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| American Democracy versus Third Political Parties: Challenge, Constraints, and Potential Change. |
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A Thesis Submitted in Fulfillment of the Requirements for the

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# Dedication

*To my Parents, Wife, and Two Little Angels: Alaa and Safaa*

# Acknowledgements

A number of people had great impact on the development of this project.

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# **Abstract:**

This study discusses American Democracy in relation to third political parties. American Democracy is a two-party system allowing only two parties to win in elections. Despite the existence of several parties attempting to win the presidency for over a century and a half, the presidency had been always shared by either the Democratic Party or the Republican Party. Political scientists saw this phenomenon as surprising given the diversity of the American electorate, and its unconstitutional basis. The study investigates the nature of American democracy and reviews third parties of the previous two centuries within the context of the movements that brought them to explain how American democracy is opposing the rise of other parties. It also considers the lack of pluralism as the main challenge to contemporary American democracy and a sign of its decline. Therefore, the study is a combination of historiography, election results, and analysis to address the various aspects of this phenomenon.

**Keywords**: Democracy, two-party system, third political party, presidency, challenge

الملخص

تناقش هذه الدراسة موضوع الديمقراطية الأمريكية وعلاقتها بكتلة الأحزاب السياسية الثالثة. الديمقراطية الأمريكية هي نظام ثنائي الحزب بمعنى انه يسمح لحزبين فقط بالفوز في الانتخابات. على الرغم من وجود العديد من الأحزاب التي حاولت الفوز بالرئاسة لأكثر من قرن ونصف ، فإن الرئاسة كانت دائمًا مشتركة بين الحزب الديمقراطي أو الحزب الجمهوري. هذه الظاهرة مفاجأة لكثير من علماء السياسة بالنظر إلى تنوع الناخبين الأمريكيين والاساس الغير دستوري لهذا النظام. تبحث الدراسة في طبيعة الديمقراطية الأمريكية وتستعرض كتلة ألاحزاب الثالثة في القرنين الماضيين في سياق الحركات التي ادت لظهورهم كما تشرح كيف تعارض الديمقراطية الأمريكية صعود كتلة الأحزاب الثالثة. ان الافتقار إلى التعددية الحزبية يعتبر

التحدي الرئيسي للديمقراطية الأمريكية المعاصرة وعلامة على تراجعها. لذلك فإن الدراسة هي مزيج من التأريخ ونتائج الانتخابات والتحليل لمعالجة الجوانب المختلفة لهذه الظاهرة.

**الكلمات المفتاحية**: ديمقراطية ، نظام ثنائي ، حزب سياسي ثالث ، رئاسة ، تحدي

**Résumée:**

Cette étude traite de la démocratie américaine par rapport aux partis politiques tiers. La démocratie américaine est un système bipartite permettant à seulement deux partis de remporter la présidence. Malgré l'existence de plusieurs partis tentant de remporter la présidence depuis plus d'un siècle et demi, la présidence a toujours été partagée soit par le Parti démocrate, soit par le Parti républicain. Les politologues ont vu ce phénomène comme surprenant compte tenu de la diversité de l'électorat américain et de sa base anticonstitutionnelle. L'étude examine la nature de la démocratie américaine et passe en revue les tiers partis des deux siècles précédents dans le contexte des mouvements qui les ont amenés à expliquer comment la démocratie américaine s'oppose à la montée des autres partis. Il considère également l'absence de pluralisme comme le principal défi de la démocratie américaine contemporaine et un signe de son déclin. Par conséquent, l'étude est une combinaison d'historiographie, de résultats électoraux et d'analyses pour aborder les différents aspects de ce phénomène.

**Mots clés**: Démocratie, bipartisme, troisième parti politique, présidence, contestation

# List of Acronyms:

ABC:  American Broadcasting Companies

AIP:  American Independent Party

CBS: Columbia Broadcasting System

CPPA:  the Conference for Progressive Political Action

FECA:  Federal Election Campaign Act,

GOP:  Grand Old Party

IBM:  International Business Machines Corporation

LRP:  the Liberal Republican Party

NAACP: National Association for the Advancement of the Colored People

NAFTA: North American Free Trade Agreement

NBC: National Broadcasting Company

NSRP: National States' Rights party

POW:  Prisoner of War

RUP: La Raza Unida Party

THRO: Throw the Hypocritical Rascals Out

UWSA: United We Stand America

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Liberty and freedom are two principles celebrated in the American lifestyle but seemed to be irrelevant in elections. American democracy functions under the two-party system, allowing only two parties to compete and win the presidency. For over a century and a half, that nation was dominated by either the Democratic or the Republican Party. In other words, these parties maintained their control over the presidency from 1860 to this day without interruption that Americans think of them as legitimate as the American constitution. That confused legitimacy is taken for granted to the point that a recent study attempted to combine human genetics of American people and their party's affiliations.

Democracy is a political system sought by several nations over the last two centuries. It is perceived as the ideal political system that would build a responsible government and secure nations against tendencies of tyranny and chaos. Though it started with the Greeks and developed by the Magna Carta and the British parliament, America was deemed as the model throughout the last two centuries. Since the early days of the Republic, countries have sought to benefit from American democracy. Alexis de Tocqueville, for example, was one of those early authors charged by the French government to study American Democracy, which led to his authoring of *Democracy in America*, in which he detailed its main pillars and its challenges. His aim was to benefit France, which had recently witnessed a revolution that ended the Monarch. Therefore, the main conclusion of his study includes the idea that equality is the main idea of his time and the American democracy stood as the excellent system that adhered to this principle.

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What Tocqueville considered as a threat to democracy, however, was the tyranny of the majority (Tocqueville 287)

Within the United States, voices praising American democracy are also common. This should not be surprising for several reasons. For example, the American people have developed a creed opposing the idea of tyranny embodied first in their experience with the British monarch. Additionally, Americans take pride in their Democratic system that had survived several serious incidents, including the death and assassination of presidents, severe economic conditions, civil and foreign wars; as well as several scandals related to presidents and their cabinets. Equally important, they stress the longevity of the American constitution as being the longest constitution in effect. In other words, a political system that has been kept for over 230 years appears to be a stable one in comparison to other political systems and regardless to what really contributed to this stability.

At the international level, American Democracy is preached as the ideal model of governorship to the extent that many believe America to be an exceptional nation. This means that laws governing other nations can not apply to the United States because it is either superior or immune to those challenging problems. For that reason, exporting democracy to other nations had been typical rhetoric in America's major conflicts both in the past and the present day. Major wars such as the Mexican and American War in 1846 and the invasion of Iraq were all justified with the intention of building democracy and spreading western values of liberty and freedom. They were initiated, ostensibly, to Abolish tyrannical regimes and governments and create a

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representative government for the people. Yet how far the American people enjoy this freedom in electing their leaders in government seems to be an urgent question in this context.

If Democracy is the best system of governance, it is because it checks the very nature of the human being, which would render selfishness and love for power. Therefore, democracy gives the people the chance to bring other leaders who would fulfill the people's agenda, and historians deemed this principle necessary for a true functioning democracy. But what happens if leadership was monopolized by two major parties, and when people feel unable to act, and their choices are limited? It is in that context that the American two-party system is considered a two-party dictatorship and not a model of an actual functioning democracy.

Democracy also signifies the ability of citizens to choose their representatives, a condition that seems weak within the American political system dominated by both the Democratic and Republican parties. In several American elections, the candidate with the majority of the electoral vote failed to become president. Therefore, despite the majority of Americans who seem to support one of the major parties, resentment of the two parties had been a common theme as many voters wish to have other choices beyond the Democratic and Republican close vision.

The two major parties in the United States are almost as old as the American republic. The Democratic Party was established in 1828 by Andrew Jackson after he seceded from the Democratic and Republican Party. The Republican Party appeared in 1854 but turned into a major party in 1860 in response to the successful attempt of Abraham Lincoln to gain the

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presidency through strong advocation of the slavery issue, which caused the split in the Democratic Party and the decline of the former major party, the Whig to be replaced by the Republican Party. This incident had been the only case in the republic's history when the third party, namely the Republican Party, could claim the presidency and defeat the two major parties.

Arguments against the dominance of the two major parties are traced to the fact that a sizable number of voters are left unrepresented because of an intense polarization between the two parties. In other words, each major party is attempting to implement a literal agenda of its own, which might leave a silent middle that is not endorsed by any. Furthermore, trust and confidence in the major American political parties are critical, especially during these recent years, which suggests the necessity of change:

> U.S. democracy faces many challenges. But the core problem is a two-party system that has divided the country into two distinct parties representing two competing visions of national identity, with no middle ground, and a political system that requires broad compromise to do anything. Until we solve this fundamental issue, we're just tugging at the knotted ends of a tangled spool while the clock ticks and this world, Earth 2, and any other alternative futures all hang in the balance. (Drutman 27)

Not only the two-party system appears to monopolize politics, but also it hinders the rise of new ideas. For example, George Wallace, a third-party candidate in 1972, insisted that " not a dime's worth of difference" exists between major parties. To many scholars, the existence of such a dichotomy is surprising given the diversity of electoral politics in the United States:

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That the United States should have the oldest and strongest two-party system on the globe is for many, particularly for foreign observers, a bewildering phenomenon. America appears to have all the ingredients for a vibrant and enduring multiparty system--an increasingly multiracial and multiethnic population, substantial regional variation, diverse and conflicting economic and social interests, a history of sectional conflicts, and substantial disparities in the distribution of wealth (Bibby and Maisel 76)

Out of these factual remarks, the American political system fell under heavy criticism; some had referred to it as a duopoly or a two-party dictatorship. Other scholars had even anticipated the fall of the two-party system in the U.S.A; some actually had determined a date for this change to occur. For example, Theodore Lowi claimed in 1992 that America would soon relinquish the two-party system. John Anderson, a third-party candidate, had confirmed that change in the American political system, believing that "in the first quarter of the twenty-first century we will see the making of the multiparty system." (Anderson, qtd.in Grossman 03). Some went further to suggest the need to change the whole political system to respond to the social and technological changes that the nation witnesses. As one scholar asserted, "the time has come for us to imagine completely novel alternatives to discuss, dissent, debate, and design from the ground up the democratic architecture of tomorrow" (Wells 28)

So, is American Democracy in danger? This question seems irrelevant given the longevity of the American Constitution, but scholars emphasized that Democracies may die as a result of two factors. Military coup constitutes the first form that had been at work in many

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European, Latin American, and Arab governments. The second factor that threatens to destroy democracy occurs by the hands of politicians:

> But there is another way to break a democracy. It is less dramatic but equally destructive. Democracies may die at the hands not of generals but of elected leaders,_presidents, or prime ministers who subvert the very process that brought them to power. Some of these leaders dismantle democracy quickly, as Hitler did in the wake of the 1933 Reichstag fire in Germany. More often, though democracies erode slowly, in barely visible steps. (Ziblatt and Levitsky 2)

It is the second factor, however, that might apply to the context of American Democracy.

During the authoring of this thesis, at least three devastating incidents targeted American democracy. First, the campaign of Donald Trump in 2016 seems to have one single aim regarding former secretary of state, Hilary Clinton which was "to lock her up". Tolerance appeared absent or nonexistent between major parties and supporters of both parties viewed each other as enemies. Second, The political system appeared weak, especially after the alleged Russian intervention to throw the election to the demagogue candidate, Donald Trump. Third, Trump's four years in office had been overloaded with polarization and hatred at least in rhetoric. This polarization came recently in the form of a mob attack on the Capitol, in which Trump supporters attempted to stop the process of certifying the election results to inaugurate Joe Biden, the democratic nominee. These challenges are ongoing at the moment: some observers believe that only miracles could halt the collapse of American democracy in the future.

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The aforementioned challenges suggest the necessity of creating a multi-party democracy in America. That would, however, require other parties to compete with the Democrats and Republicans. Historically, the two-party system has been challenged repeatedly by other parties, commonly referred to as third parties or minor parties, that attempted to gain the status of a major party or at least promote some issues in mainstream politics. Those parties are usually categorized into transient and doctrinal third parties. Some notable third parties had attempted to break the two-party system. Had these multiparty democracies not been wanted by American citizens, it is expected that the system would not have been challenged repeatedly. . But why these parties failed is partly the concern of this study.

Although this study does not suggest that a multi-party system is better than a two-party system, evidence suggests that having a plurality system might be the choice that appeals to most Americans. Throughout the various chapters of its history, America was frequently in demand of change. That change was reflected through the third parties they had supported over a hundred and sixty years since the manifestations of the Democrats and Republicans as major parties in 1860. It is also suggested that American citizens are being more anti-systematic. The election of President Obama, which had been rooted in grass-root movements and protests as well as dissatisfaction stood as evidence of that. Furthermore, recent studies may associate the development of a particular economic sector such as business with multiparty democracy.

Again, having a multiparty system does not suggest creating a perfect state, yet there is a strong presumption that the current two-party system is a monopoly of power that failed to

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reflect the people's will and does not probably represent the needs of the American people. This can be visualized in cases when one of the two presidential candidates will win the popular vote without winning the presidency. For example, in the 2016 election, Hilary Clinton, the first woman to run as a major-party presidential candidate, won the popular vote in front of Donald Trump. However, the latter eventually became a president due to his victory in the Electoral College. Accordingly, many of those who wished to have the first women president were disappointed. For several weeks people protested but could not affect any change.

Based on the centrality of parties to American life, political historian Joel Silby divided political parties into four stages. The preparatory period began with the birth of the American nation and continued to the Jacksonian age. The second period refers to the party period, which persisted throughout the jacksonian democracy to the end of the gilded age and the nineteenth century. This period represented the golden age of American political parties. The post-party period followed when parties began losing their significance to reach the current era named the no-party period.

Assuming that third parties had been the vehicle of change in the United States, one must consider the main aspect of each period of their history. For instance, Historian Richard Hofstadter believed that the period from the Civil War to 1890 was an age of industrial and continental expansion and political conservatism; meanwhile, he saw that the age of reform had persisted from the 1890s to World War One, passing through three prominent stages. Two of these stages had been consecutive, including the agrarian movement, which appeared vividly in

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the Populist movement and William Bryan's candidacy for the Democratic Party, and the Progressive movement, which lasted from 1900 to 1914. The last episode included the New deal and its consequence during the thirties of the last century (Hofstadter 1). This study considers these episodes along with other three stages that came later, including the civil rights movement, the age in the sixties, and the general resentment that persisted towards the end of the century within American society.

The study combines both statistics and historical analysis of those third parties that attempted to challenge the two-party system ever since the creation of the United States, with a special focus on those parties that seemed as a big threat to alter the party system. In this way, the study combines historical data and analysis to explain how these parties fit within the American Two-party system that is the core of American Democracy. It also uses both the descriptive approach and the analytical approach as to interpret the data collected which ranges from quantitative to qualitative dat

The study is also an inquiry about the nature of American Democracy as to whether it discourages a multiparty democracy or it was made this way so that it serves the current two major parties. In other words, was it the case that American Democracy developed as a monopoly ever since the establishment of the nation? This seems urgent, especially if one considers that successful third political parties of the nineteenth century succeeded in becoming a major party, but the ones that came after failed. Does this suggest that these parties had been

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alienated in the last century, or perhaps it was the nature of the American political system that supported only two contenders over the presidency?

   To fully understand the experience of third parties, this study is divided into four chapters. The first chapter is devoted entirely to covering three main aspects related to American political parties. It starts with historical background that illustrates the origins of political parties and the nature of American Democracy. The chapter continues to cover the antebellum third political parties that successfully broke the two-party system. Then, it reviews the various characteristics that helped antebellum third political parties to break through the two-party system and gain the status of a major party after contributing to the collapse of the Whig as a major party. This chapter aims to reveal how American third parties in the nineteenth century had been successful in displacing the Whig as a major party and replacing it with the Republican Party.

   The Second chapter deals with the various movements that brought third parties into existence from the mid-nineteenth century to the twentieth century. Those movements included industrialism, progressivism, and the resentment of the New Deal. Along with these movements, the chapter reviews third parties that emerged and attempted to change and challenge the two-party system. Hence, it covers those political parties that emerged from Roosevelt Bull Mouse Party to George Wallace during the eighties.

   The third chapter deals with three main cases of third parties that appeared from the late eighties until the end of the century. It reviews the case of John Anderson Ross Perot in 1992 and

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1996 as well as Ralph Nader in 2000. These three cases came in response to dissatisfaction from major political parties that characterized Americans during this period. Additionally, This intense focus on these two cases came to echo the success they enjoyed compared to other third political parties.

The fourth chapter analyses the cases already discussed in the previous chapters and renders the crisis that third political parties confront within the American political system. It reviews the various constraints that prevented minor parties, especially in the twentieth century, from gaining a major party status. Additionally, the chapter reviews the various theories that explain when a third party is likely to emerge on the dimensions of third political parties, which explain the reasons that may lead to the emergence of these parties. The chapter also underlines the contribution of third political parties to American politics. The last element seeks to understand the current challenges facing American Democracy from the election of 2000 up to that of 2020. The aim is to review the scholarly literature that addresses the two-party system and democracy in America. These views range from reforming the current system to establishing a new multi-party system. Finally, the chapter discusses the decline in American democracy reviewing its major symptoms.

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1.1. **Historical Backgrounds:**

American Democracy, being a reference to modern democracy, is traced to the Constitution of 1789, which established the modern American nation. The constitution reflected the ideas of the American Founding Fathers and the various references that they resorted to in establishing their nation. This part that accounts for the origins and development of American Democracy serves to visualize the uniqueness and particularity of American Democracy compared to the western ones. Indeed, the political system of the United States was the first of its kind, and whether one can deem it a Democracy or a Republic may explain why America had long been dominated by two parties. The beginning of this chapter accounts for the origins and the nature of the political system that appeared in 1789.

1.1.1. **The Roots of American Democracy:**

American Democracy had evolved over the years tracing its origins to several documents and charters that came along the history of Democracy itself. Some scholars emphasized that the discovery of America and the age of European colonialism marked the birth of this system. However, a broader view may trace its roots to the classical period, namely the Greeks and the Romans. Although the United States strongly supports democracy, that system saw the light

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within the Greek dynasty in the 5th century BC, where male citizens in Athens attained the right of participating in government through debating and voting on suggested laws. In this context, Kemp suggested that the Greek system of government had been "closer to a true Democracy or rule by the people than any other in history," and his justification was that the Greeks "viewed dictatorships as the worst possible form of government, so their government evolved as the exact opposite" (7). With the coming of the Romans, the Greek direct Democracy turned into a form of representative democracy in which citizens had to elect officials representing them in government. This change came to meet the expansion of the Roman Empire into large states that left the Greeks model unpractical.

The impact of the Greeks and the Romans on American Democracy is deemed undeniable to many historians, for their governments served as a reference to the American Founding Fathers as they attempted to create a government of their own free from the British monarch. In other words, the classical systems of government served as the basis of the American government being among the best philosophies available at the time. One illustration of this resemblance manifests in the decision of the Founding Fathers to keep the boundaries between states and create a national government. This situation was similar to the Greek city-states such as Sparta and Syracuse, which acted independently for the most part and came

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together during wartime [1]. The Romans had also had a deep impact on American democracy, which could be explicable in the context of the American electoral system of representative democracy.

Another source that inspired the rise of American Democracy came from Europe. After all, the colonists who later became Americans had been British subjects whose education and culture were predominantly European. One area of European contribution came through the philosophers of the enlightenment, who had revolutionized political thought in Europe. Actually, it is irrefutable that the American Revolution sprang from an eager attempt to gain rights of liberty, equality, and justice emphasized by the enlightenment and lacked in the way the British ruled the thirteen colonies. For instance, Lock's natural rights theory represented a significant theme in Jefferson's Declaration of Independence. Equally important, it is very hard to imagine an American government in 1789 without Voltaire's contribution to the 1st Amendment or Baron de Montesquieu's separation of powers and checks and balances. Furthermore, the basis of federalism owes credit to Machiavelli and Hobbes, who advocated the necessity of establishing a strong government. Therefore, the age of the enlightenment provided a corpse of challenging ideas that revolutionized political thought and fostered democracy in America.

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[1] Some other contributions of the Greeks included Aristotle's written constitution, the rule of the law, and other aspect of the electoral system.

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If Europeans were influential in building American Democracy, the British would take most credit primarily through their long history of struggle to limit the absolute rule of kings through parliament. For example, the Magna Carta or the Great Charter had a pivotal role in establishing the parliament and suggesting that its laws were superior to the king; therefore, this document was a check on the king's absolute power as it granted the people some of their rights. Later on, the petition of rights in 1628 limited the king's authority to collect taxes without the consent of parliament. Eventually, the Bill of Rights in 1689 ensured protection from unusual punishment and freedom of speech. These reforms did not establish a real democracy in England in any sense, but they instilled some of its ideals and formed the basis of the American government in 1789. For example, it is undeniable that the invention and development of parliament in Britain had contributed to building American Democracy, but it was until the appearance of the thirteen colonies and then the American constitution that both representation and democracy combined (Britannica). Therefore, the American system of Democracy was indeed unique and particular.

The Constitution of 1789 came in response to the change in the relationship between the British and their American subjects. When the American colonists decided to fight the British colonization, they established a colonial government that would allow some collaboration between the thirteen colonies that had long been independent in managing their territories. The government they established came under a charter named the Articles of Confederation, which,

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in turn, established the Continental Congress. The latter would decide on behalf of the inhabitants of the thirteen colonies. Although it had several constraints, it successfully managed the Revolution against the British and eventually resulted in American independence.

During the American Revolution, the colonists confronted several weaknesses characterizing their government, which functioned under the Articles of Confederation. For instance, each state was represented by a single vote and a decision required the consensus of nine out of the thirteen representatives in the Continental Congress. Additionally, the legislative nature of the government meant that it could make laws but be unable to execute them; therefore, the Continental Congress failed to solve the problems that emerged after independence, including the debt owed to the French government; these problems intensified following the American independence in 1783.

To solve those problems, the American Founding Fathers met to discuss the terms of the Articles of Confederation, and their original intention was to modify the terms of the charter. For over two constitutional conventions, delegates strived to debate and solve the collective challenges of the newly independent colonies. However, not surprisingly, those debates eventually unraveled the old charter and instituted an entirely different one that envisioned a government with rare similarities in the other parts of the globe. That government was the one established under the American Constitution in 1789.

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American political parties appeared in the first government of George Washington. For that reason, understanding their emergence requires examining the American electoral system established by the Founding Fathers and their vision of the nation's politics.

### 1.1.2. **The American Constitution:**

The American Constitution is a fundamental document by which the United States was founded, and to many historians, it stands as the oldest constitution in effect since 1789. Generally, a constitution refers to "a written document which forms the set of political principles by which a state or organization is governed, especially in relation to the rights of the people it governs" (Cambridge dictionary). In the context of the United States, the constitution is " the fundamental law of the U.S. federal system of government and a landmark document of the western world" (Cambrdge dictonary).

Apart from being the first constitution of its kind worldwide, the miracle of the constitution lies in its endurance. As Historian Bruce Ackerman emphasized," It is one thing to write a Constitution; quite another for it to survive; and still another for it to survive in a world for which it was not designed (93). For more than two centuries, this document had been vitally important in the decisive events that the nation witnessed. Suffice it to say that most of the Supreme Court judgments were a mere interpretation of that document.

The origins of the constitution go back to several events and documents influencing the politics of America ever since it was a group of thirteen colonies. At first, the Colonists who

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came from Britain formed the Colonial government before the circumstances of the American Revolution compelled them to unite under the government of the Articles of Confederation. Some historians believe that the Articles of Confederation carried some hints about democracy, especially the Article that entitled each state to one vote. However, by the end of the Revolution, George Washington wrote to Henry Knox in 1785 that "we are no more than a rope of sand, and shall as easily be broken", especially after it failed to solve the debt issue owed to France. Washington was not alone in this view; many recognized that the government embodied in the Continental Congress suffered and accordingly mooted the idea of a strong central government. The two Conventions that the Founding Fathers had were initially intended to reform the government. Not surprisingly, delegates' meetings produced a new document known as the American Constitution in 1789.

Generally, historians highlight two major characteristics of the Constitution: separation of powers and federalism. Historian Sandy Maisel contended that "Separation of powers is maintained when the executive, legislative and judicial powers are housed in separate institutions" (3). By this definition, separation of powers meant that the three branches of the government were independent. A clear example in this context includes the law prohibiting legislative branch officials from serving in the Supreme Court or other positions of the legislative body except in rare situations. Another definition ascribed to Michael Genovese considered the separation of powers as "the idea that different institutions will be primarily responsible for

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executing the major functions of government (i.e., lawmaking, enforcement, and interpretation)" (83). By means of comparison, Genovese in here considered the separation of powers as the opposite of "the fusion of powers" that is practiced in several democratic nations, including Great Britain.

The American Constitution defined most of the checks and balances, although some others are derivative. A typical example of these implicit checks is the Judicial Review, which is a check of the Supreme Court on both the legislative and executive branches to declare laws unconstitutional. Even though this check does not appear in the wording of the Constitution, it was successfully instituted by Chief Justice John Marshall in 1803 in the landmark Marbury v. Madison (83). The reason for creating such a system was the fear of tyranny and absolute monopoly that the Founding Fathers feared most:

> The framers of the Constitution were particularly concerned that their new creation would not become what they were rebelling against, namely, a strong and despotic monarchy. Checks and balances were thus instituted as a partial means of ensuring that no one institution would gain enough power to strip the other institutions of power and thus come to dominate government. (Genovese 83)

Checks and balances constitutes a principle supported by several notable Founding Fathers. For example, James Madison says in Federalist 51 "Ambition must be made to counteract ambition". Within the same paper, he noted that for the three branches to function

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properly, "they must be given the means to counteract attempts for either individual aggrandizement or encroachment upon the legitimate power sources or structures of their competing institutions (Genovese 83). Clearly, Madison feared the monopoly of power by a single group in government.

The separation of powers in the United States is unique in the sense that it ensures that electing the president is not carried out by the legislative branch. Equally important, it varies the terms of each official such as senators with six years in office, the president with four years in service, and members of the House of Representatives with two years term to guarantee the existence of some different electorate while they select their representative officials (Misael 04).

The second defining characteristic of the American Constitution is federalism. The latter term implies the division of powers between two governments: the federal government and state governments. Together, these two governments constitute the federal system. The Constitution clearly defined the powers allocated to the federal government. At the same time, the tenth Amendment prescribed that the powers "not delegated to the United States by Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the states are reserved to the states respectively" (Maisel 04). In a manner of speaking, the states integrated the separation of powers as a principle in their constitutions, though with some differences.

Having tackled some aspects of the Constitution, it is essential to refer to the debate over what could describe the political system of the United States: a democracy or a republic. As

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noted earlier, the constitution does not explicitly include the word democracy. In fact, the Founding Fathers had regarded the word Democracy with an utterly different understanding from that of the Americans today. From the standpoint of the Founding Fathers, Democracy symbolized chaos and disruption.

Actually, the Founding Fathers' terminology was not as precise and agreed upon as one might expect. For instance, in the Federalist Papers, Madison explained the difference between a Democracy and a Republic. From his standing point, "pure Democracy" refers to "a society consisting of a small number of citizens, who assemble and administer the government in person." At the same time, he saw the republic as "a government in which the scheme of representation takes place. Thus, according to Madison, "The two great points of difference between a democracy and a republic, are: first, the delegation of the government in the latter to a small number of citizens elected by the rest; secondly, the greater the number of citizens, and greater sphere of country, over which the latter may be extended." In short, for Madison, democracy meant direct democracy, and republic meant representative government ." (Madison et al. 235)

On the other hand, democracy denotes the system of government in which people play a significant role. In light of this definition, some historians believe that it is possible to consider the American political system as a representative Democracy. They justified this claim with reference to the early intentions of the Founding Fathers:

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A representative democracy came about in the United States because the colonists were tired of taxation without representation and wanted a more fair system where the people had more say in the rule of the country. They did not desire the Athenian form of democracy, however, as they feared it would give the people too much power and would lend control of the government to the uneducated masses. What they came up with was a representative democracy wherein elected representatives rather than direct rule by the people rule the government (Kemp 9)

It is most likely that both the concepts of democracy and republic apply to the United States as stated by Eugene Volokh:

I often hear people argue that the United States is a republic, not a democracy. But that's a false dichotomy. A common definition of "republic" is, to quote the American Heritage Dictionary, "A political order in which the supreme power lies in a body of citizens who are entitled to vote for officers and representatives responsible to them" — we are that. A common definition of "democracy" is, "Government by the people, exercised either directly or through elected representatives" — we are that, too (Volokh).

## 1.1.3. The American Constitution and Electng the President:

The origins of the Electoral College date back to the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia and the weaknesses of the central government under the Articles of Confederation.

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In that Convention, there was an overall agreement over the necessity of a strong central government. Yet, the form of the presidency and the way of electing the president were not agreed upon among delegates. For that reason, attendants proposed several plans to determine how the most important office would be filled in the central government.

