

Chapter 33 - Democratic Breakloose: The 1968 Election

Vietnam and race were the two poles of the 1968 presidential election. On the first issue, the three major candidates, Democratic Vice Pres. Hubert Humphrey, Republican former Vice Pres. Richard Nixon, and independent former Alabama Gov. George Wallace, all promised peace with honor, ranging from Humphrey's timid attempts at moderation of current American aggressiveness to Wallace's endorsement of greater ferocity. Humphrey bore the direct legacy and weight of Pres. Lyndon Johnson's war and Johnson's rejection of any new Humphrey initiatives. On the second issue, Humphrey had been a national voice for equal rights for African Americans since 1948, and Johnson had aggressively pushed equal rights legislation. Nixon stated support for equal rights while assuring white Americans he would not compel desegregation. Wallace was the national leader for white supremacy.¹

Wallace carried five Southern states, four of those Republican presidential candidate Barry Goldwater, who opposed the Civil Rights Act of 1964, took that year, plus Arkansas but less South Carolina, represented in the Senate by Strom Thurmond, Nixon's go-to in the South and the segregationist States' Rights presidential candidate of 1948. Wallace failed to be the spoiler of the presidential campaign, as Nixon took 31 more electoral votes than needed to win the presidency.

Nixon took majorities of the popular vote in only fifteen states, twelve of them in mountain and west north central states, but defeated second place Humphrey by seven-tenths of a percent of the popular vote. Humphrey had a majority of the popular vote in only five states, three in New England, plus the District of Columbia, voting in a presidential election for the second time. Arguably, Wallace's campaign as a Democratic former Governor cost Humphrey a victory, unless his largely racially motivated vote would have gone to Nixon as less racially liberal than Humphrey.

Nixon's narrow victory showed virtually no coattails in House elections. Republicans picked up a net of five House seats over the 1966 election, three in the South and two in the Border. While still chipping away at Democratic dominance in these regions, the Republican Party still held only 25% of Southern House seats and 38% of those in the Border. This compared to 53% in the remainder of the country. Southern Democrats kept 33% of Democratic House seats and the South plus the Border had 44%.

The breakdown of the Democratic presidential party was not reflected in the Democratic House races, whose candidates tended to break loose from the floundering Administration.

Thirteen of the fifteen incumbent members of the Class of '46 (Democrats Abraham Multer of New York and John Bell Williams of Mississippi having already left midway through the 90th Congress) chose to run for reelection in 1968.

Democrat Porter Hardy of Virginia on February 25, 1968, announced he would retire at the end of the 90th Congress. He would be 65 at that point. Presumably in good health, he would live another 27 years. Not facing another immediate redistricting, not having had a primary opponent since 1946, and having been reelected in 1966 without opposition, he said it seemed "like a good time to quit. The feeling was motivated in part by observing some of my elderly colleagues ... forcing themselves to continue their Congressional duties despite physical incapacities. I determined not to let myself get into that category." On the other hand, when asked by a reporter if he might run for governor, he did not dismiss the

¹ Phillips, 25. Gould, 4, 130, 132, 135, 149-50.

suggestion. But he did not run in 1969 when Virginia elected its first Republican governor since Reconstruction.²

Hardy's eleven terms resulted in a raft of investigations of the federal executive. More than anyone in the Class of '46, he was responsible for keeping presidential administrations on their toes. As such, he did a substantial service to the nation, but one major component of the nation that he did not serve was black citizens. He remained a white supremacist, while generally avoiding the rhetoric of one.

What Hardy did do after his announcement of retirement was to take two trips to 19 countries at a cost to the public of \$61,173. One was taken in May with the Subcommittee on National Defense Posture. The second was the more questionable. With the same Subcommittee but with his time quite short, from November 7 to December 1 he traveled to Mexico, Venezuela, Brazil, Ecuador, Tahiti, New Zealand, Antarctica, Australia, and the Philippines.³

Democrat Frank Karsten of Missouri announced his retirement on March 5, 1968. Like Hardy, he would serve out his term. He cited "personal reasons" for his departure. Karsten was previously nominated with a minimum of three-quarters of the vote and elected with at least 64% of the ballots since 1948, but he nonetheless encountered his third redistricting in four elections. A long redistricting battle under court order produced districts enacted in August 1967 that placed most black St. Louisians in Karsten's district. In December, the Federal court declared that plan unconstitutional and the redistricting struggle was on again. With no solution in sight, the court on March 4, 1968, ordered the 1967 plan to be used in 1968 and redistricting efforts to continue for the 1970 election. Karsten announced his retirement the next day. His successor in the First District would be African American Democrat Bill Clay.⁴

Karsten turned 56 four days after his term ended. He had spent his life in DC as student, staff, and representative and would remain in Washington as a lobbyist, initially for a federation of organizations representing Federal government employees in the New York City area.⁵

