

Chapter 5 - Special Elections

Ninety new members were elected to the 80th Congress on November 5, 1946; one, Olin Teague, was elected earlier. Thomas Stanley and Burr Harrison of Virginia and James Scoblick of Pennsylvania were elected on November 5 to vacancies in special elections, concurrent with the regular elections, and took office in the 79th Congress on certification, though their oaths of office as with Teague were delayed until the 80th House was in session on January 3, 1947.

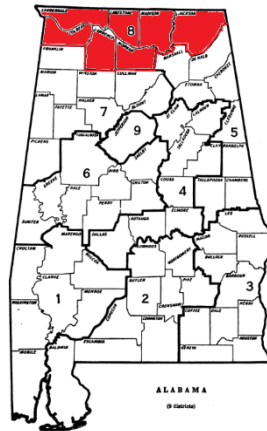
Fifteen members of the Class of '46 joined the 80th Congress through special elections after November 5. Eight succeeded on the deaths of incumbent representatives. Four stepped into vacancies when predecessors were elected to other offices: the Senate, a governorship, a mayoralty, and a state judgeship. Three filled vacancies resulting from presidential appointments, two to district courts and one to the Federal Communications Commission.

There are no vice-representatives and no appointments to vacancies in the House; all representatives are elected by voters in their districts. In thirteen of the fifteen cases there was a partisan nominating process, six by primary, seven by committee. The remaining two were chosen in free-for-all elections. Only two faced no overt competition for nomination or election. Only one of the special elections resulted in a partisan turnover.



Robert Jones

Source: *Pocket Directory* (1951)



Alabama 8th Cong. Dist.

Source: *Congressional Directory* (1948)

The death of Sen. John Bankhead of Alabama on June 12, 1946, between the primary and its run-off, led to outgoing Gov. Chauncey Sparks appointing his highway director, George Swift, to the vacancy. Swift did not contest the special election called for the same day, November 5, as the regular election. Jim Folsom, the new Governor apparent, and Lister Hill, the State's other Senator, supported Rep. John Sparkman for the vacancy, who squeaked through the special primary on July 30 and won the special Senate election at the same time he was being reelected to his House seat without opposition.¹

Robert Jones, 34 and a gunnery officer, was out of the Navy in February. He had been a county judge before the War and was reelected in 1945 while still in the service; he resumed the bench after discharge. His father was a dry goods merchant in Scottsboro. In August, Jones filed for Sparkman's House vacancy

¹ Virginia Hamilton, 145. Sparkman's multiple candidacy was allowed by Alabama law.

and found himself competing on September 24 for the Democratic nomination with six other men. One was a County Commissioner. One was a State Senator endorsed by Labor. One had been a secretary to Sparkman. Bradley Twitty was endorsed by Folsom and would eventually write two books about the Governor. Two were elected prosecutors; George Johnson's district including three of the counties in the Congressional District.²

There were few if any issue differences even as the central matter of Southern life and politics arose in the midst of the campaign. On August 10 a race riot broke out in Athens in the District. Two white brothers and a black man got into an "altercation" on Saturday afternoon. The black man fled and the police arrested the two brothers. White folks gathered and chased after and injured various black folks, 50 to 100 by one account. The State Highway Patrol was called in as well as police from other towns. The mob advanced on the jail, demanding the release of the brothers, which was done. Nine or ten of the mob were arrested. The prosecutor, who was House candidate Johnson, had a grand jury return sixteen indictments against whites on August 23. The trials were set first for October and then continued to 1947.³

The Eighth Congressional District stretched along the Tennessee border from Mississippi to Georgia. Largely rural, the biggest city in 1940 had 17,000 people and the largest in 1950 would count 24,000, it was nevertheless benefitting from the electricity and flood control work of the New Deal's Tennessee Valley Authority. Wages from manufacturing were outpacing farm income by 1947, but average median family income in 1949 would be only \$1549. Half of the employment in the District was in agriculture, and half of the cotton farms were operated by tenants. The District was the whitest in the State, the black population holding at 19% and, largely as a result, the District's politics were the least racist.

There were seven counties in the District, and six had a champion in the House race. Colbert County had two. Jones ran first, in large part because his county, Jackson, had a higher voter turnout than all but Colbert County, and he took 97% of the Jackson County vote. The next best friends and neighbors vote was prosecutor Jeff Smith's 70% in Madison County, the most populous in the District, but whose voting turnout lagged Jackson's. Solicitor Johnson took 65% in his home county. Jones got 23% of the vote District-wide which placed him first against second place finisher Sen. Jim Smith, the Labor candidate, of Colbert County, who took 18%. Jones, with 60%, swamped Jim Smith in the run-off on October 22, and had no opponent in the general election on January 29, 1947. He would take the oath in the House on February 5.⁴

Rep. Robert Henry died in Madison, Wisconsin, on November 20, 1946, at age 56, in his first term in the House. He had been reelected to the 80th Congress fifteen days earlier though ill and unable to campaign since the primary.⁵

The Second Congressional District extended from Milwaukee exurbs to the State capital in Madison. Madison, the largest city, had had 67,000 people in 1940 and would reach 96,000 in 1950, but farm income in mid-decade still slightly outweighed manufacturing wages in the District. Unsurprisingly, dairying was the money-maker. Average income per farm was \$4818 in 1945; in Alabama's Eighth District it was \$1278.

² *The Anniston Star*, August 14, 1939; August 9 & 11 & 29, 1946; September 22, 1947; August 13, 1948; December 20, 1964. *Abilene Reporter-News*, September 24, 1946.

³ *The Anniston Star*, August 12 & 19 & 23, October 23, 1946. *Athens LC News Courier*, March 27, 2012.

⁴ V.O. Key (1949) used this special election to illustrate his use of the term "friends and neighbors," 38. *Alabama Official and Statistical Register 1947*.

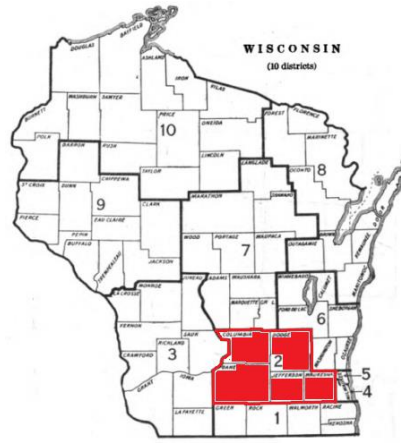
⁵ *Waukesha Daily Freeman*, November 6, 1946.

Average median family income would be \$3215 in 1949. The population was overwhelmingly white and native-born.



Glenn Davis

Source: *Pocket Directory* (1953)



Wisconsin 2nd Cong. Dist.

Source: *Congressional Directory* (1948)

The defeat of Sen. Robert La Follette Jr, formerly of the Progressive Party, in the Republican primary in August by Joseph McCarthy, opened the possibility of the former's candidacy for the House seat. Regular Republicans were not thrilled at the prospect and decided to hold a District Convention to endorse a candidate for the vacancy. In the meantime, Glenn Davis, 32, a Waukesha County attorney, who had served a term in the Wisconsin Assembly before resigning to join the Navy, met with a panoply of county Republican leaders who pledged their support for his candidacy, and he decided to run. Davis, "Strapper" to his family, "handsome with wavy hair and a dimple," had been raised on a dairy farm in the County and had spent 32 months as a communications officer on an oil tanker that had been converted to an auxiliary aircraft carrier, which supported Marine landings across the Pacific War. He was discharged in December 1945.⁶

Arthur Nelson Lowe, 50, a former insurance man and current auditor in a State agency, had already announced for the Republican nomination. On January 10, 1947, former Progressive Harry Sauthoff announced, thereby closing the speculation about a La Follette candidacy. Sauthoff, 67, had spent four terms in the House as a Progressive, where he was notable for his opposition to Pres. Franklin Roosevelt's preparations for war. He gave up the Second District in 1944 for a failed attempt at the Senate. Now a Republican, Sauthoff was a firm supporter of Republican candidates, particularly of Joseph McCarthy, who had beaten La Follette in the November 1946 elections. Davis threw his hat in the ring on January 15. David Bogue, 66, a former district attorney and recent District Republican Chair, announced on January 24; so, too, did Milo Swanton, 55, executive secretary of the Wisconsin Council of Agriculture, but who had not been active in partisan politics.⁷

A variety of other would-be's fell by the wayside, and Sauthoff and Lowe rejected asking the District Convention for an endorsement. In the event on February 11, Davis won handily with 172 votes against

⁶ *Waukesha Daily Freeman*, November 29, December 2 & 10 & 24, 1946; January 15 & 16, 1947. Kevin Smith, 10, 16, 62, 78.

⁷ *Waukesha Daily Freeman*, November 22 & 27, December 9, 1946; January 2 & 10 & 23 & 24, April 24, 1947. Roger Johnson, 78. US Social Security Death Index.

Bogue with 74 and Swanton with 51, the losers then pledging their support to Davis. Sauthoff and Lowe remained in for the primary on April 1.⁸

Davis espoused mainstream Republican positions while Sauthoff remained loyal to relatively more liberal economic positions and more isolationist foreign policies that were consistent with his Progressive history. While unsupportive of an assertive foreign policy, Sauthoff was vocally concerned with alleged communist influence in labor unions. Despite the fact that thirteen newspapers endorsed Davis and none endorsed Sauthoff and that all the Republican State legislators in the District but three former Progressives endorsed Davis (and those three did not endorse Sauthoff), the *United Press* nevertheless opined on the day of the primary that Sauthoff would win. Davis took 64% to Sauthoff's 31%, who then pledged his support.⁹

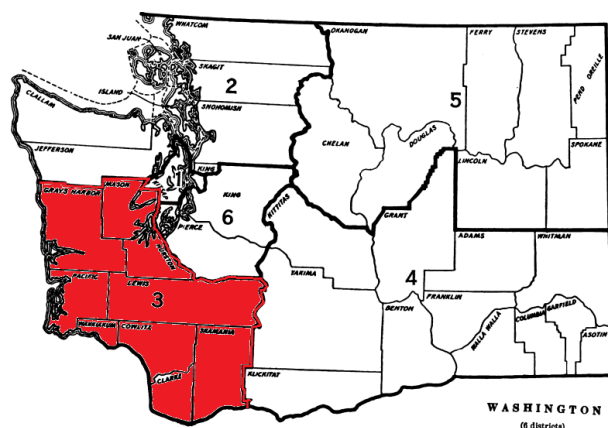
The general election was three weeks away. Davis had already lost fourteen pounds campaigning. Carl Thompson emerged from the Democratic primary, but the last Democratic representative from the current Second District had been elected in 1932. Thompson, 33, was in fact a former Progressive but of the rare interventionist variety. An attorney and four-year veteran of the Army transportation corps in the War, Thompson received Labor backing. Thompson hearkened to the new Wisconsin Democratic Party that was absorbing the interventionist Progressives and adopting liberal domestic policies. He did surprisingly well, polling 49% on April 22. A Socialist candidate took 290 votes; Davis topped Thompson by only 842 ballots in an election in which turnout was just 71% of the primary vote. There were some local issues on the April 1 ballot, which may have been the difference, or perhaps as the *Chicago Daily Tribune* editorialized, Wisconsin's isolationists stayed home in a contest between two interventionists.¹⁰

Davis would be sworn in to the House on May 5. Three days earlier, Thompson's wife delivered twins.¹¹



Russell Mack

Source: *Pocket Directory* (1951)



Washington 3rd Cong. Dist.