The presidency was a truly formidable dilemma for the Founding Fathers. At the beginning of the Constitutional Convention, four proposals aimed to solve the problem of the presidency. The first plan suggested that Congress, the legislative body, would select the president. Delegates did not endorse the idea as it had many drawbacks. First, it could result in an imbalance between the other branches of the federal government. Second, this plan would divide congress and leave some "hard feelings" among its members. For others, implementing such a proposal would bring into existence "unseemly political bargaining, corruption, and perhaps even interference from foreign powers" (Kimberling 1)

The second proposal suggested that the state legislature would decide the presidency. Again, this idea appeared risky since it implied that the president would be inclined to support states and disturb the powers and rights of the federal government. For instance, that president might erode federal authority and thus undermine the whole idea of the federation (Klimberling)/. The third proposal suggested a popular vote as a means of choosing the president. As William Kilmbring pointed out, delegates had reasons to reject this plan too:

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Direct election was rejected not because the framers of the constitution doubted public intelligence but rather because they feared that without sufficient information about candidates from outside their states, people would naturally vote for a 'favorite son' from their own state or region [2] (Kimberling 2).

This plan had some other serious problems as he gave an overall assessment of the college. As one scholar noted, "at worst, no president would emerge with a popular majority," and "At best, the choice of president would always be decided by the largest, most populous states with little regard for the smaller ones" (Kimberling 2)

Eventually, the compromise was presented by the Committee of Eleven, whose plan was to elect the president indirectly through a number of electors from each state [3]. Delegates praised the idea, believing that it was an ideal plan. For instance, Alexander Hamilton commented:

"The mode of appointment of the chief magistrate of the United States is almost the only part of the system, of any consequence, which has escaped without severe censure. . . . I venture somewhat further and hesitate not to affirm that if the manner of it be not perfect, it is at least excellent (Pfiffner 57).

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[2] The view suggesting that the Founding Fathers looked at the masses with suspicion is also strong, especially if one considers their views regarding parties and democracy as well asthe rule of the people.

[3] The committee of eleven was a group from the Founding Fathers, whose mission was to find a solution to the issue of Representation in the two houses of Congress.

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The Electoral College is a political organization that consists of electors entitled to electing the president of the United States. According to the Online encyclopedia, the electoral college consists of Nominated persons, known as electors, from the states and the District of Columbia, who meet every four years in their home state or district and cast ballots to choose the president and vice president of the United States. The Founding Fathers invented this system in order to settle the debate about the presidency and the way of selecting the president. Considering the period it was designed, it was a technical mechanism at a time when the United States was a vast country lacking modern means of transportation and communication.

The basic idea of the Electoral College is to elect the president indirectly. The reason for that is debatable. The data gathered suggest that the Founding Fathers did not trust the common people with selecting the highest office in the nation, along with fear of regionalism. This fear is vivid in the words of Alexander Hamilton as he maintained that " a small number of persons selected by their fellow citizens from the general mass will be most likely to possess the information and discernment requisite to such complicated investigation"(Hamilton 1)

Indeed, the framers' real intention regarding the presidency remains a mystery to many historians; perhaps, these various opinions stem from not only their thinking which was different but also the political environment of their time. For example, Maisel argued that "by popular vote the Democrats who wrote the constitution were not that democratic; few were willing to entrust such an important decision to the masses." Maisel also stressed the fact that even if so

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intended the popular vote as a strategy, they would encounter the problem of slaves whom they consider as three-fifths of a human being(11). Additionally, the geographic distance left no choice, as it was hard to have a popular election in the nation. Therefore, the Electoral College was a practical solution.nn

The electoral process is determined by the constitution, which declares that a number of electors shall be appointed for each state. That number would be equal to the state's number of representatives in both houses. This is declared in Article II of the Constitution which reads:

Each State shall appoint, in such Manner as the Legislature thereof may direct, a Number of Electors, equal to the whole Number of Senators and Representatives to which the State may be entitled in the Congress: but no Senator or Representative, or Person holding an Office of Trust or Profit under the United States, shall be appointed an Elector.' (Maisel 12)

The aforementioned quote prescribed that those holding an office of trust would not apply as electors. Evidence indicates that by this condition, the law attempted to choose "worthy men without a conflict of interest "(Maisel 12). Additionally, electors had to cast two votes, and one vote must not go to a candidate from the elector's own state. This practice ensures that electors do not act on a regional basis. The constitution intended through these conditions to guarantee that the election of the president would be carried out by the majority, and if it were not the case, the president, at the minimum, would be selected from among the top three finishers

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by the House of Representatives. In this case, however, each state would cast one vote only, and apparently, this process is a part of balancing between large and small states' interests. It is also for the same reasons of maintaining the balance that the constitution requires the winning candidate in either case (the majority of votes, or through the election of the House of Representatives) to become the president, and the runner-up would be nominated vice president (Maisel 12) [4].

By considering the circumstances of its establishment, the Electoral College was a real invention. At the minimum, it guaranteed the election of a respected man to the presidency without violating the compromises and principles that came in the new constitution. However, scholars debated the extent to which the Electoral College encouraged democracy. Maisel believed that the electoral college did not foster democracy in America since it was in its essence" a compromise crafted by a political elite to guarantee a desired result"(12). This view seems accurate considering the overwhelming intention of the Founding Fathers from the electoral process. As clarified by Alexander Hamilton, the point behind the election of the president "should be made by men most capable of analyzing the qualities adapted to the station, and acting under circumstance favorable to deliberation, and to a judicious combination of all the

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[4] This law requiring the second winning candidate to become the vice president was repealed by the twelve amendment in 1804.

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reasons and inducement which were proper to govern their choice"(Hamilton 1). Clearly, popular democracy was off the agenda of the framers.

Ever since its adoption, the Electoral College as a mechanism for choosing the executive in chief saw two significant changes. The first change occurred in campaign organization through the twelfth amendment of the constitution, which required the election of presidential candidates and vice presidents to be done separately. This custom ensured that candidates would run on a ticket with the understanding that one candidate is the president and the other is the vice president. It was in the election of 1800 that the founders faced the case of candidates with no majority that paved the way for the adoption of this amendment in 1804.

The second fundamental change to the Electoral College concerned the manner by which candidates are chosen. The constitution did not dictate a particular way for this process, but in the year 1836, most states conducted popular elections based on statewide, not district, to select their electors. The development of the winners takes all principle was the direct result of the increasing power of political parties [5]. In other words, the integration of the plurality system instead of proportional representation in the American electoral system was crafted by parties for pragmatic reasons. During the nineteenth century, party leaders became aware that particular parties dominated some states. Politicians had also assumed that these parties would gain more if

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[5] The Winner takes all system ensures that the candidates winning the majority of the electoral votes would eventually take the entire number of the electoral votes allocated to that state.

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they attracted other states that were not presumably within their hands. This, in turn, facilitated the widespread adoption of the winners-takes-all system because other parties wanted to have their green states too. The competition over states became harder as parties gained and lost votes in the process. Parties had the custom of appointing a slate of candidates equal to the overall number required by the constitution for that state, and as people voted for the entire slate, the winner-takes-all principle was widely institutionalized.

### 1.1.4. The Constitution and Parties:

The Constitution is a vital and necessary pillar in organizing the government because, as Richard Pieds noted, it builds the legitimate political power and organize it, "In constitutional democracies, constitutions empower democracy: they create the institutional structure, offices of government and framework for decision making that organize the defuse preferences of mass society into a recognizable, meaningful, and legitimate political power (1). Therefore, without a constitution, it is impossible to determine the nature of a legitimate ruling in a particular country and the method by which people acquire that legitimacy of ruling as well. For that reason, examining how the Founding Fathers viewed political parties and people's ruling was necessitated.

Actually, neither the term "party" nor the word "Democracy" appears in the constitution, a fact that came surprising to many historians. To fully fathom that heresy, tracing some of the beliefs of the framers regarding the government is necessitated. First, the American Founding

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Fathers had been right about several expectations regarding governmental powers, such as the separation of powers and checks and balances. However, their vision and perception of political parties were apparently confused or even paradoxical. It was by virtue of that confusing vision that the American Constitution did not include the term "party," nor did it require their formation as access to the presidency. Historians had different views in their attempt to explain this phenomenon. For instance, one view stressed that the Founding Fathers' resentment of parties stems from their deep understanding of what these parties really are. In that context, the founders' definition of parties was to be "an organized attempt to get control over the government." In other words, parties are mainly an "instrument in the naked scrumble of power," and they symbolize competition over power, a goal that the Founding Fathers deemed as a threat to the stability of the newly founded republic:

> It's not that these early Republicans valued unanimity of thought or uniformity; no, they desired a rich, full, robust exchange of ideas and debate, from tavern halls to the halls of congress. But why they wondered must this debate channeled through parties , which are organizations dedicated not to truth or liberty or the common good but rather to seizing, holding, consolidating, and extending political power. (Bennett 6)

Because of the potential dangerous tendencies, the Founding Fathers did not expect the rise of political parties at least as early as a decade following the ratification of the constitution. the reason that led the framers to develop this animosity toward parties varied. One view

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suggested that the period of that generation was totally different, lacking an existing reference from which a tangible experience would be felt. The framers were sensitive, and they opposed establishing such an institution. This standpoint is confirmed by Maisel, who insisted that the type of parties that were established at that time were similar to parties of eighteenth-century Anglo-Irish philosopher and politician Edmund Burke; they were no more than "a body of men united for promoting by their joint endeavors the national interest" (29) [6]. With this idea in mind, the framers had no sign that establishing parties would help build the nation because there existed no typical example from which an experience could be drawn, and clearly, the parties that appeared in America were the first model of their kind. Even Britain, which was divided into Whigs and Tories, could hardly be considered as political parties since they were merely "marked extended groupings of elite families, locked in factional struggle for power and patronage (Bruce Ackerman 17).

Equally important, the framers believed in a republican ideology that emphasized the "subordination of narrow interest to the general welfare of the community". Therefore, a group of organized people willing to employ whatever means for the sake of holding or maintaining power was much of a threat to these founders' principles. As James Benett concluded:

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[6] Edmund Burke was a statesman and political thinker who dominated debates in the British parliament by his principled stands on controversies including the French and the American revolution which inspired the rise of modern political conservatism

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Those earliest and most sagacious political scientists, the Founding Fathers, did not put their faith or trust in political parties" in fact, they spurned them as inimical to Republican liberty. They agreed with the satirists Jonathan Swift, who remarked: 'party is the madness of many, for the gain of the few' (5)

Resentment of parties was usually a public announcement of the framers, and it was not a concealed rhetoric. This may suggest that disdain for the idea of political parties was a consensus drawn largely from philosophies preceding the American Constitution. As an instance of this, James Madison, the designer of the constitution's principle outline, had been prominently an adversary to the idea. Madison warned the American society of the danger of factions that were considered "adverse to the rights of their citizens and to the permanent and aggregate interest of the community"(Madison et al. 232). Others, including John Adams, also warned the nation that "the division of the republic into two great parties… is to be dreaded as the greatest political evil (James Bennett 1). He once wrote:

"There is nothing which I dread so much as a division of the republic into two great parties, each arranged under its leader, and concerting measures in opposition to each other. This, in my humble apprehension, is to be dreaded as the greatest political evil under our Constitution."(Adams and Adams 511; qtd. in McCarthy 363)

Perhaps, the most robust case made against political parties is found in the rhetoric of the first American president, George Washington. In his farewell address, Washington warned the

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nation against these organizations which might devour through passion the very essence of the republic,

This spirit unfortunately is inseparable from our nature, having its roots in the strongest passion of the human mind. It exists under different shapes in all governments, more or less stifled, controlled or repressed; but in those of the popular form, it is seen in its greatest rankness and is truly their worst enemy (Ackerman 38)

Even as he was leaving the presidency, George Washington, the first American president, spoke in a similar tone and warned "in the most solemn manner against the baneful effects of the spirit of party. Washington outlined some of the risks that parties have:

It always serves to distract the public councils and enfeeble the public administration. It agitates the community with ill-founded jealousies and false alarms; kindles the animosity of one part against another; foments occasionally riot and insurrection. It opens the door to foreign influence and corruption, which find a facilitated access to the government itself through the channels of party passion. (Ackerman 39)

Some historians believe that the last part of this quotation dealing with loyalty is an implicit accusation from the president to the Jeffersonians and their relationship with the French. Washington and Madison were not alone in this view,

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Because parties appeared in his government, President Washington was paradoxical in his views. On the one hand, he stood against the formation of parties and refused to extend his term in the presidency; On the other hand, he manipulated the time to pave the way for the Federalist John Adams to be elected; delay would leave Jefferson unprepared since he could not run knowing that Washington would seek the third term. This would also destroy the reputation of the Democratic-Republicans, and they would certainly appear as factionists (Ackerman 24).

Even when they campaigned against each other, both Jefferson and Adams fell short of the dilemma of parties. Some historians believed that opposition to parties was the result of the ongoing revolution against a common enemy. Ackerman wrote that during the period of national liberation, these disagreements are suppressed by the ever present-threat of defeat, but after the Revolution, they took on a pressing urgency as the new nation define its affirmative direction"(26). Therefore, and as Richard Hofstadter emphasized, "the creators of the first party system on both sides Federalists and Republicans, were men who looked on parties as sores on the body politic"( James Benett 1).

Resistance to parties on the part of the framers did not last long. Within the first presidency of the nation, the Founding Fathers disagreed over issues regarding the politics of the nation. Accordingly, they established the first political parties in the history of the nation, namely the Federalists as opposed to the Democratic and Republican Party. In this context, Maisel believed that "The founding generations as theorists, feared factions and the division in the

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nation that factions implied. The founding generation, later as those attempting to govern, found that parties were necessary to form the coalitions required to further their views of the common good"( Maisel 30).

Some historians might not endorse the claim that these were the first political parties. Instead, they insist that the origins of American political parties transcend the conflict between Hamilton and Jefferson, and it goes back to the time the states were still colonies debating the ratification of the Constitution. As William Chambers noted, "An older historiography had it that political parties and parties existed in the American colonies even before the Revolution; that the first national parties appeared with the emergence of the Federalists and Anti-Federalists in the contest over the ratification of the Constitution in 1789, and that later national parties were simply an evolution of these earlier-day confrontations" (Chambers 4)

In a manner of speaking, this could be true, but it is most likely that parties such as these did not fully fledge until the Jeffersonians, known as the Democratic-Republicans, opposed Hamiltonians, known as the Federalists. The Federalists differed from the anti-Federalists in many ways. The Federalists'' beliefs included establishing a strong central government, imposing tariffs, and objecting to Nullification, which was the right of states to refuse an act if it violates their constitutional rights. In contrast, the anti-Federalists believed in a weak central government, the state nullification and opposed tariffs. Additionally, supporters of Hamilton were loose constructionists, a term that referred to the broader interpretation of the Constitution

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as opposed to the Jeffersonians who were strict constructionists and favored a strict interpretation of the Constitution. By virtue of that opposition, the first party system appeared in the United States. From now on, issues, opinions, and points of view regarding the decisive issues of the nation were the leading force behind the shift of powers from one party to the other.

Indeed. it is not accurate to say that the Founding Fathers attempted to establish political parties, while it is even clearer that they did not support the two-party system which came to define American Democracy in the next century. Instead, these intelligent men desired the good of the republic. They deemed personal interest to be a leading factor to tyranny, the very reason that they had fought against in their revolution, and attempted to create a government that is immune to it in the two conventions. For that reason, political parties or factions, as they were perceived then, were the creation of politicians who tried to realize their policy goals (unlev.edu), and what they established was a necessity to develop a political and economic policy, and certainly, the party was not their perceived goal.

### 1.2. The Antebellum Third Political Parties and the Antebellum party system:

The term "antebellum" signifies events or periods in American history related to the time before a war, especially the American Civil War. In this context, the emphasis is on those parties and party systems that preceded the American Civil War. The term party system was used first by English scholar James Bryce in American Commonwealth (1885). A party system does not refer to merely a number of political parties that dominate a particular era, but rather a "system

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of interactions resulting from the inter-party competition as Sartori emphasized. As Steven Owlinetz noted, it is a separate entity from the parties that it encompasses and which happened to have "a number of distinct features which arise from electoral competition and parties' relation to each other". Owlinetz continued,

> These include the number of parties contesting elections and winning legislative seats, their relative size and strength, the number of dimensions on which they compete, the distance which separates them on key issues, and their willingness to work with each other in government formation and the process of governing. Party systems can vary on any or all of these (Mack 28)

Until the American Civil War, the United States witnessed two-party systems. The first party system appeared when Jefferson created the Democratic Republican Party to oppose the Federalist Party. It ended with the decline of the Federalist Party. The Second Party system appeared when the Democratic and Republican Party split into two major factions: the National Republicans, who later established the Whig Party and were headed by Henry Clay, opposed the Democratic Party established by Andrew Jackson. This party system ended with the decline of the Whig Party and its replacement with the Republican Party in 1860. Eventually, these two major parties, the Democratic and the Republican parties, dominated the American presidency with no prevailing party competitor until the modern day.

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However, this domination of the presidency was challenged by several political parties that attempted to advocate some issues in government. The most significant success they achieved was their ability to replace one of the major parties through the Republican Party. The latter was composed of several factions who primarily hoped that major parties would endorse their cause and eventually turned into a political force that defied the second two-party system and replaced one of its major constituents_ the Whig Party. Therefore, a close look at these prevailing third parties and the declining major parties necessitate

Between the ratification of the Constitution and the Civil War, several movements came to advocate their vision through third-party campaigning. A widely accepted assumption claims that the primary aim of these third political parties was to force the two main parties to endorse their ideology while organizing a political party was a means, and possibly, the whole third party strategy ranked last. Some of the issues that inspired third parties were fear of secret societies, slavery, and the influx of immigrants into the nation.

## 1.2.1. The First Party System and Antebellum Third Political Parties:

Historians divide the history of major political parties into party systems to account for the changes occurring in major parties' coalitions. In each of these party systems, two major parties dominate the political scene, and except for Washington's presidency, this duality is a constant theme of American political history. Generally, the pertained sources defined the one-party system as a system to which "belongs any system in which at most elections in the recent

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past (a) one party has won all or nearly all of the offices, and (b) the second party has usually received only a small percentage of the popular votes (Ranney and Kendall 477). Washington's presidency came as a consensus on the man leading to independence rather than an electoral competition. For that reason, this period is labeled the one-party system because of the absence of those contending over the presidency.

The first-party system witnessed the domination over the presidency by two main parties: the Federalists and the Democratic-Republican Party. The Federalist Party was founded on the claim of supporting the establishment of a strong central government. Jefferson formed the Democratic-Republican party as an opposition to the policies of the Federalists, especially those ideas of Hamilton. The Federalists were a faction of the Founding Fathers who believed in a strong central government, including those who wrote the Federalist Papers in support of the ratification of the Constitution. Some of these men included Hamilton and Madison. The conflict between the Federalists and the Democratic-Republicans originated during Washington's presidency. Although Washington did not belong to any party, he was close to the Federalists.

Again, the presidency of Washington had released two opposing alliances: the alliance of Madison and Thomas Jefferson in opposition to the policies of Hamilton. The motifs for this objection relate to policy rather than power. In other words, that disagreement concealed two prominent visions for the future of the United States. Hamilton believed that the nation should endorse the "mercantile interest of the New England." Meanwhile, Jefferson and Madison

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reckoned that rural America, like the farmers in Virginia and the peasant in the west, should be the real model.

The conflict between Jefferson and Hamilton had deep roots, and historians hold differing views regarding the role played by President Washington. Hamilton and Jefferson were both serving in Washington's cabinet, yet Hamilton was closer to President Washington in terms of the important issues that determined the potential of the nation, such as the debt owed to France during the Revolutionary war. Being a wealthy man, Hamilton believed in a strong and powerful central government, especially at the levels of economy and politics; he believed that the government of the new nation "should be conducted in a court system patterned after the British monarchy" if it is destined to grow (Utz norma jean 18 ). Other extreme views may suggest a different scenario to what was taking place in the government of Washington. For instance, in his three essays on "the Origins of American First Party System," Joseph Charles believed that Washington was deceived and therefore used by Hamilton to realize his interpretation of the Constitution. From his standpoint, Washington was a " sick, tired, old man, a puppet," and " along with Hamilton, Washington must bear responsibility for the appearance of the first party system" (Morris 136). Charles went further to imply that Washington did not realize the exploitation of Hamilton as he wrote,

An aged military hero who symbolizes national unity and independence becomes one of

the most dangerous figures possible to representative government if he gets into the

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hands of a group who protect with the magic of his name whatever furthers their ends, and then use the denunciations of him which follow as a further political weapon (Charles 52)

Even though they both were not likable personally, John Adams Washington's vice president agreed with most of the policies of Hamilton. Jefferson, however, abundantly opposed Hamilton's views contributing to what could be seen as the first two factions in American history, but loyalty to Washington still kept him in government. In Congress, these striking views were apparent, and they contributed to the division over Jefferson's rural vision and Hamilton's mercantile vision, which later became the basis for the formation of parties in the USA.

When Washington announced that he would not run for a third term, the two political sections were extremely visible. They included Adams, Washington, and Hamilton as the Federalist Party opposing the Democratic-Republicans headed by Jefferson and Madison. The intensity of disagreement had even increased over adopting the pro-British Jay Treaty, which Jefferson had opposed. Eventually, Washington gave up his position and returned home to Virginia [7].

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[7] Jay treaty was a 1795 treaty between the United States and Great Britain that averted war, resolved issues remaining since the Treaty of Paris of 1783

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In the election of 1796, Adams ran for the presidency in an attempt to continue the program of Hamilton. Accordingly, congressional representatives who opposed Hamilton's views organized a counter-campaign and gathered support. Eventually, Adam prevailed over Jefferson with a difference of three votes. The custom then was to select the candidate who came second as vice president, which resulted in the appointment of Jefferson as vice president. According to several historians, this incident was a crucial step in legitimizing the electoral process. Additionally, this party system "was policy center and formed at the seat of the national government, spreading to the far reaches of the nation" (Maisel 31).

The election of 1800 was a disadvantage to Adam, who opposed Jefferson hoping to get a second term, despite his humble reputation and unpopularity as a leader. Hence, most electors chose Jefferson, and through this decision, they proved the maturity of the party system (31). The victory, however, cost huge effort and time as no candidate earned the majority of votes, and as prescribed by the Constitution, the case had gone to the House of Representatives, which was dominated by the Federalists. The aim was to select a candidate out of the top three finishers. Thus, the case represented a crisis due to the willingness of many representatives to prevent Jefferson's victory. By the end, Jefferson successfully became a president "after thirty-five inconclusive ballots in the house." Maisel believed that through this incident, the legitimacy of the electoral process was established (31).

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Historians provided several names for Jefferson's victory, for it represented a notable event in the history of American politics. Jefferson himself referred to it as the Revolution of 1800 (Maisel 31). Meanwhile, historian Bruce Ackerman considered it as the Second American Constitution. Clearly, by the first constitution, he meant the one established in 1789, and Ackerman outlined the differences between the two:

> The first Constitution emphasizes the place of Congress in our political life; the second, the place of the president. The first gives center stage to congressional notables, politically responsive to their local communities; the second, to presidents claiming a popular mandate on the basis of their party's nationwide victory. The first relies on Congress to enact constitutional amendments when the original design needs correcting; the second relies on the Supreme Court to weave the mandate of the president's party into the fabric of our higher law. The first constitution was the product of speculation; the second, of experience. (Ackerman 245)

Obviously, the Federalists were not happy with the victory of their rival; in a manner of speaking, they were furious. For instance, General Marchell is believed to have his back turned during the ceremony while Adams refused to attend it lest he met his political opponent, but despite all of that, Jefferson became the president.

If the first party system was important in the history of American political parties, it is because it witnessed four main events that extremely influenced the future of the nation (Maisel

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31). The first incident occurred through the voluntary abandoning of power in 1796 by a president who could have remained in office and been elected as long as he wanted. The second incident occurred in the following election when Jefferson, a man who strongly objected to the policies of the president and had been defeated with a slight difference, accepted to serve as the vice president for the simple reason that the supreme law, which was the Constitution, required that. Third, the Founding Fathers succeeded in establishing a party system that could shift the opposing political views to the electorate, and in this way, to the people to decide. Finally, as Adam lost in the election of 1800, he could have manipulated the House of Representatives where he had the majority. Nevertheless, he willingly moved the power to the new president. As a result of these incidents, "the legitimacy of the new nation's political system was assured; and the role that parties were to play in that system demonstrated a primacy without precedent"(32).

Another prominent result of the first party system was the demise and the fading of the Federalist Party, and there were two causes behind this incident. First, the party was not able to relinquish its conservatism and compromise for the sake of preserving its popularity. For example, the party remained until the end against the declaration of war against Britain in 1812. Additionally, the Democratic and Republican Party had successfully developed an agenda that included the Federalist Programs, including manufacturing, Commerce, and a strong central government.

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The demise of the Federalist Party inspired a debate among scholars about how a major party could disappear from the political scene. Actually, the data gathered suggest that this disappearance was inevitable because of many reasons. For instance, parties were new, and citizens at this period did not have enough time to develop loyalty to one's party. Additionally, differences were not sharp, and politicians did not disagree fundamentally about all the issues being debated at that time. For example, in his first inaugural address to the nation, Jefferson said, "every difference of opinion is not a difference of principle…..we are all republicans, we are all Federalists."

Additionally, the strong basis of loyalty for the politicians was mainly region rather than party. Jefferson was reported to organize orchestrated dinners in order to "cajole" congressmen into supporting him in the election. Therefore, the demise of the party was a logical result and not a surprise. Furthermore, parties simply lacked party organizations that could sustain allegiance to the party within the electorate. As Maisel noted, " when Federalist leaders failed to respond to popular dissatisfaction with their views there was no ingrained party organization to uphold the party. The leaders retired back to their home and the party disappeared" (33).

The fall of the Federalist Party marked the end of the old divisions and the beginning of a new era in American politics known as the "era of good feelings." With no competitor on the scene, the Democratic-Republican Party was the sole running party. The result was that four candidates from the same party were competing for the presidency in 1824. These candidates

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included John Quincy Adams, Henry Clay, William J. Crawford, and Andrew Jackson. The existence of more than one candidate came in response to the party's failure to choose any of the aforementioned nominees. With the absence of any contender party to the Republican and Democratic Party, American politics got into the Era of Good Feeling.

The term "good feeling" referred to the period following the first party system and reflected the old view of the American Founding Fathers who opposed forming political parties. As mentioned earlier, the framers of the constitution had warned the nation against sectionalism that would originate from parties or factions attempting to seize the government and shackle the will of the people [8]. Only when circumstances compelled them to establish parties did the Founding Fathers consider building political factions. Thus, the era of good feeling came to secure these fears for a while before another party system challenged it. In other words, the era of good feeling came as a reminder that establishing parties and factions in government is not to be encouraged, and it seemed that the nation came back to the right path.

The Era of Good Feeling interrupted the first party system and lasted from 1816 to 1824. It coincided with the presidency of James Monroe, although George Dangerfield believed that after the first two years, especially as "the panic of 1819 initiated a depression with consequent social and political repercussions," there was the seedbed of Jacksonian Democracy rather than

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[8] Some historians suggest that the current parties are the ones being feared by the Founding Fathers because they monopolize power.

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the continuity of the Era of Good Feeling. With the return of partisanship and the spirit of parties and factions, the ideology of the Founding Fathers began to weaken, and it faded away in coincidence with the movements and passions that built the republic at first. Some historians believe that this demise occurred in three main phases. The first phase occurred between revolutionaries and Tories during the American Revolution; the second phase manifested in the fight between the Federalists and anti-Federalists over the ratification of the Constitution, and the last phase witnessed the confrontation between the Federalists and the Democratic-Republicans that resulted in the triumph of Jeffersonians and the extinction of the Federalist Party (342).

### 1.2.2. Jacksonian Democracy and the Second Party System: (1824-1854):

The origins of the second party system go back to the election of 1824, which was complicated in many ways. While Andrew Jackson achieved the majority of the popular and electoral votes, he was unsuccessful in achieving the majority in the Electoral College and becoming the president. In such cases, the constitution turns this decision to the house of Representatives. In the house, Henry Clay, whose rank was fourth, had given his vote to John Quincy Adam, and therefore, allowed the latter to become the president. In return, Adams appointed Clay as a Secretary of State. This incident generated great anger in Jackson's camp. They accused Adams and Clay of making a "corrupt bargain" designed by the elite to prevent the American people from electing their own popular president (Maisel 34). Through these

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tribulations, the election of 1824 marked the first challenging presidential case in the history of American politics when a candidate won the popular vote and failed to ascend to the presidency [9]. This led Andrew Jackson to abandon the Democratic and Republican Party and establish a new party, known as the Democratic Party, which would compete starting from the 1828 election.

In the election of 1828, Jackson from the Democratic-Republican party competed with President Adams, whose party's label changed into the National Republicans. In this context, it is notable that both of the aforementioned parties came from the Democratic-Republicans party that Jefferson established to oppose the Federalist Party. Eventually, Jackson prevailed and became the president. However, soon after his victory, he allowed his own supporters to occupy all governmental patronage jobs, excluding those who supported Adams. The data gathered suggests that Jackson hired 10 percent of federal workers from his party loyalists. (social studies help) After this election which was more about personality rather than issues, supporters of Jackson became known as Democrats. Meanwhile, his policies had dramatically strengthened the presidency, which inspired opposition to his policies, especially in terms of the great growth in the executive branch's powers.