Hardy and Karsten were the only departures of Class members. The thirteen who ran for reelection all succeeded. While redistricting impelled Karsten out, seven of the thirteen found themselves in new districts yet survived. The most extensive redistricting was that for Democrat Carl Albert of Oklahoma. The State had not changed his District since 1952. As he rose in the Democratic leadership of the House, Oklahoma tried to preserve his electability as the population of his District shrank from 266,995 in 1950 to 227,692 in 1960. The Third Congressional District was now 41% under the optimal population of an Oklahoma district – "now" by 1960 figures and likely even less by 1968 measures. The 1967 legislature added a whopping nine counties to Albert's existing thirteen counties. This change did not reduce the presumed Democratic vote in the District, as eight of the original 13 counties had given majorities to Democratic presidential candidate John Kennedy in 1960, while five of the added nine did as well. And Albert's increased prominence in the House likely made him that rare member of the House known not only to his constituents. At any rate, the fact that Albert's new constituents constituted 74% of the population of his reconfigured district did not prevent his winning the 1968 primary with 70% of the vote and the election with 68%.

² CQWR, March 1, 1968, 424. *The Progress-Index*, February 26, 1968.

³ *The Daily Register* (Red Bank), March 14, 1969. CQWR, May 9, 1969, 695.

⁴ *Mexico Evening Ledger*, June 28, 1967; March 6, 1968. CQWR, February 9, 1968, 230-1; July 26, 1968, 2002-3. *Jefferson City Post-Tribune*, March 4, 1968.

⁵ CQWR, November 14, 1969, 2293.

Albert's primary opponent was Jon Marshall, whom the Representative appointed to the US Military Academy in 1954. Marshall had served a year in Vietnam and ran as a proponent of increased aggressiveness in the war.⁶ Albert's easy win was still his worst showing in a primary since 1952. He was not even opposed in the previous four primaries.

His Republican opponent was Gerald Beasley, 42, a physician and John Birch Society member. Beasley ran an ad whose sole subject was his opposition to gun control and another which opposed trade with communist nations. He outperformed every previous Republican opponent of Albert's. Oklahoma, as befits a Border State, which was competitive if largely Republican in the 1952-1960 period of political "normalcy," was in the process of finding a new Republican dominance in the era of wild election swings from 1964 to 1976. Albert's old District gave the Democrat Kennedy, albeit Roman Catholic, 54% in 1960 and the neighboring Texan Johnson 69% in 1964. His new District still gave a plurality, albeit only 39%, to Democrat Humphrey in 1968. Wallace came in third, but with a substantial 27%. Congressional Quarterly would feel the District was positive on Democratic economic policies, albeit "conservative on racial questions." Albert abandoned his segregationism for integrationism as he moved up in the Democratic hierarchy, but the slippages in his primary and election returns, even if his victories were comfortable, must have been a bit worrying.⁷

Texas' pattern over time was similar to Oklahoma's, even if the stasis it would reach in the 1990s would be a little less Republican. Both Democrats Olin Teague and Omar Burleson found themselves, as did Albert, with new districts in 1968. Unlike Albert, they had been redistricted just two years before. Their districts, as befitted House committee chairs, even if the committees were less critical to their districts than they might have been, were protected by the legislature and were greatly undersized, 40% below optimal for Teague and 31% below for Burleson, before the 1965 redraw. After that they were only 9% under and 10% under, respectively, but the Federal court found the 1965 redistricting unacceptable. In January 1966 the Court allowed the plan to be used in 1966 but demanded a new plan for 1968.⁸

In 1967 the Legislature sought to please the Court's concerns about variances from the standard, while making sure that Teague was assured of reelection. His district had been moved into the metropolitan counties of Dallas and Tarrant (Fort Worth) in 1965, and legislators feared those increasingly Republican counties would threaten the Representative. A House plan would have taken him out of Dallas and Tarrant and six other northern counties and move his district far to the south along the Gulf coast. His initial district was relatively compact and rural, with Teague's home in the very south end. In 1958 he gained three counties in the northwest. In 1966 he was moved into the metropolises and lost counties along the western side, and the District began to resemble a diving otter. Now some legislators wanted to protect him by leaving him with only three of his current counties and adding a lot of strange. Interestingly, the Dallas business community pressed to keep him in the County, arguing that his role on the Science and Astronautics Committee made him important to the aerospace industry in the metropolis.⁹ Teague was likely in agreement with the business people; he had won with pieces of the metropolitan counties and wanted to avoid a radical if well-meaning redistricting. In the end, Teague kept his piece of Tarrant, lost about 18,000 constituents in Dallas County, and added four, rather than eleven

⁶ *CQWR*, August 1, 1968, 2184-5.

⁷ *The Ada Weekly News*, October 24 & 31, 1968. *CQWR*, June 6, 1969, 911; December 25, 1970, 3072.

⁸ *CQWR*, September 16, 1966, 2122-3.

⁹ *Bryan Daily Eagle*, April 21, 1967. *The Austin American*, May 8, 1967. *McKinney Courier-Gazette*, May 15, 1967.

of the southern counties. Only about 13% of his new constituents were new to him, but the Sixth Congressional District evolved from an otter to an anaconda.

