, 2014. By the end of October, 56% of survey respondents in California said they would reject Proposition 18. “‘Right-to-work’ Measure: Trend Against Passage of Proposition 18 Continues to Mount,” The California Poll #249, October 22, 1958, UC Berkeley Data website, <http://ucdata.berkeley.edu/pubs/CalPolls/249.pdf>, Accessed June 28, 2014. [↑](#endnote-ref-70)
71. “Democrats Organizing to Support Knowland,” *Los Angeles Times*, April 25, 1958, 11. According to the article, Earl Adams, who was the Los Angeles County Chairman of the Knowland-for-Governor Committee, claimed: “more than 25% of registered Democrats in Southern California will vote for Bill Knowland.” [↑](#endnote-ref-71)
72. “Republicans Warned of Union Drive,” *Los Angeles Times,* June 28, 1958, B1. [↑](#endnote-ref-72)
73. Schuparra, *Triumph of the Right,* 47. [↑](#endnote-ref-73)
74. “Sen. Knowland Accuses Foe of ‘Machine’ Plot,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, August 4, 1958, 10. [↑](#endnote-ref-74)
75. William Henry Chamberlin, “The Meaning of Knowland,” *Wall Street Journal,* June 5, 1958, 10. [↑](#endnote-ref-75)
76. “Sen. Knowland Accuses Foe of ‘Machine’ Plot,” *Chicago Daily Tribune,* August 4, 1958, 10; “Knowland Tells How He Will Win,” *New York Times,* August 31, 1958, 41. [↑](#endnote-ref-76)
77. “Knowland Drive Called Ruthless,” *New York Times,* August 10, 1958, 66; “Brown Asks FEP Stand of Opponent,” *Los Angeles Sentinel,* October 9, 1958, A16. [↑](#endnote-ref-77)
78. Keith T. Poole, “82nd Senate Roll Call Data,” Vote View website, [http://voteview.com/senate82.htm](http://voteview.com/house81.htm), Accessed December 31, 2013. [↑](#endnote-ref-78)
79. “Knowland Says Rights Measure Is Still Good,” *Los Angeles Times,* July 26, 1957, 1; For an overview of Knowland’s role in the passage of the 1957 Civil Rights Act, see Montgomery and Johnson, *One Step From the White House,* 213-219. [↑](#endnote-ref-79)
80. “We Need More Than That,” *Los Angeles Sentinel,* April 11, 1946, 7. [↑](#endnote-ref-80)
81. “Let’s Talk,” *Los Angeles Sentinel,* January 30, 1964, A6. [↑](#endnote-ref-81)
82. George E. Sokolsky, “Democrats Given California Edge,” *New York Times,* April 13, 1958, 52; “These Days…Bill Knowland and California Campaign,” *Washington Post and Times Herald,* May 8, 1958, A13. [↑](#endnote-ref-82)
83. In the first *Los Angeles Times* article printed after Knowland’s concession just before midnight on November 4, 1958, Brown’s lead was 120,000 votes. The article stated that Brown had estimated he would win by 500,000 votes. “Brown Elected!: Knowland Concedes; Democrats Predict Legislature Control,” *Los Angeles Times*, November 5, 1958, 1. In actuality, when all the numbers were in, Brown trounced Knowland by more than 1 million votes. Rarick, *California Rising,* 109. [↑](#endnote-ref-83)
84. After his loss in 1958, Knowland would still be involved in politics, most notably by serving as the head of the 1964 California delegation to the Republican National Convention. However, he was a private citizen. He returned to northern California to run his family’s newspaper, *The Oakland Tribune*. According to Montgomery and Johnson, Knowland “took up model trains, golf, boating, duck hunting…” and tried to make up for lost time with his family. Montgomery and Johnson, *One Step From the White House,* 260-262. [↑](#endnote-ref-84)
85. Brennan, *Turning Right in the Sixties: The Conservative Capture of the GOP,* 24. [↑](#endnote-ref-85)
86. Jonathan Schoenwald, *A Time for Choosing: The Rise of Modern American Conservatism* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2001), 124. [↑](#endnote-ref-86)
87. Oral History Interview with Hon. James D. Garibaldi, January 11 and 16, 1989, State Government Oral History Program, 49. Garibaldi served as a California State Assemblyman from 1935-1938 and later as a legislative advocate from 1946. He was still active at the time of the interview. Lou Cannon has also supported the idea that Brown would not have entered the race if he were running against Knight. He stated that the switch between Knowland and Knight “brought Brown, who had been leery of opposing Knight, into the governor’s race as the champion of the union shop.” Cannon, *Governor Reagan*, 130. [↑](#endnote-ref-87)
88. Oral History Interview with Hon. Thomas J. MacBride, April 21 1987, State Government Oral History Program, 52. [↑](#endnote-ref-88)
89. Oral History Interview with Hon. Thomas J. MacBride, April 21 1987, State Government Oral History Program, 52. [↑](#endnote-ref-89)
90. In addition to Knight, many other Republicans stayed away from right-to-work since many of them represented union members. Republican David Mulford recalled that Knowland’s “erroneous position…caused a lot of damage…I didn’t like what I saw, as a legislator. We were on the firing line up there, the assemblymen and the senators of the Republican party.” Oral History Interview with David Donald Mulford, April 11 1988, State Government Oral History Program, 11-12. Mulford served as an Assemblyman from 1957-1970. [↑](#endnote-ref-90)
91. Oral History Interview with David Donald Mulford, April 11 1988, State Government Oral History Program, 11-12. Mulford served as an Assemblyman from 1957-1970. Seealso Cannon, *Governor Reagan*, 130. [↑](#endnote-ref-91)