Apparently, there had been several issues regarding President Jackson. Regardless of his policies that strengthened the presidency, Jackson was the first president from the west and came

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[9] There had been other cases similar to the 2000 election in which a candidate wins the popular vote and fail to become a president.

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from a western movement. Additionally, he was the first president to be elected by appealing directly to the masses and not being supported by a powerful political organization. Therefore, historians referred to his term as Jacksonian Democracy, and it was a turning point in the history of American Politics (Britannica) [10]. During his presidency, American Democracy endorsed a road of populism after it was dominated by the elite political ideology. In addition, it was in this period that the Americans witnessed the extension of the votes to include the condition of being a taxpayer after it was determined by property measures.

With the growth of the executive branch during the presidency of Jackson, the national Republican Party strongly objected to the policies of President Jackson. As their attempt proved unsuccessful, the National Republicans attempted to create a coalition with other groups of the opposition, especially a group named the anti-Masonic Party, widely accepted as the first third party in America. Anti masons believed that a secret organization of fraternity to which the president is allegedly a member had designed a conspiracy against democracy, the people, and the safety of the Republic. In this way, the third-party movement began with the attempt of the anti-Masonic party to clean the government from secret organizations.

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[10] Scholars and political scientist consider some elections as critical because of the energy of he electorate as well as the significance of its results. Some may refer to them as realigning elections because of the changing coalitions of major political parties and accordingly changing the entire party system.

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### 1.2.2.1.The Anti-Masonic Party and Fear from Secret Societies

Among the earliest parties that opposed the Democrats in the second-party system was the Anti-Masonic Party. The latter was organized in 1820 to protect the American government from the conspiracy of secret societies, including freemasonry. The latter was thought to be dominant in American politics at that time, and leaders believed that it represented a colossal danger to American Democracy and the republic. In this way, the legacy of the anti-Masonic Party lies in being the first American national third party.

Hatred towards the fraternity of freemasonry and its secret teaching was not new; perhaps, it dates back to the middle ages. In the American context, however, that hatred is associated with secrecy:

> The very secrecy with which Masons discharge their ritual and carry out their fraternal life has for centuries fed charges by the order's enemies that Freemasonry is a worldwide conspiracy against Christianity, or Democracy, or the rights and privileges of ordinary men and women. Freemasonry long ago received the bitter condemnation of the Roman Catholic Church, and it has been banned by law in the twentieth century in many Communist and Third World nations (Gillespie 47).

The ranking members of Freemasonry included "bankers, judges, businessmen, lawyers and others who typically gravitated towards public office."("Major American Political Parties of the 19th Century"). Although it began as a religious and moral attempt rooted in religious

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crusade, opposition to freemasonry increased in size to encompass a large number of Americans who eventually considered political action as a means for change ( Green ). Historian David Gillespie believed that President Jackson, Henry Clay, and several Founding Fathers had been Freemasons, a fact that supported the claim of a conspiracy to strip the average citizen from his rights of participating in the government (Gillespie 48). Equally devastating was the murder of William Morgan, a former mason who had just written a book exposing the fraternity rituals and oaths and which he intended to publish before he was murdered.

Despite some local victories, the anti-Masonic party attempted to ascend to the presidency only once in 1832. In that election, the party's nominee appeared ineffective, and its candidate had been a weak campaigner, not to mention that he had been a former mason who still had ties to the fraternity:

> Wirt had proved to be a pitiful candidate for the Antimasons, demonstrating a complete lack of aptitude for office seeking: his letters following the nomination were defensive and apologetic in tone; he despaired of victory before the campaign had begun; and although his greatest task was to convince the National Republicans to support him, instead he had to defend himself concerning charges of duplicity against Clay and the Nationals. Following the election, Wirt appeared to be in a depressed but philosophical state of mind, blaming his defeat and Jackson's triumph in part on the rotting moral fiber of the

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nation and the tyranny of the majority, describing the electorate, as "that herd of swine into which devils were cast (Vaughn 69)

Writ, however, had received 7% of the nation's votes for that election and seven electoral votes (Gillespie 49). In the aftermath of this election, the party had gone into a steady decline until it was absorbed by the newly founded Whig Party to which they brought the spirit of "egalitarianism and evangelism, and at least a residue of agitation for political reform (Gillespie 49).

A close look at the anti-Masonic party suggests that its demise came primarily due to the single limited issue that it was fighting for. Even when the party rose again in 1872, protesting three other groups next to freemasons, including Catholics, Mormons, and foreigners. From the standpoint of party leaders, the danger brought by these groups lies in their beliefs, which would lead to diversity and eventually secularization [11]. The party received few votes then faded away with less than 1% of the votes (Green 142).

One area of contribution owed to the Anti-Masonic Party was the idea that parties should run on a platform and advocate for causes that are anti-masonry. The movement also had some

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[11] A Mormon is a member of a religious group called the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, which began in the US in 1830

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notable contributions as many leaders exploited fears of secret societies to change the result of the election. For instance, in the state of Rhode Island, both the Democrats and national Republicans used anti-Masonic rhetoric to achieve more votes in the state that had already had anti-Masonic regulations. So in a way, major parties were compelled to include the agenda of the Anti-Masonic Party if they wanted to attract a sizable number of voters. The second major contribution of the party was that it was the first American party that used national conventions in 1831 to nominate their candidate who would run for elections. Henceforth, this became a custom for political parties in the USA up to the modern day.

### 1.2.3. Antebellum Third Parties:

When Jefferson wrote the Declaration of Independence, his words came against the reality that among each five Americans, there was one subjugated to slavery and its tragic treatment. Actually, northern states were tremendously influenced by the words of Jefferson, and consequently, they began a massive campaign for abolition. However, Jefferson was not the sole motive behind this campaign, and clearly, not every American was in desperate need of the words of Jefferson or a war of liberation to realize that slavery was wrong. For instance, groups known as the Quakers dedicated their efforts to the cause of abolition. Their leaders included John Woolman, who warned the nation of God's wrath if slavery was not abolished, ''The seeds of great calamity and despoliation are sown and growing fast on this continent" (Green 5). In fact, near the revolution, all Quakers had already freed their slaves.

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By the end of the American Revolution, many Americans predicted a quick end to slavery. Under the Articles of Confederation, the Government banned slavery in future states of Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, and Wisconsin, and later in 1808, the slave trade was prohibited in the USA. Despite all this effort to end human bondage, slavery remained in practice for long decades to come. Historians owe that delay of abolition to several events that occurred in the later period. Green believed that "the U.S. Constitution, ratified in 1788, recognized slavery by requiring the return of runaways and, in the three-fifths clause, gave states extra representation in Congress based on their slave population". Additionally, "With the invention of the cotton gin in 1793 cotton became a highly profitable commodity ( 6).

Added to the previous causes, American conviction that blacks were of an inferior race and sometimes "not human" and that America was a white country went against a quick deterioration of the institution. The government was also reluctant to go against Americans' mainstream convictions despite their belief that slavery was "a great evil." Therefore, slavery continued as a bargain on the southern economy, and abolition was not fully achieved.

The adoption of Missouri as a slave state in 1820 shocked abolitionists, who had marked a dramatic increase in slave society in the south. For instance, in 1790, consensus reported that the south had 654121 slaves, but in 1830, that number reached 1983833. Therefore abolitionists were convinced that they had to change their strategy and take matters into their hands through third political parties: the first third party to advocate this issue was the Liberty Party.

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### 1.2.3.1.The Liberty Party (1840-1848):

Among the parties that strived to be an alternative to the two major parties in the second-party system was the Liberty Party. Anti-slavery society members in New York founded the latter, especially those who felt hopeless from the existing two major parties of the time: the Democrats and Whigs. Some of their leaders include Josua Leavitt and Myroon Halley.

Because they sought change through the political system, Liberty members endorsed a pragmatic approach to ending slavery. Therefore, they did not advocate an entire abolishment nationwide at first. Instead, they sought to end slavery only in the capital along with new territories and states acquired by the American government. In addition, they wanted to end the slave trade, which was the source of slavery. (Green 9).

The first presidential nomination of the Liberty Party occurred in 1840, and their nominee was James K. Bernie, who believed that the Whig party was not different from the Democratic Party and, therefore, a pro-slavery party [12]. Bernie had been a slaveholder who repented and turned into an abolitionist, an experience that he hoped every slaveholder would undertake.

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[12]The candidate of the Whig was William Henry Harrison who would soon become a president.

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Because both parties appealed primarily to northern voters, followers of the Whig and Liberty parties developed an intensive rivalry between them. Whigs saw the Liberty party as a "stalking horse" to the Democrats since they were stealing the northern votes. This was true to a large extent as voting to the liberty party increased over the years. The Liberty Party was the first third party in the United States to provide a strong alternative, spoil the election and change its outcomes. While the results of their first participation in the election of 1840 were disappointing, achieving a mere 7000 votes. In 1844, the party had changed the outcomes of the election costing the Whig party candidate Henry Clay the state of New York, and therefore, allowing the democratic candidate James Polk to win the presidency. Henry Clay needed almost 5000 votes garnered by his opponent in New York. Many claimed that Henry Clay, the Whig's nominee in the election of 1840, would have become a president had he received a third of Birney's New York votes (5,270) (Green 12). This version of the story regarding the Liberty Party's role in electing James Polk was met with consensus among historians from revisionists to neo-abolitionists (Volpe 691).

Another remarkable success of the Liberty party manifested in its ability to turn the issue of slavery from a social issue advocated by the abolitionist society into a legal and political issue that is against the American constitution. Undoubtedly, opposition to slavery began as a religious and social movement, but it was by virtue of the liberty party that it turned into a political issue and a campaign at both the state and federal levels in the first half of the nineteenth century.

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Members of the liberty party differed significantly in their understanding of the relationship between the law and morality. While members of the party in New York believed that the two concepts were "inextricably linked," the party's faction in the western territories believed that the two concepts were different. In this way, the liberty party was pioneer in suggesting a liberal interpretation of the constitution by which it could conclude an incompatible relation and integration of the issue of slavery into the constitution.

Despite the considerable growth in support of abolition, the liberty party faded away, for it had performed poorly in the late elections. This, in turn, caused its members to join either the Democrats or the conscious Whigs until the establishment of the Free Soil party, which in turn claimed slavery as the main issue in its platform.

### 1.2.3.2. Free Soil Party and the Extension of Slavery

As the Mexican and American War continued, President James Polk demanded a Bill of 2 million dollars to settle the territorial issue with Mexico. The bill included the Wilmot Proviso, which attempted to halt the extension of slavery into the territories ceded by the United States. Eventually, the bill did not pass in Congress, and President Polk continued his war until he defeated Mexico. However, the Wilmot Proviso inspired a third political party known as the Free Soil Party.

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Because they endorsed a strategy of gradual change, members of the Free Soil party never objected to slavery where it existed; their sole goal was to halt its extension to other new territories. Historian David Gillespie believed that members of the party responded to this expediency by claiming that "to be right and fail is no victory" (51). Followers of the party included former antislavery Whigs, Liberty men, and some anti-extensionist Democrats, including the New York-based Barnburners and the centered-conscious Whigs of Massachusetts [13]. Green and Gillespie believed that the latter two groups' endorsement was driven by revenge more than commitment, while Gillespie considered them anti-extensionist as opposed to abolitionists.

The Free Soiler's convention in 1848 was notable in the sense that it attracted thousands of people from various political backgrounds; some historians believe it to be unprecedented since it was the first time a completely developed third party emerged based on differing issues, most notably anti-slavery extension. At this point, the two major parties –Whigs and Democrats_ had no choice but to address the issue of slavery due to two main incidents: the 1844 successful spoiling of the liberty party and the debate over the Wilmot Proviso. By the end of the Liberty convention, Van Buren emerged as the running candidate, and delegates chose Charles Francis

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[13] Barbarners reformers so named because, it was said,"they would burn the barn to destroy its rats"), a story of an old dutchman who had burned his barn, for he wanted to kill all the rats living in it. Through this name the Barbarners suggested their determination to achieve reforms even if they had to destroy the entire political system.

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Adams, the grandson of President John Adams and the son of former president John Quincy Adams.

The Platform of the party appeared racist in the sense that it appealed only to the white working class showing the seriousness of bringing slavery to the new territories. The platform insisted that these new territories "would be preserved for whites to start a new life away from oppressive eastern factories, European tyrants, and degrading competition from slave labor and even from free blacks( Green 14). This racist tone left even some Black abolitionists like Frederick Douglass contemplating the possibility of endorsing the party. However, the platform also strived to be representative of all the constituent groups:

> For the Whigs, the platform called for internal infrastructure improvements in roads, canals, and harbors, paid for by the national government. For the anti-protective-tariff Democrats it offered a tariff for revenue purposes only. To fulfill its "free soil" ideology, it promised a homestead bill that would set aside land for small farms in the new western territories. (Green 14)

Because of their symbolic leaders, a former president and a son of a president, the two major parties, the Democrats and the Whigs, could not ignore the Free Soil Party in this election. This shows a typical success and a sign of strength to the third political party in the nineteenth century. Fearing their potential, the Whigs as a major party, resorted to personal criticism of the Free-soil candidates:

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The Boston Atlas, a Whig journal, called Adams a huckster who lives off the reputation and wealth of his family. Van Buren was called a traitor and hypocrite, the Judas Iscariot of the 19th century who put revenge and ambition above patriotism. Perhaps, most damaging the free Soilers were called abolitionists, almost akin to being called a communist in the 1950s. (Green 15)

Free Soilers too fulminated against Taylor through personal attacks, including being uneducated and inexperienced in politics, a fact that anybody listening to him would realize. The party made huge efforts to guarantee its ascending to the presidency, claiming itself to be the only party that could save the United States from being torn apart by slaves.

Contrary to what many enthusiastic Free Soilers had expected, the results were shocking; Van Buren received 10% and no electoral vote while "the uneducated, uninformed, politically inexperienced, a man who never voted in an election received 47.33% of the votes as well as 163 electoral votes. The Free Soilers' interpretation of this result differed. While some believed that 15% percent was acceptable compared to other third political parties like the liberty party, others representing the majority of the party constituents had been shocked and disappointed, and soon, they launched a sudden return to their old loyalties (green).

There are at least four explanations for the failure of the Free Soil Party. First, party loyalty was visible in this election. In addition, prejudice about the party and its candidates was important and significantly impacted voters. For example, even within the party, some believed

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that Buren was not a sincere candidate while his running mate was depicted as "the slave-owning Andrew Jackson's hand-picked successor," and this had an impact on the vote of abolitionists. Finally, it was clear that those voting Whigs sided with the unity of their party instead of voting for the Free Soilers. Perhaps, most importantly, the message of the Free Soil Party was extreme, and the nation was not yet ready for it (Green 16).

The Compromise of 1850 divided the nation into slave states and free states, as it abolished the slave trade and not slavery. The south was given a strict fugitive slave law engaging citizens by the power of the law to help capture runaway slaves after it was thought that the same compromise ended the issues of Free-Soilers. Paradoxically, objecting to its content inspired the rise of the Free Soil party once again, and they organized their Convention in 1852 and nominated John Hale and George Julian for president and vice president, respectively. In their meeting, members of the Free Soil Party had several arguments against the 1850s Compromise:

> The Free Soilers condemned the Compromise of 1850 because it allowed slavery in New Mexico and Utah territories. They faulted the Fugitive Slave Act as repugnant and unchristian and demanded its repeal. Like the Liberty Party platform in 1840 and 1844, they demanded that the national government separate itself from slavery by abolishing the institution in the district of Columbia (Green 17)

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Despite the considerable effort spent by the two candidates in their campaigns, the party faced a significant loss in the election in comparison to the election of 1848, attracting only 4.9 percent of the vote. This significant decline is owed to the party's failure to preserve some of its main constituents, including the Barnburners, who retreated to the Democrats. Additionally, many people in the electorate thought that the 1850 Compromise was sufficient to end this disagreement over slavery, and therefore, slavery was not yet a decisive issue in the election.

**1.2.3.3.** The Know-Nothing Party and the Temperance Movement :

Like its predecessors, the know-nothing party came to reflect the changes occurring within American society. In this case, it was the massive influx of immigrants to America that was a major cause. Green believed that there was a rapid increase in the number of birth of foreign children from 1 percent in 1830 to 15% in 1860. Certainly, prejudice and stereotypes played a significant role in turning America into a xenophobic nation. Green believed that "the most unsettling to native protestants was the large Irish and German catholic components" because, as he noted, "they reminded Americans of their ancestors' enemies in England, France, and Spain. Actually, the deepest hatred and detest was reserved for the Irish who were believed to be the symbol of three Ps:" popery, poverty, and political corruption,"; many white Americans looked at them as "dirty, untruly, mercurial and as being from a separate race of people, incapable of assimilating into American life"(Green 18).

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The economy was also a major cause. New immigrants competed with American citizens over jobs and political influence. The Democrats saw these immigrants as an opportunity to enlarge their base of support and change the outcomes of the elections. Even worse, the Americans had to pay taxes to support the poor immigrants financially. Additionally, propaganda depicting immigrants as killers and diseases to the republic was common to the extent that Samuel Morse, the inventor of the Morse code, assured America through his original device that the Pope was attempting a conspiracy to control the churches and states of America through immigrants.

The aforementioned reasons were not as decisive as the murder of Bill Poole, an incident that inspired the formation of secret societies such as Orders of Sons of America and New York's Order of the Star-Spangled Banner. Secret societies attempted to widen the already increasing fear of immigrants. The Know-Nothing Party emerged from these secret societies like the Order of the Star-Spangled Banner as it turned into a political organization. Some of the weirdness of the newly founded political party included the act that "members took an oath of secrecy, learning special signs, hand grips, and signals of distress and pledging to oppose public office for Catholics and immigrants"(Green 16).

Indeed the American Know-Nothing Party was the earliest version of a "nativist revolt." Historian David Gillespie compared it to the anti-Masonic party in the sense that both parties were motivated by suspicion towards the decisions of the unresponsive elite. However, the Anti-

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Masonic party fought against the conspiracies that were the results of secrecy while the American Party strived with secrecy to hide even its nominee from the public to end the alleged conspiracy of Catholics and immigrants in America. Ironically, that secrecy increased the party's reputation to achieve victories at the local and state level.

The year 1854 and 1855 marked the strength and the influence that the American Party had in several states, including New York, Rhode Island, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Delaware, Kentucky, New Hampshire, and California. Green believed that the party's popularity at this period reflected the wide acceptance of its message. Former Whigs also had sympathy for the Know-Nothing cause. Between 1854 and 1857, the party captured the governorship of six states (Gillespie 54). The south lacked both Catholics and coming immigrants, and therefore, they alienated themselves from the message of the northern chapter in terms of the issues they advocate. Thus, the party's salient issue in the south was to act as an opposition to the dominant Democrats in the south.

As the American Party attempted to discuss the platform in their 1856 convention, there was a strong determination to ignore the discussion of slavery in a way similar to the Whig Party. The Northern faction pressed the party to ban slavery or at least speak against it. Ultimately, the party decided that it would call for "no intervention in the rights of the states, and they tackled issues such as the requirement of citizenship to hold public office and opposition to the union of

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church and state." Near its close, the convention nominated Millard Fillmore, former Whig president, and president Jackson's nephew Andrew Jackson Donelson.

Apparently, there were two issues with President Fillmore. First, some of his policies as a president reflected sympathy towards the south, including supporting the 1850 Fugitive Slave Act. Second, Fillmore was not a true nativist, and he did not share many of the party's principles. His acceptance of the nomination, which happened to be on a period when he was celebrating with the pope_ was a hope to unify the deteriorating Whig party in the first place. Oddly, his rhetoric in the campaign hardly included the word nativism; instead, he advocated preserving the union.

Contrary to the common prophecy of the party, the issue of slavery came to be the central theme and the most prominent issue in this election. Southerners feared the potential influence of the newly founded Republican Party, which had the slogan of "Free Speech, Free Press, Free Soil, Free Men, Fremont, and victory." From the standpoint of the Democrats, the Republican victory would be a suicidal incident. Rumors about southerners leaving the union had Fremont ranked first were common, and the American Party resorted to personal attacks against Fremont. "They dubbed Fremont a Black Republican" because of the party's alleged sympathies for the slaves. He was also accused of being a secret Catholic since he married in the church and sent his adopted daughter to a Catholic school, but Fremont was an Episcopalian.

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Fremont responded by accusing the Democrats of being "reactionaries" who would violate the freedom of others and disrespect the principles of the Declaration of Independence.

Eventually, the Know-Nothing Party attracted very impressive results, including 21% and eight electoral votes. Despite this impressive result, the party proved ineffective as it could not accomplish its nativist goals, and this would be the first sign of the party's decline (Green 21). To explain the party's demise, historians considered several causes; one explicit aspect of the party's failure goes back to several causes, including the lack of alliance between the two major parties and the Know-Nothing Party. The improvement of the economy that was partly owed to immigrants along with ignoring the main issues such as slavery were major causes too. Consequently, its members shifted to the Republican Party, especially in the north and other contesting third parties' ideologies towards the election of 1860. Nevertheless, the legacy of the Know-Nothing party remained as the forerunner of the decline of the second-party system:

> The Know-Nothing party served as the bridge between the death of the Whig party and the growth of the Republican Party. By providing a focus on the forces that destroyed the Jacksonian alignment, the American movement was primarily responsible for the Whig party's demise. The nativist order enjoyed a brief period of ascendancy, but it in turn was destroyed by the sectional forces that produced the Republican party. Different political forces, in other words, were responsible for the disintegration of the second party system

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on the one hand and the ultimate form and direction that the third party system assumed on the other. (Gienapp 444)

### 1.2.3.4.The Constitutional Union Party:

The demise of the Know-Nothing party_ or the American Party_ brought mixed results; its supporters in the north backed the newly founded anti-slavery Republican Party, while its constituents in the south and remnants of the Whigs endorsed the Constitutional Union Party. The latter was formed on the ground of neglecting the issues that were tearing the nation apart, namely slavery. In terms of its ideology, the constitutional Party became "the party that would have wished a way the slavery dispute", and its supporters "felt that the only way to combat the growing sectionalism threatening to destroy the nation was to sidestep the slavery issue" (Rosenstone et al. 59).

Not only did members of the Constitutional Union party avoid the slavery issue, but they were angry at those who advocated it. For instance, John Contendon, a strong advocator of the union, insisted that the nation had largely expressed its resentment to the issue of slavery. Contendon complained, "I am sick and tired over this Negro question in all its forms in which it can be presented and I would to God we can get back to those days when our fathers lived in harmony and peace together, and there was not a word on that subject between them…what have we gained by this enormous agitation? Anything but dissent (Green 22). According to Contendon, politicians had committed the mistake that they no longer view the constitution as

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supreme but as party platforms, "no more platforms instead of the constitution or of conventions that are masters of the people" (Green 22).

Apparently, members of the Constitutional Union Party could not fathom the intensity of disagreement created by this issue, nor were they realistic in selecting their candidates who appeared to be living in a world of the past. Some sources described their candidates in their 1860 convention as "venerable gentlemen representing a generation of almost forgotten politicians; most of them had retired from public life involuntarily rather than by choice (Rosenstone et al. 89). They had been mistaken for living in a world of politics that no longer exists!

The platform wording of the Constitutional party backed up three prominent slogans" the constitution of the country, the union of the states, and enforcement of the laws." In general, neglecting decisive issues is not common in the history of third political parties, and the party is a pioneer in that. Similar negligence tendencies can be found in some major and minor parties but with less intensity [14]. At the end of their convention, members of the party nominated Senator John Bell, a former Democrat that turned into the Whig Party.

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[14] The American Whig Party was a major party that witnessed a sudden collapse due to its ideology of ignoring the silent issue of slavery.

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So complicated and intense was the election of 1860 in terms of issues and candidates. While Abraham Lincoln and Stephen Douglass competed over the north, an intensive competition co-occurred between Bell and southern Democrats in the South. The fact that Lincoln neglected the nine southern states brought positive outcomes to the Constitutional Union, which pulled 12.6 percent of the vote along with 39 electoral votes. Despite this percentage, Bell could not change the outcomes of the election. Additionally, the fight over the issue of slavery and the Civil War proved the party's failure and led to its fast decline.

### 1.2.3.5.Southern Democrats:

Southern Democrats rose because of the division in the Democratic Party over the issue of slavery. Generally, The Democratic Party supported slavery, especially through its coalition of supporters in the American South. Northern Democrats, however, realized that slavery was growing into a decisive issue, which led to an intensive disagreement that gave birth to a new party known as Southern Democrats.

Actually, each of the five consecutive elections following the year 1940 witnessed the emergence of a third party. From the standpoint of many historians, these third parties did not act on behalf of the proslavery societies challenging the inhumanity of slavery based on the moral argument of humanitarian anti-Slavery crusaders. One explanation suggested that major parties supported slavery and the interest of slaveholders. Opposition to the abolition of slavery within

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the two major parties was hard to find among third political parties except for the Sothern Democrats, who had remarkably fought and considered a different path from their major party leaders.

Undoubtedly, slavery was the prominent issue that helped in the emergence of Southern Democrats, especially after the remarkable decline of support for the Democrats in the north. That decline also came in response to the intense disagreement and fight between pro and antislavery groups, which manifested clearly in the Fugitive Slave Act, the Ostend Manifesto, the Kansas-Nebraska Act, and the Kansas Constitution, to name a few. That decline in support appeared in 1859 when northern Democrats lacked support to challenge southern Democrats in Congress, but they still had control over their party convention. At the Convention, Southern Democrats had little concern about the party's unity; their formidable cause was slavery. Thus, they tried to establish a slave code legalizing slavery in their territories and a code that could function as "a doctrinal test to impose upon the Douglass Democrats in the convention which was less than three months away" (Potter 403 qtd in. Rosenstone 60)

Before the Convention, Alabama required its delegates to walk out if the black code was not included in the platform. Meanwhile, seven other states had the green light to withdraw in case Douglass had been nominated. With one-third of the Delegates to his side, Douglass successfully prevented the inclusion, but he needed the support of two-thirds for nomination, hoping that a compromise might be reached, which was apparently beyond the ability of the

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convention. From the standpoint of southern Democrats, the Supreme Court, in the case of Dred Scott, had made their demands logical, and they are likely to withdraw, while Northern Democrats refused to adopt the black code and vowed to act similarly[15].

For several days, the convention could not reach a compromise, and on the sixth day, delegates had to cast votes for one of the two plans. They must endorse either the black code or support whatsoever decision was made by the Supreme Court regarding slavery. By voting for the latter, southerner states withdrew, including Alabama, Georgia, South Carolina, Mississippi, Texas, Louisiana, Delaware, and Arkansas. The remaining delegates had to decide the nomination. Douglass convinced the convention to decrease the number of votes required for his nomination due to the withdrawal of the states, but the chair of the convention required two-thirds of the original two-thirds majority. For fifty-seven ballots, supporters of Douglass hovered around fifty percent, which was not enough for nomination. As a result, Delegates agreed to meet again on June 18th

In order to replace delegates that left the convention, Douglass assembled new delegates from Alabama, Louisiana, and Georgia. However, when they met in Baltimore, both old and new delegations appeared demanding accreditation. Douglass successfully transferred most of the

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[15] Dred Scott case was a legal decision that occurred on March 1857, in which the Suprem Court ruled that the Missouri Comprise was unconstitutional, and African Americans living in areas where slavery is prohibited were still slaves.

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contested seats to the new states causing other states to withdraw, including Virginia, North Carolina, Tennessee, and parts of the other six states. Douglass failed again to get the two-thirds required, but on the second ballot, he was nominated as the candidate of northern Democrats in the election of 1860.

Southern Democrats were also determined to gain their cause; they successfully managed to appoint John. C Breckinridge as their candidate and include the black code on their platform. Historians claimed that both Abraham Lincoln and Douglass appealed to northerners for votes while both Breckinridge and the Constitutional Union Party contested over the votes of southerners. In fear of Lincoln and a Republican victory, southern Democrats allied themselves in fusion with Northern Democrats and Bell (the Constitutional Union Party?), especially in states where they presumably thought Lincoln had a chance. Actually, Breckinridge stood a chance had the election thrown to the House of Representatives; he had 13 of the 32 congressional delegates compared to Lincoln, who had 15, and was unlikely to get the two other states necessary.

Surprisingly, Breckinridge failed, and Lincoln emerged victorious, carrying 18 states despite his national votes being under 40%. Only the 15 states that he took by a majority were enough to guarantee his election. Southern Democrats' candidate got 18% of the vote carrying eleven southern states and ranking second with 72 electoral votes. His support came from rural areas, especially in the south.

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Clearly, by 1864, the party was no longer alive as the civil war had settled the issue of slavery permanently; nevertheless, this issue remains formidable and prominent, especially in generating a number of third political parties' offspring.