On March 10, 1967, the Speaker of the Texas House had led a delegation of legislators to Washington to meet with Texas representatives about redistricting. Over a catfish and hush puppies dinner hosted by Rep. Wright Patman, he and 18 other Federal representatives conferred with the legislators. The challenge was to satisfy the Court without putting two Democratic representatives in the same district. Burleson was at risk of finding himself paired with Rep. Graham Purcell of Wichita Falls. As it turned out, the Legislature was successful in avoiding double-bunking, but at the consequence of Teague's anaconda, the Tenth District's Casper the Friendly Ghost, and the Eleventh District's bird, as in middle finger. These shapes occasioned some vocal skepticism at the time, though in the fullness of events they would pale beside the computer-drawn gerrymanders of the 21st Century.¹⁰ Burleson's Seventeenth District, which had doubled in geography in 1958, was now larger than West Virginia. At least it was compact. Despite the addition of seven new counties, only 12% of the inhabitants of the new district were new to Burleson.

The fallacy of the redistricting was that, although Burleson's district was now only two-tenths of a per cent below optimal, Teague was 8% over, a figure that boded ill for its continuation as drawn.

Teague, as in 1966, faced no opposition for the nomination. His district was similar in its 1968 presidential voting to Albert's. Humphrey eked out a plurality of 38.8% over Nixon's 38.7%, Wallace took 22.5%, and the Representative had no general election opponent. While Albert was necessarily loyal to the national Democratic ticket, Teague withheld his support from Humphrey, saying it was because the presidential candidate would not repudiate Johnson's current Attorney General Ramsey Clark, whom the Representative felt was too permissive of urban rioters, and because Humphrey made "irresponsible remarks" about winding down the Vietnam War. Perhaps his rejection of Humphrey helped insulate him from Republican opposition, but since 1952 he had only one such, in 1964.¹¹

Burleson's new counties brought him no primary opposition, unlike his experience in 1964 and 1966, nor did it unearth a general election opponent, but that was the case in 1966 as well. Humphrey carried Burleson's district more easily than Teague's with a 44% plurality. Wallace ran third with 18%. Nixon's share at 38% was almost the same as in Teague's district. While the explicit racism of Wallace's history and campaign was limited in its effect in the District, and Burleson's call for equal rights activist Martin Luther King Jr's call for a new march on Washington to not "be permitted, peaceful or otherwise" may have been due to its primary focus as an antiwar rally, American history teaches that one should never discount the influence of racism, particularly in light of Burleson's consistent opposition to equal rights legislation.¹²

Louisiana Democrat Otto Passman's District had not changed since his initial election in 1946. A 1964 suit to force redistricting finally produced a July 1966 enactment that did not apply until the 1968 election. Passman's Fifth Congressional District, 15% under the standard population, was given two new parishes, and changed to 5% below the standard. The new parishes were 12% of the population of the new District. As in 1966 but unlike the four cycles before that, Passman drew a primary opponent. Anthony Bruscato, 29, was another political novice, but an attorney rather than a grocer with a drinking problem and ran an active campaign. Bruscato ran on issues of economic importance to the District, accusing Passman of

¹⁰ *Lubbock Avalanche-Journal*, March 11, 1967. *The Odessa American*, March 13, 1967. *Brownwood Bulletin*, May 17, 1967.

¹¹ *CQWR*, June 6, 1969, 916. January 22, 1971, 178. *The Texas Observer*, October 18, 1968.

¹² *San Antonio Express*, January 25, 1968. Branch (2006), 669. *CQWR*, June 6, 1969, 917.

inactivity. It is difficult to unseat an entrenched incumbent on such cool-button issues; one might conclude that the young lawyer may have been more interested in an opportunity for professional advertising. Still, Passman was held to 71%, a 16-point drop from his performance against the grocer.¹³

No one filed against the Representative in the November election, keeping his perfect string perfect. Passman appears to have kept his head down in the presidential contest, even as the Louisiana Democratic Party was struggling. Newly re-elected Democratic Gov. John McKeithen, though a declared segregationist, remained loyal to Pres. Johnson and then to Humphrey while losing control of the State Party to Wallace supporters. The Governor regained control by running for president as a favorite son candidate. The State, nevertheless, went for Wallace as did Passman's district, where the Alabaman took 56% of the vote. Humphrey still beat Nixon, 24% to 20%.¹⁴

Ohio Republican William McCulloch also encountered redistricting. New 1966 districts still left his District 12% below the optimum population. Federal district court upheld the State's districts despite a population range of 43 points, but the US Supreme Court reversed the decision *per curiam* in December 1967. The General Assembly moved expeditiously to enact a new plan the following month with only a 2.4-point range. McCulloch acquired three townships in metropolitan Montgomery County, which constituted only 9% of his new District's population but boosted his conformance to within 1% of the standard. McCulloch's 1966 primary opponent, his first since his initial nomination, challenged him again and knocked two more points off the incumbent's percentage, getting 22%. For the first time ever, McCulloch had no Democratic opponent, even as Humphrey took 36% of the district vote and Wallace's 11% held Nixon to 53%.¹⁵