Source: *Congressional Directory* (1948)

Two weeks before the Thompson twins appeared, Republican Fred Norman, 65, died in bed in the District of Columbia, apparently of the heart disease for which he had been treated “for some time.”

⁸ *Waukesha Daily Freeman*, February 12, 1947.

⁹ *Waukesha Daily Freeman*, February 13, March 22 & 31, April 1 & 2, 1947. Kevin Smith, 83-4.

¹⁰ *Waukesha Daily Freeman*, March 10 & 16, April 21 & 24, 1947. *The Janesville Daily Gazette*, March 29, 1947. Kevin Smith, 81-2.

¹¹ *Waukesha Daily Freeman*, October 6, 1947.

Norman had represented the Third Congressional District of Washington in the 78th Congress, was defeated by a Democrat in 1944 and then won the seat back in 1946. The Governor set primaries for May 17 and a special election for June 7. There would not be a four-month lag of trial candidacies and political chess as in Wisconsin but rather a quick rush to judgment.¹²

Russell Mack, 55, the owner and publisher of the *Grays Harbor Washingtonian* was the first Republican to file on April 26. He was born in Michigan, but his parents moved to Aberdeen, Washington, when he was about four. His father, a cigar dealer, died when Mack was fourteen. Mack claimed to be a veteran of the First World War, though he would remove that from his congressional biography in 1953. Mack remarried on January 26, 1947, his first wife having died of Parkinson's disease in 1945.¹³ He had won the Republican nomination for this open seat in 1934 but captured only 31% of the general election vote. Mack repeated his primary victory in 1940 and lost again to the same Democrat, but with a much improved 44% of the ballots. That Democrat would lose to Fred Norman in 1942.

Three other Republicans put their names in the hat in 1947. Herbert Sieler of Chehalis, 58, an attorney and legal businessman, had served a term in the Washington Senate and had contested Mack for the nomination in 1934. Thomas Hall, 38, of Skamakawa was a dairy farmer and Washington Representative. Monroe Burnett of Olympia was a realtor; he had a run for State Representative in 1942. Washington primaries were usually blanket primaries, but not this special one. Mack was a clear winner with 55% against Sieler's 22%, Hall's 22%, and Burnett's 1%.¹⁴

The Third District was nine counties in the southwest corner of Washington. Traditionally Republican, the New Deal had attracted its substantial Labor vote, but Fred Norman had won it in 1942 and 1946. Largely rural, its largest city in 1940 had had 19,000 people, but this would increase to 42,000 in 1950, and Clark County was in the growing Tacoma metropolitan area with 85,000 people in 1950. Vancouver was the home of the Kaiser shipyard that built 50 small aircraft carriers during the War as well as numerous Liberty ships.¹⁵ Manufacturing wages in mid-decade were nearly four times farm income. There were also forestry and fishing industries. Farms were poor, averaging \$1378 in income, similar to Jones' Alabama District, but thanks to industry average median family income in 1950 would be \$3216. The population was overwhelmingly white and the 10% foreign born share of 1940 would drop to 7% in 1950.

Mack's Democratic opponent, Charles Savage, had filled the interregnum in Norman's House career, defeating and then losing to the late Representative. Savage aligned himself with fired Secretary of Commerce Henry Wallace's opposition to Truman's foreign policy and was roundly attacked by Mack on that score, the Republican embracing the Democratic President. Savage, a former labor union official, also had issues with Truman's battles with strikes, and Mack had problems with the Republican House's cutbacks on western reclamation funding, not so much personally as Mack was an old-line cut-Federal-spending Republican, but rather in its effect on the election. The Savage-Wallace alignment gave Mack much opportunity; the Republican said, "I am for President Truman's foreign policy. ... In any difference of opinion between the president and secretary of state on one hand, and Stalin, Wallace or Savage on

¹² *Albany Democrat-Herald*, April 18 & 25, 1947.

¹³ *Albany Democrat-Herald*, April 26, 1947. *Aberdeen Herald*, April 12, 1906. Mack's draft registration of June 5, 1917, noted that he was the sole support of his mother. PoliticalGraveyard.com. Certificate of Death, Washington State Department of Health.

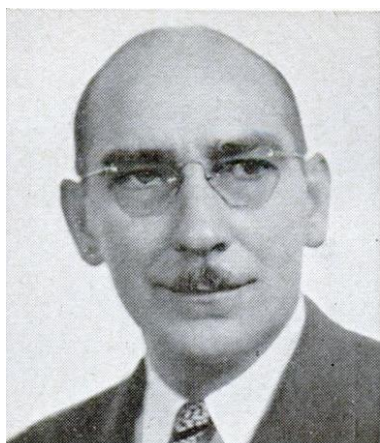
¹⁴ *Eugene Register-Guard*, May 18 & 19, 1947. *The Daily Chronicle*, August 8, 1942; August 21, 1961. *The Bend Bulletin*, May 17, 1947. *The News-Review*, May 17, 1947. *Statesman Journal*, November 21, 1993. In a blanket primary, all candidates are listed on a common ballot with party designation. The candidate with the highest vote in each party is nominated.

¹⁵ *The Oregon Statesman*, May 20, 1947. Gunther (1947), 70.

the other, I am with the president.” Both national party organizations sent funds to the contest, which attracted national attention.¹⁶

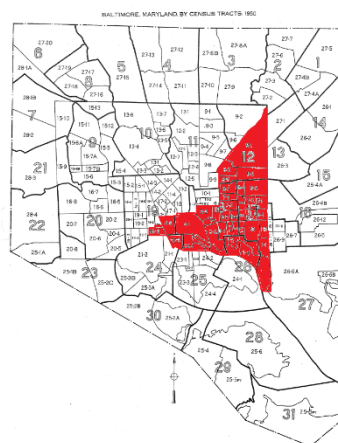
Mack won a narrow three-point victory in an election that was low-turnout despite the press attention. He ran 2.5 points behind Norman’s victory the previous year and the total vote dropped off by 25%. But he won.

He would be sworn in on June 25, 1947.



Edward Garmatz

Source: *Pocket Congressional Directory*, 1953



Baltimore, Maryland Third Cong. Dist.

Source: 1950 Census

On May 6, Thomas D’Alessandro, who had been in the House since 1939, won election as Mayor of Baltimore. D’Alessandro would serve twelve years as Mayor and die two months after his daughter, Nancy Pelosi, later the Speaker of the House, took her seat in that body. Now in 1947 with his resignation on May 16, he was leaving a vacancy in the House.

The boundaries of Maryland’s Third Congressional District had not changed since 1902. It was the eastern pie slice of the old City before the 1918 annexation that more than doubled its size. It included much of the downtown, the inner harbor, and Little Italy.¹⁷ By 1950 the immigrant population, which was about 10% in 1940, would fall off and the black population would increase from about 20% to 24% of the total. The median household income would vary wildly across the census tracts, with an average across them being \$2536.

The State Democratic Central Committee met on June 17 to nominate a candidate for the vacancy, and the Republican City Committee met on June 19. The Democrats chose Edward Garmatz, who was reported to be D’Alessandro’s “personal choice.” The Republican choice was Edward Panetti, who had run against D’Alessandro in 1942. Simon Jarosinski, a Democratic member of the City Council, stole a march on the two, nominated by petition as an independent on June 16.¹⁸

Jarosinski was 47 and an insurance official with the State. He charged that D’Alessandro had dictated the choice of Garmatz and played to his own Polish ethnicity. In turn, D’Alessandro charged that Jarosinski was the candidate of former Attorney General William Curran. Curran had been the dominant Democratic

¹⁶ *Albany Democrat-Herald*, May 19 & 21, June 7, 1947. *Oakland Tribune*, May 29, 1947. *The News-Review*, May 29, 1947. *Eugene Register-Guard*, June 8, 1947. *Capital Journal*, June 9, 1947. *The Oregon Statesman*, June 10, 1947. *The Waco News-Tribune*, June 10, 1947.

¹⁷ *Cumberland Evening Times*, April 4, 1952.

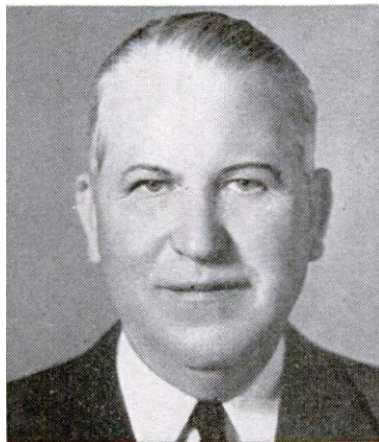
¹⁸ *Cumberland Evening Times*, June 27, 1947.

leader of Baltimore before his ally, Howard Jackson, lost the mayoralty to a Republican in 1943. The Republican Mayor was to the left of the old Curran-Jackson economic and socially conservative regime, and the defeat of the latter prompted the rise to power within the City's Democratic Party and eventually its governance by a New Deal oriented faction, of whom the most prominent member was D'Alesandro. Democratic Party politics in the rest of the State, anchored in the Tidewater, remained conservative and segregationist.¹⁹

Garmatz was 44, an electrician, and a union member. His parents were immigrants from Germany. His father was a mattress maker. Currently the candidate was a police magistrate, and he had been D'Alesandro's campaign manager in the race for Mayor. D'Alesandro's organization was behind him, but the presence of a Curran Democrat as well as a Republican raised some concern. Certainly, the Unions wanted to help, but on June 23 the new Labor Management Relations Act, AKA Taft-Hartley, became effective, which banned Unions from making any contribution or expenditure in behalf of a candidate for Federal office. Phillip Murray, the President of the national CIO, decided to make a test case of the new law and endorsed Garmatz in *CIO News* on July 14 as well as opposing Panetti. The AFL also endorsed Garmatz in its *Baltimore Federationist*. The FBI looked into it, and Murray and William Green, head of the AFL, demanded prosecution. They were, and on June 21, 1948, the Supreme Court would find that restrictions on endorsements were an abridgement of free speech. The Court did not rule on restrictions on spending.²⁰

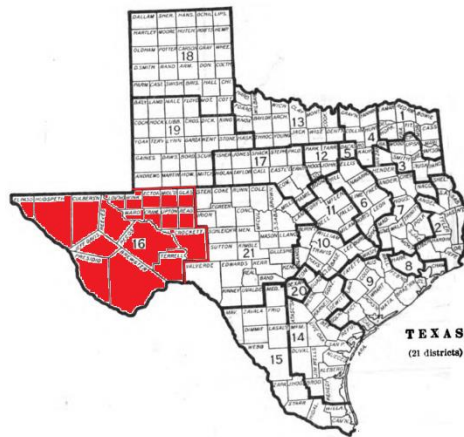
In the meantime, Garmatz won the special election on July 15. Panetti had taken 27% against D'Alesandro in 1942 for this seat, but managed only 16% of the vote this time. Jarosinski pulled 31% of the vote, leaving Garmatz with a comfortable if unimpressive 53%.²¹

Garmatz would be sworn in on July 24, 1947.