### 1.3. The Election of 1860 and the Third Party System:

The election of 1860 was significant for several reasons. First, it witnessed the appearance of the modern two-party system with its leading players of the current era: the Democratic and the Republican parties. It also resulted in a rare political phenomenon in the American political system revealed in the decline of a major party which is the only incident occurring throughout the American history of politics, along with the Federalist case in 1835. Therefore, a close investigation of this critical election was necessitated.

### 1.3.1. Slavery and the Republican Party:

The third-party system began as early as the year 1854 with the establishment of the Republican Party. The latter was based on the anti-slavery movement, and it represented the view of citizens in North America, especially those who were against the institution of slavery. The issue of slavery became a salient issue in this period. It had developed over the years since the drafting of the Constitution as the plans attempting to resolve it were temporary. For instance, the Founding Fathers settled this issue by declaring that a black slave represented two-thirds of a complete human being. Possibly, this solution was designed to preserve unequal representation in Congress, which had benefitted slave owners:

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Throughout the entire pre–Civil War period unequal representation helped to protect the interests of slave owners. Until the 1850s equal representation in the Senate, as Barry Weingast has pointed out, gave the "the South a veto over any policy affecting slavery."Between 1800 and 1860 eight anti-slavery measures passed the House, and all were killed in the Senate. (Dahl 53)

Later, the United States witnessed the emergence of abolitionists who vehemently opposed slavery and called for abolition. Apparently, opposition to slavery, especially in the north, was not merely humanitarian. Other reasons, such as the economic factor and the sectionalism that divided the nation into north and south, but all these factors combined resulted in a bloody war called the American Civil War (Maisel ). In this context, the Republican party as a third party came to fulfill the change sought by Americans, especially in the north.

The Republican Party was formed in 1854 in Ripon, Wisconsin as an opposition to the Democrats on the issue of slavery. Its members included former Whigs and Free Soil parties, especially those who were unsatisfied with the effort done by their respective parties to end slavery. In the beginning, the party's popularity appeared in the Northern States, especially with their candidate John C. Fremont as they gained 11 out of the entire sixteen Northern states in the 1856 election. Historian David Gillespie believed that unlike other third political parties, the Republican Party appeared strong right from the beginning. This might question the claim that

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considers the Republican Party as a third party in the first place, believing it to be a major party right after its formation [16].

Furthermore, the issue of slavery came to influence the politics of personality and patronage. Scholars discussed this period in terms of the response of the elite class to the question of slavery. The Democrats who originated during the Jacksonian period endorsed slavery and supported the southern states, while the opposition embodied in the Whig party, which replaced the National Republican party, "equivocated on the issue of slavery ( Maisel 34). The Republican Party advocated ending slavery, and in this way, it threatened southern states who had long believed in the inferiority of slaves and the necessity of the institution for their plantations; therefore, Southerners threatened to withdraw from the union in case a Republican candidate was elected. Meanwhile, the issue of slavery was dividing the nation, especially in the election of 1860. With the demise of the Whig party in 1856 and the division among the democrats into south and north, the candidate of the Republican Party succeeded in ascending to the presidency in 1860. As a result, Southern states declared their secession and created the Confederacy, the forerunner of the American Civil War in 1860.

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[16] The fact that former whig members had joined the party might confirm this view, but one had to consider the differences that existed between the Whig Party and the Republican Party, especially regarding the issue of slavery. Therefore, the Republican party had been a new third party.

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Abraham Lincoln never considered the threats of southern secession as real but "another southern bluff." Most of the questions that were directed to him from southerners were met with indifference. This situation alarmed famous journalists like Donn Piatt, who claimed that " Lincoln cannot be made to believe that the South meant secession and war" (Green 26). The fact of the matter was that the Republican party was powerful in this election, and it possessed the effective means of campaigning including resources, speakers, the press support, literature, and enthusiasm" ( 24). To many historians, without abolition as a salient issue in this election, the fate of the Republican Party would have been similar to preceding third parties. As Abraham Lincoln argued in his debate with Douglass in 1858, "the sentiment that contemplates the institution of slavery in this country as wrong is the sentiment of the Republican party" (Levine 481).

The result of the 1860 election was surprising to the nation as Abraham Lincoln won the presidency with 180 electoral votes but less than 40% of the popular vote. This election marked the transformation of the Republican Party from a third Party to a major party. More importantly, it marked the establishment of the two-party system with two major parties that still dominate the political scene in the modern day. Equally important, it brought the two parts of the nation into a bloody civil war, which ended in 1865.

The results of the Civil War were tremendous as it brought changes to the status of Black Africans in the United States and opened a new political era in American history of politics. The

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Thirteen Amendment abolished slavery, stating that "Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction." Additionally, the fourteenth amendment recognized Blacks as citizens of the United States and promised them equal protection. Furthermore, Congress passed the fifteenth amendment, which gave Blacks the right to vote. The last amendment was explicit as it insisted that "The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of Servitude. (The constitution 1791). This was the second time that the electoral system witnessed an extension of the electorate.

Perhaps, Historian George Fletcher was right when he claimed that the Civil War marked the foundation of a new constitution utterly different from that of the late eighteenth century. Fletcher insisted that "the first Constitution was based on the principles of peoplehood as a voluntary association, individual freedom, and republican elitism. The guiding premises of the second constitution were, in contrast, organic nationhood, equality of all persons, and popular democracy. These are principles radically opposed to each other (Fletcher 2).

At the level of politics, the victory of Abraham Lincoln was remarkable in many ways. Maisel wrote that the Democrats and the Republicans "have dominated American electoral politics as the two major parties since that time. No other party's followers have gained majority status in Congress" (35).

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### 1.3.2. The Decline of the American Whig Party:

One of the main results of the second-party system was the decline of the American Whig Party. Scholars had largely regarded this incident as a turning point in American politics due to its uniqueness. Indeed, and except for the Federalist party, it was an unprecedented case in American politics that a major party running in several elections and winning the presidency twice would suffer a sharp decline and fade away. Equally important, no other party came to be a major party since this time.

Political scientists usually investigated the causes leading to the destruction of the Whig Party in an attempt to foresee a similar scenario of a declining major party in the future. It is assumed that the decline of the party occurred gradually, and it occurred over several elections, such as the midterm of 1850, but still, in Congress, they appeared as competitors to the Democrats over the majority. It was at the state level, however, that frustration prevailed. For instance, Mack noted that by 1851, the Whig dominance declined to five out of the 31 states. Gillespie concluded that the issues of sectionalism and slavery "delivered the death blows to the Whig, and he emphasized that the two issues had been the most powerful ever in the history of American political parties."No other issue in history had rivaled slavery and sectionalism in their impact upon the American political parties" he emphasized, and " Opposition to slavery was the raison d'etre for liberty and free soil and the rallying cry for ascendant republicanism" (56).

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The Whig's heavy losses at midterm and state levels led many pro-Fillmore Whigs to suspect the reliability of the President's promise to save both the nation and the party; therefore, they proposed establishing a new party that would run on the platform of supporting the Compromise. Yet President Fillmore, described as reluctant, stubborn, and confident, emphasized that he would save the Whig party by saving the nation. Other notable Whig leaders acted differently. For instance, Webster, who might have considered running for the 1852 election, believed that a union party was a necessity. Similarly, Clay endorsed the idea of a new party with the condition of including abolition in the party's platform. Southern Whigs did also support the idea of a new party, and in some states like Georgia, they allied themselves with the Democrats only to support the compromise. Eventually, the Democrats returned to their party, while Whig supporters remained separate. Accordingly, the union movement was short-lived, and it was an explicit sign that the house of Whigs was in constant deterioration.

Whig members Attempted to revive their party in 1852 and ensure its continuity as a major party, but they confronted the problem of poor leadership, which appeared in their inability to agree on a single candidate for the next presidential election. Indeed, this was hard, especially if one considers the strong sectionalism that prevailed within the party. While the anti-compromise camp rejected the candidacy of Webster, Fillmore did not work hard to be the nominee. Meanwhile, General Winfield Scott, Northern Whig's nominee, had a hard time winning state and local elections. Therefore, the lack of leadership was crystal.

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Apart from leadership, there seems to be another serious problem within the party, which appeared in the fact that it was likely to succeed only when it could oppose the Democrats. Mack wrote that the political system evolved was characterized by "sectional rather than party differences," and a bipartisan coalition occurred in both the North and the South. Under these frustrating conditions, Clay refused to run and anticipated a Democratic victory. Meanwhile, Webster believed that he stood a chance in the Union Party movement, but all hopes disappeared as soon as he learned that the movement was faint. Finally, Fillmore announced he would run, but a considerable size of the Whig base in the north rejected him and endorsed General Winfield Scott.

In 1852, sectionalism dominated the Whig convention and made the scene complicated. The study of Gienapp revealed that this year represented "the climax of the forces of sectionalism within the party's council" (p. 399). While Fillmore received the support of Pro-Compromise, Scott was nominated by Northern Whigs and had to write a paper appealing to the southern vote and guaranteeing the approval of the Compromise in case he wished to be elected. To pick up the presidential nominee, the party went to the 53rd ballot to reach the nomination that had finally appointed General Scott as the party's presidential nominee. The Democrats, on the other hand, nominated General Franklin Pierce.

In his Campaign, Scott endorsed some issues that eventually contributed to his defeat. For example, he falsely accused the Democrats of being anti-immigrant and anti-Catholic while he endorsed Catholics whose vote remained Democratic only to anger the nativist groups who

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had been constant loyal supporters of the party in the preceding elections. Scott was not a Catholic himself, but his daughter became a convert, and this symbolized his sympathy toward them. The second mistake was his appeal to immigrants, especially from Ireland and Germany, promising that he would decrease the naturalization period for immigrants, especially those serving in the military. The results were devastating:

> Neither Scott's promise to liberalize the naturalization period nor the attack on Pierce seems to have pried Catholics from the Democratic ticket. On the contrary, according to the New York Herald, the Whig strategy lost two Protestant votes for each Catholic vote it gained …To Catholics, the Whigs and their candidate lacked credibility. In his quest for the presidential nomination going back to 1840, Scott had cultivated the support of nativists…and in the two previous presidential campaigns. Whigs had joined in alliances with foes of Catholicism. In 1848, the Native American part had been the first to endorse Zachary Taylor for president (Prendergast 42; qtd .in Mack 2010).

Whigs lost the presidency winning 159 to 71 in the Electoral College, and their popular vote was under 44%. What followed was a sharp decline. The performance of the Whigs in this election was the worst and followed a consecutive loss at the state and local elections. Campbell noted that in Texas, even those who favored Taylor in the election of 1848 had turned against Scott in this election (26). Whigs also lost confidence in the party as it lacked leadership. Both Clay and Webster died that year; General Scott was criticized for the recent loss, and Milliard

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Fillmore decided to leave the party. Certainly, Gienapp was not wrong when he claimed that this election was "a hammer blow to the Whigs as a national organization" (349)

The Whig members split over the various movements such as the Know-Nothing Party as well as the newly founded anti-slavery party, the Republican Party_ especially after a massive protest to the Kansas Bill that enflamed opposition to slavery and reflected what the Wilmot proviso did to southerners:

Now the party appeared in a third party named the Know-Nothing Party. The latter party soon joined other Former Whigs to form the Republican Party, and this marked the end of the second-party system and the beginning of the third-party system.

### 1.4. Characteristics of Third Parties during the mid-nineteenth Century:

Generally, parties of the nineteenth century differed from those of the twentieth century. Some scholars insisted that even the antebellum third parties were different from those that followed towards the end of the century in the sense that they were very effective:

These parties were fueled by ideas, passions, and visions of what America could and should be. They were not perfect…. But despite these weaknesses, these inevitable flaws, the parties stood for something….And what is more, those parties waned and waxed,

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fought and won and lost, in what was a relatively free marketplace of ideas and poli-tics.(Bennett 1–2)

One striking feature of the antebellum third political parties, which emerged in the pre-civil war era, was that they had constantly held a position to the left of major political parties:

Most late nineteenth-century national third parties stood to the left of the major parties. Many were organized farmer and worker reactions of frustrations rendered by industrial capitalism, by what Marxists believed to be capitalism's inherent contradictions: owing haves versus producing have-nots and cycles of boom and bust. These prescriptions were for reform, roll-back, even overthrow. Most such parties were not avowedly or self-consciously Marxist; but their rhetoric raised the specter of class struggle for the first time in American history (Gillespie 63).

Clearly, these third parties were prominent players in the nineteenth century; at the minimum, they could change the entire party system. The gathered data suggest that the other three characteristics of third political parties in the nineteenth century that distinguish them from their twentieth-century counterparts.

First, third parties of the nineteenth century were organized in a way similar to the major parties. In other words, they ran a local election and arranged their convention where they could choose their nominees and usually choosing the candidate came along with real fight. These parties also considered the issues of the day and had speculations translated into platforms

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visualizing the appropriate solutions. In addition to that, parties of this era were continuous and stable. For instance, every third party of this period, with the exception of Southern Democrats, remained for at least two elections (Rosenstone et al. 48).

The second prominent feature of 19th-century third parties was that leaders attempted to ally themselves with the two major parties before they established third parties. In other words, the movement considered a third party as the last resort that comes because of a failure to work with the major parties. This shows that the party was not an end, but the advocated issues. As Rosenstone et.al. emphasized, "only when attempts at alliance failed or when a faction was unable to win policy, concessions or capture a major party nomination, did politicians and voters organize independent parties" (79). For example, most third parties that had not been prominent were unable to attract known leaders; however, these parties that were relatively and potentially influential had successfully attracted and drawn the attention of well-known personalities, including two former presidents: Van Burren and Fillmore and 9 American Congressman who abandoned their major parties.

Thirdly, many of these parties were the offspring of the two major parties. They "either grew into or out of the major parties. The liberty party was incorporated into the Free Soil Party, which in turn became part of the Republican Party. The Know-Nothing Party and Constitutional Union Party both descended from the Whigs" (Rosenstone et al. 79).

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Indeed, parties of this era acted similarly to major parties; they grew to be a major party or broke from them. Perhaps the secret behind this vital movement was the lack of constraints that shackled their rise. However, the same cannot be said about the movement itself, which suffered several problems. From the standpoint of several historians, the" third party movement found it extremely difficult to sustain themselves" because "after several elections, either the conditions that originally precipitated the parties' formation disappeared or one of the major parties took up the third parties cause."(Rosenstone et al. 80).

Failure to replace one of the two major parties on the part of third parties usually resulted in giving up on the part of their voters. With the minor victories that they could win in terms of policy or patronage, they could not satisfy their base, which would eventually abandon the party.

### 1.5. Conclusion:

American Democracy had deep roots in classical Greeks and Romans. It also drew from European experience through the enlightenment ideas, particularly from the British through the various English charters, including the Magna Carta, the Petition of Rights, and the Bill of Rights. The colonial experience also helped establish a unique local government within the thirteen colonies, which built a form of alliance under the Articles of Confederation at the beginning of the American Revolution, which the colonists had borrowed from the Indian tribes that lived in America.

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The idea of two views opposing each other is a recurrent theme in American history. For example, some colonists wanted to be loyal to England during the Revolution, while others sought an independent nation. Regarding the nature of the federal government, notable Founding Fathers supported a strong central government while others opposed it. Political parties were not an exception.

The Founding Fathers resented the idea of parties partly because they believed that it would destroy the republic and lead to the exploitation of power for personal benefits, but they soon realized they were necessary to build coalitions and determine the major policies of the nation from the variety of contesting ideologies. The parties they established have changed over time, and these changes marked the foundation of the Democratic Party and later the Republican Party to compete for dominating the presidency.

Another prominent result of these changes included the collapse of two major parties: the Federalist and the Whig Party, and the appearance of several third political parties that attempted to advocate their issues in the political mainstream. The major success of these parties appeared in their ability to destroy and replace the major party which was realized through the various political forces that formed the Republican Party and the strong intensity of slavery as a salient issue. Therefore, Scholars considered this era as the Golden age of third political parties. Along with the prominent issue of slavery, other third parties advocated ideas with less intensity,

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including the Anti-Masonic Party's fear of secret societies and the Know-Nothing Party's fear of immigrants.

Third parties functioned as a third voice and served as a pressure on the two major parties to respond to the will of the people. They projected a considerable influence even when they failed to gain the presidency through spoiling or cutting votes from one of the major parties as in the case of the Liberty Party, and these parties did not seek office until the major parties refused to endorse their main issues, and therefore, they pursue this path as a last resort. In other words, issues were the main goal behind organizing, which seems absent in the third parties that came later.

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Since the election of 1860, the Republican Party had dominated the presidency against the Democratic Party. Nevertheless, this dominance did not prevent the emergence of other third-party alternatives. Since the settlement of the slavery issue, America had embarked on the road of change, and third parties represented the voice of those who became the victim of that change. Therefore, several movements had addressed the people's concerns through politics in the period following the Civil War. The demands varied depending on the particular third party in concern; however, three prominent movements generating third political mobilization appeared crystal from the mid-nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century. It began with the Greenback and the Populist parties, which addressed the concerns of farmers and labor, respectively. The second wave of third parties came through the Progressive movement in response to the severe economic conditions and corruption that dominated American urban centers at the beginning of the twentieth century. Finally, the third movement was a reaction to the severe conditions of the Great Depression. This chapter aims to analyze the various third parties that originated throughout these three movements.

### 1.1. The Gilded Age and American Third political Parties:

The name gilded age reflects a romantic picture of the United States, but in reality, it covers many aches, problems, and issues influencing American society. Generally, this period began in 1869 and ended by the end of the nineteenth century. The data gathered suggest that the

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two major parties _the Democrats and the Republicans_ had few differences in terms of political ideals throughout this period. However, they had a vicious competition, originating from their regional differences, loyalties of the Civil War, and opposing moral and religious beliefs.

Generally, historians consider the fifty years following the victory of Lincoln as the gilded age of political parties on the basis of the importance and centrality of the political party. At the beginning of the twentieth century, parties indulged in the party period, which had given priority to the independent candidates rather than the party itself, while the modern era is described as the no-party era.

Major parties had some differences regarding some issues. Issues such as patronage, which reflects a trade-off between absolute loyalty to a particular party in return for favors such as jobs and money, were notably among the debatable issues of this age. For instance, this disagreement divided the Republican Party into two prominent factions: Stalwarts supporting patronage and Half-Breeds opposing it.

At the level of society, the growth of industry in America had mixed results. While it had led to the growth of the United States into a massive industrial power, it had been devastating to the average American, especially within agriculture and industry. In this context, historians highlighted three major philosophies that had been tremendously popular during the gilded age. These basic philosophies marked the beginning of the gilded age and were responsible for keeping wealth in the hands of the few while hurting the average American. First, there was a strong sense of individualism characterizing American society, which signified that people are

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responsible for their success and failure. Therefore, people should seek ways to create wealth and adapt to the new industrial environment, believing they have no right to seek help from the government or any political institution such as welfare agencies.

The second philosophy that dominated American society, as well as government, was laissez-faire. The latter originated from French, and its literal translation is "let them do it." As an ideology, it stressed the idea that the government should not intervene in the economy. This means that competition is absolute, and the means justifies the end. Proponents of this philosophy, known as liberals, believed that efficiency in the market would be naturally achieved if the government left economic decisions to the firms and companies concerned most [17]. The absence of governmental regulations led to the exploitation of workers and dishonesty in business. It had also concentrated wealth in the hands of a few and left the rest of society in severe poverty. Ironically, for most of this period, the government acted on behalf of businesses and against unions.

Social Darwinism represented the third pillar of American industrialism, and it was a mere reflection of Darwin's theory of biology into politics and society ("Social Darwinism"). In this way, this theory emphasized that if people attempted to achieve financial success and they failed, that failure would be their own fault, and even possibly, that these people do not conform

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[17] Liberals of the late nineteenth century are different from those of the current era in the sense that the latter group demands government intervention for solving problems. Still, the libertarians as a third political party of modern era do resemble the old version of liberalism.

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to the survival of the fittest test and the norms of the "good species". The danger presented by this philosophy was that it left no excuse for those who failed to gain wealth and served as an excuse for those using dishonest means in business.

In front of this massive movement towards industrialization and urbanization, and under these industrial changes, the status of farmers had deteriorated, pushing them to look for solutions that would address their problems. Eventually, they decided to advocate and organize based on political parties, which was reflected first in the Greenback Party.

### 1.1.1. The Greenback Party

Before 1870, mobilizing through political parties was never a priority to farmers. Various events came together, leading farmers to consider establishing their own political parties. The beginning came through events related to the cost of railroad shipment:

 Increased reliance on rail transportation, coupled with the railroads exorbitant rates for shipping goods to market prompted farmers to organize clubs known as granges. Since the federal government had granted huge rail tracts of land and subsidized rail operation, many farmers felt that the government should exercise at least some control over the rates railroads could levy. (Rosenstone et al. 63).

It was due to these problems and the growing disappointment of farmers towards rail rates practices that enlightened and motivated farmers to organize themselves. That movement appeared first in Illinois as a way to prevent the reelection of the Chief Justice of the state's

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Supreme Court, who repealed the law of 1871 that allowed the governor's board of commissioners to determine maximum rail rates.

One of the strategies that grangers followed was to establish an alliance with the Democrats so that they could defeat the Republicans. This strategy worked giving many states offices in Iowa, Minnesota, and other states, but it lasted for a short period that by 1876, the anti-monopoly movement disappeared, and laws that they had successfully enacted were repealed. Apparently, the railroad issue was never a significant issue; therefore, it did less to either produce a political party or force major parties to respond.

Several issues combined led farmers to establish the Greenback party. Without the outbreak of these issues, farmers would have not reconsidered their strategies of working with major parties. The severe conditions spurred farmers to believe that the government needed to increase the money in circulation, and this would occur if it adopted the Greenback, a currency proposed during the Civil War but failed to pass. Later on, farmers drew the name of their party from the Greenback currency. Even worse, the panic of 1873 came as a result of "reckless railroad speculation and a European depression," which had distributed the balance of trade leading to the decline of the Banking system such as those of Jay Coock Company. This, in turn, caused one firm to fall after another, and it prompted farmers to endorse a third political party as a way of last resort:

The panic lengthened into a depression. Industrial plants shutdown, railway construction declined sharply and over half the railroads defaulted on their bonds. Long bread lines

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began to appear in the larger cities there was no notion of public relief_ and tramps swarmed the countryside. Commercial failure increased to almost 6000 in 1874, almost 8,000 in 1875 and over 9000 in 1876. (Rosenstone et al. 64)

To make the situation worse, President Grant vetoed the inflation Bill of 1874 after it passed through Congress in response to the pressure of the Greenbacks. This spurred the anger of farmers, and in several states of the Midwest, the president veto disturbed the unity of the Republican Party and cost the party losing midterm elections to the Democrats. As a result of this setback, the movement that came out of the need to end monopoly disappeared along with the parties that advocated its demands, leaving two main states_Illinois and Indiana_ where the fuel of the movement lasted, and the greenbacks took over the anti-monopoly party. That base of support gave birth to the first National Greenback convention that nominated Peter Cooper, a New York philanthropist as its standard-bearer.

As far as their platform was concerned, the Greenback demanded a note that the government issued directly and it would reflect "the necessities of the people whose industries are prostrated, whose labor is deprived of its just reward by a ruinous policy which the republican and democratic parties refuse to change" (qtd.in Rosenstone et al. 65).

The Greenback, however, suffered several obstacles in 1876. Apparently, Cooper was not the right person to lead. He clearly lacked enthusiasm. For instance, after two weeks of his election, he still hoped to see the currency issue and the farmers' demands realized through the two major parties; accordingly, the party failed to attract the vote of farmers that had less

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concern towards the railroad issue. Eventually, Cooper received 9% of the Republican votes, a percentage that scholars deem as "an inauspicious start."

The hard depression continued to produce devastating conditions for both farmers and workers, which generated unity towards the cause of paper money. In theory, the paper money serves the interest of farmers since it would increase prices and accordingly help farmers pay back their loans. From the standpoint of workers, it was an opportunity for more jobs. The common interest between farmers and industrial workers generated more cooperation. Rosentone believed that "in all the states where they were organized, the labor reformers and Greenbacks were really two branches of the same party which was gradually being formed in the country to deal with the industrial and economic problems that the old parties were all too slow in taking up (Rosestone 65, Haynes 121).

The platform that the party called for in 1878 reflected the alliance of farmers and labor as it demanded short working hours, government labor bureaus and restrictions on contract prison labor and immigration. In that year's midterm, the national party achieved some victories taking up 14 congressional seats and receiving more than a million votes. However, much of these results came in response to the fusion between candidates of the Greenback Party and the two major parties in Midwest states.

The party appeared again in 1880, nominating James B. Weaver as their nominee, advocating a platform with radical at the time but turned to be a fundamental feature of the American industrial community:

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All money to be issued and its volume controlled by the national government, an eight hour work day, enforcements of a sanitary code in industrial establishments, curtailment of child labor, the establishment of a bureau of labor statistics, the regulation of interstate commercial facilities by congress or an agency of its designation a graduated income tax, the ballot for women, and equal voting rights for Negroes (Dinnerstein 1505 qtd. In Rosenstone et al. 65).

Failure to make inroads was surprising given the fact that the two major parties did not tackle the issues of the day embodied in industrial change and its effects.

As the Depression decreased and the economy started to recover, the Greenback party situation became highly fragile, especially after the Republicans claimed that it was by virtue of their policies of "hard money" that the Depression came into a demise. Weaver had won only 3.3%; most of his vote came from the Midwest, where his supporters concentrated. These results signaled the fading of the dream of a union alliance between labor and farmers replacing one of the two major parties. As a result, most of what used to be Greenback supporters went to the democrats leading to the victory of the Democratic Party in 1882 (Haynes 145).

A new start to the anti-monopoly parties appeared in 1884 when a party advocated the same demands of the Greenbacks. The party nominated Benjamin Butler, a former Greenback governor of Massachusetts. The campaign that Butler led appealed to all types of opposition to come together in support of the party: but up to this year, the two major parties were reluctant and refused to endorse those issues.

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The parties had not come to grips over economic issues. Both sides had ignored or touched lightly on such matters as labor unrest , farmer problems, public land policies railroad regulation, the growth of monopolies and even tariff reforms"(Roseboom and Eckes 107)

Because the economy was strong, Butler pulled only1.7 of the votes. The data gathered suggest that this failure is owed to the fact that the party base of support came entirely from farmers. Following the Butler campaign, the movement had entirely deteriorated. The party did not perform well under Alston Streeter as it gained 1.3 of the votes and came fourth behind the Prohibition Party's candidate.

### 1.1.2. The Populist Party:

Populism as a concept had been a field of differing views. For instance, the term itself could refer to democratic or authoritarian movements("Populism"). In the context of the United States, populism refers mainly to " a democratic movement of farmers and workers who swore allegiance to the Omaha platform of 1892" ((McMath, "Populism in Two Countries" 517). Other historians believe that the concept stems from the historical conflict between the rich and the poor in the United States, which could appear in several aspects:

Such images and countless others like them make up the language of populism. Whether orated, written, drawn broadcast, or televised this language is used by those who claim to speak for the vast majority of Americans who work hard and love their country. That is the most basic and telling definition of populism: a language whose speakers conceive of

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ordinary people as noble assemblage not bounded narrowly by class, view their elite opponents as self-serving and undemocratic, and seek to mobilize the former against the latter (Kazin 1)

The people's party was the last of the many attempts advocating anti-industrial, pro-farmer /labor sentiment". The party was inspired by the return of the agricultural hardship in the late 1880s, but its roots go back to western settlement during the post-Civil War. Western settlement had been encouraged by railroads that had swamped the nation with the propaganda of quick wealth and luxury. The railroad prophecies about the west worked effectively in the wake of the panic of 1870; the number of settlers increased in several western territories. Rosenstone et.al. believed that the "unusual amounts of rainfall and rich harvests in the early 1880s contributed to the sense of bounty ( 68).

Because of their poverty, most farmers took some loans from banks to run a business. Realizing the huge profits they could make, the mortgage companies encouraged the poor farmers to take beyond the ability of their farms. Consequently, land value increased as farmers fell in "extravagance, overinvestment, and speculation." The situation continued until 1887, when the decade of farmer's bounty and tranquility was interrupted by the shortage of rainfall, contributing to deflation.

Back in the south, farmers confronted even worse conditions. The end of the Civil War marked the demise of the southern banking system, leaving farmers at the mercy of local

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merchants. The latter brought to farmers the goods they needed in exchange for a lien of their future crop. Therefore, the system was awful and oppressive to farmers:

> The effect of the crop liens was to establish a condition of peonage throughout the cotton south. The farmer who gave a lien of his crop delivered himself over to the tender mercies of the merchant who held the mortgage. He must submit to the closest scrutiny of all his purchase and he might buy only what the merchant chose to sell him. He was permitted to trade with no merchant except for cash, and in most cases his supply of cash was too meager to be worth mentioning. He must pay whatever prices the merchant chose to ask he must market his crop through the merchant he owed until the entire debt was satisfied (Rosenstone et al. 69)

Failure to pay back the debt still had terrible consequences; farmers would be in bondage for that year or sometimes forever to the same merchant; otherwise, they would run to another territory where they could rent a farm and accept to live as a fugitive from the law. Some statistics estimated that three-fourths or nine-tenths of southern farmers had fallen victim to this crop lien system. Additionally, between 1870 and 1897, there was a steady decline in commodity prices.