Democrat Joe Evins in Tennessee, like McCulloch, had a new 1968 district on top of his new 1966 District but did not find it moving into a metropolitan county. On the other hand, his new District was much different from his old one. The plan used in 1966 was declared unconstitutional in December 1965, but the Federal panel allowed it to be used. The Court required a new plan by June 1, 1967, but the General Assembly drug its feet until its constitutionally required adjournment on May 26 when the "tumultuous House session marked by heated debate, wild parliamentary maneuvering, and an attempt by one representative to climb a ladder and [re]start the House clock" failed to produce a new plan. On June 2 the Court ordered its own plan into effect. Amid challenges, the Court revised its design on July 13.¹⁶ Evins' new District, his fourth configuration since initial election, took away six counties and added five. Shifted relentlessly northeast, Evins' District now included only four of his original eleven counties in its current arrangement of 21. Yet he had encountered only three contested primaries since his initial one and none that held him to less than 79%. Significant general election opposition was even more rare. There had been three contested elections, with Evins' worst showing at 88% and none of the challengers were regular Republicans.

This year, 1968, was a little different. True, there was no primary opponent, but there was an actual candidate of the Republican Party on the November ballot following an actual Republican primary. Durelle Boles was a bankrupt used car dealer in Knoxville. With the new district, Evins' territory scooted close to

¹³ *The Shreveport Times*, May 22, 1964; August 11, 1968. *Lake Charles American-Press*, July 7, 1966. *The Alexandria Daily Town Talk*, June 20, July 18, August 17, 1968. *The Monroe News-Star*, August 14, 1968.

¹⁴ *CQWR*, January 5, 1968, 19-20; April 19, 1968, 883; August 23, 1968, 2248; June 6, 1969, 898.

¹⁵ *CQWR*, December 15, 1967, 2569; February 2, 1968, 167; June 6, 1969, 910.

¹⁶ *Kingsport News*, May 27, June 3, 1967. *CQWR*, July 21, 1967, 1261.

Knoxville without including the city. More importantly, by the shifting of his District northeast, Evins moved into traditional Republican territory. Nine of his current counties voted for Nixon in 1960. None of the counties in his original district had. Boles, however, was perhaps not the best Republican to take advantage of this change. He had feinted at a run for the US Senate in 1964. He would actually try unsuccessfully for the Republican nominations for Senate again in 1970 and 1978. Against Evins he managed only 24% of the vote.¹⁷

Nixon got 39% of the vote in the new District in 1968, a plurality. Another threat to Evins, whose opposition to equal rights wavered at times, was the performance of Wallace in the District; he took 32% and ran first in eight counties. Humphrey ran third in the District and first in only two counties. DeKalb, Evins' home County, gave a plurality to Nixon.¹⁸

The District of Democrat Harold Donohue of Worcester, Massachusetts, pushed deeper into the penumbra of Boston with its 1962 redistricting. Now with that plan found unconstitutional by a Federal panel in February 1967, a new drawing pulled his District back from Boston and shifted it south to the Rhode Island line. Losing a city and three towns, he gained 18 towns, and his new constituents were 23% new to him. For the first time since 1950 he had a primary opponent. Joseph Casdin was not, however, from the new territory. A four-term Mayor of Worcester, Donohue's home, he ran as a peace candidate. Donohue, himself, was shifting slightly away from his support for Pres. Johnson's policy on the war. Casdin took only 30% of the vote, but that was Donohue's worst showing since his initial nomination.¹⁹

Donohue's almost inevitable Republican loser (there were none twice, in 1962 and 1966) was Howard Miller, 31, who was brought into the District with the new configuration. He failed to get the Republican nomination for the House in his old District in 1964 but succeeded in 1966 when he achieved 29% against Donohue's friend Philip Philbin. A chemical engineer and recent law school graduate and an active citizen of Franklin, he managed 39% of the vote in 1968, outpolling Nixon by four points in the District. It was Donohue's worst showing against a Republican since 1956. One thing the Representative did not have to worry about was the Wallace vote; the Alabaman took 3% in the District.²⁰

The remainder of the Class's incumbents kept their old districts in 1968, though for Democrats Robert Jones of Alabama, Edward Garmatz of Maryland, Bryan Dorn of South Carolina, and Watkins Abbitt of Virginia, those districts were only two years old.

The shift of Garmatz' District into the suburbs in 1966 did not produce his primary opponent in 1966, and he was not even opposed for the nomination in 1968. The Representative faced no election challenger in 1966; he did in 1968, but Republican James Chew came from the City of Baltimore as well. Chew, 41, was a disabled veteran and chose his issue to be Garmatz' alleged neglect of the Merchant Marine, perhaps not a winning strategy for the prime defender of that sector in the House. Chew was also a newish Republican, having been a Democrat and part of Garmatz' organization in 1966. His 19% was the best Republican showing since the last time there was a Republican opponent to the Representative in 1960.