Ken Regan

Source: *Pocket Directory* (1953)



Texas 16th Cong. Dist.

Source: *Congressional Directory* (1948)

¹⁹ *The Cumberland News*, July 15, 1947. *The Gazette and Daily*, July 16, 1947. Durr, 14, 21-2, 55. Fenton (1957), 171.

²⁰ *The Gazette and Daily*, July 10, 1947. 1900 & 1920 & 1930 Census schedules, Baltimore, Maryland. CQWR, January 7, 1966, 17. *The Cumberland News*, July 16, 1947. *The News-Herald*, October 4, 1947. *United States v. Congress of Industrial Organizations*, 335 U.S. 106 (1948).

²¹ OurCampaigns.com.

Back on April 24, Pres. Truman nominated Ewing Thomason to a district judgeship. Thomason had represented far west Texas in the House since 1931, and his confirmation on June 23 and resignation on July 31 created a vacancy in the Sixteenth Congressional District.

Garmatz' Baltimore District was less than eight square miles in area. Thomason's was 42,607 square miles. The Baltimore District had a population of about 200,000 in 1947 and was slowly losing people. The Texas District had had 230,700 in 1940, and by 1950 it would have 353,937. The city of El Paso held 42% of those folks in 1940 and 37% of them in 1950. Journalist John Gunther wrote that the City was "a friendly, vivid, animated town" with nothing leading to it "except five hundred miles of semidesert." The Army's Fort Bliss was a major influence as was the Phelps Dodge Corporation, a mining firm.²²

There were two towns in the District of about 9500 people in 1940, which would be growing to 25,000 and 30,000 in 1950. The next biggest town in 1950 would have 5000 people. One should not get the impression, however, that the District was rural except for these urban centers. The farm population in 1950 would be fewer than 30,000. Apart from El Paso and Midland and Odessa, most everyone lived in small towns. The farms, or rather ranches, were however huge and realized \$10,000 in income apiece on average in 1945. The real employment was in oil and construction. All those people moving to west Texas needed some place to live and work and shop. Black citizens were few, but there was a significant population of immigrants, 14% in 1940, 11% in 1950, almost all of whom were from Mexico. Median family income would be good, averaging \$3127 in 1949.

In 1949 political scientist V.O. Key wrote that Texas politics "is concerned about money and how to make it, about oil and sulfur and gas, about cattle and dust storms and irrigation, about cotton and banking and Mexicans," and the Sixteenth District seemed to encapsulate expansively those concerns.²³

There were no Republicans in Texas, certainly not in the Sixteenth District. Every one of the District's 19 counties went for Roosevelt in 1944. It was not thought necessary to have nominating committees or primaries to fill Thomason's seat; the various Democrats could all just run in the special election, and seven of them did. Texas Sen. H.L. Winfield from Fort Stockton (1940 population 3300) announced for the seat the day Truman sent Thomason's name to the Senate. Texas Rep. Woodrow Wilson Bean, an attorney of El Paso, declared the next day. Federal employee Benny McEntire of El Paso announced on May 1. Ord Gary threw his hat in the ring on May 5. Gary was nominally of El Paso, but had farms and ranches in three counties and over the years had been a cotton ginner and head of various cotton growers' associations.²⁴

McEntire withdrew when he learned he could not run for Federal office and keep his Federal job, but Pat Hargrove of El Paso replaced him. Hargrove, a civil engineer, had run against Thomason in 1946. Winfield, who had not waited for Thomason to be confirmed to announce, did not wait for the confirmation to withdraw, saying on May 10 the confirmation was taking too long. Victor Gilbert filled the slot, announcing on June 6. Gilbert was an attorney and as an Interstate Commerce Commission supervisor for west Texas had made close friends in the trucking industry, which was important in the extensive District. Now from El Paso, he had been the chief executive officer of Callahan County, had represented Callahan and Eastland counties in the Legislature, and owned farm holdings in three counties. Ken Regan of Midland semi-announced on June 29, saying he "agreed" to be a candidate "when and if" a special election were called. He was an oil man, a cantaloupe farmer, and a cattle raiser, tall, greying,

²² Gunther (1947), 835.

²³ Key (1949), 254.

²⁴ A qualification: Seven of Texas' 254 counties had voted Republican in the 1944 presidential election. *The Austin American*, April 25, 1947. *The Waco News-Tribune*, April 26, 1947. *Hudspeth County Herald and Dell Valley Review*, July 19, 1985. *El Paso Herald-Post*, May 5 & 8, 1947.

handsome, “even distinguished looking.” James Metcalfe of Odessa joined the race by July 18; he was the head of a firm that provided reproductive services of documents and had spent ten years in law enforcement. Louis Fail of El Paso also added his name by July 30; he was retired from 37 years with the Southern Pacific Railroad and a union member, had been a City Alderman, and had run against Thomason in 1942.²⁵

The Governor on July 19 set the special election for August 23 with an August 1 filing deadline.²⁶ The ballot was filled with four men with political histories, two major entrepreneurs and a minor one. Oil, cotton, cattle, trucking, railroading, and law enforcement leavened the politics of the contest. Five men were from El Paso and one each from Odessa and Midland, but most had broader links across the District.

Bean, Gary, Gilbert, and Regan were the candidates with sufficient resources to make the most active campaigns in the sprawling District. Bean accepted the label of “liberal.” Gilbert called himself “middle of the road.” Gary and Regan settled on the right but with a division on restricting the Federal Power Commission to regulate retail prices of natural gas, Gary opposing the restriction and Regan supporting it. It was reported that Regan was supported by the so-called Texas Regulars, who were an anti-Roosevelt group of Democrats. A more important conflict centered on Bean’s attempt in the Legislature in February to impose an extraction tax on oil, natural gas, and sulfur to fund \$22 million for increased salaries for school teachers. The Legislature adjourned without voting on the bill, which the Governor opposed, he instead advocating the restoration of a State property tax. Regan was accused of opposing Bean’s bill, which he did not deny.²⁷

In the end, Fail, Metcalfe, and Hargrove could not each top 2% of the vote, while Bean, Gilbert, and Gary divided up the El Paso ballots. Regan, too, ran strong in El Paso, coming in second there, and took 43% of the District vote and the election. Bean was second with 38%.²⁸

Regan was 59 (born in 1888), but claimed to be 54 (born in 1893 per his congressional biography). Native to Illinois, his father was a school teacher, who sent the two-year-old away to live with relatives when his mother died. He married Lulu Belle Mickle in 1916 when he was 27. It may have been his first marriage; it was at least her second, but she claimed it was her first and listed her name as Lois St. Ores, St. Ores being her father’s middle name. Her family would say she ran away from her marriage to a tobacco salesman named Kenneth Regan and that they lost track of her after 1924. Regan appeared with her in the 1920 Census in Kansas City as a sales manager for a tobacco company. He was listed as a veteran, and his congressional biography says he was an Army Signal Corps flyer in the Great War, a captain. It was reported during the 1947 campaign that he never went overseas during that war.²⁹

²⁵ *Lubbock Morning Avalanche*, July 30, 1947. *The Odessa American*, August 20, 1947. *Abilene Reporter-News*, May 11, 1947. *El Paso Herald-Post*, June 6, August 25, 1947. *The Odessa American*, January 1, June 29, July 18 & 22, August 12 & 13 & 22, 1947. *The Austin American*, August 17, 1947.

²⁶ *Corsicana Daily Sun*, July 19, 1947.

²⁷ *Lubbock Evening Journal*, August 22, 1947. *The Odessa American*, August 14 & 18 & 19, 1947. *El Paso Herald-Post*, July 24, August 18 & 21, November 10, 1947. On the Regulars, see Key (1949), 256. The Regulars had carried one Texas county in the 1944 presidential election, but it was not in the Sixteenth District. *Marshall News Messenger*, February 11, 1947. *Abilene Reporter-News*, April 18, 1947. *The Mexia Daily News*, July 22, 1947. *El Paso Herald-Post*, August 8, 1947.

²⁸ Supposed complete District totals were published in the *El Paso Herald-Post* on September 8, 1947, but these figures are less for each of the candidates than the totals from the partial returns (four precincts missing) by county in the same paper on August 23.

²⁹ Indiana Marriages, 1811-2007. Ken Regan stone, Resthaven Memorial Park, Midland, Texas, places him at age 56 in 1947, giving his birth as 1891. Wikitree.com/wiki/Mickle-134. Mickle appears in the 1910 Census in Galesburg, Illinois, married to Earl C. Florence. CyndieGreer.com.

Regan was said to have moved to Texas to drill for oil in 1920. He, himself, reported that the 1920 relocation was to engage in real estate and as an oil operator. The venue was Pecos. Whether Lulu/Lois came with him is unclear, but in the 1930 Census Regan appeared in Pecos as the husband of Bessie E. Regan, actually Dessie B. Edmundson, whom he had married in 1926 in Los Angeles, California. Dessie was married previously, as well. He seemed to have forgotten his marriage to Lulu; the Census said he was first married at age 33, which would be the marriage to Dessie given adjusted birth claims. By the 1940 Census, Dessie disappeared. Regan was living in Houston, where he said he had been living in 1935, had forgotten whether he was born in 1893 or 1891 and was cohabiting with the single Roberta McGary, 25. The two married later in 1940 in Glendale, California, he of Houston, she of El Paso. His age was given as 43, which argued for a birth in 1897. The Census gave his occupation as landman in the oil industry. During the 1947 campaign it was reported that from 1936 to 1942 he was active in oil development along the Gulf Coast but continued to live in Pecos, 600 miles from Houston.³⁰

After a two-year stint in the Army Air Corps during World War Two per 1947 reporting and his congressional biography, he moved to Midland. During the campaign he advertised himself as a 27-year resident of the District.³¹

Regan would not be sworn in until November 17, 1947, with the special session. The first session of the 80th Congress adjourned on July 27, a month before the special election.



Charles Potter

Source: BioGuide.Congress.gov



Michigan 11th Cong. Dist.

Source: Congressional Directory, 1948

Rep. Frederick Bradley died on May 24, 1947. Bradley had served a Michigan district since 1939; he was only 49 years old and died in New London while there as a member of the Board of Visitors of the Coast Guard Academy. Needless to say, this was a shock and a surprise to the politicians of Michigan's Eleventh Congressional District. The District spanned the Straits of Mackinac, including seven counties in the Upper Peninsula and nine in the Lower. In mid-decade, manufacturing wages exceeded farm income by 64% and farms were small, with an average income in 1945 of \$1466. Dairying was significant in the Lower Peninsula. Paul Bunyan had passed this way earlier, but wood products were still the largest part of manufacturing, particularly in the Upper Peninsula. The foreign born in the overwhelmingly white

³⁰ Guttery, 128. California, County Marriages, 1850-1952. Iowa, County Marriages, 1838-1934. California, County Marriages, 1850-1952.

³¹ *El Paso Herald-Post*, August 18, 1947.

population would drop from 11% to 8% over the 1940s. The largest town was Sault Ste. Marie with 16,000 in 1940 and 18,000 in 1950. Average median family income in 1949 would be \$2248.