People wondered about the cause, and while some linked the problem to overproduction, others, including farmers, blamed the railroads and grain elevators and operators. The former group was able to "extract whatever fees they chose to" while the latter "set arbitrary prices and cheated farmers when grading the cop". There were other unreasonable explanations as many

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resorted to conspiracy theories believing that there is something "wicked" about the system itself. Due to their inability to pay back their debt, farmers accused bankers of increasing the value of the dollar by creating a shortage in funds and abusing the money supply.

When farmers considered finding a solution, they reckoned similarly to their predecessors and stressed the need to increase the money in supply. However, farm organizations including the National Farm Alliance which represented the northern farmers, and the National Farmers' Alliance and Industrial Union which represented the southern alliance, needed to figure out a way by which they could come to that end. Actually, both organizations had successfully developed a political strategy. The alliance of the south strived to seize control of the southern Democratic Party machinery, which would leave them in a secure position since they would not allow Blacks to come to power. Meanwhile, the northern alliance saw a third party as an alternative to the two major parties, who were careless towards their demands. Therefore, the main leading causes of founding the Populist Party included drought in the west, deflation, mortgage debt, and crop failure.

The alliance-backed candidates had been successful as a strategy. Its success included winning three gubernatorial, three senatorial, and fifty-two congressional races as well as seven state legislature. This success was supposedly attempting to make the necessary legislation at the state level and enhance the condition of both farmers and laborers. Unfortunately, the elected legislatures failed to turn the movements' demands into laws because the movement itself was fragmented; therefore, an alternative option became a necessity. The alliance forces were unable

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to enact desired legislation at the state level. What was needed, many Alliancemen believed, was "a national third-party organization, which might supplement the state organization and take the lead in securing national measures of reform that the states were powerless to effect (hicks 185)

Talks about the alliance and mobilizing in a third party coincided with a plan known as the sub-treasury plan, which required the government to provide help to non-perishable farm products and advance 80%of the value of the crop to farmers thinking that it would increase the money in circulation and decrease the rate of interest. But the plan was met with serious criticism, especially in terms of inflationary potential, which, at least as Rosestone believed, "helped publicize the farmers' desperate need for an expanded money supply (71)

In the beginning, establishing a party was not acceptable to all farmers. Some quarters especially in the south, refused to join the convention of 1892, believing that their strategy was to capture the Democrat machinery. Only when they became hopeless of the effectiveness of their strategy that they considered joining a third party that held its first convention in July 1892

The platform that the convention agreed upon included many demands such as government ownership of railroads, free coinage of silver, and a graduated income tax". When the nomination came, many hoped that Judge Gresham, a former Republican, and a well-known personality, would be selected to reveal the strength of the movement as different from its predecessor. However, the judge was denied the nomination, and delegates had no choice but to select a former Greenback party, James Weaver.

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The Populist Party's endorsement of the silver money cause had successfully attracted more votes. In this election, the populist received 8.5 percent of the vote, and they captured some states with a majority of over forty percent, including Nebraska, North Dakota, and Wyoming. Most of the votes came from rural areas, while the south had mixed feeling about supporting the Populists in this election. On one hand, southern states did not take third parties endorsement seriously. After all, splitting the white vote was a principle. But some parts within the south had voted for the populist on the ground that the Democrat nominee Grover Cleveland was seen by many as " an unrepentant tool of Eastern bankers conspiring to keep them poor," and this in turn generated southern votes for the Populists (Rosenstone et al. 72).

The shortage of money continued following the panic of 1893; this time the cause had been the failure of the British banking firm Baring Brothers which led to an extreme scarcity of money and tightened the depression. The west and the south became very disappointed and desperate due to the policy of indifference that characterized President Cleveland. For instance, in 1890, the attempt to pass the Sherman Silver Purchase Act, which had been the sole act from the silverties – was met with the president's push to repeal it. Clearly, the president's policy was no help.

The Populist call for the silver cause was thought to be an inroad to access the presidency and be one of the two major parties. However, they became identified with it. Somehow the increase in the popular vote for the populist to 11.2 in 1894 and the loss of the Democrats helped confirm this prophecy in the mind of the populists.

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The Democratic Party, however, came to endorse the issue of the silver money, especially in southern parts that suffered an economic disadvantage. Western democrats who thought similarly shared this opinion, and delegates from the south and the west met in June 1895 to cooperate within the Democratic Party and advocate the silver currency. The populist party strategy was to take out some of the issues that broadened the movement "and concentrate on the issue of the silver currency, and as the chairman commented," keep the money question to the front." With the change in the Democratic Party's position, some populists were willing to make a fusion with the Democrats, but this fusion was extremely criticized within the party because for many populists, even the silver issue would not solve the entire issue of the expansion of currency. This fusion, as Green emphasized, put the Populist in a dilemma. They could keep their own identity only if they remained independent from the Democrats, while they could gain a potential victory and risk the existence of their party (36).

The Democrats' endorsement of the populist was not a choice; it came in response to the considerable growth of the party over the years, and many Democrats were concerned about being replaced by the Populists (Gillespie 73). When the convention came, the populist realized that they had been mistaken in their belief that both parties would continue supporting the gold currency while they could make inroads and beat one of the two major parties through the silver currency which went away following the Democratic endorsement of the silver currency. They nominated William Jenning Bryan. Some populists, especially western farmers, believed that Bryan was one of them and supported him, while others feared that this support might destroy

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their party. Eventually, those who demanded fusion with the Democrats won the convention and secured the nomination of Bryan.

The 1896 election was unique in the sense that it marked the reemergence of the major parties opposed to each other on fundamental issues:

> The economic rationale for the party system that had been displaced in mid-century by the issues of slavery, war, and reconstruction had reemerged at last. The major parties were again aligned on opposite sides of the genuine and crucial conflict of the day. In a country rent by economic depression, they appealed to the polarized electorate from opposing poles. (Sundquist 154)

The two opponents run different campaigns. While Bryan traveled more than 18,000 miles and had given 600 speeches to no less than five million voters, William McKinley decided to remain home, claiming that he might "compete with some athletes as go out and speak against Bryan". Personal attacks were also common. While the Republicans accused Bryan of being an anarchist, Bryan responded by claiming that McKinley was a tool for "Wall Street" (Green 37).

Unfortunately, Bryan failed the presidency, and with that polarization, there was no justification for the populist existence. Many of the populists that endorsed William Bryan decided to remain within the Democratic Party. Furthermore, the economy healed as the depression intensity weakened, and gold production increased tremendously. Following this election, the Populist Party witnessed a steady decline despite its participation in the next three elections. Nevertheless, the legacy of the movement persisted:

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Populism was the first modern political movement of practical importance in the United States to insist that the federal government had some responsibility for the common weal; indeed it was the first such movement to attack seriously the problems caused by industrialism" (Hofstadter 61)

Additionally, the Populist Party was "the last important minor party to sustain a working national, state, and local organization for several elections (Rosenstone et al. 75). Furthermore, the Populist party came with some radical ideas that other parties had included in the platforms, especially during the progressive movement. Such ideas do appear mainstream to average Americans today, but they were perceived as extremely radical and un-American during the Gilded Age.

Furthermore, the legacy of the Populist transcends the demand of the movement to include cultural aspects such as populist rhetoric, which remained as a defining aspect of American populism:

Through the language of these rebels, who were based among small farmers, flowed two powerful, inherited streams of grassroots rhetoric. First was the moral revivalism of plebeian preachers and lay campaigners against slavery and strong drink; second was a spirited defense of producers both rural and urban, wage earners and the self employed upon whose labor and loyalty the republic depended. (Kazin 3)

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It also seems fair to suggest that the movement's decline had some other external factors involving the whole political system. The populist came at the turn of the century as the two-party system institutionalized:

> The populist' dilemma stemmed from a basic fact of politics: the objective of parties and candidates is to win at least 50 percent of the vote. By the time of the Populist crusade, there was a diminished opportunity for minor parties to influence national policy by gaining a foothold in Congress. In contrast to British and European parliaments, Congress by the 1890s had come close to institualizing the two-party system by granting enormous powers to the presiding officers and chairmen of the various committees. Populist congressmen were often prohibited even from speaking on the floor, and their chances of actually enacting the planks of the Populist platform were virtually nil (McMath, American Populism 210)

### 1.1.3.   The Prohibition Party:

The Prohibition Party had been the longest-running third party ever; it participated in every election since 1872. The party is notable for being the first party to endorse several major reforms, including child labor, income tax, women suffrage, and direct election of senators.

Ever since it was established, the Prohibition Party supported various candidates and social movements. For instance, the party backed abolitionists in 1850. Additionally, it had backed the Know-Nothing party that objected to Irish and German immigrants who resisted temperance. Moreover, the prohibition party's members stood behind major parties when their

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calculation indicated that support for immigrants would result in more gains than that of the temperance movement. The Feminist movement had also crossed paths with the Prohibition Party, and it was the first of its kind to advocate equality for women and their right to vote in elections.

As far as its origins are concerned, several factors combined resulted in the establishment of the prohibition in 1869:

> First, many states that had passed prohibition laws in the 1850s had since repealed them or had given up on their enforcement. Second, the Internal Revenue Act of 1862 both legitimized the liquor industry and gave the government a financial stake in maintaining liquor traffic. Third, with the formation of the United States Brewers' Association, liquor interests had increased their political influence. Finally, because the Civil War had resolved other, more pressing issues, temperance supporters could now devote far more attention to their cause. (Rosenstone et al. 76)

One remarkable issue about the party was its slow growth, which reflected the hope of its leaders that the Republican Party that endorsed abolition would include temperance in its platform. Even when they engaged in politics, their attempts were unsuccessful, with their inability to go beyond the 1% of the votes. Therefore, the liquor industry became powerful and extended its influence as the Prohibition Party was suffering consecutive setbacks.

In the election of 1884, members of the party continued to gain support for their cause, hoping that one of the two major parties would endorse their movement. The delay of the

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convention reflected their curiosity to see the response of the two major parties, but when the Democrats and Republicans nominated Grover Cleveland and James G. Blaine, respectively, they too nominated one of their leaders John P. St John. The party's worthiness manifested in New York, where he received 25000 votes. Consequently, Blaine's inability to gain New York cost him the election as a whole, and it was the sole election in which the Prohibition Party played a role in changing the outcomes of the election (Rosenstone et al. 77).

Despite their continuing efforts, members of the Prohibition Party remained ineffective and with little influence on the nation's policy. Perhaps, there had been a time when politicians made concessions, but still, the two major parties realized the little influence of the Prohibition Party over voters. The temperance movement appeared successful at the turn of the century, leading to seven states' adoption of prohibition laws, but this victory came through the anti-saloon league, various church groups, and social shifting conditions. Indeed, the lack of a coherent platform and a solid background hindered the success of the party, which had been created as a response to other players' demise:

> The rise of prohibition strength owed a great deal to the sense of cultural change and prestige loss, which accompanied both the defeat of the populist movement and the increased urbanization and immigration of the twentieth century (Gustfield 102)

Additionally, residents became aware of the social changes that allowed their defeat to urban immigrants where drinking became common. In addition, they were concerned about the decline of the party and the movement in terms of population.

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Generally, The Prohibition Party had gone through three prominent phases according to its enrolled members. The first stage is the prophetic stage (1869-1896) which was characterized by the belief that the party had the potential to achieve "evangelistic transformation" to a better social order in the United States. The second phase that followed was the pragmatic period which is characterized by pragmatism rather than blind confidence in the future. Realizing that they did not stand a chance to beat the two major parties, members resorted to coalitions with various groups, including women's suffrage and progressive organizations. Finally, the party's current status referred to as the fundamentalist period portrays the party as a small, very peripheral band of conservative protestant Christians." In terms of statistics, the data gathered suggest that the Prohibition Party scored its best results (270000) in 1892 when a single vote out of every forty-four of the entire votes went to the box of the prohibitionists. However, scholars insisted on the pragmatic phase as a heyday of the party, especially after the success of the party along with the various organizations to the adoption of the eighteenth Amendment that gave women suffrage. Other achievements of the pragmatic phase included the successful election of Prohibition's Sidney J. Catts as Florida's governor in 1916, as well as the winning of Charles H. Randall to three consecutive terms in the House of Representatives.

Up to the modern-day, the Prohibition Party still exist but only in small districts not to win election effectively but to celebrate the memory and the victories of the past. These types of parties are considered doctrine parties, and one of their prominent features is their ability to last for a long time compared to the transient parties that usually present a real threat to the major

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parties in government. Still, the Prohibition Party's long existence may be linked to the commitment of its member:

> But these parties' stability and continuity, their long lifespans, result more from their activists' faithful commitment to party doctrine or creed than from any genuine hope of electoral victory. Even their pragmatists, when pragmatists exist in their ranks, find their gratification in being right (Gillespie 10).

When evaluating the weight of doctrinal parties within elections, there appears to be a big gap between them. Gillespie explained why:

> Beyond the constraints that keep all third parties out on the national periphery, continuing doctrinal parties often are alienated from the political and electoral mainstream by the radicalism of their creeds and by their activists' fidelity to creed. No presidential candidate running solely as nominee of a continuing doctrinal party ever has won more than 6 percent of the popular vote. Some of these parties regard the whole American election process to be a sham or fraud and do not normally offer candidates for office (Gillespie 10)

### 1.1.4. The Liberal Republican Party in the 1870s:

The liberal Republican Party came into being through secession from the Democratic Party. Actually, its founders did not intend a third-party movement against the two major parties for the long term. This party, instead, served to correct the path endorsed by the Republican Party. The party's founders expressed their concern and resentment to the fact that "commercial

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and industrial interests were coming to master and command the GOP, and to remold it into a bastion of high-tariff protectionism" (Gillespie 61). Other demands of the Liberal Republicans included reforming the civil service as well as fighting corruption which they believed was a common feature of the government under the leadership of Ulysses Grant.

Somehow, the liberal Republicans came to be a potential ally with the Democrats, for they both had common issues despite the range of differences that separated them from each other. Both the Democrats and Liberal Republicans were angry at the radical reconstruction that the Republican Party had endorsed since the Civil War. The military governments established in the south to enhance Blacks' status were among the main policies opposed by both the Democrats and the Liberal Republicans. This consensus brought the two sides closer in elections to confront their rival Republican candidates.

As a movement, the Liberal Republican foundations began in Missouri in 1870, when fusion between the Democrats and Liberal Republicans expelled the Republican governor and successfully elected their candidate. The same event occurred again in the next election, in which a fusion ticked threw the governorship to their side. This fusion strategy was extremely helpful in making significant results in the polls. For instance, the party successfully gained the governorships of Georgia, Tennessee, and Louisiana during the years 1872 and 1876. This had occurred despite the existence of some Reconstruction measures that limited the participation of many confederate military soldiers. In fact, the Liberal Republicans were even close in other states such as Alabama, Arkansas, and Florida.

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Amazed by the successful Missouri model, the Democrats considered the use of the fusion strategy in the election of 1872 in order to seize control of the government and immediately overthrew the presidency of Grant. Therefore, the same candidate supported by the Liberal Democrats in the previous election was selected as the Democratic presidential candidate. Their choice came to Horace Greely, a New York Tribune editor, whose candidacy was also supported by the Liberal Democrats. B. Gratz Brown, a well-known Missouri fusionist, was selected as a vice candidate, and the platform of the LRP was also adopted by the Democrats that year.

For several considerations, the candidacy of Greely was a disadvantage and a serious mistake for both the LRP and the Democrats. First, his actions were strange as he usually strived on behalf of hopeless causes. Some historians associate his personality with the name "Don Quixote" believing that he had been "tactless, alienating, and eccentric":

Soon after Ft. Sumter he had urged Lincoln to make peace with the Confederacy on their own terms. Then he became an enthusiastic champion of military conquest. [Even while he was seeking] Democratic support for his candidacy, he said he would not endorse any Democratic nominee for office. Most Democrats [and Liberal Republicans] opposed high tariffs . . . But Greeley was a protectionist (Gillespie 61–62)

The campaign was a disaster. Greeley made a series of blunders. He denounced a Union soldier's convention as "rekindling the bitterness and hatred . . . of civil war." He called Negroes

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"ignorant, deceived, and misguided" for voting against him. He even said he would accept secession if the southerners voted for it in a fair and open election. (qtd in Gillespie 62).

Indeed it was not logical at all that this candidate wanted to ignite the war after all the casualties that both the north and the south had sacrificed. Apparently, the candidate did not reject Lincoln's policy only, but he went against his own party _the Democrats in rhetoric and ideology. Humiliation toward the Black community, and the implication that he might allow secession were all leading his campaign which was very weak in terms of impact. All in all, Greeley was against all that could help him appear as an alternative to the Republican candidate in this election.

However, some of his policies had been well-received among southerners, and accordingly, states like Georgia, Tennessee, and Texas were all in support of his candidacy. Other states such as Missouri, Maryland, and Kentucky were also in Greeley camp. Nevertheless, Grant won the presidency with 56 percent of the popular vote.

Another unprecedented issue that occurred in this election was the death of a candidate before the Electoral College meets. This event led to a debate over the sixty-six electoral votes acquired by Greeley and whether those electors would fulfill their promise and cast their votes for him. Eventually, his running mate received only eighteen votes, and three of the Georgia electors still hold to Greeley, but Congress decided not to certify the result for they were cast on a dead candidate. As mentioned previously, the electors are not compelled to vote for the candidate they first promised to support.

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The attempt to implement the Missouri model persisted for the next four years, unlike the Liberal Republican movement, which soon had come to its demise. In other words, the election of 1972 was the sole opportunity that had rendered the party a potentially significant political party. The primary factor for this decline is owed not to the death of Greeley, the party's presidential nominee as much as it concerns the campaign he had conducted. In other words, it was due to his decisions, policies, and actions that the party deteriorated.

However, some of the liberal Republicans' policies had come true, not because the party strived to achieve them as the data collected suggest. For instance, there was an ending to the Republican reconstruction of the south, and southerners successfully regained political control over their territory after they were seized by the military. Yet this decision occurred in the presidential election of 1876 when the Republicans nominated Rutherford B. Hayes and the Democrats ran a New Yorker Sam Tilden. The latter carried the popular vote by 250,000 votes, and in the Electoral College, he received 184 to 165 electoral votes. The Democrats thought that they had a great chance of winning back the presidency. There was a debate over twenty votes and the Democratic candidate would have become the president if he won only one of them. The problem was solved through a committee of eight Republicans and seven Democrats who suggested that the presidency would go to the Republican Grant, and in return, a deal was made to end the Republican reconstruction. In addition, some improvements to the infrastructure in the south had to be done as well. So, one of the fundamental issues raised by the Liberal Republicans came real, but clearly, the party had no hand in it.

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Another issue endorsed by the Liberal Republicans, which the American government adopted, was the issue of civil service. Congress adopted the latter in 1883 in a form of act known as the Pendleton Act, which attempted the replacement of the old spoils system with a better civil service. Again, the Liberal Republicans had no effort in pushing the act through Congress because the party was dead by that year. As Gillespie emphasized, " had it been still alive, LRP have welcomed that act, but the long-dead party had nothing to do with Pendleton's passage (63).

## 1.2. Progressive Movement and the Dissatisfied:

The beginning of the twentieth century marked the rise of the progressive movement in the United States; many Americans were not satisfied with the conditions of workers and the way the laissez-faire policy dominated American politics and society. This period witnessed the election of three governors from the American nation's heartland states, including Robert La Follette of Wisconsin, Samuel Van Zant of Minnesota, and Albert Cummins of Iowa. Actually, these governors were elected as "anticorporate, radical trust busting governors," and their election signaled an era of progressivism that would last until the introduction of the "Return to normalcy" policy by President Warren Harding in 1920. By that time, the populist insurgence faded away after William Bryan lost the election, and the election of William Mackinlay settled the question of the standard gold currency. However, a host of other issues remained, especially what concerns farmers and workers on the relationship between business government and the

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people. The people in concern were predominantly protestant upper and middle-class urbanites progressives signaling a new age of reform in the United States.

Progressivism in the United States is a term that can not be restricted to the political parties that held this name in this era; instead, it is a broader concept:

> Progressivism in this larger sense was not confined to be the Progressive Party but affected in a striking way all the major and minor parties and the whole tone of American political life. it was to be sure, a rather vague and not altogether cohesive or consistent movement, but this was probably the secret of its considerable successes, as well as of its failures… its general theme was the effort to restore a type of economic individualism and political democracy that was widely believed to have existed earlier in America and to have been destroyed by the great corporation and the corrupt political machine and with that restoration to bring back a kind of morality and civic purity that was also believed to have been lost. (Hofstadter 5–6)

The origins of the Progressive movement go back to the post gilded age era, and the conditions it produced. In other words, the philosophies of rugged individualism social Darwinism, and laissez-faire combined with the severe conditions of the average citizen and the corruption in politics which appeared in political machines.

At the turn of the century, American society was outraged by the conditions they faced. Industrialization had improved life in the cities, but at the same time, it had resulted in exploiting the workers who did much of the work and received little income. Meanwhile, political parties

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were corrupted by businessmen who were ready to contribute to political parties as well as state legislations who appointed the U.S. senators in return for the favors and the privileges given to them by politicians. As a result, political parties abused their power and became representatives of corporate America that had long been careless towards the grievances and the sorrows of the average American. Consequently, voices within the two established parties called for an end to the equation that linked the increase in industrialization and permanent farmer peasantry and worker poverty (Green 40)

Historian Arthur Schlesinger and others held the belief that the history of the United States turns in cycles. In the words of Gillespie, this meant that "periods of reform, change, progressivity eventually yield up to conservatism and rest, which in their turn then lose out to reform and change" (81). At the beginning of the twentieth century, third political parties moved to the hands of the Progressives after the torch of change had been wasted by the Greenbackers and the Populists.

The Progressive movement came to the United States to criticize social and political conditions that the average American confronted daily. The development of industry and Technology was not assisting the average citizen who had to experience challenging conditions such as low wages, long working hours, and corruption. Republican leaders were unable or rather unprepared to handle these problems because they believed that the economy could fix itself by itself, and that the best way for the government to enhance the economy was by doing nothing. It was part of a philosophy known as Laissez-Faire, which was deemed as an important

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pillar of Capitalism. Such conditions revealed an America dominated by few businessmen and overwhelming poor citizens.

During the gilded age, the competition turned into warfare involving any means that could lead to wealth. Therefore, several works at that time reflected the idea that the road to success does not require hard work:

> The image accumulated its ambiguities under circumstances of increasingly unnerving competition, in which rewards flowed more often to sheer power than entrepreneurial skill. In the very celebration of the businessman as the epitome of American individual-ism, we detect signs of concern that the older individualistic virtues no longer apply, that the ability to mobilize to concentrate to incorporate counted for more than thrift and dili-gence. The enormous role of lack in Alger's tales may contain a covert recognition that the route of success required some magical outside assistance. For it was clear even in images of robber barons and captains of industry that business was a kind of warfare in which all 's fair which succeeds. (Trachtenberg and Foner 81)

Another belief that contributed to this mess is embodied in a philosophy known as social Darwinism. The latter is based on the belief that certain people are naturally better and accordingly would create wealth and become successful; a typical example included captains of industry, men who made financial success. These men represented the good species that survived in Darwin's theory, which had been taken from its context of biology and applied in sociology by the efforts of Robert Spencer. Thus, while the rest of the people who could do nothing but

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remain poor are a burden on American society, their failure is not owed to the challenging conditions they are confronting but to some weaknesses in their genetics.

Indeed and as Trachtenberg and Foner emphasized, "Spencer's 'Social Darwinism' seemed to sanction precisely that scene of tumult and conflict, of rising and falling fortunes" (81). Later, the American elite became fascinated with social Darwinism and its major proponents like Spencer, who turned it from the field of biology to sociology to justify the results of capitalism. "Nature's cure for most social and political diseases is better than man's," wrote the president of Columbia University, Nicholas Murray. As Andrew Carnegie attempted to explain his fame and financial success, he stressed the element of competition, stating that" we can not evade it. And while the law may be sometimes hard for the individual, it is best for the race, because it ensures the survival of the fittest in every department" (81).

The Progressive movement had had various demands and radical groups. For example, a group of writers, known as muckrakers, criticized businessmen and their companies' policies and misdeeds. Yet the soul of the movement, especially in the first fifteen years, was embodied in "extending the participatory power of ordinary citizen, eradicating corruption and building good government" (Gillespie 83). Among the obstacles that stood against the free choice of voters were political machines.

Political machines had been defined as " a party organization headed by a single boss or small autocratic group that commands enough votes to maintain political and administrative control of a city, county, or state" ("Political Machine"). Political machines provide people with

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social services in return for their votes. These organizations appeared in the United States to meet the enormous growth of American cities due to immigration and migration from rural America. Unfortunately, that growth left the government weak in providing services, and political machines were to defy that challenge, but along with that, they caused several cases of abuse.

The structure of the political machine included three essential parts. The first part is represented by Bosses or county committees who had been in charge of the party, the machine, and their control precedes to politicians as well. The second prominent element manifested in Election district captains, who served to mobilize and generate sympathy and support in a neighborhood. Finally, at the bottom of the machine stood voters whose political and financial support was absolute in return for services provided by election district captains and bosses. The Tamny Hall, for instance, was among the most extensive political machines. It was directed by William Magear Tweed in New York City, and It maintained a strong voting base of loyalties targeting primarily immigrants who would receive favors such as jobs or housing in return. The hierarchical structure of political machines helped in being more influential to people than any other governmental agency. Scott Greer gave an example of this:

> What tells in holdin your grip on your district is to go right down among the poor families and help them. I've got a regular system for this. If there's a fire in Ninth or Tenth or Eleventh Avenue, for example, any hour of the day or night, I'm usually there with some of my election district captains as soon as the fore engines. If a family is burned out I don't I don't ask them if they are Republicans or Democrats, and I don't refer them to the

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Charity Organization Society, which would investigate their case in a month or two and decide if they are worthy of help about the time they are dead from starvation. I just get quarters for them, buy clothes for them if their clothes were all burned up, and fix them up until they get things runnin' again. It's philanthropy, but it's politics too - mighty good politics. Who can tell me how many votes one of those fires brings me? The poor are the most grateful people in the world, and, let me tell you, they have more friends in their neighborhoods than the rich have in theirs (Minar and Greer 220)

Because of their power, political machines had been associated with criminal activities, sometimes in the form of payments to conceal some enterprises' misdeeds and illegal activities from the eye of authorities. At their height, political machines had a steady income from donors, which they would repay on the day of the election when a mass army of voters would be organized. In fact, these organizations questioned the legitimacy of American Democracy as it influences the political behavior of voters not through the merit of the political programs but rather the prescriptions of bosses.

The political machines were perceived as a fraud during the progressive movement when people attempted to clean cities from their exploitation and various political abuse. Furthermore, They pushed the government to act on behalf of the average citizen against the various drawbacks put by the establishments, the monopolies, and the trusts. For instance, the cartoon of

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Thomas Nast delivered the death blows to the Tammany Hall political machine, and the remaining ones declined immediately after [18].

The change sought by the movement came to influence both major parties; thus, both parties provided a progressive agenda for their candidate. For instance, the Democratic president Woodrow Wilson and the Republican Theodore Roosevelt had been all progressives seeking reforms that would improve citizens' conditions. Pragmatists in the movement hoped for a change from within the system more than that which might come from outside, although the second choice had been present and active in this era.

Actually, non of the progressives considered changing Capitalism as a whole; instead, they understood that the government had an obligation to reform itself and settle the problems that emerged as a result of industrialization. Therefore, they initiated a change targeting primarily the urban cities, and their priority was to reform the government through different means:

Progressives tried to improve municipal governance by wiping out corruption eliminating bossism, and installing city managers and commissioners with a better understanding of the underlying problems of poverty and good government. Schools and parks were built. Some cities cut streetcar fares and gas rates and provided work relief for the unemployed.

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[18] The civil reforms introduced to replace patronage of political machines did not fully end them all. Actually, some of them remain in effect up to this moment.

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Middle-class women moved into settlement houses, living among the urban poor to provide social services not available through government agencies (Green 40)

The reforms of the progressives were vivid at the state level; many reforms were introduced, and states overwhelmingly passed laws against child labor, setting working hours and requiring compensation in cases of death and injury. Other reforms included redistribution of wealth through the pressure of taxes on businesses and accordingly limiting their profits as well as inheritance and income taxes. It was unsurprising that this change came through tough pressure on the government and the supreme court that resorted at first to protecting businesses, citing the fourteenth amendment that prohibited the taking of life, liberty, and property without due process, but the determination of the progressive compelled the government to liberalize its views and take the social and economic burden and cost on consideration.