¹⁷ *Kingsport Times*, April 13, 1964; July 1, 1965; August 1, 1968. *Nashville Tennessean*, August 8, 1970; June 12, 1978.

¹⁸ *CQWR*, June 6, 1969, 915.

¹⁹ *CQWR*, February 24, 1967, 285; September 20, 1968, 2504. *Nashua Telegraph*, August 26, 1968. *Fitchburg Sentinel*, September 11, 1968. *The Sun* (San Bernardino), September 18, 1968.

²⁰ *Fitchburg Sentinel*, September 11, 1964; November 1, 1966. Barone, Ujifusa, and Matthews (1972), 345. *CQWR*, October 4, 1968, 2653; June 6, 1969, 899.

Garmatz backed Humphrey, who carried the District, but Wallace took 20% there. Nixon topped Chew by ten points.²¹

Garmatz' consistent opposition to open housing legislation may have insulated him against Wallaceite opposition, but Democrat Robert Jones had a larger problem. Alabama's favorite son and die-hard segregationist presidential candidate was vacuuming up most all of the Democratic votes in the State. He would get 70% of the presidential vote in Jones' District in November. Humphrey would get 12%. Jones, usually a national Democratic loyalist, even as he continued to vote against equal rights, could not afford to support Wallace, for fear of his seniority in the House (see John Bell Williams), nor oppose Wallace for fear of his constituents. Jones' solution was silence, except that he pledged to vote for Wallace if the election went to the House, which would happen if no candidate received a majority of the electoral vote. In a sort of equivalency, Wallace endorsed Jones for reelection.²²

Jones avoided a contest for nomination; he had not had one since 1946 except for the two cycles when Alabama ran all House candidates at-large. But in the general election he had the novel experience of facing three opponents. Even more innovative was that none of them was a Republican. Ken Hearn, an aerospace engineer, Huntsville having become a center of rocketry thanks to the Army's Redstone Arsenal and the relocation of former Nazi Wernher von Braun's German colleagues there, was the candidate of the Alabama Conservative Party. Charlie Burgess was the contender of the National Democratic Party of Alabama, a predominantly African American organization, though Burgess was white. Richard Pella ran on the ticket of the American Independent Party.²³

The Alabama Conservative Party was organized in about 1967 and centered on Huntsville, whose eleven-year fluoridation of its municipal water service the Party sought to reverse. The National Democratic Party of Alabama (NDPA) was formed in late 1967 as a vehicle for the support of Humphrey for President, given that the State Democratic Party was supporting Wallace. The Alabama Secretary of State refused to list the NDPA electors until overruled by the US Supreme Court. The American Independent Party (AIP) called itself the same as the name chosen by the Wallace campaign for its position on the ballots of most other states; in Alabama Wallace ran as the Democratic Party candidate. The Alabama version of AIP were even more extreme white supremacists than Wallace. This party filed a slate of four unpledged electors. Just to confuse matters further, a group calling itself the Alabama Independent Party placed electors on the ballot for Humphrey as did the NDPA but refused to cooperate in combining the slates as the NDPA suggested.²⁴ The Alabama Independent Party did not vie for the House seat. Jones was reelected with 76% of the vote, Hearn had 15%, Burgess 6%, and Pell 3%.

Democrat Abbitt was less dominated than Jones by concerns about Wallace's run, but it still presented something of a quandary. Abbitt avoided supporting the Democratic presidential nominee for years while also skirting the Charybdis of publicly backing the Republican. While, with the arguable exception of Republican presidential candidate Barry Goldwater in 1964, the Republican nominees were not active segregationists, Wallace was and thus aligned with Abbitt's support for white supremacy. On the other

²¹ CQWR, October 4, 1968, 2588; October 25, 1968, 2930; June 6, 1969, 899. *The Salisbury Times*, April 2, 1962. *Evening Capital*, September 12, 1968.

²² CQWR, June 6, 1969, 886. *The Anniston Star*, November 7, 1968.

²³ CQWR, October 23, 1970, 2589. *The Anniston Star*, July 21, November 4, 1968.