The newspapers leapt into prognostication. Two days after the death the *Detroit Free Press* identified four likely Republican would-be heirs. Two of them would actually make an attempt, Victor Knox, in fact, announcing on the day the paper printed his name. Otto Bishop, not on the *Free Press*'s list, announced two days later. Another two days and it was proclaimed that Marie Bradley, Frederick's widow, wanted to fill his seat. Another one the *Free Press* had missed, Charles Potter, announced from Washington, DC, on the same day as Mrs. Bradley. Knox confirmed his candidacy but George Girrbach, the other of the *Free Press*'s select, said on June 4 that he would run but not against the widow.³²

On June 17 the Governor set the special primaries for July 29 and the special election for August 26. He also announced that Marie Bradley was not a candidate. George Harvey and William Forsyth joined the four early contestants, and the Republican field was set. In a predictive piece about the primary printed four days later, the *Lansing State Journal* felt that Knox was the favorite followed by Girrbach in the Upper Peninsula and Bishop in the Lower. Potter was given an "outside chance" at the nomination.³³

Knox of Sault Ste. Marie was the Speaker of the Michigan House, a relatively young man at 48 and yet a major State-level politician. He was a farm implement dealer by trade. A decade older at 57, Girrbach was a dairyman and manufacturer also from Sault Ste. Marie, which he represented in the State Senate. He was in only his second term. Bishop was also a Senator, but in his seventh term. He was from Alpena, operated a coal business and an insurance agency, and was 71, long in the tooth to begin a US House career. Potter, from Cheboygan, was only 30 years old, the son of a self-employed fish buyer. He had been a social worker before four years of Army service that left him with the loss of both legs when he leaped from the top of a dike and came down on a land mine. Before his discharge as a major in July 1946 he had spent his last year of service learning to walk on artificial legs with two canes.³⁴

Potter's handicap was his primary election asset. Without the political career and contacts of his major opponents, he traded heavily on the misfortune of his War service. A political advertisement on July 10 included a full-length picture of the candidate standing with a cane and noted he had lost both legs. Another ad on July 17 included the text, "The only candidate who admits that he hasn't a leg to stand on." On July 24 the ad said, "The man gave two legs for his country. Won't you give him one vote?" The primary returns were badly split. Six of the candidates carried at least one county. Three minor candidates took an aggregate 17%. Bishop, supposedly a favorite in the Lower Peninsula got only 11% and his home county. Girrbach, the Upper Peninsula chosen, had 16% and one county, not his home. The overall shoo-in Knox came up with 24% and five counties. "Outside chance" Potter had the inside track with 32% and seven counties.³⁵

It took only 5040 votes in a district with about 120,000 voting-age people, 44,000 of whom had voted for Republican Thomas Dewey in the 1944 presidential election, to nominate Charles Potter.

The District was unchanged since 1928 and elected Democrats from 1932 until Bradley's win in 1938. The Democratic primary nominated Harold Beaton, 41, a bachelor attorney from Mackinac County, who had been its elected prosecutor. He had a War record as well, though not as debilitating as Potter's. There

³² *Detroit Free Press*, May 26 & 27 & 31, 1947. *Battle Creek Enquirer and News*, May 29, June 1, 1947. *Port Huron Times-Herald*, May 30, 1947. *The Ludington Daily News*, June 4, 1947.

³³ *Battle Creek Enquirer and News*, June 18, 1947. *The State Journal*, August 2, 1947.

³⁴ *The Escanaba Daily Press*, June 19, July 13, 1947. *The State Journal*, May 24, 1948; June 23, 1954; December 7, 1966. *Asheville Citizen*, November 20, 1952. 1940 Census schedule, Cheboygan County, Michigan.

³⁵ *The Escanaba Daily Press*, July 10 & 17 & 24, 1947. *The State Journal*, August 6, 1947.

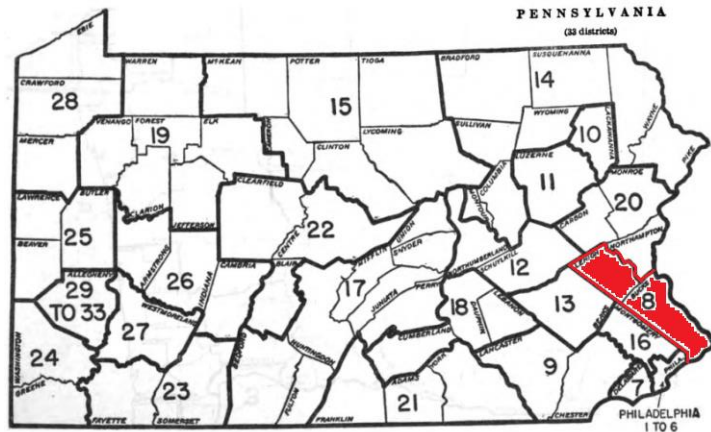
were signs of dissension in the ranks of the District's Republican politicians, likely over Potter's presumptuous win over established office-holders, but possibly also over claims that Potter had recently been a Democrat. The *Detroit Free Press* reported that the two candidates agreed on issues. It could have been a peninsular contest, with Beaton from the more Democratic Upper and Potter from the very Republican Lower; in the primary Potter had taken 52% of the vote in the Lower but only 13% in the Upper. But he had little trouble dispatching Beaton, winning 7-3, carrying the Upper Peninsula with 59%.³⁶

Potter would not be sworn in until November 17, 1947.



Franklin Lichtenwalter

Source: Pennsylvania House of Representatives



Pennsylvania 8th Cong. Dist.

Source: *Congressional Directory*, 1948

Charles Gerlach died on May 5, 1947, nineteen days before Frederick Bradley, eleven days before Thomas D'Alesandro's resignation from the House, and nearly three months before Ewing Thomason's, yet the special election to replace him from Pennsylvania's Eighth Congressional District trailed those that were won by Potter, Garmatz, and Regan. The delay seems to have been to allow Pennsylvania's Republican leaders to decide who Gerlach's replacement should be. Republican Gov. John Bell set the date of September 9 on May 15, and filing would end May 26. If the Republican candidate were unknown to the public, he would have ample time to remedy that before the election.³⁷

The District consisted of only two counties, Bucks and Lehigh, an arrangement likely to cause a contretemps and the nomination of someone who had not had the opportunity to ruffle the feathers of the other county – someone obscure. Gerlach was from Lehigh County and had been in the House since 1939. Bucks County Republican Committee members felt it was their turn, but Lehigh had more people and cast more Republican votes and had more members on the District Committee than did Bucks. Reportedly though, Bucks made its point, the would-be Lehigh candidates dropped out, and Bucks Republicans settled on a relatively unknown choice.

Then the big guys stepped in. The District was heavily industrialized with 45% of the civilian labor force employed in manufacturing. Labor had not done well politically in the District but decided to make it a test case of their opposition to the Taft-Hartley Act enacted by the new Republican Congress. In return, in the State capital of Harrisburg, Republican leaders met at the Bellevue-Stratford Hotel to pressure the

³⁶ *The Escanaba Daily Press*, July 4, 1947. *Detroit Free Press*, August 17, 1947. *Battle Creek Enquirer and News*, August 24, 1947. *Michigan Manual* (1947-1948).

³⁷ *The Evening News*, May 14 & 21, 1947.

Speaker of the State House to run for Congress. Franklin Lichtenwalter met his wife in the hotel lobby after the meeting and told her that he had agreed, and that it was “the worst thing that could ever happen to me.” Back in the District, former US Sen. Joseph Grundy of Bucks County told his County Committee members that the nominee was to be Lichtenwalter from Lehigh County. On May 23 the District Committee unanimously chose Lichtenwalter.³⁸

Lichtenwalter was 37, the son of the operator of a sand quarry. After three years as a dental technician, he went into insurance, and had a good general business. He had served in the Pennsylvania House since 1938, becoming the majority leader in 1943 and the Speaker in 1947. He displaced the incumbent Speaker when the latter made a questionable joke about a Democratic candidate who was a “full-blooded Italian” named Dent. “He spells it D-E-N-T, and I don’t know how many T’s after that.” Party leaders decided two terms were enough for Ira Fiss and brought Lichtenwalter into the post. His legislative biography says he had “a movie star’s lean, handsome, and trimmed mustache look.”³⁹

For the open House seat, he faced Democrat Phil Storch, also from Lehigh County – another reason for Republican leaders stiffing Bucks County. A newspaperman, Storch spent eighteen months as a Marine combat correspondent in the Pacific. The young and childless Lichtenwalter, exempt from the draft due to his legislative membership and for medical reasons, missed the War. Storch was 36 and president of the Lehigh Valley Newspaper Guild (CIO). His campaign was a recipient of Labor aid, some of it below the table thanks to Taft-Hartley and some of it above in a challenge to the new law. There were 26,000 dues-paying union members in the District. It was reported that Lichtenwalter was not meeting the Taft-Hartley issue “frontally.” Maybe, but he did accuse the CIO of instigating Communist Party activity in the District.⁴⁰

If the contest was a test case on Taft-Hartley, the Law won; Lichtenwalter took 61% of the vote. Despite a substantial Union presence and an even larger manufacturing employment, the Eighth District may not have been the best place for a stand by Labor. There were 72,007 registered Republicans and 46,487 registered Democrats. Gerlach had won the 1946 vote with 59% and the 1944 election with 58%. He had held the District since he unseated the previous Democrat in 1938.

Lichtenwalter, who as a State Representative had represented only part of Lehigh County, now had Bucks County as a constituency, which had a significant farm sector. Farms there were well off, averaging \$4070 in income per farm, better than the \$2448 in average factory wages. Gunther ravished on the “quiet enchantment of the scenery in Bucks County,” but manufacturing employment there was almost as significant as in Lehigh.⁴¹ The overwhelmingly white population of the District was increasingly native born; foreign born would fall from 8% in 1940 to 6% in 1950. The largest city in 1940 was Allentown with 97,000 but the Allentown-Bethlehem-Easton metropolitan area counted 167,000 in the District and Philadelphia metro added 37,000 in Bucks County. These numbers would go up to 107,000, 186,000, and 60,000 in 1950. The median family income in 1949 would be virtually the same in both counties, the average being \$3429.

Lichtenwalter would also have to wait until November 17 to take his seat in the 80th Congress.

³⁸ *The Gazette and Daily*, August 29, 1947. “Franklin H. Lichtenwalter,” at legis.state.pa.us. *The Philadelphia Inquirer Public Ledger*, May 24, 1947. *The Altoona Tribune*, May 24, 1947.

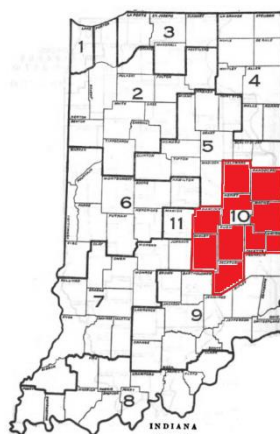
³⁹ *The Progress*, December 13, 1946. *The Pittsburgh Press*, September 16, December 1, 1946. *The Evening News*, November 18, 1946. legis.state.pa.us.

⁴⁰ *The Pittsburgh Press*, September 4, 1947. *The Evening News*, September 4, 1947. *Time*, September 22, 1947. *Joplin Globe*, September 13, 1947.