At the national level, the progressive movement succeeded in giving women suffrage which was an extremely viable and prominent change that signaled another extension of the electorate after the case of African Americans. A similar prominent achievement was the direct election of senators that had been one of the grievances that attempted to immune the government against corruption and political machines

The Progressive Movement was one of the most successful movements in America. Yet its achievements are owed considerably to the third political parties that had been active in this era. Therefore, Progressive demands found ears in a number of third political Parties, which attempted to implement a progressive agenda. Other groups, such as the socialists, were very

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active during this period, although they advocated an extreme agenda that visualizes their programs and ideas as strange to the political system. On top of these parties, the Bull Moose Party holds a prominent position since it was founded by a former president that enjoyed extreme fame among the American people.

### 1.2.1. The Progressive Party (Bull Moose) 1912:

The Bull Mouse Party was the first prominent party to defy the two-party system centered on a single candidate. Indeed, the party would not be running in 1912 if there had been no prominent leader like former President Roosevelt deciding to run. Yet this was not the sole cause behind his popularity; people had intended to vote for Roosevelt for several reasons. For instance, he sided with workers and fought against their exploitation. Furthermore, progressive legislation such as the anti-trust Sherman act was enforced for the first time during Roosevelt's presidency. Additionally, he made several attempts to check management's activities, including railroads, meat, and the drug industry. Therefore, President Roosevelt was a progressive president who attempted to support workers and protect ordinary men in society from the abuses of greedy people in business.

However, what led Roosevelt to announce his candidacy after leaving office was not a mere seeking of other terms in office. Following his election in 1904, he denounced and denied seeking a third term claiming that "the wise custom which limits the president to two terms regards the substance and not the form and under no circumstances will I be a candidate for or accept the nomination for another." (Hammond 450) Given his popularity, the choice of his

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successor was left to him, and he chose his best friend William Howard Taft of Ohio, thinking that he would continue his progressive reforms. Unfortunately, events that came after proved him wrong, and the two men had been different in terms of their vision of the nation's future.

Some of Taft's deeds included dismissing some members of the Roosevelt cabinet even though he promised to keep them in service. Additionally, he appeared to go against the progressive agenda that the party had endorsed. Other personal issues included reports revealing that members of the Roosevelt family had been dealt with badly by the White House. Despite all the preceding issues, Roosevelt's real cause of anger was even more profound as Mowry suggested:

> Roosevelt's boundless contempt for the Democratic Party unconsciously made him antagonistic to anything that might enfeeble Republicanism and thus enhance the possibility of a Democratic victory. Then too he was supremely proud of the fact that he had, seemingly through his own efforts, left the party in what had appeared to be an impregnable position. Now when he saw it in shambles, an artist's pride in his own creation was touched, and a sense of irritation grew against the men who he reasoned, had destroyed it. (Rosenstone et al. 83)

These misunderstandings were to throw the Republican Party into chaos and division. In 1910, Roosevelt attempted to stimulate republicans to his side; his strategy was to win the support of the progressives and later address conservative issues related to the party. The problem was that the two goals were naturally contradictory. Those efforts were also undermined by the fact that

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each side interpreted the moves of its counterpart as a "personal attack," and so, the whole Republican Party was in a critical position, and the Democrats seized the opportunity to attack Republicans of all kinds. The result was the loss of thirteen U.S senate seats to the Democrats and fifty-seven congressional seats. This takeover allowed the Democrats to overtake the house again after it was controlled by the Democrats for sixteen years. That tremendous loss pushed Taft to unify the party, but progressives decided that Taft would not be the presidential candidate for the 1912 election, which would result in much division within the Party. From the standpoint of Roosevelt, the Republican Party would not prevail regardless of the man that would take the nomination. For that reason, he believed that the party would correct its path and endorse his ideology once again. It was even possible that he might have considered endorsing Taft, and no sign of attempting to run appeared clear throughout 1911.

What really pushed Roosevelt to reconsider his decision to run was Taft's decision to repeal his predecessor policy and prosecute the U.S. Steel Company under the Sherman Antitrust Act. During his presidency, Roosevelt permitted the company to buy the ailing Tennessee Coal and Iron Company to avoid a potential major bank failure if that company collapsed. Regardless of the effectiveness of this decision, it successfully maintained the position of the U.S. steel company. However, the message delivered to Roosevelt through Taft's decision was that he had been utterly deceived, or at least this was how he perceived it. This, in turn, pushed supporters of Roosevelt's decision to defend him publically, and the growth of that defense had been critical to the decision of running for the presidency in 1912. Otherwise, the election would certainly have

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ended with a Republican victory if Taft withdrew from the race or Roosevelt decided not to run. In either case, the Democrats did not stand a chance (Rosenstone et al. 84)

Campaigning for the nomination was very strong between the two factions of the Republican party. At first, it seemed that both men did not have the chance to win the majority of votes, but when the national committee decided that the debatable 254 seats would go to Taft except 19 due to his control of this body, he successfully gained the nomination.

Out of this decision, Roosevelt met with his advisors, and several options were discussed. Attendance discussed the option of appealing to the people since the party had abandoned them. But those who had established their career with the Republican party did not want to venture with their future, while those who thought they would lose nothing approved it. In addition, Roosevelt had some concerns about financing the campaign. When the director of the U.S. Steel Company and another wealthy man decided to solve this problem, Roosevelt decided to run, and he immediately informed the convention that he would establish a new party, which he called the Bull Mouse Party. Accordingly, his delegates rejected voting for a nominee within the Republican Party.

As far as their platform is concerned, the Bull Mouse Party was similar to its predecessor Greenback and Populist in terms of their demands:

Its platform echoed earlier Greenback and Populist pledges, calling for the direct election of U.S senators, direct primaries, women's suffrage, publication of campaign expendi-

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tures, regulations of interstate industry, a minimum wage, unemployment insurance, and old age pensions (Rosenstone et al. 85).

So far, the only difficulty that Roosevelt found was a disagreement over an anti-trust plank that the financer of the party rejected, while it received tremendous support from the progressives in the party. Even though he made many supporters angry, Roosevelt eventually decided to abandon the plank. Choosing Woodrow Wilson in the Democratic camp had a divisive impact on the Roosevelt camp; ostensibly, because Democrats attempted to appease progressives. The truth was that not all Roosevelt supporters agreed to pursue the road of a third party, and accordingly, they were willing to support Wilson instead.

In the election of 1912, the real competition occurred only between Roosevelt and Wilson; Taft stood a little chance, especially by the end of the election. Based on the Progressive demands of the people in this election, Wilson appeared as the favorite candidate Green best summed up his campaign as he commented:

Wilson's campaign style combined the dual personas of the articulate but distant professor and the high moral tone of a devout Presbyterian. It was all dignified and intellectual. His theme of New Freedom, to counter TR's New Nationalism, emphasized ending monopoly, free competition, and the right of collective bargaining. Wilson opposed a paternalistic society while pointing out that Roosevelt's radical proposals were ''well intentioned but unrealistic (Green 49).

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Eventually, Roosevelt gained 27.4 percent of the popular vote and secured 88 votes in the Electoral College. This was the best result achieved by any other third party throughout American history. Considering that Roosevelt ran only to defeat Taft, who had gained 23.2 of the popular vote, this result marked a victory for Roosevelt. Generally, Roosevelt's support originated from urban cities. The once stronghold of third parties did little to support Roosevelt because they believed that his overwhelming agenda did not address the needs of farmers.

The election of 1912 demonstrated that the strength of the progressive party was bound to its presidential candidate, and there had been no well-established ideology that guided the party and guaranteed constant support to its cause. Therefore, the progressive revealed "No committed ideological bloc whose political course was directed by what was necessary to advance program":

> They merely followed their leader where he led. Roosevelt's Progressive party remained in being, but when, in the 1914 midterm election, the Wilson administration showed a loss of support, it was the Republicans rather than the Progressives who benefited. It was evident that the public support given the Progressive party in 1912 had been Roosevelt's personal following, which did not attach automatically to other candidates running as Progressives (Sundquist 164; qtd. in Rosenstone et al. 87)

The 1912 election brought some other changes to the major parties. For the Republican Party, failure signaled the demise of the Republican political machine, which could not survive the loss that the party confronted locally. Failure to gain local seats in the context of political

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machines meant that bosses had little to provide to voters and, therefore, the inability to sustain voters' support. Additionally, the party lost the financial support of the other contributor, Frank Munsey leaving George Perkins as the only financial source of the party. Since Perkins was responsible for the withdrawal of the anti-trust plank, many saw him as a leading cause of that failure. Roosevelt rejected the strong demands of other leaders to expel Perkins from the party and saw that as an "advanced radical element" as unnecessary. Moreover, he threatened to leave the party if they attempted to oust Perkins from the party.

Roosevelt, however, had a positive impact on the progressive cause allowing them to gain several seats in congress. For instance, a single progressive seat was maintained in the 1916 election compared to 14 seats that were garnered following the 1912 election. However, his tendency to be involved in European war went against the progressive demands and agenda. This led him to an alliance with those who felt that the age of isolationism in America was over. In this way, Roosevelt seemed to contradict the progressive agenda.

Envisioning the 1916 election, Roosevelt knew that defeating the Democrats required the whole Republican Party behind him. For that reason, he strived to gain the nomination of the party. Perhaps, he was willing to reconcile with conservative Republicans, hoping to gain some concessions in exchange for his return to the party. In other words, he attempted to maintain his support from both the Republican and the progressive camps.

From the standpoint of progressive leaders, the nomination of Roosevelt was not suitable for the party. Indeed, they felt the need to get the progressive vote, and they attempted to do so

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but through other candidates like Charles Evans Hughes. When the delegation attempted to design a compromise, progressives were unwilling to accept Hughes as their nominee, and they agreed to put T.R. on separate tickets. Watching this scenario, Roosevelt concluded that he would not win within those circumstances, and he was unwilling to receive a second defeat; therefore, he declined running on a separate ticket, and consequently, the progressive party disbanded. Despite his withdrawal, the legacy of the progressive party and Roosevelt's candidacy as an opposition to the two parties remained:

> The 1912 election was the first and only time in American political history when a third party outran one of the two major parties in a presidential election. It was also the first of many elections in the 20th century when the candidate was the party, compared with the 19th century when ideas and the party came first for third parties. The election of 1912 was testament to Roosevelt's personal popularity, his prestige as a former president, his ability to win financial backing, and his success in luring local Republican organizations to the Bull Moose cause (Green 50)

Perhaps, the election also signified that the Progressive party had been a faction but not a real party that could challenge the duopoly as maintained by one of Roosevelt's advisors:

> For all its legal status, the Progressive party cannot really be said to have been a political party at all. Rather, it was a faction, a split-off fragment of its mother star, the Republican Party, which, like a meteor, flamed momentarily across the sky, only to fall and cool on the earth of solid fact. . . . The lesson taught by the Progressive incident seems to be the familiar one: that a party cannot be founded without a definite cause, or solely upon the

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personality of an individual. To survive the hardships of the initial years, a new party must be a party of ideas, not of men. If the Progressive party had framed an issue that was at the same time clear and of large actual consequence, it would not have died upon the defection of its leader.. . . The answer of the Progressives was, "Make Roosevelt president." And when it became clear that they could not do that, the Progressives disbanded and the country knew them no more(Pinchot 172, 226-27 qtd. In Rosenstone et al. 88).

### 1.2.2.  The Socialist Party:

The origins of the Socialist Party in the United States go back to the year 1878 when the Socialist Labor Party was established. However, the socialist movement began earlier, and some historians associated it with the 1853 Workingmen alliance [19]. In 1892, the socialist party appointed its presidential candidate only to capture a few American votes. The feeble results persisted throughout the end of the nineteenth century to reach its zenith with their candidate Joseph Maloney who attracted 3 percent of the popular vote in the 1900 election. Actually, the party shares the legacy with the Prohibition party as the second third party as far as its longevity is concerned. Its longevity, however, does not reflect its results in the polls which did not exceed 1 percent since the 1924 election.

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[19] The Workingmen Alliance was established by Joseph Weydmeyer , who was a close friend of CarlMarx in New York City. The basis of such alliance was the idea of class struggle. The alliance advocated the necessity of trade unionism and political action.

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The socialist party witnessed division and had run under four labels, including Socialist Labor, Socialist, Socialist Workers, and Communist. The extension of its ideology reflected the strength of the ideas it advocated and, therefore, the ability of the party to endure, unlike several other third parties. Actually, many scholars wondered how socialism as a movement endured in a hostile environment such as that of the United States. However, the data gathered suggest that the socialist members persisted because they pursued the road of education, which was not present in the other cases of third parties.

The socialist party was similar to the Green and Populist parties in the sense that they were all products of the economic conditions lived by American society, and they reflected a segment of Americans who believed that their demands were not addressed. The sole difference that separated them was that "the Greenbackers and Populists advocated an increased role for government, socialists saw collective ownership of the means of production and distribution as the solution". The Socialist Party came into existence as a reaction to the Socialist Labor Party's "doctrinal rigidity." In this context, the Socialist Party was " a moderate faction" that collaborated with Eugene Debs, a former American Railway Union President, to found the party. Historians maintained that The socialist Party was " to be the most successful and the most ideologically flexible of the American socialist parties" (Rosenstone et al. 89).

As president of the railway Union, Debs was a prominent leader in 1894, which led to his arrest by the government that supported management over workers. Debs's sentence in prison was fruitful as he read the major works of Karl Marx and eventually endorsed socialism as an

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ideology. Debs decided to run in 1904 and 1908, winning less than 3 percent of the popular votes. But his superior result came in 1912 when he attracted 6 percent of the popular votes, which was about 901.873 votes. For Debs, winning the presidency was never an intentional goal; instead, he wanted only to "educate workers about the evils of capitalism" (Green 148).

When analyzed, the good result reflected in this election came due to two main factors. First, it was the first time that the party could successfully create a broad coalition, and second, this time the socialist party included several groups:

> A coalition of regional groups that had different, even conflicting points of view. In this diversity lay the party's strength. By the mid-twentieth century standards of leftwing organization, such a conglomerate aggregation as this would have been impossible, but the prewar Socialists enjoyed relative success precisely because they were so catholic in their organization (Shannon 6-7 qtd. In Rosenstone et al. 90)

The second reason explaining the popularity of the Socialist Party was its base of European immigrants that supported its cause. The data gathered suggested that almost two million European immigrants arrived in America between the beginning of the Twentieth century and the beginning of World War One. One might wonder about what motivated these immigrants to endorse the Socialist cause. Actually, some of these immigrants came to America withholding such ideology. This is not to say that immigrants were an overall advantage to the Socialist Party; for instance, these immigrants turned into a divisive force after European ethnicities formed a foreign language federation associated with the socialist party. This was a disadvantage

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to unions who wanted to achieve gains for their workers and confronted cheap labor force competition.

The Socialist Party platform in 1912 launched a severe attack on the two major political parties: the Democrats and the Republicans, who were seen as " the faithful servants of the oppressors." Green maintained that the whole system was described as "corrupt and a source of unspeakable misery and suffering of the whole working class." The platform called upon workers to consider controlling the current government and industry and turning them into bodies reflecting "the political expression of the economic interests of the workers. Along with that, the Socialist party had certain goals that reflected their unsatisfaction with the current system, including " reorganizing the government by abolishing the senate, ending the presidential veto, downgrading the role of the Supreme Court (i.e., elimination of judicial review), and the curbing of a court's power to issue injunctions." Additionally, they demanded "collective ownership of the transportation and communication networks and the banking and currency systems, a shortened workday, elimination of child labor, minimum wage scales, unemployment insurance, workman's compensation, a graduated income tax, and an inheritance tax"(Green 148).

After the election of 1916, the party deteriorated, and Debs decided to support the candidacy of Allan Benson, who has been described as "a lackluster candidate." But Benson was not the sole cause of this decline. A more reliable explanation may suggest that the Socialists' refusal to endorse American intervention in World War One allowed the party to be liable to

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criticism and resentment from other politicians as well as the media, so by the end of the war, a third of local chapters disappeared (148). Additionally, in 1917, the government issued the Espionage Act, which had given the power to the Post Office to halt any socialist publications from being distributed through email. This law was also used as a pretext to arrest, interrogate, indict, and even jail the leaders of the Socialist movement.

From his cell in prison, Debs made one final attempt in the election of 1920 since it was the first time women had to go to the polls, and he was able to garn 900000 votes and almost 3.4 percent of the popular vote. Those who left the party decided to endorse the Progressive Party of La Follette, especially in 1924, while others joined the communist camp. It was remarkable that the faction that joined La Follette had some disagreement with labor unions over strategies, and following the failure of electing La Follette, socialists resented that unionists decided to go back to the major party base of support. Later on, this faction of Socialist changed tremendously:

> The Socialist Party that emerged from the LaFollette venture was markedly different from its earlier incarnation. Its new leader and six-time standard bearer Norman Thomas, a college-educated refugee from the ministry, reflected this change. Intellectuals replaced unionists, farmers, and immigrants; New York, where Socialists had enjoyed little support in the past, became the new base of power. Party backers were generally middle class and well educated rather than working class (Rosenstone et al. 91).

The Great Depression might have helped the Socialist Party gain 2.2 percent in 1932, but the New Deal as a rescue program of President Roosevelt had caught the attention of those

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dissatisfied. The 1936 election was shocking in when the party attracted the least number of voters ever since its establishment; it appeared clearly that the socialist base fell in the Democratic camp. The fact that socialists had endorsed the Democratic Party even though the Democratic Party reflected in Roosevelt's New Deal program did not address the socialist concerns seems not logical. One explanation for this controversy emphasized that the New Deal was" economically conservative, yet its rhetoric was much more radical and anti business", and as Schlesinger put it, " in part, this radicalism sprang from disenchantment with the experience of collaboration with business." "In part too," he added, "no doubt, it was an opportunistic improvisation designed to neutralize the clamor on the left (Schlesinger 392 qtd. In Rosenstone et al. 92). The last attempt of socialists to run a presidential candidate was in 1956.

The Communist party was another faction that split from the socialist party following its poor results. It was founded in 1921 during the years of the Soviet Union's rise. However, this party served as a representative of the Soviet Union in all aspects. It had also run several national candidates in the period from 1924 to 1940 and persisted until 1968. Its support reached its zenith in the year 1932 as it attracted 3 percent of the presidential votes. The party witnessed a division of its faction to appear under the label the Socialist Workers Party in 1938. The latter had been consistent in running its presidential candidate starting from 1948 but failed to garn over 1 percent of the popular vote.

Among the four parties that came to represent the Socialist ideology in the United States, only the Socialist Party successfully generated national support over a number of elections.

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Actually, little impact had been generated by the socialist parties on major parties, election results, or even American public policy. Their legacy could be summed up merely on their longevity as a party. The only cases where they scored good results in the polls were in 1912 and in 1924 when they endorsed a foreigner to their ideology.

### 1.2.3. The Progressive Party: Robert La Follette 1924

Before the Progressive Movement of 1924, several attempts were made to design an alliance between farmers and Laborers, but all attempts failed because party leaders had always sided with one side over the other. The Progressive Party in 1924 seemed to defy this reality, and it had been one of the successful movements that coherently addressed both parties' concerns.

Roosevelt and La Follette appeared largely similar in terms of the progressive movement they represented. For instance, both candidates strived to secure rights from big businesses on behalf of the average American citizen. Additionally, they had all sought the extension of the electoral process, and they built a party centralized on their personality so that it was impossible to consider the movement's achievements without its central candidate. However, still, considering the circumstances and challenges they confronted, they had undoubtedly been living different and unique experiences. For instance, the Progressive Party in 1912 came at a time when farmers enjoyed reasonable prices for their products, while in 1924, the post-war depression was marked by relatively severe economic conditions. It was a time when the Republicans dominated the government having a pro-business ideology, and they had given little attention to the poor laborers and farmers.

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Farmers of the twentieth century came to live the same experience as those in the 19th century. High prices led farmers to acquire machinery and build infrastructure, but when these prices declined due to a lack of demand, slow population growth, and the availability of production, prices plummeted. For instance, in 1921, prices decreased by 44 percent. The economy had revived by 1924, but farmers' concerns were not addressed. Some resorted to the Non-Partisan League, which was independent of major parties. The league's strategy was to back favorable candidates in both parties' primaries, and through this strategy, its members hoped to realize particular social demands

In 1912, many Americans were angry at Taft's government; Roosevelt was the clear example, but other politicians objected to his presidency as well, including Bob la Follette, a Wisconsin lawyer. Among the crisis that he saw worth healing within the government of Taft was the manipulation of laws by wealthy businessmen to avoid paying taxes. Meanwhile, the poor and the middle class confronted an increasing augmentation in the tax burden. Along with that, la Follette was especially concerned with the injustices that circled the workers while business owners gave nothing in compensation or did not fulfill their obligation towards their own workers and the large community.

La Follette tried to gain the Republican primaries. Previously as a governor of his state, he attempted to enact laws permitting citizens of the state to elect the candidates of their state directly

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Bob was successfully elected as a senator, and he fought against corporations, industrial capitalists, and other influential political party bosses. This had attracted the conservative republicans who began to realize the misconduct of Taft's government, and accordingly, they managed to fight Bob la Follette as a way to gain their cause. When the Great War started in 1914, Bob strongly objected the American participation in the war. When it ended in 1917, La Follette was elected as a senator, and he rallied against monopolies striving to improve the life of the average citizen, especially in the sectors of agriculture and labor

In 1922, several groups met to establish the conference for Progressive Political Action, which successfully elected several representatives to Congress in the same year. These groups included " the railroad brothermen, the Non-partisan league, the Socialist Party, and the Committee of Forty-Eight" (a group of progressives left hanging by Teddy Roosevelt's decision not to run in 1916) (Rosenstone et al. 94). These results motivated sympathizers to consider running a third party in the 1924 election. Eventually, the railroad brotherhood felt that leaving the major party fold was unnecessary, so farmers decided the direct primary, and accordingly, the plan failed.

However, what led progressives to reconsider the idea was the success made by labor parties outside America, especially in Britain and Canada. So as soon as the major parties decided not to run a progressive that year, the CPPA decided to run on a third-party ticket. In fact, the progressives may have anticipated a progressive candidate only from the Democratic Party, who expressed concerns from progressive support, and eventually, their choices headed

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towards John W. Davis. Meanwhile, the progressives backed the candidacy of Robert La Follette in this presidential election.

La Follette became famous during his term as governor of Wisconsin (1901-1905) through the "Wisconsin Idea," which preached the use of "direct primaries, equalized corporate taxation, and railroad regulation". Indeed, Bob was remarkably a progressive icon as he strived to attain progressive reforms. He had even attempted to win the Republican nomination in 1912, and only the sudden return of Roosevelt weakened his position. In the last election, Bob's final decision was to leave the Republican Party and support the Democratic candidate Woodrow Wilson.

La Follette's original attempt was to get into the race as independent, simply to protect those progressives serving in congress and those who attained their positions through the major parties, and who are likely to go on a progressive candidate in case the question of the presidency went to the House of Representatives. Therefore, his nomination was not out of the delegates' selection but rather a CPPA national committee's decision. The socialists also decided to throw their support to him.

The platform of the Progressive Party in 1924 could be labeled a "monopoly" as delegates demanded public ownership of water power and railroads, protection of collective bargaining, direct primaries and elections, the approval of wars by referendum, and an end to the use of injunctions to resolve labor disputes. The platform gave special attention to the farmer's plight as well (Rosenstone et al. 96).

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When the national race for the presidency came in 1924, they nominated Robert La Follette as their candidate. Choosing bob for the nomination was backed up by organizations such as the American Federation of Labor which was the first time in the nation's history that a labor organization supported a presidential candidate. However, that support would decline soon as the organization learned that their candidate had few chances of winning. These organizations as "lethargic compatriots" who " had to stay on good terms with the major parties, which most certainly would remain in power."(Rosenstone et al. 96)

Some of the demands that La Follette rallied for were a source of severe criticism. Major parties seized the opportunity to show the potential danger presented by La Follette's candidacy. For instance, attempts to give Congress the power to overrule decisions made in the Supreme Court portrayed La Follette as an extremist attempting to destroy the American political system. Additionally, his campaign confronted several challenges. For instance, accessing the ballot, financial support, and organization were all lacking during his campaign. This situation, in turn, compelled him to enter the election using four different political parties. On the local base, the no progressive Party candidates for that year hindered La Follette in the sense that the cause was not publicized enough among the ordinary people, and politicians who promoted the idea were few. Therefore, it became clear that an independent candidate shackled with all these challenges would not prevail in the national election.

The decision not to run in the form of political parties caused serious problems to the campaign as well. On one side, the socialists were upset since their movement was never bound

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with winning elections but rather preaching and educating socialist principles to the people. Labor that wanted to achieve immediate gains opposed this ideology, and accordingly, conflicts of interest became a crucial feature in the party. On the other side, it was apparent that supporters of the Progressive cause outnumbered those of La Follette's candidacy.

Since the labor organization was not alone in its alliance with the progressive, the socialists had also joined and backed the candidacy of Bob. The only difference that the socialists had with the labor union was that the latter had no ambition to form a political party, whereas the former considered the campaign critical, essential, and vital to their future which was establishing their own party.

Despite his personality and the groups that supported his candidacy, Robert la Follette's campaign was remarkably "lonely and underfinanced " and to a large extent "hopeless" against his opponent, the popular Coolidge. Actually, much of what had been promised to be paid by labor organizations as finance was not given.

Despite his failure to win the presidency, Bob took five million votes, which equaled 16.6 percent. Most of his votes were located in the west, and he won his state Wisconsin easily. Statistics showed that farmers constituted half of his supporters, while each of the socialists and the labor union contributed with a fifth of the overall number of voters. Despite their ideology, the Socialists' role was unique, especially in the regions where they have been organized, and perhaps this might lead to the conclusion that not running for a political party that year was a major mistake.

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The legacy of La Follette remained prominent, especially during his service as a Governor of Wisconsin:

LA Follette revamped his state 's GOP into the progressive agency it was to be over the ensuing third of a century. From the state university in Madison, La Follette gathered a core of natural and social scientists into what today we would call a think tank the professors did research and wrote treatises on progressive reforms and their likely results. La Follette thus brought the technique of science to his program for change. Wisconsin under La Follette 's influence pioneered in the use of primaries, initiative and referendum as well as in advanced measures for conservation (Gillespie 83–84).

The Socialist's contribution to the progressive party was enormous in this election. Progressives appeared victorious where socialists had strong organization:

The Socialists had the local organizations which could provide the framework for the construction of the new party, and unlike many promoters of a progressive party, whose enthusiasm exceeded their experience, they had a rich knowledge of how to conduct campaigns in meeting the tactics of the old parties, in exchanging blow for blow in practical politics. The socialists had their name on the ballot in almost all the states_ a priceless heritage for the progressives (Mackay 55 qtd. in Rosenstone et al. 97).

For that reason, forming a political party became a necessity, especially for those dedicated progressives. Nevertheless, when they met to consider the party's structure, it was apparent that these efforts were leading nowhere. Unionists hesitated and later on became

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convinced that a third party was not beneficial to their cause. Similarly, farmers were reluctant and expressed their concerns about the rising prices of commodities. Without the support of these prominent forces, designing a powerful progressive party was no longer a possibility. Despite this fact, the Socialists and a segment of farmers attempted to revive the discussion, but they were unable to reach a compromise that would integrate their demands and eventually caused the group to disband permanently

After La Follette's presidential running in 1924, the man emerged exhausted and tired out of the burden of the campaign, and he would not remain long enough to finish the first term had he been successfully elected to office. Robert la Follette died in June 1925.

### 1.3. The Great Depression and its Impacts:

The Great Depression was one of the most devastating economic crises that the world has witnessed during the twentieth century. It occurred following World War One when the three sectors of the economy had overwhelmingly collapsed. The black Wednesday that marked the collapse of the stock market on October 1929 was considered the beginning of this crisis in the United States. The depression had occurred first in Europe and then spread to the United States, and before Black Wednesday, everybody claimed that the system of capitalism would fix itself, and the United States was immune to its impacts.

Four elements account for this crisis, and it began with the overproduction that resulted from improvements in machines related to agriculture and industry. More production led to the decline of prices and the inability of farmers to pay their loans, and therefore banks foreclosure.

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The second cause lies in the Laissez-Faire policy that prevented government intervention from regulating the economy. Thirdly, there was an over-speculation on prices related to the stock market, which was not reflected in the actual price of those shares, which led many Americans to lose the money that they had borrowed from banks. Fourth, overproduction coincided with the decline of foreign and international trade as the United States endorsed the policy of isolationism toward Europe and internally due to the laissez-faire capitalism economy that crashed the American middle class. All the previously mentioned reasons collaborated to result in the sharp decline of the three sectors of the economy: agriculture, industry, and trade.

These conditions resulted in severe outcomes for the American people. Unemployment and poverty became the apparent feature of the nation that had enjoyed a luxurious life following the Great War of 1917. The Republican government headed by Herbert Hoover was unable to act because their ideology stressed pure capitalism that believed in the ability of the system to heal itself, which led to the election of Frederick Delano Roosevelt from the Democratic Party. Roosevelt attempted to end the depression through a program known as the New Deal, which envisioned a way out of the depression:

> Roosevelt's advisors followed Keynesian economic doctrine and advocated policies that emphasized government intervention in the economy and deficit spending to stimulate economic growth— a New Deal for America. The government became the employer of last resort, the provider for those who were without the necessities of life, the benevolent force in the lives of those in need (Maisel 37)

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Theories of how America healed from the depression that persisted over ten years vary. Some may stress the role of the president; others may discuss the role played by the economic refresh that followed World War II. However, Roosevelt's presidency had a tremendous effect on the public perception of parties and electoral politics for decades.