²⁴ *Hadnott v. Amos*. "Fluoridation News." *The Anniston Star*, August 13, September 11, 1968. *The New York Times*, December 10, 1967. *The Odessa American*, October 20, 1968. CQWR, March 8, 1968, 489.

hand, Humphrey was on the Virginia ballot as the nominee of the Democratic Party. Unsurprisingly, Abbitt, the Virginia Democratic Chair, avoided endorsing anyone for President. Wallace led his district with 36%, with 33% for Humphrey, and 31% for Nixon.²⁵

No opponent emerged for Abbitt's renomination for the House, unlike two years before, but black attorney S.W. Tucker again contested the election, getting 28% of the vote. Tucker ran as an independent against Abbitt in 1964, when he received 31%. Both the Clerk of the House of Representatives, which this work uses for its Federal general election results, and the Virginia Department of Elections website, historical.elections.virginia.gov, list Tucker as a Republican, although newspaper reports of the election consistently identified Tucker as an independent candidate. It was reported that the district Republican committee decided 12-5 not to field a candidate and one of the members said "he would gladly welcome Mr. Abbitt into the Republican Party." Tucker himself endorsed Humphrey. It seems that Abbitt had yet to face a Republican opponent.²⁶

The primary challengers that Democrat Blatnik of Minnesota supposedly attracted by his support for Voyageurs National Park were William Ojala, 42, an attorney, and Edward Erickson, 36, an electronics engineer. Perhaps the National Park attracted Erickson's candidacy, as his primary concern was gun control, arguing that such would soon make it too expensive to hunt. Ojala, however, was more concerned with the war, campaigning for an end to bombing and for military de-escalation. Blatnik had moved into the de-escalation camp, but his stated position in the campaign was a nebulous one of "winning the peace."²⁷ It was Blatnik's first primary contest since 1946. He took 69% to Ojala's 27% and Erickson's 3%,

Republicans failed to challenge Blatnik in 1966 for the first time. They returned in 1968 with James Hennen, 29, an automobile dealer. His stated positions on Vietnam, gun control, and Voyageurs were thoughtful and balanced.²⁸ Despite "a strenuous campaign," Hensen was predicted to fail against Blatnik, who

talks the language of the Iron Range and has the district in his blood. Very much the old-fashioned campaigner, he delights audiences, with dialect jokes, many of which involve his father, and ignore the opposition completely. A Blatnik speech, boiled down, is usually a cataloguing of the numerous federal benefits the congressman has helped obtain for his district, and his work in the field of natural resource conservation.²⁹

Blatnik prevailed with 68%, a very consistent performance for the Representative. Minnesotan Humphrey carried the District with 67%.³⁰

Dorn, well past his filing deadline, was still casting eyes at one of South Carolina's seats in the Senate. Sen. Fritz Hollings, elected to a vacancy in 1966 and facing a Democratic primary for the full term in 1968, had already made some enemies. He had strongly criticized the President's conduct of the war and had fought hard against the confirmation of Thurgood Marshall as the first black Supreme Court justice. But

²⁵ *The Washington Post, Times-Herald*, February 20, 1969. *CQWR*, June 6, 1969, 918.

²⁶ *The Progress-Index*, June 27, July 20, November 5, 1968. *CQWR*, October 11, 1968, 2713.

²⁷ *Minneapolis Tribune*, July 13, September 4, 1968. *The St. Cloud Daily Times*, July 9, 1968.

²⁸ *Minneapolis Tribune*, September 4, 1968.

²⁹ *The Minneapolis Star*, October 26, 1968.

³⁰ *CQWR*, June 6, 1969, 901.

once again Dorn stuck with his House seat. No one opposed him for the nomination, but the Republicans planned a “major effort” against the Representative.³¹

Republicans, however, did not nominate a candidate cleanly. At their District Convention on March 15, Grady Ballard, the Party chair of Pickens County, sought the nod, but a motion was made to defer the choice until another convention on March 28. Ballard withdrew his name in a huff then tossed his hat back in after the name of Rev. Roger Newell of First Baptist Church in Calhoun Falls was moved for the position. The deferral held, however, and on the 28th John Grisso, who was the nominee in 1966, beat Ballard and Newell on the first ballot. Grisso ran less against Dorn than against Pres. Johnson and Vice Pres. Humphrey and tying the Representative to them. Dorn emphasized his support for the District, particularly the textile industry, and wanted to talk about the Soviet suppression of Prague Spring. The strategies of both Grisso and Dorn were complicated by George Wallace’s campaign, as neither wanted to alienate the supporters of the Alabaman. Grisso needed to tiptoe because of his reliance on Sen. Strom Thurmond’s active support, the Senator strongly backing Nixon. And Dorn, as was the case with Jones, needed to avoid endangering his seniority in the House as a Democrat. Grisso, without endorsing Wallace, said he would get that vote. Dorn chose the Jones commitment to vote the way his District voted if the presidential election ended up in the House.³²

Wallace took the District with 41%, Nixon getting 36% and Humphrey 23%.³³ Dorn bested Humphrey by 43 points while Grisso failed not only to get the Wallace vote but ran four points behind Nixon. An independent candidate for the House got 2% of the ballots.