⁴¹ Gunther (1947), 601.



Ralph Harvey

Source: *Pocket Directory* (1953)Indiana 10th Cong. Dist.Source: *Congressional Directory* (1948)

There was a lag before Rep. Raymond Springer died on August 28, 1947, of a heart attack in his home town of Connersville, Indiana, at the age of 65. The Tenth District had added a county in 1942 but was otherwise unchanged since 1932. Springer had displaced a Democrat in 1938. The District was on the Ohio border east of Indianapolis. The biggest town was Muncie, with 50,000 people in 1940 and 58,000 in 1950; it was the Middletown of the sociological studies in the 1920s of Robert and Helen Lynd, who concluded politics was largely a matter of mindless partisan loyalties. John Fenton, writing of Indiana politics in 1966 did not disagree with the Lynds. He described a political culture dependent on a “bipartisan split of spoils” that resulted in a “state government virtually paralyzed policywise and parties that did not provide meaningful alternatives to the voters.”⁴²

Middletown had a substantial number of industrial workers, and twenty years later manufacturing wages in the District as a whole would more than double farm income, but the latter was significant and farms were substantial, with an average income of \$3621. Livestock, particularly cattle and hogs, was more important in income than crops. Muncie was known for the manufacture of Ball canning jars, but the District as a whole in the 1940s had a large stake in automobile production. The population was largely white with few foreign born. Average median family income in 1949 would be \$2958.

The Governor quickly set November 4, the usual first Tuesday, as the date of a special election to fill Springer’s seat.⁴³ The Republican District Committee also moved expeditiously, setting a date of September 6 to nominate their candidate. There was no shortage of speculative contestants. The *Rushville Republican* of September 2 named four. The *Greensburg Daily News* of September 4 listed nine. The *National Road Traveler* of September 4 came up with fifteen. All three papers included Ralph Harvey, 46, of Henry County. He lived in a twelve-room home that had been in his family for three generations, farmed 680 acres, and was a partner in a seed corn company. He had been in electoral politics since 1932 when he took over a post as County Councilman from his father. After ten years in that he moved to the Indiana House of Representatives, where he still served in 1947. From 1945 to 1947 he was a gubernatorial appointee on the State Budget Committee and Chair for the last year. He would write that being able to disburse the funds that had accumulated during the War made him very popular. “The experience as Chair

⁴² Lynd and Lynd, 414-8. Fenton (1966), 179.

⁴³ *The Kokomo Tribune, the Kokomo Dispatch*, September 2, 1947.

of the State Budget Committee propelled me into a prominent position in statewide policies, and I had every reason to believe that I might be the candidate for lieutenant governor in the 1948 campaign.”⁴⁴

The District Republican Committee met at the Leland Hotel in Richmond at 10:00 am, then deferred until 1:30 while members could negotiate. It was reported on September 5, the day before the Committee meeting, that Harvey would take the nomination if he did not have to fight for it. Years later Harvey would write that he and John Himelick, the candidate of Fayette County, the home of the late Representative, met on the 5th to agree that Himelick would throw his four votes to Harvey if the first ballot deadlocked; Harvey otherwise could count on eight votes. Eleven votes were needed for the nomination; so, Himelick’s move would have been decisive. But Himelick did not endorse Harvey until the last ballot. Chauncey Duncan of Rush County endorsed Harvey on the sixth ballot and he moved into the lead. Harvey eked out a win with the minimum eleven votes needed. Himelick had one die-hard vote on that ballot. The runner-up was Leo Kinman of Shelby County, a newspaperman, with eight votes. The local newspapers were of the opinion that Gov. Ralph Gates “squelched” Kinman’s candidacy. It was Gates who put Harvey on the State Budget Committee and made him Chair.⁴⁵

The Democrats nominated Frank Hanley on their first Committee ballot without opposition. Hanley, 56, was a Muncie automobile dealer. He had served an appointive State job but had never before sought elective office. He was an overseas veteran of the First World War and operated a contract flight school in Florida in the Second War. Harvey missed both wars.⁴⁶

Hanley had Labor support, and Springer had voted for Taft-Hartley, but Harvey and Hanley campaigned as if the Law was the untouchable third rail of the campaign. The all-out failure of the Taft-Hartley-focused Democratic campaign that Lichtenwalter had won in Pennsylvania made Hanley wary of the issue, and Republicans were concerned that Labor, if poked, would get their vote out in the special election, but that rural voters would not be so inclined. Harvey was cautious of stirring up Labor even more; he said he would entertain corrective amendments to Taft-Harley if it were found to be unfair or unworkable but also credited it with reducing strikes. Other Republicans, including the Governor, who campaigned for Harvey, were not so scared of the Act.⁴⁷

Harvey emphasized inflation but objected to price controls; he blamed New Deal regulations, Truman, taxes, and government spending. Hanley talked about inflation, housing for veterans, and help for farmers. He supported price controls and an increase in the minimum wage. He advocated farm price supports but without restrictions on production, a political and economic impossibility. Republican supporters of Harvey also campaigned against “the infiltration of sinister foreign groups in our government.” Rep. Noble Johnson of Terre Haute, speaking at a rally for Harvey, claimed Communists had infiltrated the State and War Departments. The Governor claimed that “the PAC-communist leaders are the backbone of the New Deal party.... The Democrat party, through its New Deal leadership, is tied hand

⁴⁴ Harvey, 29-31, 47-9, 51.

⁴⁵ *Rushville Republican*, September 5, 1947. Harvey, 54-5, 64. *The Kokomo Tribune*, the *Kokomo Dispatch*, September 8, 1947. *Greenfield Daily Reporter*, September 8, 1947. *The Vidette-Messenger*, September 27, 1947.

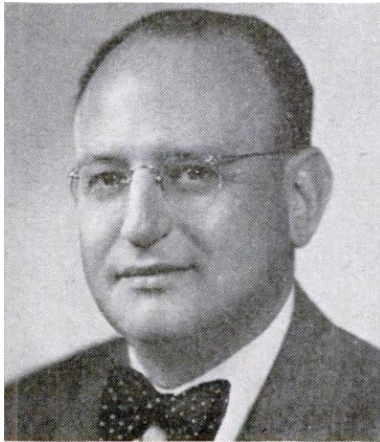
⁴⁶ *Logansport Pharos-Tribune*, September 12, 1947. *Greensburg Daily News*, September 12, 1947. *The Kokomo Tribune*, the *Kokomo Dispatch*, September 12, 1947.

⁴⁷ *Greenfield Daily Reporter*, September 9, 1947. *The Kokomo Tribune*, the *Kokomo Dispatch*, September 20 & 27, 1947. *Rushville Republican*, October 14 & 18 & 31, 1947. *Greensburg Daily News*, September 18, October 14 & 17, November 3, 1947.

and foot to the communist fringe.” The conclusion of the Lynds and Fenton that partisan politics was “paralyzed policywise” did not seem to apply to campaigns for the House.⁴⁸

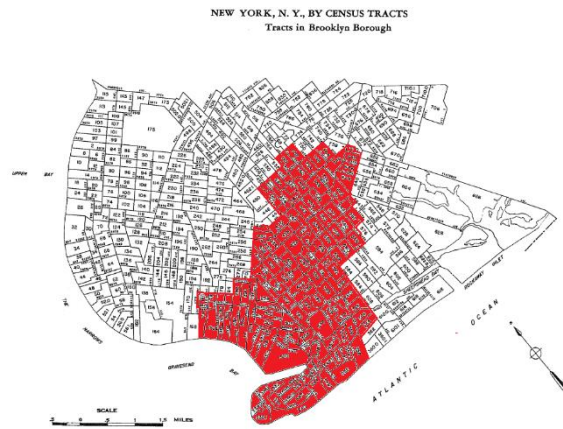
On November 4, Harvey beat Hanley by ten points with a Prohibition Party candidate taking 2%. Harvey was six points off Springer’s last win, but it was a solid victory. Turnout was only 15% of the 1946 vote.⁴⁹

Harvey, too, would be sworn in on November 17, but it was a near thing. He arrived in Washington on the 15th, to discover that his new secretary did not have the certification of his election from Indiana. Frantic calls and airmail special delivery got him sworn in on schedule.⁵⁰



Abraham Multer

Source: *Pocket Directory* (1953)



Brooklyn 14th Cong. Dist.

Source: 1950 Census

Rep. Leo Rayfiel resigned his House seat on September 13, 1947. Truman had nominated him for the district bench on June 30, and the Senate confirmed on August 23. Rayfield was in only his second term in the House, which was the life of the current configuration of his Fourteenth Congressional District in Brooklyn.

It was one of ten congressional districts in the Borough and included Coney Island, Gravesend, part of Borough Park, and part of Bensonhurst. The population would be 99% white in 1950, and 27% of the population would be foreign born. Immigrants from the Soviet Union were the largest part of the foreign born at 31% with Italians at 27%, Poles at 13%, and Austrians at 9%. Given that more recent immigrants tended to follow the paths of older migrants, the religious breakdown of the District in 1950 might be about 54% Jewish and 35% Catholic. Rayfield was Jewish as would be his successor. The average household income would be \$3742.

There would be no primary to identify party candidates for the special election. Primaries in New York, in any event, tended to be low turnout confirmations of candidates chosen by party committees, dominated by party leaders. The District was heavily Democratic, Rayfiel had taken 75% of the 1946 vote but had also been the nominee of the American Labor and Liberal parties. Joseph Whitty, Democratic leader of the Second Assembly District was expected to name the Democratic candidate, given that the

⁴⁸ *The Kokomo Tribune, the Kokomo Dispatch*, September 18, October 9 & 16, 1947. *Rushville Republican*, September 26, October 11 & 22, 1947. *Greensburg Daily News*, September 19, October 3 & 6, 1947. *The Daily Clintonian*, October 30, 1947.

⁴⁹ *National Road Traveler*, November 13, 1947, and OurCampaigns.com give slightly varying results.

⁵⁰ *National Road Traveler*, November 20, 1947.

leader of the other assembly district in the Congressional District usually got to name the New York Senate candidate. On September 18, the Democratic Committees of the two assembly districts met in Half Moon Hotel and nominated Abraham Multer. Two days later the State Executive Committee of the Liberal Party nominated Multer, but the two Democratic assembly district leaders announced that they would not accept a nomination of Multer by the American Labor Party because of charges of communist infiltration in the latter.⁵¹

Multer was 46 and the law partner of Rayfield. His parents were immigrants from Austrian Galicia, the father from what is now Ukraine and the mother from current Poland. Mordechai Israel Multer was a clothes merchant and tailor. Abraham got a bachelors from Evening City College and a law degree from Brooklyn Law School. During the War he was a member of the Coast Guard auxiliary and an air warden, not a veteran. He had been politically active for many years, but 1947 was his first electoral candidacy.⁵²

The Republican sacrifice, Jacob Lefkowitz, was a Jewish immigrant from Poland, a graduate of Columbia University but also of the Brooklyn Law School. American Labor turned to Victor Rabinowitz, also an attorney, but with undergraduate and law degrees from the University of Michigan. He had made a losing campaign for the New York Senate in 1944. Neither Lefkowitz nor Rabinowitz was a veteran. American Labor registration in the District was a smidgen higher than Republican registration but only 24% of Democratic registration, yet the American Labor vote had been 52% of the Democratic vote for Rayfiel.⁵³

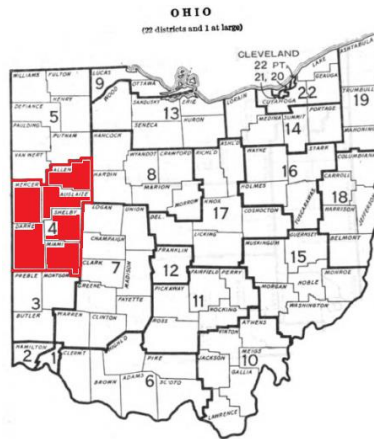
Rabinowitz did top Lefkowitz by nine points on November 4, 1947, but Multer's combined Democratic and Liberal total was 58%. He would be sworn in on November 17.