92. Schiesl, “Pat Brown,” 5. Brown was “bubbling over with enthusiasm” once he learned that Knowland was running as the Republican candidate for governor, likely because he knew that, if he entered the race, he would easily win. Rarick, *California Rising,* 98. [↑](#endnote-ref-92)
93. “Knowland Drive Called Ruthless,” *New York Times,* August 10, 1958, 66. [↑](#endnote-ref-93)
94. Anderson, “The 1958 Election in California,” 276. [↑](#endnote-ref-94)
95. Oral History Interview with Hon. Thomas J. MacBride, April 21 1987, State Government Oral History Program, 54. [↑](#endnote-ref-95)
96. One of the main activist groups that conservatives gained control of was the California Republican Assembly (CRA). According to Republican Marks, when the CRA began, it was “sort of the Warren-Knight-[U.S. Senator Thomas H.] Kuchel Republicans who we would regard as moderate, progressive Republicans.” After 1958, however, it became much more conservative. Oral History Interview with Milton Marks, January 24, 1996. State Government Oral History Program, 66. [↑](#endnote-ref-96)
97. Totton, “The 1958 Election in California,” 281. [↑](#endnote-ref-97)
98. Totton, “The 1958 Election in California,” 291. [↑](#endnote-ref-98)
99. Masket finds that there was a shift from bipartisanship to partisan polarization before and after the end of cross-filing in the California Assembly. Using fist dimension nominate scores that measure the distance between the parties on economic issues, Masket found significant overlap in how the two parties voted in 1953. Several Democrats voted more conservatively than moderate Republicans at times. He concluded that “the political center was a legitimate place for politicians to reside, and many chose to reside there.” After the end of cross-filing, however, the Assembly became highly polarized, “with virtually all Republicans to the far right, virtually all Democrats to the far left, and only a few legislators in the center. Masket, *No Middle Ground,* 91-93. Using Masket’s dataset of nominate scores for the California Assembly, I did not find any discernible partisan pattern with second dimension scores before and after the end of cross-filing. Seth Masket, “Datasets,” <http://mysite.du.edu/~smasket/Data.html>, Accessed June 22, 2014. [↑](#endnote-ref-99)
100. Stephen Cummings and Patrick Reddy, *California After Arnold* (New York, NY: Algora Publishing, 2009), 113. [↑](#endnote-ref-100)
101. Oral History Interview with Hon. Thomas J. MacBride, April 21 1987, State Government Oral History Program, 54. [↑](#endnote-ref-101)
102. According to Assemblyman Mulford, Knowland was told “by his own father to get off that right-to-work issue. But he was a very stubborn man, and he rode that issue.” Oral History Interview with David Donald Mulford, April 11 1988, State Government Oral History Program, 11. [↑](#endnote-ref-102)
103. Clouatre, *Presidential Upsets*, 10. [↑](#endnote-ref-103)
104. Marks asserted this during an interview. Oral History Interview with Milton Marks, January 24, 1996. State Government Oral History Program, 61. Marks served in the California Assembly from 1958-1966 and then the California Senate from 1967-1996. [↑](#endnote-ref-104)
105. Oral History Interview with Milton Marks, January 24, 1996. State Government Oral History Program, 62. [↑](#endnote-ref-105)
106. “Brown Signs Bill Ending Cross-Filing,” *Los Angeles Times,* May 6, 1959, 1. [↑](#endnote-ref-106)
107. Mark Brilliant, *The Color of America Has Changed: How Racial Diversity Shaped Civil Rights Reform in California, 1941-1978* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2010), 157. [↑](#endnote-ref-107)
108. For a discussion over Brown’s battle for FEPC see Rarick, *California Rising,* 123-125; Brilliant, *The Color of America Has Changed,* 160-161. [↑](#endnote-ref-108)
109. Daniel Martinez HoSang, *Racial Propositions: Ballot Initiatives and the Making of Postwar California* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2010), 61. [↑](#endnote-ref-109)
110. Edmund G. Brown Sr., “Years of Growth, 1939-1966: Law Enforcement, Politics and the Governor’s Office,” Oral History Transcript (1982), 493. [↑](#endnote-ref-110)
111. “Brown Signs Bill Ending Cross-Filing,” *Los Angeles Times,* May 6, 1959, 1. [↑](#endnote-ref-111)
112. Gaines and Cho, “Crossover Voting Before the Blanket,” 33. [↑](#endnote-ref-112)
113. “Cross-Filing System In California Is Abolished,” *Ocala Star-Banner,* April 24, 1959, 6. The roll call votes confirm the partisan nature of the 1959 vote to end cross-filing. Forty-five Democrats and 4 Republicans voted in favor of A.B. 118, while 1 Democrat and 28 Republicans voted against the bill. In the Senate, the bill passed 22-15, 21 Democrats and 1 Republican supported the bill and 4 Democrats and 11 Republicans voted against it. Gaines and Cho, “Crossover Voting Before the Blanket,” 33. [↑](#endnote-ref-113)
114. “Assemblyman Beck Will Ask Annual Budget And Legislative Session in Support of Warren,” *Sacramento Bee,* January 23, 1945, 1. [↑](#endnote-ref-114)
115. Masket, *No Middle Ground,* 81. [↑](#endnote-ref-115)