Wisconsin Republican Glenn Davis had no primary opposition, and his share of the vote in the general election dropped only one point from 1966 to 63%. His opponent was Carol Baumann, 35, director of the Institute of World Affairs at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. Baumann accused Davis of voting against “almost every major bill and program designed to alleviate America’s ‘NOW’ problems – housing, urban development, poverty and equal job opportunities.” Davis ran against urban rioting. He bested Nixon’s percentage in the District by nine points. Baumann got one point less than Humphrey. The difference was Wallace’s eight per cent.³⁴

There was one other member of the Class of ’46 in the 1968 races for the House of Representatives. Democrat Laurie Battle, who served four terms in the House from Birmingham, Alabama, before losing a Senate primary to incumbent John Sparkman, sought to return to the lower house. In 1966 Rep. Howard Smith of Virginia hired him as staff director and counsel of the House Rules Committee. But Smith was defeated for renomination in the primary in a radically redrawn district in July 1966. The Democratic nominee then lost to Republican William Scott. Smith did not endorse his Democratic conqueror nor Scott in 1966, but a letter of Smith’s was printed in a newspaper just before the election and then circulated by Scott’s campaign which disparaged the “mud-slinging, character assassinating campaign of libel and abuse” in Smith’s primary.³⁵

³¹ *CQWR*, February 23, 1968, 348-9.

³² *The Index-Journal*, March 14, 16, 29, April 6, July 15 & 31, August 28, September 27, October 9 & 25, 1968. *CQWR*, October 11, 1968, 2709.

³³ *CQWR*, June 6, 1969, 915.

³⁴ *Waukesha Freeman*, June 26, September 6, October 15, November 1, 1968. *CQWR*, June 6, 1969, 920.

³⁵ *CQWR*, April 26, 1968, 961. Dierenfield, 221.

Smith had opted to change in 1966 to a primary from convention nomination for the first time in sixteen years “out of a sense of fair play; a desire to attract the new constituency of Fairfax County, which historically shunned the convention system; and misguided overconfidence,” his biographer would write. In 1968, Eighth District Democrats shifted back to convention. Scott reportedly maintained ties with Smith’s supporters, though Smith still did not endorse the Republican. Battle began to appear around the District in association with prominent supporters of Smith and the Byrd organization. Andrew McCutcheon, 40, a congressional aide and Johnson Administration lobbyist, described as “moderate” or “moderate conservative,” won the Democratic nomination in convention over Battle 132.5 to 87.5 with two minor candidates getting 42 votes. County delegations operated under a unit rule which may have doomed Battle’s candidacy. Smith attended the Convention but left before McCutcheon’s acceptance speech.³⁶ Scott handily defeated McCutcheon. Battle stayed on with the Rules Committee until 1976.

The 109 members of the Class of ’46 was now shrunken to 13 who would return to the 91st Congress. The two Republicans, McCulloch of Ohio and Davis of Wisconsin, remained from the 90th. The two Northern Democrats, Donohue of Massachusetts and Blatnik of Minnesota, remained. Two of the three Border Democrats, Garmatz of Maryland and Albert of Oklahoma, returned, as did seven of the eight Southern Democrats – Jones of Alabama, Passman of Louisiana, Dorn of South Carolina, Evins of Tennessee, Abbitt of Virginia, and Teague and Burleson of Texas. In age they ranged from Dorn at 52 to Passman at 68 at the start of their twelfth congress.

Albert was the “permanent chair” of the 1968 Democratic National Convention in Chicago. The normal practice was for the Speaker of the House to chair the Convention, but McCormack was 76 years old. Albert was McCormack’s heir apparent to the speakership and became the Convention chair. After midnight on the second day of the Convention, the Platform Committee’s report came up on the agenda; the timing, it was reported, was to keep the anticipated conflict off primetime TV. Between the platform’s support of Pres. Johnson’s prosecution of the Vietnam War, the opposition of some delegations to that, the presentation of a minority plank on the war, the anti-War demonstrations outside the Convention, and the fact that Albert was somewhat ill, the gathering got out of hand. Chicago Mayor Richard Daley, seated immediately in front of the podium with the hosting Illinois delegation, sent his lieutenant Rep. Dan Rostenkowski to restore order. Rostenkowski at 6’3” was a much larger physical presence than the 5’4” Albert. Albert would claim that he handed the gavel to the Chicagoan. Others would report that Rostenkowski seized the gavel. The news media were not kind to Albert’s difficulties in controlling a rancorous and tired convention.³⁷

³⁶ Dierenfield, 210-1, 227. *CQWR*, February 23, 1968, 352; May 10, 1968, 1093; October 11, 1968, 2774. *The Progress-Index*, April 20, May 5 & 6, 1968.

³⁷ The Convention begins with a temporary chair and then elects the permanent chair. Lindy Boggs, the wife of Platform Chair Hale Boggs and seated on the podium, gave a sympathetic account of Albert’s situation on pages 217-8. Somewhat less sympathetic is Thomas O’Neill’s version on page 215. Albert’s published account is on pages 302-6. A more contemporaneous report from Albert is in an interview on August 13, 1969, on pages 10-3. Press reports include *Garden City Telegram*, August 28, 1968; *Independent* (Gallup), September 5, 1968; *Evening Capital*, September 7, 1968. *The New York Times*, February 6, 2000, provided a recap at Albert’s death.

