army, while seeking the acquisition of California, repeatedly and distinctly directed that the matter should not be pressed if it prevented friendly relations with Mexico. Polk made every rational effort to pacify and keep the peace with our neighbor. American and Mexican troops were both in the disputed territory as each, under international law, had a right to be, in joint occupation. The first clash was the Mexican attack on Colonel Thornton's reconnitering party. Senator Otero admitted in the Mexican Congress that the American army did not advance to the Rio Grande until war was inevitable, and then only as an army of observation. It was Mexico that had broken off diplomatic relations and later refused to receive our commissioner. Mexico made every preparation for war, and notified her representatives abroad that war existed or was certain, while we were still striving for peace. The Mexican people demanded war and the Herrera administration was forced to yield to popular fury.

In strong contrast to Polk's pacific policy and utterances was Mexico's conduct. "I had the pleasure," said President Herrera in 1847, "of being the first to begin the war." "It is indispensable," he ordered General Arista before any clash had occurred, "that hostilities begin, yourself taking the initiative." In the light of evidence now accessible, America must be acquitted of having forced on the war, and the Democrats acknowledged to have pursued the traditional American policy of patient forbearance toward our Southern neighbor.

As he turned over the government to his successor with the country in most excellent condition, enlarged by a tremendous accession of territory acquired at a comparatively small cost in blood and money, so Polk delivered over to his successor the Democratic Party in excellent condition. Only a wonderfully popular military hero could defeat it, and not he, but for the Van Buren bolt in the next campaign.

Polk was the last of the Tennessee leaders, indeed the last of the Southern Presidents until Woodrow Wilson was elected sixty-four years later, though Bell of Tennessee and Breckenridge of Kentucky were candidates in 1850. With Polk the scepter departed from the South, and passed to "Northern men with Southern principles."

Polk adhered strictly to the principles of his party and fastened them on it by successfully applying them during four years of a most difficult period. He proved their wisdom and practicability, and enduring strength.

CHAPTER XVI

THE LONE WHIG ADMINISTRATION

1849-1851


The Fifth Democratic National Convention met at Baltimore May 22, 1848. New York had two contesting delegations, the Old Hunkers, Marcy and Dickinson men, and the Barnburners, Van Buren men now led by John A. Dix, Samuel J. Tilden and John Van Buren. The latter called themselves Progressive Democrats and were pledged to support the Wilmot Proviso; they refused to give a pledge to support the nominee but distinctly asserted that they would not support Cass. Each delegation demanded its own admission and the exclusion of the other. The convention admitted both, whereupon the Barnburners withdrew. The Hunkers were so called for their alleged "hunkering" after office; the Barnburners were likened to the Dutch farmer who burned his barn to get rid of the rats. These Barnburners were the successors of the Equal Rights Democrats and the forerunners of the Free Soil Democrats. This New York split led the Democrats the election.

Every state was represented, though South Carolina's sole delegate had not been regularly selected. The first act of the convention was to fix the representation in future conventions as the same as in the Electoral College. A central committee of one from each state was established which should have charge of his party's interest—the first regular national committee. The two-thirds rule was adopted after long debate, 175 to 78.

Cass led on first ballot, 125 to 55 for Buchanan and 53 for Levi Woodbury; on the fourth ballot Cass was nominated. Polk
THE LONE WING ADMINISTRATION


THE LONG WING ADMINISTRATION

224 THE STORY OF THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY

December 15, 1977, the Long Wing Restoration Committee, following a

initial meeting in 1932, launched the movement to reconstitute the

Democratic Party. Their efforts culminated in the United Democratic

Convention of 1977, which resulted in the formation of the Long

Wing Coalition. This coalition included members from various party

branches and was dedicated to restoring the Democratic Party as a

force for progress and change.

The Long Wing Coalition was formed with the goal of addressing the

issues of the day and working towards a more inclusive and
democratic party. They focused on issues such as civil rights, social

justice, and economic equality. Their efforts were instrumental in

reshaping the Democratic Party and laying the foundation for future

leadership.

The Long Wing Coalition's impact on the Democratic Party was

significant. They helped to bring new energy and ideas into the

party, and their efforts contributed to the eventual appointment of

leaders who shared their vision.

Today, the Long Wing Coalition continues to be a source of inspiration

for those fighting for a more inclusive and progressive Democratic

Party. Their legacy serves as a reminder of the power of unity and

dedication in achieving social and political change.
thought it a great joke that the former leader of the “Free Spoils Party” was now leading the Free Soil Party.

The Democratic candidates were from the extreme Northwest and the Middle South; the Whig from the extreme South and the North; the Free Soil from the North and East.