Rep. Robert Jones of Ohio resigned from the House on September 2, eleven days before Rayfiel did, but the course of his replacement from the Fourth Congressional District was a little slower. For one thing, there was a primary.



William McCulloch

Source: *Pocket Directory* (1953)



Ohio 4th Cong. Dist.

Source: *Congressional Directory* (1948)

Jones' route to confirmation as a member of the Federal Communications Commission was also slower than Rayfiel's and more interesting. Ray Wakefield held a seat on the five-member Commission,

⁵¹ *Brooklyn Eagle*, July 6, September 17 & 21 & 26, 1947.

⁵² 1920 Census schedule, Kings County, New York. Multer.com. *Brooklyn Eagle*, January 21, 1943.

⁵³ *Brooklyn Eagle*, July 6, September 12 & 30, October 28, 1947.

which could have no more than three members of the same political party. Wakefield was a Republican, and when his term was up in 1947, Pres. Truman was obliged to name a Republican. On May 21 he reappointed Wakefield and sent his name to the Senate for confirmation. Four weeks later Truman withdrew his appointment of Wakefield and sent Jones' name to the Senate. Wakefield was credited with being "a champion of lower communications rates." It was reported that Republican leaders objected to the reappointment of Wakefield, and Truman agreed to replace him, that Jones was favored by Republican Senators Robert Taft and John Bricker of Ohio. Muckraker Drew Pearson would charge that Taft and Bricker had conflicts of interest in that Taft owned a radio station and that Bricker had applied for a license for one. Pearson also claimed that Democratic Speaker of the House Sam Rayburn was opposed to Wakefield because he had voted to deny a radio license to Rayburn's nephew. Jones was confirmed on July 11.⁵⁴

The Ohio Governor waited until after Jones' resignation to set the dates for a special primary and election. As with Multer, the election was set for the customary first Tuesday in November. The primary would be October 7. William McCulloch of Piqua was identified by Republican leaders as their favored candidate as soon as Jones was nominated. Nevertheless, Dewey Fetter declared for the Republican nomination before the date of the primary was set. McCulloch announced the day the Governor set the dates, but it was contended that he "was not eager for the contest and had to be argued into the acceptance of the candidacy." He was expected to have little to fear from Fetter, who was a Lima paint salesman. Still, Fetter got 29% of the vote.⁵⁵

McCulloch, 46, was an attorney whose private practice had been interrupted by two years in the Army during the War. He worked in Military Government and was separated in October 1945 as a captain. He also had taken time from his legal practice to serve six terms in the Ohio House of Representatives, the last three as Speaker. When he had entered the Army, Republican leaders assured Mabel McCulloch, Williams' wife of nineteen years that she could have the nomination for her husband's legislative seat, but she demurred. On returning from the Army, McCulloch passed on running again for the General Assembly, and it seems was inclined to stay home and pick up his legal practice.⁵⁶

Jones had won his fifth term in 1946 with 59% of the vote in a Republican year. McCulloch faced Democrat Joseph Quatman from Lima, another attorney and veteran. *The Cincinnati Enquirer* opined that the only major difference between the candidates was that Quatman was for aid to Europe and McCulloch was against. McCulloch won with 55% on November 4 and would take his oath on November 17, 1947.⁵⁷

The boundaries of the Fourth District had not changed since 1927. Lima was the biggest town with 45,000 in 1940 and 50,000 in 1950. Piqua would have 17,000 in 1950. Farming was important in the six counties that were hard up against the central Indiana line, but manufacturing wages were 81% greater than farm income in mid-decade. Hogs and dairy were the major money makers for farms that averaged incomes of \$3183. The manufacturing of non-electrical machinery was tops. The population was overwhelmingly native-born whites, and the District would have an average median family income of \$3007 in 1949.

⁵⁴ *Evening Star*, September 30, 1949.

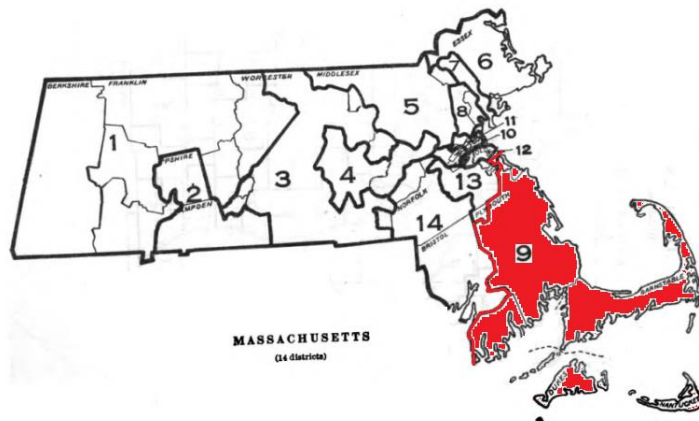
⁵⁵ *The Cincinnati Enquirer*, June 22, October 12, 1947. *Newark Advocate and American Tribune*, August 25, 1947. *The Sandusky Register-Star-News*, September 10, 1947. *The Delphos Courier*, August 27, 1947. *Ohio Vote*, October 7, 1947.

⁵⁶ *The Piqua Daily Call*, February 21, 1944; October 16, 1945.

⁵⁷ *Delphos Daily Herald*, October 3, 1947. *The Cincinnati Enquirer*, November 2, 1947.



Donald Nicholson

Source: *Pocket Directory* (1951)Massachusetts 9th Cong. Dist.Source: *Congressional Directory* (1948)

Rep. Charles Gifford died on August 23, 1947. He had been in the House since 1922 and was 76. The Ninth Congressional District of Massachusetts was in its current configuration only since 1942. It included Cape Cod, Nantucket, Martha's Vineyard, New Bedford, Taunton, and north to Boston Harbor. 61% of the population would be counted as metropolitan in 1950 and an even larger 70% were in 1940, though the largest city was New Bedford, with 110,000 people. European Americans were 96% of the population in 1940, and that proportion would even increase a little by 1950. The foreign-born were 20% in 1940, largely from Canada and Great Britain and a substantial Azorean population in New Bedford. Average farm income was a nice \$4760 in 1945 with poultry and eggs, fruits and nuts, and dairy leading. Manufacturing wages dwarfed farm income, however, and was heavily in textiles. The average median family income in the six counties, three of them only partially in the District, would be \$2954 in 1950. Of those few components reported by the Census that were actually in the District in toto, it would be \$2592.

The parents of Donald Nicholson, 57, were born in Nova Scotia, his father a blacksmith. Nicholson was a salesman of Wareham, had been in elective office since 1920 as Selectman and 21 years a State Senator. He led the October 28 Republican primary with 41% over three other candidates. William Perry, 43, an attorney, ran second, thanks to his success in New Bedford where he was a Councilman. Third place was taken by Nathaniel Tilden of Scituate, 53, a farmer and legislator, who captured much of the northern part of the District.⁵⁸

Nicholson faced Democrat Jacinto Diniz in the special election on November 18. Diniz, 59, was born in the Azores, lived in New Bedford and was a State Representative. He said he was an American veteran of the First World War as was Nicholson.⁵⁹

Nicholson took 58% of the ballots in a turnout of 50,000 voters. 115,000 had voted in the 1946 general election and given Gifford 61%. Diniz claimed irregularities, but the Executive Council of Massachusetts declared Nicholson elected on November 26, and he was sworn in on November 28.⁶⁰

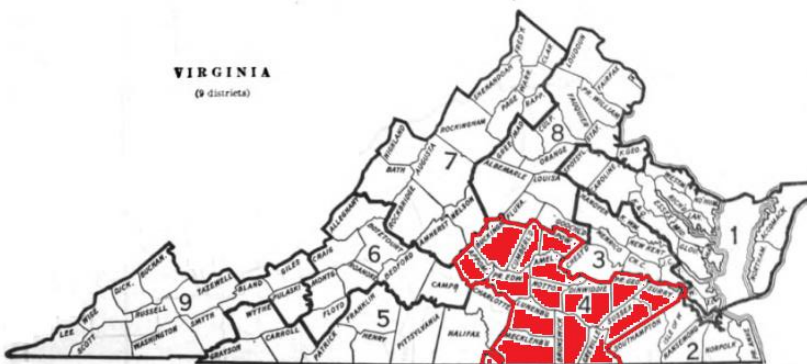
⁵⁸ 1900 & 1910 Census schedules, Plymouth County, Massachusetts. 1940 & 1950 Census schedules, New Bedford, Massachusetts. *The Berkshire Evening Eagle*, October 11 & 29, 1947. 1940 & 1950 Census schedules, Scituate, Massachusetts. *Massachusetts Election Statistics* 1947.

⁵⁹ *The Berkshire Evening Eagle*, April 8, 1947; October 7, 1949. 1940 Census schedule, Bristol County, Massachusetts.

⁶⁰ *The Berkshire Evening Eagle*, November 19, 1947. *Fitchburg Sentinel*, November 26, 1947.



Watkins Abbitt

Source: *Pocket Directory* (1953)Virginia 4th Cong. Dist.Source: *Congressional Directory* (1948)

Rep. Patrick Henry Drewry was in the House even longer than Gifford. He took his seat in 1920 and he lived longer, to December 21, 1947, but died younger, at age 72. Drewry's home, where he died, was in the metropolis of Virginia's Fourth Congressional District, Petersburg. Petersburg had 31,000 people in 1940 and 35,000 in 1950. The District was rural even by the Census' lax standards – 80% rural in 1940, 76% in 1950. Despite being so rural, manufacturing wages in 1947 were still 88% of farm income in 1945. Fourth District farms were poor, average income being only \$1549. Tobacco was by far the money crop, and the New Deal tobacco program had saved many small farms, so that the tenancy rate in the District was a moderate 30%. Average median family income in 1949 however would be a poor \$1803.