Members of the Class of '46 who did not return to the House after 1968:

Porter Hardy was focused on governmental performance, as his frequent investigations attested. Other interests were foreign aid and surviving relatives of veterans. Three of his five enacted resolutions dealt with survivors, the others with a study of governmental operations and retirement of House staff. He spoke 419 times on the floor in his eleven terms and moved 33 amendments. An amazing 28 were accepted. Two addressed survivors, 14 foreign aid. Also in the mix was citizen housing (two), Army housing, war powers, the Defense Production Act, boat safety, surplus property disposal, military construction, Demonstration Cities (two), and NASA. Almost all of these were concerned with administration reporting on these activities. Twelve of his 49 public bills were enacted and dealt with survivor benefits, veterans pensions, peanut growing, Naval medical personnel, Naval construction, the Defense Production Act, and purely local matters (six); another was vetoed. Eleven of his 33 private bills became law. On key votes, Hardy was with Democrats 334 times (159 with only Southerners, 53 with Northerners), Republicans 30 times, and missed 19. He was contrary in opposing two increases in benefits for veterans with non-service connected disabilities, the Colorado River project, and the restoration of foreign aid funds, and in supporting the transfer of the Maritime Administration to the new Department of Transportation. His rated voting was slightly to the left of the bulk of Southern Democrats in the Class.

Frank Karsten's 22 years in the House do not seem to have lived up to his early billing, at least in what is public; he was submerged for the last 14 years in Ways and Means. His level of floor participation was low, 169 events and two amendments, one of which was accepted addressing the budgetary process. This and housing were his primary focus. The budgetary process was one of his five enacted public bills out of 92 introduced. The others were on the expenses of civil servants, veterans, tariffs on mica, and narcotics. He introduced twelve resolutions; the only one enacted was a eulogy. Four of his 13 private bills became law. Karsten voted 362 times with Democrats (212 with only Northerners, three with Southerners), four times with Republicans, and missed 19 votes. He was contrary in opposing summary dismissal of National Security Agency employees, termination of Food for Peace funds with countries that traded with North Vietnam, and outlawing travel to incite a riot. Karsten's rated voting was far and away the most liberal of Border Democrats and only slightly less so than that of the most liberal Northern Democrats.

Abraham Multer was phenomenally active. He spoke 1441 times on the floor and moved 85 amendments. Twenty-three were accepted, covering the District of Columbia (five), the Defense Production Act (four), Demonstration Cities (three), area redevelopment (two), the involvement of banks with lotteries (two), sales of government surplus, export controls, B'nai B'rith, veterans housing, credit unions, boycotts of Israel, and insured savings. He introduced 1529 public bills, the most per session of any member of the Class by 30%; his batting average was low, but nine were enacted, addressing the District of Columbia (six), the Archaeological Institute, members' expenses, and banking. Seven of 213 resolutions (the most per session in the Class) became law – three dealing with the Banking and Currency Committee, one each on the District of Columbia, the disposal of government surplus, House staff, and the death of John Kennedy. Of his 350 private bills (once again, the most of any Class member per session), 23 were enacted (first in Class). Multer focused on a variety of issues: housing, the Defense Production Act, Israel, banking, the District of Columbia, and Demonstration Cities. He voted 333 times with Democrats (200 with Northerners, three with Southerners), once with Republicans, and missed eight votes. He and John Carroll were the most thoroughly Northern Democratic in their voting. He was contrary in opposing the Wood Anti-Subversive Bill, the Eisenhower Doctrine, summary dismissal of National Security Agency employees, funding for the House Un-American Activities Committee, broadening the

Internal Security Act, and the veto override to increase the pension for veterans requiring constant care as a result of non-service-connected disabilities. His rated voting was tied with most liberal in the Class.

John Bell Williams was a counterpoint to Multer. A white supremacist and budget quibbler, he also worked on matters of food safety, universal military training, and most importantly the aviation industry. He was decidedly active, speaking on the floor 754 times and moving 42 amendments. Seventeen were accepted, addressing rent control, requirements on air time for the Air Force, airports, equal pay for women, loyalty oaths, and the funding of international organizations (four times), Indian affairs (twice), the Department of Labor, the Bonneville power project, the Interior Department, the Coast Guard, airports, and the budget in general. Thirteen of 235 public bills were enacted, covering civil aeronautics (thrice), hospital construction (twice), the Railway Labor Act (twice), food safety, air travel rates, the District of Columbia, and local matters (thrice). None of his 27 resolutions were enacted, but five of his 44 private bills were. He voted 260 times with Democrats (185 times with Southerners, nine with Northerners), 74 times with Republicans, and missed 25 votes. He was contrary in opposing Interim Foreign Aid, the Mutual Security Program, the Eisenhower Doctrine, the Peace Corps, and the presidential continuity amendment. John Gunther thought him liberal in 1946, but Williams' rated voting was the second most conservative of the Class's Southern Democrats.