The image that portrayed Roosevelt as the economic expert who rescued America from the Great Depression and the military leader who wisely guided the nation through World War II led to the dominance of the Democratic party over the White House for decades. Roosevelt was the only president who violated the George Washington recommendation to limit the president's tenure to only two terms. He was able to get a third term in 1940 and another fourth term in 1944 before he died in office in 1945 [20]. During his presidency, the Democratic Party had a coalition of several groups. Southerners' vote had been mostly democratic from the era of the Civil War, but the Roosevelt program attracted others, including members of labor unions, small farmers, minorities, ethnic Americans, the poor, and civil rights activists. On the other hand, Republicans became the party that supported big businesses. The latter party had also sought redemption through gaining the sympathy of those who had been traditionally democrat, and this resulted in Southerners' support of Lincoln's party [21].

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[20] As a response to Roosevelt four terms an Amendment was added to the constitution that made it illegal for presidential candidates to go beyond two terms in office.

[21] These efforts were done especially during 1960s especially under the candidacy of Richard Nixon.

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The presidency of Roosevelt was significant in another way. Because the depression represented one of the salient issues in elections, it marked the beginning of a new party system where voters and political parties changed their positions. Opposition to the New Deal and Roosevelt policies had generated a third party such as the Union Party in 1936. Nevertheless, Roosevelt remained in power until his death, and the Democratic Party continued to rule the White House until 1960 when issues had changed.

### 1.3.1. Union Party 1936 William Lemke:

The Union party was established by the left political spectrum, including North Dakota congressional representative William Lemke who ran as a presidential candidate in 1936. Lemke was a nominal Republican who sought office that year on the platform that was a large "amalgam of left and right values with the balance titled to the right". Gillespie insisted that for many outsiders, the party was seen as a "gobbledygook" (91). For example, people who supported him referred to him as the liberty Bill while those who opposed him used the term "the liberty bill has cracked," and despite his unattractive face and ugliness, he managed to take 1.96 percent of the nation's vote. Additionally, he was able to get on the ballot in thirty-five states from the whole number of forty-eight states nationwide (Gillespie 90).

Among the prominent founders of the Union party was Charles E. Coughlin, a catholic priest who came to prominence during the depression through a famous radio program that could reach over 40 million Americans. The priest had also reached the public through his magazine

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social justice. His announcement of the birth of the Union Party through radio had a great impact on directing public attention toward the party. Coughlin had differing views. For instance, he was anti-communist, giving his listeners a choice between God and communism. Suddenly, the priest attacked capitalism believing it to be the enemy of civilization. He had also been a supporter of Roosevelt to the point that he might have enjoyed dinner with the president at the White House. The main factor leading to his endorsement of the Union party, however, would be his opposing views of Roosevelt's policies.

Coughlin opposed the New Deal and Roosevelt's presidency and veered to the far right to the extent that in 1936, the union year, he was claiming to endorse "the road of fascism," which would be seen as "virulent and vulgar." Meanwhile, His anti-Semitism was generating enthusiasm, especially from pro-Nazi allies in the late thirties [22]. Yet his influence declined soon after the 1936 election. Eventually, factors such as the church, public demand, and wartime led to his decline (Gillespie 91)

Coughlin had a major role in publicizing the union party and generating support, but the leader of the party and the presidential candidate that ran against Roosevelt was William Lemke, a Republican candidate from North Dakota who was dedicated to the cause of farmers. Because he was raised as a farmer, Lemke rallied for their rights, believing that the Great Depression as a crisis began in agriculture and influenced other sectors of the economy. His state stood as an

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[22] Anti- semitism is a concept that signify hatred or violence towards the jewish community.

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example in which half of the population was living on governmental aid. To pursue his aim and solve the problem of the Depression, Lemke arranged two proposals. The first plan attempted to fight bankruptcy, and the other was intended to resolve the issue of debt. When he contacted Hoover's administration, they refused to endorse his plan. This rejection pushed Lemke to arrange a meeting with Roosevelt, and the reply of the Democrats was thought to be an endorsement of his plans. For that reason, Lemke supported the candidacy of Roosevelt believing that he would attain a prominent position in his administration, especially in terms of Farmers' concerns. However, these ambitions dropped as Roosevelt appointed a group of economists and advisors who controlled his influence over decisions.

Because the administration farm bill did not satisfy Lemke, he proposed his own plan, the Fraizer-Lemke Bankruptcy Act, which would decrease the farmer's debt to a level of his property. The plan suggested that any debt that is beyond the ability of farmers ought to be canceled. But Lemke failed to push this plan, and as a reaction, he attempted to collect the 145 congressional signatures that would permit him to discharge the plan from the committee that kept delaying the plan. The attacks he received from Roosevelt only increased his hatred and anger. When Lemke successfully released the plan from the committee and allowed the house to consider it, President signed the plan in fear of losing the farmers' support. Therefore, what came out of this plan debate was the emergence of William Lemke as a prominent leader for farmers' rights.

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Having his first proposal passed, Lemke considered his second plan to assist farmers in their mortgage finance with low rates. President Roosevelt doubled his efforts to prevent this plan, especially after Lemke collected the congressional signatures needed. Eventually, the plan did not pass, thanks to the president's effort, but following this incident, Lemke became convinced that the major factor preventing his plans' success came from the man he supported and set in the White House. Therefore, when William Lemke considered running as a third-party candidate, he had two goals. One was to defeat his opponent, and the other was to forge an alliance between the farmers and labor that would control the house in 1940 and serve their collective needs. The movement that coincided with his goals was that of priest Coughlin, who opposed Roosevelt as well.

Eventually, An alliance of three main forces agreed on a presidential run with Lemke as its leader. These three forces included William Lemke, Coughlin, and the alliance of Smith. The declaration of the Union Party candidacy came in July 1936, with a little media attention covering the story.

The Union Party's platform strongly supported William Lemke's proposals regarding farmers but ignored some of the prominent ideas of the Townshend Plan and Share Our Wealth movement, who were allied to Lemke. Consequently, both movements campaigned poorly for the Union Party due to their suspicion of the other two leaders. Clearly, the explanations provided by Coughlin and Lemke failed to convince them otherwise.

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At the end of the race, it was clear that the three leaders could generate little support for Lemke as he had been unsuccessful in attracting the support of farmer labor alliances in the Midwest. Additionally, few national leaders endorsed his cause. It was clear that the legacy of the Union Party lay in its ability to threaten the Democrats reflected in the person of Roosevelt. Democrat had expressed some concerns of potential union supporters, especially in the Northern plain states. To weaken the intensity of that support, Roosevelt advocated planks addressing the concerns of the farmer, and he directed his speeches to them not to vote for the Union Party that year.

By the end of the election, less than 2 percent of voters supported Lemke. This poor showing led to the decline of the party. Coughlin's movement declined as he dissolved his organization, believing that his followers were not faithful to him. Even Lemke, who previously attempted to sustain the party for the next coming elections, had eventually abandoned it. Therefore, the party collapsed soon after.

### 1.3.2. States Rights' Democrats (Dixiecrats) 1948

In 1948, the south was outraged by the plans put forward by Truman regarding the civil rights issue. In the Democratic convention, the Mississippi Democratic executive committee threatened that they would leave the convention had the Democratic Party endorsed Truman's civil rights proposal. Additionally, they agreed that Truman should not receive the nomination of the Democratic Party. On the ground, several gatherings of people backed up these decisions.

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The same intense rhetoric appeared when they met in Jackson, Mississippi, emphasizing that they will never support a candidate backing the civil rights cause.

As Truman realized the potential damage that might result from his civil rights proposals, he attempted to withhold the formal introduction of the legislation and slow his move regarding ending discrimination in federal employment and integration within the military. President Truman intended through this strategy to keep both the Northern liberals and the southerners as loyal constituents of the Democratic Party.

In the Democratic national convention, compromise seemed to be unreachable. While southerners' attempt to expel the civil rights issue failed, Midwest delegates successfully persuaded the convention to adopt an even liberal plank compared to Truman's. Consequently, delegates decided to leave the convention, and despite that, Truman acquired the Democratic nomination (Rosenstone et al. 109).

Those who opposed Truman's candidacy met to design their campaign and establish a third political party. The party that came out of this meeting was named the Dixiecrat. Therefore, the Dixiecrat party was a transient segregationist party that was established due to opposition to President Truman, a Democrat who attempted to impose integration in the military and provide rights to the African American community. The main goal of the party was to maintain racial segregation by advocating state rights. The party had been active mainly in the south. Unlike the Progressive Party, the Dixiecrats came primarily from one major party, and precisely they had been part of the Democratic Party. Their experience appeared similar to Roosevelt's Bull Mouse

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party in 1912 when he ran against the Republican candidate Taft and the case of Southern Democrats in the election that marked the victory of Abraham Lincoln.

The Dixiecrats' nominee for the election of 1948 was Strom Thurmond. The latter was born as a southern democrat, then led the third party, and eventually became a member of the Republican Party. In the speech where he accepted the nomination, Thurmond attacked the civil rights program and expressed his concerns over the declining power of the south and the southern vote.

A deep analysis of the Dixicrats as a third political party suggests that there had been other issues responsible for its rise regardless of the civil rights issue. The Dixiecrats had other economic and political concerns as well, and among these concerns was the fact that southerners had long resented some of the policies of the New Deal that targeted unions, cities, and progressives. Those issues were very prominent in states like Alabama. It should also be noted that whatever characterized the Dixiecrats as a party, its leaders alienated themselves from national and state politics in a manner similar to that of Roosevelt's movement within the Democratic Party. Therefore, the movement symbolized that the aim was not just to take out the civil rights program but also to restore their party.

By the end of the election, Thurmond gained 2.4 percent of the popular vote. In the south, the Dixiecrats collected 22.6 percent of the vote, and they were able to take 38 electoral votes from states where they run as Democrats. Their voting rates increased, especially within the areas with a large number of Whites surrounded by a black community (Rosenstone 109).

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Historians marked Thurmond's nomination in 1948 as the beginning of the shift of the American south from the hands of the Democrats to the Republicans. His successful campaign in 1948 gained thirty-nine electoral votes, which might render the power that a third party could gain in elections. Later on, Thurmond changed his stand on the African American cause and encouraged many to act similarly. Gillespie believed that " some of Thurmond's senate votes on civil rights measures in the eighties showed fundamental change in position on the rights of black Africans" (99).

The Dixiecrats were successful as far as their demands were concerned. For instance, its results compelled party leaders to approach the issue of civil rights at a slow pace. None of Truman's civil rights proposals were successfully passed during his second term. The year 1952 witnessed the fall of the Democratic Party into the hands of racial moderates who still represented the views of southerners. The latter base was successful in nominating Adlai Stevenson, who had chosen Alabama Senator John J. Sparkman as his running mate. Although they did not implement a racial tone in their campaign, they were still considered a good choice for the South.

The cession of the Dixiecrats had also been interpreted differently. Some historians believed that the party might not have split if no progressive party had run that year. Thus, the progressive party played a significant role in dividing the Democrats in this election.

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### 1.3.3. The Progressive Party 1948:

The Progressive Party of 1948 still attracts the attention of various scholars who attempted to uncover its significance and truth. In July 1948, the party began to function in Philadelphia. Their candidate had been Henry Wallace, along with Senator Glen Taylor deemed as vice president. Indeed that election was prominent within the Democratic party (Gillespie 95). Henry Wallace was an ex-government official who served in the Roosevelt cabinet as Secretary of Commerce and Agriculture. In this election, Wallace attracted 2.4 of the vote. Unlike some third parties, the party was not the result of a secessionist movement from within the major parties except for the fact that its nominee had been a Democrat for a while.

Ever since its establishment, the party had another legacy that was rendered on the fact that it was the last chance for international Communist strategy called the Comintern. The latter was a communist organization established in 1935 by Moscow, and it included several third parties. These parties were directed by this body. In America, the Communist party served and represented this agenda; and it represented a constituent in the Comintern until World War II when Stalin abandoned it.

Before it declined, the Comintern had resorted to various strategies. For example, the atrocities committed against German Communists veered the party from inspiring mass revolutions to gaining the sympathy and even the alliance of other organizations with a contagious agenda, including progressive forces. That strategy was labeled 'United Front" and several European countries along with China initiated a tremendous fight against Axis power

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such as Nazim and Fashism. American Communists had also strived against fascism, although they had been usually unsuccessful.

In 1948, the Communist Party had no candidate for the presidency, which would soon drive its base towards the progressives and Wallace Campaign. The extent of influence that the Communist base exerted on the campaign is debatable:

> Although it certainly was to become so later on, it seems an overstatement to say that in 1948 the Progressive party was a communist front organization. Wallace himself expressed resentment at the more heavy-handed attempts of the Stalinists to dominate the Progressive party affairs. In his acceptance speech at the national convention, he spoke of his vision of "progressive capitalism." It is, however, not too much to say that throughout 1948 the Progressive party was a fellow traveler of world Communism (Gillespie 97).

Unfortunately, what came in the form of denouncement of foreign intervention was soon to be interpreted by many as a reflection of Stalin's dishonest policies that contradicted his innocent statement, especially in Eastern Europe.

Apparently, communists were decisive and dominant in influencing the Progressive Party, and the platform they made was highly Communist. For instance, they condemned " big business control of our economy and government." They have also seen the two parties as single agenda that call for a program of "monopoly profits through war preparation, lower living standards, and suppression of dissent." They had also criticized attempts to denounce the legitimacy of the Communist Party in America and the activities made by the House Committee

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of Unamerican Activities. In addition, the platform spoke against efforts of abusing the rights gained by labor. Furthermore, the party welcomed a friendly relationship with Russia and insisted on the necessity of nationalizing basic industries and establishing "a true American Commonwealth" ( Gillespie 97).

One fundamental barrier that stood against the progressive party was their dramatic failure to unify the left. Citizens who had left views had either been incapable of building a basic ground or came to have suspicious views regarding their ties with foreign foes, especially Russia. To make things worse, the Socialist Workers Party had its nominee that year, and African Americans had hardly accepted the progressive party's agenda and pursued their ways in support of Truman. Anti-communism grew steadily among union leaders, and many decided to withdraw as soon as they realized the candidacy of Henry Wallace. Moreover, other leftists sided with Truman as they came to know the extent to which communists dominated the party. All these factors undermined the party in the elections.

As many historical supporters abandoned the party, communists had been attracted to it, but eventually, the progressives dreamed of scoring good results in elections. The Democratic party as a major party usually did include some of these ideas within its platform. Gillespie insisted that the " democratic platform bore a forthright plank for civil rights, and Truman used some surprisingly leftist-sounding "give 'em hell" populist rhetoric early in his campaign. Closer to the era of McCarthyism, the communist confronted strong pressure from the government, and they were repeatedly interrogated concerning Wallace's campaign through the famous question"

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were you for Truman or for Wallace?" (Gillespie 98). In that era, answering that question was enough to determine a fellow citizen or a potential disloyal Russian spy.

The last hurrah for the Progressive Party marked its decline, especially after sympathizing with Russia in its war against Korea; this inspired the remaining left to veer off the party. Accordingly, their nominee in the 1952 election gained a mere 140.416 votes.

1.4.**Conclusion:**

This chapter reviewed the main third parties that attempted to respond to the changes occurring in the United States over one century since the 1860 election. The nineteenth-century farmers initiated their movement to meet the challenge posed by the Industrial Revolution, which the nation witnessed following the Civil War. Among all the parties that advocated farmers' rights, the Populist Party was the most successful. The extent of this success manifested in the ability of its constituents to put their candidate William Bryan as the Democratic presidential candidate. Additionally, the strength of the movement appeared intense that it resulted in changing the party system itself. That change influenced the coalitions and the alliances of the major parties, but the Democrats and the Republicans survived.

The second movement that had also been successful in terms of its demands was the progressive movement which marked a strong will of the people to get the government involved in improving the lives of average Americans, especially workers who had been exploited by extreme ideologies guiding the economy along with the policies of the businessman and

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corporations that cared for nothing but their own interests. The movement's strength reflected a strong response from the major parties that endorsed progressive demands into their platforms. Consequently, three American presidents came to be called "progressive presidents, including Roosevelt, Taft, and Wilson. Theodore Roosevelt had been the most committed to the progressive agenda, which pushed him to run against his own friend and party on a third-party ticket, for they had attempted to repeal his progressive reforms. Other parties, including the progressive party and the socialist, had attracted a huge number of voters and enjoyed some prominence.

The economy had been important in the two-mentioned movement, but the Great Depression stood as an event with a pivotal role for both major parties and third parties. This economic crisis transformed the coalitions and signaled an alignment of the major parties and introduced a new party system. It also resulted in the extension of Roosevelt's term in office to more than two terms, and it resulted in the dominance of the Democratic Party on the presidency. Even third parties that emerged were an objection to his presidency or the introduction of some reforms, but generally, third parties' activities decreased in the era of the Great Depression.

By the end of the nineteenth century, it appears that major parties began a campaign of reforms to strengthen their position and dominance and weaken the threatening alternatives. Likewise, the movement was successful in improving democracy by ending the political machine, for instance. Progressive reforms had also been a significant achievement of third parties                          in                          this                          era.

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The last half of the twentieth Century had been active in terms of the movement that attempted change and sought to protest various issues. The third political party played a major role as a device representing desenters, protesters, economic reformers and other minority groups. This would be the focus of this chapter.

### 1.1. The Civil Rights Movement:

The civil rights movement was a critical period in American history. It was the period when minorities sought justice and equality in the United States. This movement may be referred to as the "struggle for social justice that took place mainly from the 1950s and 1960s for Black Americans to gain equal rights under the law of the United States". The bloody Civil War that ended in 1965 brought an end to slavery, but discriminatory practices persisted over the years and had devastating impacts on African Americans. Lynching, discrimination in public facilities, and other racist practices persisted for almost a century despite the fourteenth amendment that fully acknowledged black people as citizens of the United States or the fifteenth amendment that gave them the right to vote.

By the mid-twentieth century, African Americans felt the necessity of mobilizing and organizing to achieve their goal of racial equality. This protest took many forms, including strikes, marches, boycotts, and sometimes other violent strategies. Among the various organizations that led this struggle was the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, the

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National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee. According to Gillespie, these organizations were the core of the civil rights movement. However, blacks were not the sole participants in this movement. Many white Americans did their best to support racial equality. In addition, the movement included other minorities that were also subjugated to oppression with relative intensity, such as the Chicanos or Mexican Americans.

Because the issue of slavery and the status of Blacks in America was born with the nation itself, people had differing views on how to go with the racial question. For instance, because they were convinced that the two major parties did less to advocate the rights of Blacks in America, some African Americans advocated building a third party of their own such as the Black Panthers Party. on the other hand, the inability of some white Americans, especially in the south, to accept an equal status with African Americans led them to form parties such as the American Independent Party, which had the slogan of " segregation today, segregation tomorrow, and segregation forever."

Another issue that dominated this era had been linked to the Vietnam War. The latter generated a huge number of people who protested American foreign involvement. Because protests against the Vietnam War came mainly from supporters of the Democrats, it had pushed many traditional blue-collar Democrats to deter from the GOP, believing that protesting while having troops on foreign soil is not patriotic. Others believed that the party became isolationist and unable to reflect the image of the United States at the international level. Some other

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conservatives had moved to the Republican Party, especially as the party stood on the left on social issues such as abortion.

The intensity of issues during the civil rights movement led to questioning American democracy and the system itself. For instance, questions regarding the Electoral College, especially regarding the unpledged voters, dominated the talk in the 1960 election, when the election appeared so close that people feared that the fate of the election was in the hands of the unpledged electors [23]. During this era third political parties came to reflect those changes, and among these prominent parties was the American independent party.

### 1.1.1. George Wallace and the American Independent Party:

Among the significant third parties that had been prominent in American politics was the American Independent Party. To fully fathom the party's ideology, a bird's-eye view of events coexisting with its rise necessitates. The American Independent Party appeared in the sixties, a time characterized by great change and reforms within the nation and a hard fight in Vietnam initiated as part of the Cold War objectives:

Wallace gained public attention in 1963 when he used his power as a governor to prevent two blacks from attending the University of Alabama. This act made him a source of pride for the masses that supported segregation in America. Wallace wanted to test that support going to the Democratic primaries in 1964, in which he was surprisingly amazed by the support he

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[23] An unpledged electer refers to the person who made no pledge to any candidate before the election. This issue came in response to the Democratic Party's endorsement of the civil rights issue.

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received despite the poor management that characterized his campaign. Wallace did not appeal solely to the racist voters of the American people; instead, he widened his circle to attract voters by stimulating the right or the conservatives focusing on other issues including "law and order, running your own school and protecting property rights" (Rosenstone et al. 111).

For all the events surrounding him, Wallace had little concern that he might appear as a racist. As one senator maintained, "he can use all the other issues _law and order, running your own schools, protecting property rights_ and never mention race. But people will know he's telling them 'a nigger's trying to get your job, trying to move to your neighborhood' (Frady 6 qtd. In Rosenstone et al. 111). Therefore, racism represented a major key leading to his success. His message was well-received among those who feared that a prominent black force in the community might threaten their positions within American society. The right might not mind supporting Wallace since they constantly fear change and benefit from the status quo. In addition, Wallace strongly criticized the people and the elite running the American government.

One of the strategies of Wallace was to run separately. He realized that it is necessary to get on the ballot in all states if he is likely to win; therefore, he hired four lawyers specifically to attain that goal, and apparently, these lawyers were clever enough to get his name on the ballot in 50 states. Nonetheless, Wallace got the ballot in Ohio only because signing a petition for access to the ballot was overruled by the Supreme Court, which was a remarkable victory for third-party force. The second exception was the District of Columbia which he never gained.

Wallace knew that challenging the two parties on a third-party ticket might not be as easy as hunting a fish in a barrel. After all, the two major parties strived to drive as many voters

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as possible from his Campaign. For example, both the Democratic candidate Hubert Humphrey and Republican Richard Nixon attacked Wallace with rhetoric that deemed a vote for Wallace as a wasted vote. The Democrats sought to demonize Wallace, and they came up with a southern strategy. Similarly, the Republicans promised the nation that they would not enforce desegregation fiercely. The point of these efforts was to advocate the critical issues to Wallace voters so that they would vote as Democrats or Republicans instead, and this is one of the main strategies that major parties carried against third parties. In the context of Wallace's campaign, these strategies deterred many voters from the base of his support.

Practically, candidates of major parties did their best to alienate the campaign of George Wallace. For instance, the Republican Richard Nixon had also attempted to attract Wallace's supporters. For instance, he "softened his stand on racial integration. In a private session with Southern Republican National Convention delegates, he advocated policies more tolerant of segregation; he also publically advocated an end to the policy of cutting off federal funds from segregated schools" (Rosenstone et al. 112). Additionally, he embarked on a trip and identified with prominent Southern cultural symbols and leaders, including Senator Strom Thurmond. The Democratic candidate did his best to turn voters from Wallace to the Democratic fold by claiming that those who support Wallace would certainly endorse the Republican candidate Nixon. This was done through the effort of labor organizations that strived to preserve loyalty to the Democratic Party.

Wallace supporters had been mainly concentrated in the south. When elections began, Wallace confronted the fact that the North was siding with the Democratic candidate.

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Additionally, Wallace failed to attract the maximum of voters within the South compared to the Republican Nixon, possibly because the latter managed to move to the right and undermined Wallace's supporters. Statistics confirmed that another sector of voters was prominent in voting for a third party:

> He drew heavy support from those who felt most disaffected from the political parties and from the political system. Independents were twice as likely as party identifiers to vote for Wallace. The former governor polled about four times as many votes from people who on balance disliked the major parties or their nominees than he did from the less disgruntled. Citizens who saw no difference in the way the two major parties ran the country were 10 percent more likely to cast a Wallace ballot than those who saw some distinctions (Rosenstone et al. 112).

Even though the election ended with a Democratic victory, democrats had been very careful in terms of their policies towards the south, for they wanted that base of voters to support their party. For instance, Harry Dent, who served in the Thurmond campaign, was now appointed Deputy Counsel to the president, hoping that he would control government policies in conformity with the Southern voices. Nixon himself asked his chief of staff "to establish and enforce a policy in this administration that no statements are to be made by any official that might alienate the South" (Evans 145 qtd. In Rosenstone et al. 114).. Other southern-oriented policies included the fact that" the White House delayed the Johnson administration's fall 1969 school desegregation deadline. In June, the Justice Department came out against the extension of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Furthermore, the administration watered down desegregation

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plans for twenty-one South Carolina school districts". It became clear that the policies of the Nixon administration centralized around appealing to southern votes by appointing men who had fought tirelessly against Desegregation.

Later on, these strategies proved successful, especially after Wallace had left for the Democratic Party and the American independent party appointed John Schmitz for the presidential election of 1972. The results showed that Schmitz gained only 1.4 percent of the popular votes, and even worse, he received a mere 1.1 percent of the southern vote. Meanwhile, Nixon won 69.7 of the southern vote. Therefore, it became clear that Wallace's supporters fell into the fold of the Republican Party in the 1972 election.

Following that dramatic defeat, the American Independent Party witnessed division. Out of that division came two factions of political parties: the American Party (AP) and the American Independent Party (AIP), which had both failed to gain enough voters in the election of 1976.

Despite all these barriers, the results suggest the extent to which a third party could compete: Wallace received nearly ten million votes, which historians regarded as the best amount of votes that non of the third parties could gain until this election.

After this dramatic election, George Wallace returned to the Democratic party in the year 1972. Indeed, he attempted to run again under the banner of the Democratic Party but this objective was halted by a campaign incident in which Wallace had been shot which led to his paralyzation, and he lived the rest of his life on a chair. What followed that decisive election was a steady decline in the American Independent party, which stemmed from the absence of its

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shining leader. This decline confirms the theory that sees the twentieth-century third political parties as centered around their leader. So, when Wallace left the party, the party stood few chances, then it disappeared. In other words, the fact that a party may die after its candidate is gone is deemed a common feature of third parties during the twentieth century, and it gives credit to the claim that referred to the twentieth parties of this era as the independents of the Twentieth century; the life of the party is utterly linked to its candidate.

### 1.1.2. Racial Third Parties and Minorities:

Next to George Wallace, several third political parties were founded on a racial basis to address the needs of the white community. Among these political parties stood a weird party that was closer to Nazism, according to many historians. The National States' Rights party (NSRP) was one of the racist parties that positioned itself on the far right. Even in terms of its symbols, the party used a thunderbolt flag, which was a reference to Germany. The party platform was created in 1958, which the party attempted to implement over three decades. Within this platform's terms, there exist very racist tendencies; for instance, it called for a pure white community and the exclusion of other races. Additionally, it emphasized that the American government should adhere only to people of white color. The party also asked for a total separation of races and demanded laws banning interracial marriages, and as far as Blacks were concerned, they supported their return to their mother continent of Africa.

The party appealed primarily to the American south, and during its active years, its leaders claimed that they had a base of 12,000 members, but to many outsiders of the party, the

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number did not accede 1,500 members. Among the party's prominent leaders was J.B. Stoner, who had been known for his intensive racial tone throughout his speeches. The party also had the Thunderbolt, a monthly journal that was produced by one of the famous racists of Georgia, who was condemned to prison in 1985 for his complicity in the bombing of an African American church. That Thunderbolt journal had been weird in terms of the articles it produced:

> The paper occasionally pictured NSRP rallies at which white South African neo-nazis delivered fraternal speeches, or party conferences attended by anti-Semitic refugees from communist eastern Europe. It carried articles with titles like "pro-Jew Ministers changing Christianity into Materialist-Atheist Judaism (April 1980) and "Is Carter Illegitimate Brother of Kennedy?" (September 1976). In the years after NSRP ceased activity as a party, Fields continued to edit his paper, which he renamed Truth at Last (Gillespie 208).

The possibility of a woman holding the presidency was not sensible to the Founding Fathers, who deliberately avoided the issue and did not bother mentioning that one of the conditions for being a president was to be a gentleman. However, two women have attempted to run for the presidency. Victoria Woodhull was the first lady to make the first attempt in 1872 a year after she gave a speech claiming that women do have the right to vote. Her argument was that the 14th Amendment which declared blacks as citizens of the United States and the fifteenth Amendment, which granted them the right to vote, mentioned the word "citizen" which could certainly apply to both sexes. Her speech helped in becoming a prominent leader of the women's movement for suffrage. Victoria helped in establishing the Equal Rights Party in 1872, and later she received its nomination for the presidential race, a decision that went against the norms of

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this period. The platform she designed included suffrage for women, women's total control over their body as well as a program to improve the condition of labor. As for her running mate, the choice came to Frederick Douglass, a black abolitionist. Some theories concluded that by the end of the election, she was able to pull two thousand votes, but clearly, there were several issues hindering her campaign. For instance, in several regions, officials met her votes with denial, which prevented counting her votes. Additionally, the society seemed unprepared for such cultural reforms as many debated whether women could be seen as citizens or not, let alone whether they could bear the responsibility of the presidency. Furthermore, the candidate was younger than the age required for a man to run for president; her age did not accede 35 (Green 143)[24].