The Fourth was the quintessential "Southside" district. Walter Watson defined the Southside in a publication of the Virginia State Library in 1925 as "That section of Virginia which lies south of the James River and east of the Blue Ridge Mountains ...; but the designation is often restricted to a smaller area, excluding the tidewater and upland counties, and sometimes also the northern counties of this region." The Fourth District's fifteen counties and two independent cities all lay within Watson's more expansive definition.⁶¹

Watson's geography is nebulous, but the reason to identify Southside is his statement in the next paragraph, "It was the stronghold of slavery in Virginia." This leads directly to V.O. Key's statement in 1949, "In its grand outlines the politics of the South revolves around the position of the Negro." "The hard core of the political South ... is made up of those counties and sections of the southern states in which Negroes constitute a substantial proportion of the population." While the black population in Virginia was relatively small for a Southern state (24% in 1940 and 23% in 1950), it was proportionately more important in the Southside. The Fourth District was 49% African American in 1940 and 46% in 1950. Key's definition of the "black belts," "in which Negroes constitute a substantial proportion of the population," was as nebulous as Watson's Southside. He observed that it was in these black belts that whites were able "to run a shoestring into decisive power." In Virginia it was Southside that was the foundation stone of the Byrd organization.⁶²

The lowest proportion black among the fifteen counties of the Fourth District in 1950 would be 24%. All but two counties would be at least 43% black; Sussex County would be 65% black. Sen. Harry Byrd took

⁶¹ Watson, 5.

⁶² Key (1949), 5-7. Key wavered between majority black and over a third black as significant. Laurant, 52.

72% of the District vote in the 1946 Democratic primary. In the rest of the State, he received 63%. If the two independent cities in the District are excluded, Byrd's return was 77%.⁶³

The special election in the Fourth District was on February 17, 1948. There were no primary or convention nominations. Three Democrats and a Republican contested for the seat. Robert Arnold and Watkins Abbitt were commonwealth's attorneys, and Morton Goode had been one. Jurist Harvie Wilkinson observed that the position of commonwealth's attorney, i.e. county prosecutor, represented a first level of apprenticeship in the Byrd organization. Key identified the position as one of the five county elected offices that ran "the local outposts of the organization." Abbitt had been the commonwealth's attorney of Appomattox County since 1932, when he was 24 years old. He succeeded an uncle of Sen. Byrd in the post. Robert Arnold, 32, had been the commonwealth's attorney in Sussex County since 1943. Morton Goode, 61, had moved from commonwealth's attorney in Dinwiddie County in 1920 to the State Senate, where he had now served since 1938. *The Washington Post* reported on February 17 that the real race was between Abbitt and Goode, both "stalwarts" of the Byrd organization, but that neither had been given the nod. Key wrote, "One can go from courthouse to courthouse today and the officials will not know who will be the next governor. Tomorrow, after the 'nod' has been given, one can travel the same route and observe a remarkable unanimity of prediction."⁶⁴

Unanimity was lacking in the special election, but there was a clear winner. Abbitt received 49%, Goode 39%, Arnold 9%, and the Republican 3%. Given Abbitt's location in the far west of the District from a county with the fourth smallest population, and Goode's more central location from a county with the fourth largest population, not to mention Dinwiddie's association with the independent City of Petersburg, it seems likely the nod came for Abbitt. Perhaps unanimity was lacking due to the organization being roiled the month of the election by its proposal that the State Democratic Committee be allowed to determine for whom Democratic presidential electors would vote, this in reaction to Truman's civil rights proposals to Congress on February 2.⁶⁵

Abbitt's father was a country merchant and postmaster, which required a political connection. Watkins' brother George was appointed to succeed the newly elected Representative as commonwealth's attorney. Wat Abbitt would join the House of Representatives on February 26.⁶⁶

By far the most publicized special election providing a member to the 80th Congress was that which sent Leo Isacson from the Bronx to Washington. His predecessor, Democrat Benjamin Rabin, was elected to the New York supreme court (a trial court, not the highest New York court) on November 4, 1947, and resigned his House seat on December 31. Two weeks later, Gov. Thomas Dewey set the special election at February 17. As with Multer's special election, nominations would be by party committees.⁶⁷

⁶³ Virginia Elections. Virginia's system of cities independent of counties has long perplexed statisticians. The figures on black percentage lump Petersburg with Dinwiddie County and Hopewell with Prince George County. Petersburg gave Byrd 61% while Dinwiddie County alone showed 74%. Hopewell was the only jurisdiction opposed to Byrd, giving him only 43%, while Prince George County gave 55%.

⁶⁴ Wilkinson, 24. Key (1949), 21, 23. *The Washington Post*, December 29, 1947. *The Progress-Index*, December 13, 1959; August 20, 1963.

⁶⁵ OurCampaigns.com. Key (1949), 34-5.

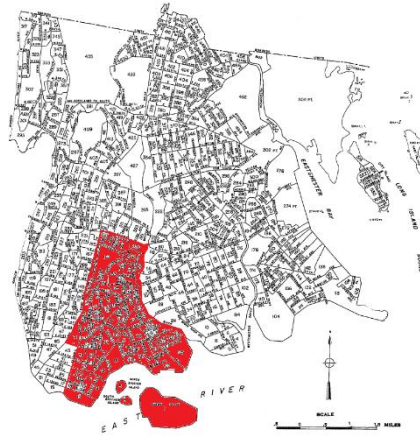
⁶⁶ *The Washington Post*, February 25, 1948. *The Progress-Index*, May 30, 1966.

⁶⁷ Devine, 72.



Leo Isacson

Source: AllPosters-IE.com

Bronx 24th Cong. Dist.

Source: 1950 Census

Of the two congressional districts in the southern Bronx, the Twenty-fourth was the eastern one. It was, according to *Time*, “a disheartening area of crowded walk-up tenements, blackened, blind-walled factories and littered streets. Its population is about 55% Jewish, 18% Negro; Irish, Italians and Puerto Ricans make up almost all the rest.” Pollster and journalist Samuel Lubell thought the District was about 40% Jewish, “a dying Jewish neighborhood where the chill of being trapped penetrates everywhere.” From 1938 to 1950 “out of Harlem poured something like 50,000 Negroes and another 75,000 Puerto Ricans. The mold of residential segregation was abruptly smashed, scores of apartment houses becoming mixed in their occupants.” The population of the District had topped out at 347,000 in 1940 and would decline a bit in the next ten years as the new influx generated a counter outflux.⁶⁸

The 1950 Census would reveal a district that had a population 22% African American and 24% white foreign-born. Given that 4% of the white foreign born were Latin American, it is likely that a proportion of the black population was also Latin American, specifically West Indian. Of the white foreign born, 27% were Russian, 17% Polish, and 9% Austrian. Lubell’s estimate is consistent with the City Health Department figures on Jewish proportions, if applied to the ethnicity of the white population as a whole. Whatever, the Twenty-fourth District would be considerably less affluent than the Twenty-Sixth, David Potts’ Bronx District, with an average median household income of \$2687, compared to \$3669.

The current boundaries of the Twenty-Fourth District were set in 1944, when Rabin was first elected. The area was served by another Democrat, James Fitzpatrick, for eighteen years before Rabin. The names give an indication of the ethnicity of the area, from Irish to Jewish, as the Jewish migration from Manhattan to the Bronx preceded the African American and Puerto-Rican moves, as the Irish had even earlier. “After 1890, the Bronx became a haven for tens of thousands of second-generation immigrants seeking to leave the crowded tenements of East Harlem and the Lower East Side.” *Time* and Lubell’s comments owe no small amount to their attitudes about African Americans and Puerto-Ricans.⁶⁹

The new representative elected on February 17, 1948, was Jewish and, more importantly for the national news, an American Labor Party (ALP) member and political god-child of Henry Wallace. Wallace, former vice-president of Franklin Roosevelt and cabinet officer of Harry Truman, had announced a presidential campaign in December 1947 as the candidate of a third party. The New York Executive

⁶⁸ *Time*, March 1, 1948. Lubell, 94.

⁶⁹ Gonzalez, 5.

Committee of the American Labor Party announced its support of Wallace on January 7, 1948, and soon its nomination of Isacson as their candidate in the special election in the Twentieth-fourth District.⁷⁰

In January 1948 the executive board of the New York CIO condemned Wallace's third party and urged member unions to withdraw support from the ALP if it persisted in backing Wallace. Twenty-four members who were union representatives on the ALP's executive committee withdrew. But then the Secretary of the Greater New York City CIO Council announced that the Council would actively back Isacson's campaign.⁷¹

Even more muddled was the fact that the ALP and the Liberal Party had run their own candidates against Rabin in 1946, whereas in 1944 he was endorsed by both.

Isacson was 37, an attorney and not a veteran. He had been elected to the New York Assembly in 1944 as ALP and, muddle again, Republican. Like Jacob Javits, he said he had rejected the Democratic Party because of its "machine politics." In 1946 he was defeated for the Republican and Democratic nominations, but renominated by the ALP. The legislative district elected a Republican and Isacson came in second.⁷²

The Democrats nominated Karl Propper for the House vacancy. Also an attorney, he was 55 and a veteran of the First World War. Joseph De Nigris, 52, the Republican candidate, was a building contractor and a native of Italy. The Liberals chose Dean Alfange, 46 or 47, also a lawyer, a Greek-American. He had been the ALP candidate for Governor in 1942. One cannot tell the players even with a scorecard.⁷³

Propper was a New Deal Democrat. The only major distinction between him and Isacson was on foreign policy. Isacson opposed Truman's request for aid for Greece and Turkey to defend against communist infiltration and threat, and Isacson was dubious about the Marshall Plan to provide funds for the reconstruction of Europe. These were Wallace's issues as well and major reasons for his split with Truman.⁷⁴

Eleanor Roosevelt, the former first lady, campaigned for Propper and implied in her newspaper column that Isacson's opposition to the Marshall Plan was because the Communist Party opposed it. Henry Wallace campaigned for Isacson and called on Truman to fire his secretaries of Defense and Commerce. Wallace struck perhaps the really telling blow against Truman and for Isacson in the Twenty-fourth District by criticizing the President's equivocation on support for a Jewish state in Palestine. Isacson also accused Truman of ducking the Palestine issue and linked himself strongly to Wallace's campaign. Propper endorsed Zionism, but Truman's stance played stronger than Propper's.⁷⁵

Isacson himself collapsed less than three weeks after his nomination by committee and a cardiologist was called in; the next day it was announced he had recovered from an "attack of exhaustion."⁷⁶

Isacson not only won the election, he received 56% against his three opponents. Propper got 31%, Alfange 9%, and De Nigris 4%. The Democratic leader of the Bronx blamed the loss initially on communists but later noted the strength of the Zionist vote. Alfange also thought communist activity in the campaign

⁷⁰ *The Camden News*, January 7, 1948. *Kingston Daily Freeman*, January 22, 1948.

⁷¹ *The Daily Messenger*, January 6, 1948. *Brooklyn Eagle*, January 7, 1948. *The New York Times*, January 25, 1948.

⁷² *The New York Times*, September 25, 1996. *Evening Star*, February 18, 1948. *Kingston Daily Freeman*, August 21, 1946. *Dunkirk Evening Observer*, November 6, 1946.

⁷³ *The New York Times*, January 22, 1948. 1940 Census schedule, Bronx County, New York. US Social Security Death Index. *The Daily Messenger*, March 30, 1948. *Wellsville Daily Reporter*, August 4, 1972.

⁷⁴ Stone, 218.

⁷⁵ Roosevelt, February 14, 1948. *Brooklyn Eagle*, February 16, 1948. Donovan (1977), 361. *The Post-Standard*, February 18, 1948. Snetsinger, 80-1.