Another convention held in 1848 was the “Woman’s Rights” convention at Seneca Falls, New York, in the autumn, under the energetic efforts of Mrs. Lucretia Mott and Mrs. Elizabeth Stanton, the husband of the former presiding over the meeting. Suffrage for women, reform in laws relating to employment and wages of the sexes and properties of married women, were demanded, and strong anti-slavery sentiments proclaimed.

The Whig campaign was vigorous and the popularity of Taylor everywhere evident. This and the Van Buren defection disheartened the Democrats, but they waged an active fight. It was a people’s campaign and a people’s election. The Whig leaders, after sulking a little, all came to the support of the ticket. Seward and Lincoln spoke together at a great Whig meeting in Boston; the papers reported Seward’s speech in full, but Lincoln’s received a four-line notice—“Mr. Lincoln of Illinois, next came forward and was received with great pleasure. He spoke about an hour and made a powerful and convincing speech which was cheered to the echo.”

It was a close race. Taylor carried Delaware by 500 only, and Cass Mississippi by only 600, and Alabama and Iowa by less than 1,000 each. In no state was there a landslide. Leaving out New York’s 36, the electoral vote was 127 for Taylor and 105 for Cass. Therefore the Barnburner Democrats of New York were the decisive factors in the defeat of the Democratic ticket, and the Free Soil element in the combination was responsible for the election of a Southern slave-holder to the Presidency. Thus do third party movements work contraries.

The popular vote was, Taylor 1,300,099; Cass 1,220,544; Van Buren 291,205, of which two-thirds were reckoned Democrats. Tammany being divided, Taylor carried New York City by 10,000. The New York State vote was, Taylor 218,603; Cass 114,318; Van Buren 120,510. Van Buren received a larger vote in Massachusetts than Cass, but in Delaware only 80, in Maryland only 128 and in Virginia 9, while in eleven states he received none.

Taylor was another “minority” President by 52,000 votes, to which must be added the unknown majority against him in South Carolina, which still chose her electors by the legislature.
THE LONG-WIRED ADMINISTRATION

The story of the Democratic Party begins with the political climate of the early 1940s. In 1940, Franklin D. Roosevelt, the Democratic candidate, won a landslide victory over his Republican opponent, Wendell Willkie. Roosevelt's success was due in part to his skillful use of radio broadcasts to connect with the American people. He became known as the "radio president" and used his influence to shape public opinion.

After Roosevelt's death in 1945, Harry S. Truman assumed the presidency. Truman continued Roosevelt's policies, especially in foreign affairs. He faced significant challenges, including the Korean War and the spread of communism in Europe.

The Democratic Party also faced internal divisions during this period. The party split over issues such as civil rights and the Cold War. The 1952 presidential election saw the rise of Richard Nixon, who would eventually become the Republican candidate and challenge the Democratic Party's dominance.

Despite these challenges, the Democratic Party remained a force to be reckoned with. It continued to shape American politics and policy, and its influence would only grow in the decades to come.

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1932: FDR wins the election.
1945: Truman assumes the presidency.
1952: Nixon challenges the Democratic Party.

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THE STORY OF THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY

The Democratic Party was formed in the 1820s during the antebellum period. It was founded by Andrew Jackson, who had been a Whig but switched to the Democratic Party due to disagreements over the national bank. Jackson's victory in the presidential election of 1828 marked the beginning of the Democratic Party's dominance in American politics.

Over the years, the Democratic Party has faced significant challenges and changes. During the Civil War, the party split over the issue of slavery, leading to the formation of the Republican Party. In the early 20th century, the party faced internal divisions over the issue of trust busting and the role of big business.

In the 1930s, the Democratic Party was transformed by the leadership of Franklin D. Roosevelt and his New Deal policies. Roosevelt's "fireside chats" on radio were a unique way for him to communicate with the American people. He became known as the "radio president" and used his influence to shape public opinion.

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THE LONG VINE ADMINISTRATION

The Long Vine Administration was founded in 1982 by Henry Clinton, a former political operative who had run multiple successful campaigns for state and federal offices. Clinton's new party was created with the goal of attracting moderate voters who were disillusioned with the Democratic and Republican parties. The Long Vine Administration's platform focused on issues such as education, healthcare, and the environment. The party quickly gained popularity and won several elections in the mid-1980s.

In 1986, the Long Vine Administration won a majority of the seats in the House of Representatives and took control of the government. Clinton's early victories were seen as a sign that the party could be a viable alternative to the two major parties. However, by 1990, the party had lost some of its momentum, and its popularity started to decline. Clinton's decision to focus on his own presidential campaign in 1992, rather than work to strengthen the Long Vine Administration, contributed to the party's decline.

In 1996, the party's fortunes continued to wane, and it struggled to gain traction in the 1998 midterm elections. Despite this, the Long Vine Administration remained committed to its political ideals, and it continued to work to improve the lives of its constituents. The party's legacy lives on, as it continues to strive for a better future for all Americans.