⁷⁶ *The New York Times*, February 9 & 10, 1948.

was critical. Warren Moscow, a political reporter for *The New York Times*, found communists and Zionists to be responsible.⁷⁷

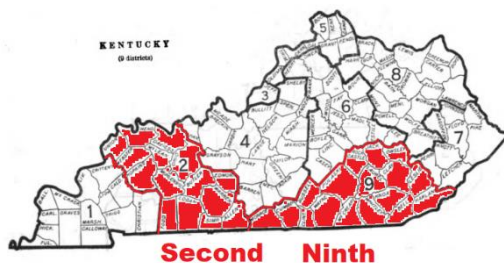
Isacson would be sworn in on Capitol Hill on March 1, 1948, joining Vito Marcantonio of East Harlem, the only other member of the American Labor Party in the House. The two ALP members roomed together in Washington along with journalist I.F. Stone and actor Paul Robeson. The new Representative flew to Washington with Henry Wallace, who used the opportunity to show the novice around.⁷⁸

The last two special elections for the 80th House occurred in the same state, Kentucky, and were necessitated by the departure from the House of two prominent politicians of the State. Democrat Earle Clements of the Second Congressional District was elected governor on November 4, 1947, and resigned his House seat on January 6, 1948. Republican John Robsion of the Ninth District was elected to the House in 1918, but had sat out two terms when he gave up the seat in 1930 for an appointment to the Senate; he died on February 17, 1948, at the age of 71.



John Whitaker

Source: BioGuide.Congress.gov



Kentucky 2nd & 9th Cong. Dists.

Source: Congressional Directory, 1948



William Lewis

Source: Wikipedia.org

The special election for Clements' seat, set by new Gov. Clements, was April 17, 1948. Nomination was by District Committee. Clements picked John Whitaker to succeed himself and Susie, as he was known to most Kentucky politicians, had little trouble getting the nomination on March 27. Susie Whitaker was 46, an attorney, and the son of a master of trains for the Louisville & Nashville Railroad and of a postmistress. His mother's father had been a Republican member of the US House. Whitaker was raised across the street in Russellville from the home of Thomas Rhea, a bachelor, and the Democratic leader of Logan County, and became Rhea's protégé. Rhea's political influence extended beyond his county, being one of the leaders of one of the two major statewide Democratic factions, the Laffoon-Rhea organization. Laffoon was Governor from 1931 to 1935 and Rhea lost the primary to succeed him. The faction was a great supporter of Franklin Roosevelt, and 30-year-old Whitaker, though a non-delegate, was tapped to carry Kentucky's standard and lead the State's demonstration for the nomination of Roosevelt at the 1932 National Democratic Convention. Whitaker was the elected prosecutor of Logan County from 1928 to

⁷⁷ *Dunkirk Evening Observer*, February 18, 1948. *The Harvard Crimson*, March 13, 1948. Yarnell, 57. Stone, 219.

⁷⁸ Stone, 217. MacDougall, 602.

1948, but was an unsuccessful candidate for the Democratic nomination for Lieutenant Governor in 1943.⁷⁹

There was no Republican nominee in the Second District special election, and Whitaker got all the votes but for a scattering of 48 different write-in names. The District had had its current configuration since 1934, stretching from Tennessee to Indiana in the western part of the State, and had been represented only by Democrats, although four of the fifteen counties were historically Republican and three were competitive.⁸⁰ Most of the District was coal country. The 1950 census would count 9618 employed in mining. Employment in the varied manufacturing of the District would be still 50% higher than in mining, and agricultural employment more than doubled that in manufacturing. Farms, however, were small and averaged only \$1573 in income in 1945. Tobacco and livestock sales were particularly important. The white population was native born, and the black population was less than 10% of the total. Owensboro, population about 32,000, was the largest town. The average median family income would be a miserly \$1496 in 1949.

Whitaker would be sworn in to the House on April 26, 1948.

The Ninth Congressional District in the southeast of Kentucky was split between the Cumberland Plateau and the Pennyroyal. It was also a coal district, even more so, with 22,366 employed in mining in 1950. Agricultural employment still topped mining. The farms were smaller and far poorer than those in the Second District with an average income in 1945 of only \$534. The population was whiter and as native-born as the Second District. Average median family income would be an impoverished \$1208.

The Ninth District was clearly a Republican bailiwick, though the New Deal had cut into it. Harlan County, in particular, “Following the unionization of the mines in the early thirties ... became enthusiastically Democratic in national and State elections, but remained predominantly, though narrowly, Republican in local contests.”⁸¹ Robsion had been the representative so long, that Republican leaders were inclined to avoid anointing a new leader in a special election less than seven months before the regular election. Picking a place holder would avoid a bitter split among the seventeen county organizations. The obvious solution was William Lewis, 79, who had taken 44% in the 1930 Republican primary for the House, but lost to Robsion’s preferred candidate, Charles Finley, who served only one term. Lewis made another run for the House in 1932 in an At-large election, Kentucky having failed to redistrict after the 1930 Census took two seats away. He came in third for nine seats in the primary and twelfth in the general election. Democrats won all nine seats.⁸²

Lewis had held a series of elective positions, Sheriff, County Superintendent of Schools, State legislator, commonwealth’s attorney, district judge, but his winning run had ended in 1934. He was a lawyer by occupation as well as a politician. By 1948 he had become something of a grand old man of the GOP who promised he would not seek election for the regular House term in November. Nevertheless, his nomination by committee was challenged by four others, including the son of the dead Robsion, who led on the first ballot with Lewis in second place. After the fifth ballot everyone had dropped out but

⁷⁹ *The Owensboro Messenger*, April 17, 1946; March 27 & 28, 1947; December 16, 1951. *The Courier-Journal*, July 1, 1932; December 8, 1946; May 2, 1948; December 16, 1951. Fenton (1957), 28-30.

⁸⁰ *The Courier-Journal*, April 22, 1948. Fenton (1957), 66.

⁸¹ Fenton (1957), 23.

⁸² Jewell. *Danville Daily Messenger*, August 5, 1930; July 26, 1932. Finley was involved in the assassination of Kentucky Gov. William Goebel on February 3, 1900. The shot that killed the new Democratic governor had come from the office of the Secretary of State. Finley was the outgoing Secretary and he and W.S. Taylor, losing Republican candidate for governor, were indicted and fled to Indiana.

Lewis, Robsion, and Charles Seale, 63, a former judge and now an executive appointee in the State government. Ballots six and seven were deadlocked at 15 each for Lewis and Robsion and 2 for Seale. Apparently, Seale was hoping to throw his votes to one of the others in return for something, but what? At the end, Robsion threw his votes to Lewis, well, most of them, Lewis winning on the eighth ballot 27 to 4 for Seale. In return the State faction supporting Lewis agreed to allow the Robsion faction to name Kentucky's two members of the Republican National Committee, the Ninth District Republican chair, and the choice of two members to the National Convention. And Lewis would serve in the House only until January 1949, which was assured as no Democrat contested the special election on April 24.⁸³

The younger Robsion was appointed a special circuit judge and then was elected to the US House in 1952, serving until defeated in 1958. Lewis took his seat in the House on May 3, 1948.

There is a tendency to evaluate special elections as a hint to what the following regular election might promise. There was no partisan change in fourteen of the fifteen elections above. Nor was there in the four other special elections for the 80th House that produced representatives which this work does not include in the Class of '46.⁸⁴ The one that did send shock waves through the political firmament was that of Isacson, replacing a Democrat with an American Laborite, strongly backed by third party presidential candidate Henry Wallace and winning, it seemed in large part, on a Zionist platform.

The one election out of fifteen or sixteen (three of the four uncounted were elected on or after the November presidential election) resulted in observations such as:

- "President Truman's chances of re-election were clouded today by returns from a New York city congressional by-election in which Henry A. Wallace hoisted his third party candidacy to a wholly unexpected triumph." "On the face of the by-election returns, the extreme left-wing of the New Deal-Democratic coalition in New York has bolted to Wallace-for-president and can deliver its votes."⁸⁵
- "The Democratic national committee raised an out and out distress signal" over Isacson's victory. Chair Howard McGrath admitted it was a "big danger signal for the Democrats."⁸⁶
- Three Brooklyn Democratic leaders came out against Truman over the Palestine issue.⁸⁷
- "Either [the Democrats] must change their cynical and bungling policies, or they must change their Presidential candidate."⁸⁸

But by June 1948 the February vote in the Bronx was long past. Soviet actions were not helping Wallace's emphasis on co-existence, and Truman was aggressively baiting the Republican Congress to demonstrate critical policy differences. On Saint Patrick's Day he started red-baiting Wallace as well, saying, "I do not want and will not accept the political support of Henry Wallace and his Communists." As for Palestine, the Administration continued its blundering path toward the inevitable recognition of Israel in May. Truman's support for Jewish aspirations conflicted with the State Department's realistic appraisal that partition of the British mandate would lead to greater conflict, hostility among Arab states to

⁸³ *The Courier-Journal*, April 3 & 4, 1948. OurCampaigns.com.

⁸⁴ Three of these individuals were sworn in on the last pro-forma day of the 80th Congress, December 31, 1948. The fourth had previously served in the House.

⁸⁵ *Dunkirk Evening Observer*, February 18, 1948.

⁸⁶ *The Daily Messenger*, February 19, 1948.

⁸⁷ *Dunkirk Evening Observer*, March 23, 1948.

⁸⁸ Syndicated columnist Max Lerner, quoted in Yarnell, 55.

American support for partition, and the resulting increasing influence of the Soviet Union in the region. The only thing the State Department was wrong about was its expectation that Israel could not succeed. If there was any direct influence from Isacson's victory on February 17, it was the call to Truman's old business partner and friend Edward Jacobson three days later by the president of B'nai B'rith urging him to meet with Truman. There was some thought that the recent election might help move the Administration to more active support for Zionism. In any event, Jacobson secured the meeting, which resulted in Truman's personal support, while the State Department was moving publicly in the opposite direction.⁸⁹

The special elections brought the partisan totals in the Class of '46 to 71 Republicans, 37 Democrats, and one American Laborite.

Of the Republicans, 31 were from the Northeast, 21 from the Midwest, 13 from the West, and 6 from the Census South. The returning Republicans in the 80th House (excluding those whose departures enabled the special elections) were 61 from the Northeast, 90 from the Midwest, 25 from the West, and 5 from the Census South.

Of the Democrats, 5 were from the Northeast, 2 from the Midwest, 2 from the West, and 28 from the Census South. 23 were from the Confederate South and 9 from the Border. The returning Democrats (with the special election exclusion) were 29 from the Northeast, 18 from the Midwest, 22 from the West, and 89 from the Census South. 78 were from the Confederate South and 21 from the Border.

If the 1946 and special elections had any regional significance, it was that the Midwest was relatively static, and the South was a-roil. The greatest shift in both parties was in the latter states. That region freed from its devotion to the economic policies of Franklin Roosevelt (admittedly laid on its Confederate sensibilities) seemed to be preparing, however slightly, for a defense of its social policies.

⁸⁹ Irwin Ross, 156-7. Yarnell, 57-8. Donovan (1977), 373-6.