Because the major parties refused to endorse the issue of suffrage, the Equal Rights Party suggested another woman run for the presidency in 1884. This time the choice came to Belva Lockwood, a female lawyer who was 54 years old. Lockwood was also the first woman to defend a legal case before the Supreme Court. The platform advocated women's suffrage and the end of discrimination based on race, sex, or nationality. She also advocated some reforms to marriage and divorce laws as well as temperance. By the end of the election, she attracted 4,149 votes in six states. Her second attempt in 1888 did not result in any recorded vote (Green 144).

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[24] This attempt was renewed several times such as the election of 2016 when Clinton ran against Trump. It is part of the idea of minorities rights that the Democrats rallied since world war Two

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Other third parties came to fulfill a religious, racial, or ethnic agenda and were active during the last two centuries. For example, resistance to the rights of minorities had pushed for the creation of third parties to counteract those tendencies. A typical example was the America First Party which was established in 1943 by Gerald L.K. Smith. The latter candidate was anti-semitic, a feature that rendered hatred, opposition, or unfair treatment of the Jewish community. The party's name was derived from the America First Committee, an organization that opposed American intervention in World War II. The committee did not accept its label to go to the newly founded party, and therefore, they denounced Smith and prevented him from joining the organization. Smith also advocated isolation in a period when the United States fought on two fronts, and he was also against FDR's New Deal. Indeed, The man was a strange evangelical preacher; H.L. Mencken saw him as "the damnedest orator ever heard on this or any earth." He had taken the nomination for president after he was rejected by Charles Lindberg, a founder of the America First Committee. Among the main demands he sought was to investigate the war management of President Roosevelt, whom he saw as a president that served the interest of the British Empire. On the Black issue, Smith believed that Africans should have their own homes but in Africa. By the end of the election, Smith secured 1780 popular votes.

The America First Party appeared again in 1947 under the name the Christian Nationalist Party. Their anti-Semitic agenda included calls to protect the United States from "Christ-hating Jews and the communist pawns." They also advocated the creation of the state of Israel in Palestine. Furthermore, they recommended the government to stop immigrants especially,

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Asians, Jews, and the colored race. Again, the nomination went to Smith. The party made several other attempts in 1952 but won few votes.

The civil rights movement of the 1960s was also a period when minorities attempted to achieve their rights through political parties. African Americans, for instance, organized a political party under the name the Freedom Now Party (1963-1965) and the Black Panthers (1966-1982). They aimed to achieve racial justice, but both parties did not run a presidential candidate. Instead, they focused on building from the base, especially in states witnessing a concentration of the African community.

William Worthy established the Freedom Now Party because he was very angry about the way the two major parties managed the issue of racial equality. He was outraged by the Democrats, who had explicitly sympathized with southern segregationists. Therefore, the only solution for the Black issue is an all-black group that would establish itself in Congress, secures its rights, and effect change in the legislative body. Their platform stressed the commitment of the black race to achieve "African American freedom, economic progress, guaranteed employment, and the end of racism in the United States, Africa, Asia, and Latin America. They ran at the local level in several states achieving several victories. The best of all occurred in Michigan, where a collective effort of 750,000 African Americans under the leadership of Albert Cleavage contributed to 39 elected candidates, including the governor, lieutenant governor as well as the position of secretary of state. On the gubernatorial level, the opposite occurred as the party attracted 0.2 percent. Cleavage carefully attempted through a newspaper cartoon to imply the sympathy of Martin Luther King to the idea of an all-black party, but this trick failed as soon

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as King denounced any support for this cause. However, what led to the deterioration of the party were the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the 1965 Voting Rights Act, which ended the legacy of the Freedom Now Party.

The Black Panther Party was also established during the civil rights movement but with a slightly different agenda. It refused the integration strategy that characterized some moderate organizations, including the National Association for the Advancement of the Colored People (NAACP) and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. Their platform called for the rights of black people and for ending police brutality. One feature characterizing the party was that its tone was violent, and the strategy they employed was borderless as they sought their rights by "whatever means necessary." Actually, the leaders of the party attempted to create an all-black nation. Therefore the aggressive strategy they pursued included calling Black to arm themselves against any threat. Even though they endorsed candidates, their effort was concentrated on the black community organization, including arming patrols against the police intervention in the ghetto and its people, a strategy that usually resulted in several casualties. Additionally, the Black Panthers enhanced their community by providing help to the elderly and children and building clinics and local hospitals. Due to their commitment, many African Americans sympathized with the panthers. For instance, a 1970 survey estimated that 25 percent of the African American community sympathized with the party. As in the case of several civil rights organizations, authorities strived to sabotage the party through "court proceedings, fines, parking tickets, and bail bonds," aiming to end the party's financial support. Green maintained that "as a

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result of political mistakes and financial ruin, the Black Panther movement came to an end in 1980," and the slogan that sustained their legacy was "Power to the People."(Green 146)

Next to Blacks, Chicanos or Mexican Americans initiated their fight to achieve the rights of their community. Therefore, they established La Raza Unida Party (RUP), which meant the United People's Party. The party denounced the oppression and discrimination that had left Mexican Americans as second-class citizens. They saw both major parties and the two-party system as "the two-party dictatorship." Their leaders included Jose Angel Gutierrez and Rodolfo Gonzales. The effort of the Chicano community led to the official recognition of the party in Texas in 1972 as the first party with the gubernatorial candidacy of Ramsey Munoz, who attracted 6 percent of the vote. Some of their demands included bilingual education and fair distribution of wealth. The party chapters extended to other states in the Midwest, such as California, New Mexico, and Arizona. The party's decline began in 1978 when its candidate for governor in Texas won 2 percent of the votes leading to the official removal of its name. The formidable issue that the party confronted was the lack of a unified structure shared by its various chapters. In some places, RUP was nationalist, but in others, they were socialists or communists. Thus, its demise originated from the poor votes it attracted in 1978 and a feeling within the Chicano community that the party was violent, confrontational, and militant, which eventually led them to return to the Democratic camp.

1.2. **Dissatisfaction and Resentment :**

During the mid-eighties and toward the end of the century, Americans felt dissatisfied with the political system. Evidence indicates that even the civil rights movement was a period of

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resentment, but it seems fair to suggest that in that period, people hoped to compel the government into change rather than resent the government itself. The following period revealed a sense of doom that strikingly hung over the United States, although scholars may disagree over its cause. Some observers believed that low wages or unawareness of social trends may have created that unhappiness, but as Jelen emphasized, the electorate held animosity towards the major parties and the electoral politics because they were unwilling to see any hope in politics and politicians alike. This situation was crystal, especially by the end of the Cold War, and it was not particular to the United States; other western democracies had witnessed the elimination of their major parties all but in a single election (Jelen 159 ).

One clear aspect of that dissatisfaction is that it had an economic nature. Green believed that "the federal deficit, the influence of special interest, and the number of good-paying jobs going overseas" marked voters' resentment of politics (153). Meanwhile, that resentment brought some competing alternative independents who threatened to take over the White House if the two major parties remained unwilling to endorse a change. Among these alternative leaders were John Anderson, Ross Perot, and Ralph Nader. What came striking concerning these three campaigning candidates was their ability to reflect that resentment through the percentage they have achieved despite their clear lack of resources. Additionally, these third parties had explicitly acknowledged some problems within American Democracy and the two-party system:

Despite their service to Democracy, the two major parties are not highly regarded today by the voters. The emergence of Perot and the Reform Party is emblematic of voters' general disdain for the present system and their considerable support for a new or third

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party. These sentiments raise questions, debated in this book by Professors Romance and Lowi, about the viability and desirability of the existing two-party system (Lowi 14)

### 1.1.3. John Anderson: The True Independent Candidate:

So far, there had been several motifs for third parties to oppose major parties, including "fervent attachment to a single cause, intense dislike of an incumbent president, or both" (Rosenstone et al. 117). The candidacy of Anderson is different in the sense that he did not run on the basis of any of the previous measures. Instead, historians believe that the sole cause that led Anderson to enter the presidential race in 1980 was the poor nominees and leadership of the major parties:

> Jimmy Carter was a weak, indecisive chief executive who had presided over one of the nation's most humiliating crises, ( the Iranian taking of American hostages) and the worst election-year economy since the Depression. His opponent, Ronald Reagon, was an aging conservative warhorse with a penchant for foolish statements and a reputation of inactivity (Rosenstone et al. 117).

Generally, the eighties of the twentieth century are marked as the years where departure from major parties was rated high. For instance, it was estimated that 823 voters in 10.000 had voted on a candidate not belonging to major parties in 1980. This departure was not a response towards issues but rather the major party candidates themselves. As for Carter, he had been an unpopular incumbent since he was hunted and seriously criticized over Americans who became hostages in Tehran following the Islamic Revolution. The president's policies also were

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devastating to the economy for the first time since the Great Depression, which led voters to believe that he should be banned from the presidency again. Voters also had reasons to detest Reagan. Actually, "a lot of voters saw Ronald Reagon as a tottering old Yesterday's Man with ideas that, while pleasing to the Archie Bankers, were out of touch with the times" (Gillespie 122).

Few Americans perhaps recognize the political legacy of John Anderson. This is not surprising given the fact that Anderson had been active inside Congress and not much attracted to the media as historians insisted. Anderson was the most conservative Republican who served in the House of Representatives. This conservatism might be reflected in his views regarding several decisions made by the Kennedy administration. For instance, social reforms, and the nuclear race with the Soviet Union were all opposed by Anderson. Additionally, he had been an advocate of strong measures for gun control. His attempt to run for president came after serving more than twenty years in Congress. Perhaps, the prominent feature that might describe his legacy was " a true independent." (57)

At first, Anderson sought the presidency on a Republican ticket, but as soon as he lost the Republican nomination for Ronald Reagan, he decided to pursue his path toward the White House as an independent candidate. Actually, Anderson lost the Republican nomination with a slight difference, which came to be a very severe experience for him, and perhaps out of it, he decided not to run again. But when voices were raised in support of his candidacy, he reckoned that it was a golden opportunity to speak out and seek revenge from those members who rejected

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his candidacy even though he might have doubted his success. His announcement of his candidacy came on June 8, 1979.

The movement Anderson created was referred to as "the National Unity Campaign. He did not build a party, nor did he hold a convention. Apparently, the only purpose that he had beyond his running was to give another choice to American voters. Therefore, he had some differing views and programs that distinguished him from other candidates, and he refused political labels. Thus, Anderson "enjoyed putting forth unpopular plans that he was convinced the country needed." For instance, he had a plan of "a fifty-cent per gallon tax on gasoline, which would be balanced by a fifty percent cut in social security taxes." (Rosenstone et al. 117) By the end of the polls, Anderson won almost 20 percent of the votes, which seems surprising given the weak campaign he ran. After all, Anderson had no emotional campaign issues, such as those held by former third-party candidates_for example, the abolition of slavery, free silver, or states' rights. He didn't rail against the current president, as Teddy Roosevelt had done. His surprising popularity was mostly the result of voter dissatisfaction with the two candidates: incumbent president Jimmy Carter and Republican nominee Ronald Reagan (Rosenstone et al. 117).

This claim, however, does not suggest that Anderson had no barriers and lacked challenges. After all, he struggled vigorously to fund the campaign which cost him a great deal of time and resources. Additionally, the odds were against him, as he needed to put his name on the ballot throughout the various states. The real heresy appeared close to the presidential debate when President Carter did not agree to get into the debate with Anderson, which was devastating for Anderson since he would lose a golden opportunity to address the whole nation directly. This

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had also undermined "the credibility of Anderson," although Reagan and Anderson had confronted each other on a TV debate. Furthermore, Anderson reckoned long about the choice of his vice president. Which later settled for Patrick Lucey, a retired Democratic governor of Wisconsin and previous ambassador to Mexico. The problem with the vice president was that he had been even less known than Anderson. In other words, voting for Anderson might have witnessed some increase had he chosen a well-known leader as a vice president.

### 1.1.4. Ross Perot and the 1992 Election:

The campaign of 1992 was unique in many ways, especially to third parties that had attracted a large number of voters. Ross Perot, the Texan billionaire, received one in five votes. Actually, some circumstances undermined the campaign of Ross Perot, without which he would have achieved better results. If these barriers were not at work, he might have ended as the 42 President of the United States and the second third party that successfully became a major party after the Republican Party in 1860.

Several events came to contribute to the rise of Ross Perot as a man gaining public attention. When the Vietnam war was over, an estimated 1303 Americans did not come back. Perot believed that they were still in Vietnam, and accordingly, he put in a considerable amount of money and resources for the sake of finding them. Perot went further to suggest that he would pay ransom in case it was necessary, yet a search launched in 1981 ended with failure leading to a disagreement between Perot and the government on whether there is a shred of evidence about

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the existence of these soldiers. Apparently, there was a videotape that Perot could never find proving the case, yet Perot counted on the assurance of Mark Smith, a special force major who saw the tape. He even took matters into his hands as he arranged a meeting with officials from Vietnam. On his return, he had a meeting with President Reagen and vice president George Bush which resulted in nothing fruitful. With his certainty of the existence of POWs, Perot blamed the government for its inaction, especially President Bush, whom he described as "weak" and a "wimp." Perot told Bush that he could reach nowhere with "corrupt American officials." As he did not find assistance and willingness to carry on the search, Perot ended his quest. The significance of such an incident in his political career was that it taught him what is it like to have power (Green 100)

Another political issue that witnessed the intervention of Perot was his extreme criticism of President Bush in the 1990s. There were nearly two main issues regarding the president's policies: American intervention on behalf of Kuwait against Iraq and breaking his promise of not increasing taxes. Perot once said, "Whatever happened to watch my lips, no new taxes." Out of this resentment of major parties' performance, Perot responded by announcing his candidacy, but this had occurred in stages. Jelen divided the campaign of Ross Perot in 1992 into four major acts beginning with his decision to run.

### 1.1.4.1.A Campaign to Gain Popular Support:

In criticism of the government, Perot was giving a speech before the National Club Press and received a question about whether he attempted to be president, and his reply was neither yes nor no, but he asked people to stay in touch and write or call him in Dallas. In his next

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appearance in MacNeil-Lehrer News Hour and the Phil Donahue Show, Perot warned American citizens and especially the average citizen that the deficit is high and the Gulf War was not right and attempted to convince them that they had to restore the country that had gone far beyond their hands and control as Americans.

Many Americans welcomed Perot's call, including Jack Gargan, a businessman who founded THRO( Throw the Hypocritical Rascals Out) and advocated through his resources and newspaper ads against congressional incumbents. Therefore, the latter invited the Texan businessman to be a key speaker in the organization in the fall of 1991, where he was introduced by John Anderson. In there, Perot raised again the issue of deficit and how it should be reduced. In addition, Perot talked about other matters that amazed the audience and drove Congressman John Jay Hooker to ask him to run for the presidency. His willingness increased, especially after he was informed by Richard Winger, an expert on ballot access, that he could get to the ballot in all 50 American states. After a long discussion with Perot, Winger successfully convinced Perot of running, but there was a need for a clear public announcement to be made by the candidate himself. Therefore, an arrangement was made to receive Perot in the famous show Larry King, which indeed occurred on February 20. During the show, Larry asked Perot several questions that seeing an announcement of his presidential candidacy, but Perot produced no clear statement until the fifth attempt when he promised to run with the condition that the American people put his name on the ballot in all 50 states.

This announcement was met with criticism. Some have undermined Perot's candidacy believing that Perot was "arrogant and naïve." But as Gillespie emphasized, the Texan billionaire

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turned into a real threat, and starting from that night, " Perot and a growing legion of supporters put together one of the most remarkable populist crusades ever," that up to the current moment, it generates debates among scholars (Gillespie 131).

From then on, Perot felt that Television would be the key to a successful campaign. Using his communication skills, Perot claimed that he would run a campaign of substance, not sound-bite. In this context, Gillespie insisted that "Perot proved himself a world-champion sound-biter." and "that was because Perot's sounded so innocent and unjaded, so manipulative." For instance, while he cleverly attacked President Bush and claimed that America is "in deep voodoo," he returned to assure the Americans that he had the keys to solving the status quo chaos through the spirit of optimism and inspiration, "we can fix anything." Sometimes, he employed the slogan of "taking back America," emphasizing his identity as an outsider who came to apply the needs of the American people. (Gillespie 131)

Perot's Campaign coincided with some circumstances that helped in increasing his popularity. At the fall of the Gulf War in 1991, President Bush's popularity increased dramatically to 90%. However, the gathered data suggested a growing discontent among the American people via the stagnant economy and poor leadership. For the Democrats, candidates such as Governor Mario Cuomo, Senator Bill Bradley, and Senator Al gore thought that the solution was to leave the primary for Governor Bill Clinton, the lesser-known candidate.

Another factor leading to Perot's popularity was the growth in the number of volunteers who participated in his campaign. This at first renders how a citizen can alter the political system

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not only through voting but also through volunteering to enlist, motivate and most of all, help fund the campaigns of a third-party candidate.

Additionally, many Americans saw Perot as a typical example of the American dream, which differentiated him from other third-party candidates whose appeal to the American dream is processed only through rhetoric and vision. Perot was a man who gained respect and became a billionaire through hard work. Additionally, "a lot of luck, and willingness to cut corners was Perot's exceptional endowment in the can-do entrepreneurial spirit." it was this life experience that communicated to his followers that the most difficult problems could not only be solvable but solvable at this time (Gillespie 131)[25].

For those campaigning on behalf of Ross Perot, the ballot access was both an advantage and a disadvantage at the same time. On the one hand, it required intensive energy, but soon, they learned that each victory they achieved would produce much enthusiasm and energy. Despite the legal constraints that hinder his progress, Perot supporters fulfilled the condition of listing him on the ballot in all 50 states. This achievement marked Ross Perot as more successful than his predecessors, especially the George Wallace campaign, which achieved their name on the ballot, but not in all districts.

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[25] The concept of the American dream  suggests that people who work hard in America would be successful and rich, an idea that had attracted a large number of immigrants to the United States from its establishment up to modern day.

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### 1.1.4.2.The Decision to Leave the Presidential Race:

Perot's announcement to run for the presidency reflected his success in using the media, and soon after his announcement, calls ruined his office. However, as the campaign continued, the media had some negative impacts on his candidacy. In NBC's Meet the Press show, for example, Perot had a good performance, but after the show asked about the budget in which he announced that he might consider leaving the race, which proved to his campaign advisors that he should appear only in places where he would be in control.

Ross Perot also confronted specific issues within his campaign. Believing that he is not similar to the major party candidates, he had mixed feelings regarding bridging a team of professionals headed by experts from the Democrats and the Republicans. This disdain came from the fact that he claimed himself to be different from those established parties. Even though he agreed with this campaign tactic, the choice was not appealing as he picked up the Republican Ed Rollins and Hamilton Jordon.

Soon some disagreement arose between Rollins and Perot. For instance, the plan to spend 150 million of his wealth on the campaign and its strategies was not liked by the candidate, although he appeared to appreciate the plan. Sometimes, Rollins had acted on his own, making some announcements. When the professionals showed him a picture designed to publicize him, Perot became angry, and he immediately isolated himself from his professionals. It was clear that their plan was not implemented as Perot decided that he would not start the race early because people's last decision may come in the last weeks of the election. Additionally, Perot was not

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willing to spend a huge amount of money on advertisements deemed necessary by his professionals (105).

This disagreement with professionals persisted with Perot's campaign, especially with Rollins. For instance, following his arrival in Michigan, Perot unexpectedly was asked a moral question, to which he could not respond. Following this incident, Perot gave a speech to the NAACP in which he referred to the black community as "you people." which was interpreted as an offense to Blacks. Indeed, Perot was not a racist candidate, and he supported civil rights laws. Nevertheless, he was a southerner who lived his life in the pre-civil rights era, and he was accustomed to such a deliberate tone towards this community. However, Rollins was angry and considered Perot's actions as nonprofessional, and eventually, Perot fired him.

Soon, Perot expressed his concerns about the campaign maintaining that the Democratic Party is proceeding while the Republican Party is "playing tricks" against him, and he concluded that he would leave the race announcing that "I am going to get out of this thing" (Green 106). Scholars disagree over his reasons, but they all agreed that he was in a very strong position when he maintained that he would withdraw from the race. As Green maintained:

> By early June he was pushing 40 percent in the polls compared with 30 percent for Bush and 22 percent for Clinton, and based on various estimates, he could have amassed between 284 and 408 electoral votes, compared with 270 needed to win the election. His support was unprecedented for an independent or third party candidate, but there had been some slippage as stories leaked about his quirks" (107).

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### 1.1.4.3.Perot's Decision to Return:

Perot, however, left an open possibility to reenter the race again as he preserved his organization and urged his volunteer supporters to continue to support his campaign. The press, however, portrayed Perot as a hesitating candidate reminding the audience of his decision to quit the navy and IBM. Additionally, major parties saw this decision as an opportunity to appeal to those voters supporting him; for that reason, both parties met Perot, but nothing came out of these conversations. Actually, the Democrats were right when they thought that Perot would certainly return to the election, which had indeed occurred as volunteers pushed him to reconsider.

One of the things that Perot did to strengthen his campaign was creating an organization called United We Stand America (UWSA). The organization released a manifesto that outlined Perot's plan to handle the problems of the nation. He would certainly be in a better place, especially since the two major parties were reluctant to offer any solution. The document dealt with how to solve issues such as the deficit. The details rendered Perot as having a clear vision.

The manifesto also suggested that "the political nobility had become immune to the people's will" (Green 108). Therefore, he proposed that the terms Americans agreed on with NAFTA need to be reorganized. He wanted to lower the cost of his campaign, denouncing the contribution of the wealthy who had long exploited both parties. He promised direct contact between the people and their representatives, and he denounced the terms of the NAFTA agreement that he thought were not beneficial to Americans and their foreign counterparts. Furthermore, Perot wanted to reform education, rebuild internal cities, and propose that the

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election day be located at the weekend so that every citizen could vote. Some of his demands were even extreme, including the proposal to abolish the Electoral College. On the issue of abortion, he claimed to be pro-choice, and he called for racial tolerance. By the end, the Manifesto concluded with a checklist for citizens to determine the issues that could be given to congressional candidates to recognize their stands

### 1.1.4.4.Advertisements as a Campaigning Strategy:

Perot's campaign was predominantly based on advertisements, through commercials, especially during the last weeks before the election. For instance, within the first two weeks of October, Perot paid 24 s to be invested in commercial advertisements. Nearly ten days later, he attempted to spend another 10 million. The national press saw these advertisements as an attempt to portray another Perot and redeem his reputation; for instance, Elizabeth Kolbert, a New York Times Journalist, wrote, "Now the main question seems to be which media image will prevail: the Ross Perot of news stories ("Paranoid!...Looney)" or the Ross Perot of the advertisements (down to earth, sober, pragmatic)" (Jelen 24). Nevertheless, these advertisements attracted a huge number of voters and helped increase the popularity of the Billionaire candidate. The slogan was, "the candidate is Ross Perot. The issue is leadership. The choice is yours". Those shows did not involve the person and the voice of Perot himself, but still, they generated tremendous support for his cause among voters.

As the campaign continued, Perot participated in some other advertisements. Perot believed in a direct approach and contact with voters. For instance, one advertisement portrayed him sitting on his desk and inviting voters to back him in this election:

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If you want to rebuild the job base, let your vote say so. If you want a government that comes from the people, instead of at the people, let your vote say so. If you want to reduce our 4 trillion national debt, let your vote say so. Look at the issues. Look at the facts. Look at all three candidates. And then vote your conscience. (Jelen 24).

When the presidential debate came, Perot was surprised that he was invited too. Clearly, the Democrats and Republicans had their own reasons to agree on his participation, but this decision surprised Perot, who later commented," I was outside the system. I marveled that they let me in". In terms of its impact, his participation in the presidential debate had remarkably revealed a unique talent to respond, and it contributed to an increase in voter support, which in turn increased his rates. The following debates also were an advantage to Perot, and they rendered that he had increasingly gained the sympathy of voters. This improvement, however, is predominantly originating from this participation.

The excellent rating following the debate was interrupted by an incident that dramatically hurt the popularity of Perot. Major parties usually undermine third-party candidates at the final stages of the election by claiming that their vote is wasted. Yet in this election, Perot himself harmed his own campaign through an interview with Barbara Walters, in which he responded to why he previously considered leaving the race. Perot acknowledged the existence of some 35 fake photos that are scandalous about his daughter's wedding plans. The problem was that Perot got this from a friend who had received it from a reporter, but the latter denied any information about the incident. Additionally, Perot attempted unsuccessfully to link this incident to Republican conspiracy but failed to provide a single shred of evidence. Although the press was

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fascinated with the story, the public expressed extreme fear that their candidate could not rationalize before he could judge. Accordingly, it seriously decreased his rates and the popularity he gained from his participation in the presidential debate (Green 110).

Despite all the constraints, challenges, and crises, Ross Perot gained 19 percent of the popular vote, scoring the best result ever attained by a third party except for Theodore Roosevelt in 1912. The number of votes totaled 19,741,647, outnumbering any third party or independent. Yet, despite this popularity, Perot had not achieved a single electoral vote, for he suffered from the absence of "a strong sectional base." Therefore, the theory claiming that Perot had prevented the Bush victory seems unreal because Perot could prevent 20 electoral votes in the Bush camp, but the latter needed 168 electoral votes to achieve victory over Clinton. Therefore the 1992 election ended with a victory for the Democrats.

Generally, the election of 1992 revealed three headlines. First, Clinton's successful gain of the presidency ended 11 years of Republicans tightening hand on the presidency. Second, the voting rates increased that year, and finally, Ross Perot, a wealthy Texan who ran as an independent, generated 19 percent of the popular votes, which rendered major parties vulnerable when they confronted a strong contender. That percentage ranks third in the history of third parties as the largest share of votes gained by candidates that did not spring from the major parties. Only Milliard Fillmore and Teddy Roosevelt outnumbered Perot's votes, but both were former presidents whose aim was to return to the presidency and not to seek it.

The support that Perot received was ruled by regional variations. His best results (more than 25 percent of the votes) came in eight states that are deemed" culturally Protestant,

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individualistic, quirky and at the time culturally moderate on the social issues. However, Perot revealed some weaknesses in the south, especially in regions primarily inhabited by the black community, such as the District of Columbia, when he won only 4 percent of the votes. Clearly, the African American community may have contributed to his loss.

Young people who had economic difficulties and felt ignored by major parties supported Perot. There were some concerns over jobs going beyond the American borders, especially to Mexico. As a third party, the billionaire achieved good results in regions that had previously supported significant third political parties, namely George Wallace and the Progressive Party.

In comparison to George Wallace, a recent study was done by Aaron W. Brown in 2013, revealing that George Wallace's candidacy emerged as the superior model for third-party campaigns in the post-World War Two era if one based that comparison on the success made in terms of integrating issues within the mainstream politics. This conclusion came as surprising given the fact that the general trend among scholars highlights an emphasis on the Perot campaign and its fascinating results. Aaron provided some arguments that outlined the weaknesses of the Perot campaign:

First, Perot was not running to play spoiler, he truly sought the presidency. his wide-spread, but unfocused appeal in conjunction with his campaign methods attests to this. Second, Perot advocated few specific solutions, instead mostly criticizing his opponents and the function of Washington. Third, because of these two aspects, he could wield no real power in having his ideas influence the major parties. His voter base was too broad,

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too evenly drawn, and too general to impact the election in a way that would significantly and specifically harm either Clinton or Bush (10).

Aaron concluded that " Perot, in the context of a defined third-party success served as little more than a recognizable protest vote for undefined change." Through this, he brought attention to the nation's problems but did not provide any focused solution of his own and certainly did not attempt to force their proposals on a major-party candidate. Indeed, Aaron had been right, and his only exception was the issue of deficit and tax increases which gained some recognition from major parties. Additionally, Perot's campaign was dominated by a sense of generality, which seemed to influence his results:

> Perot focused on a general "clean up the mess in Washington" message that found wide appeal. It is the generality of his criticism, however, that most likely led to Perot's note-worthy poll numbers. It is also this generality that places Perot outside the bounds of a defined successful third-party/independent presidential campaign. His appeal on the basis of "broken Washington" and lack of support based on particular issue stances could not leverage the major parties within the confines of the election (13).

Perot's failure in 1992 had brought some other results, and it did not end his ambition towards politics. Therefore he attempted to run as presidential candidate for the election of 1996.

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### 1.1.5. Ross Perot in the Election of 1996:

In the election of 1996, Perot attempted to run again based on the same strategy that he had implemented in the previous election, including a strong emphasis on television as an important direct means of interacting with citizens. His contenders for this election were President Clinton as a Democratic nominee and Senator Bob Dole as a presidential candidate for Republicans. Actually, the latter candidate generated a little enthusiasm among voters. Jelen described the 1996 campaign as "dud," and he believed that it had gone over three different scenes. The first scene began with the entrance of Perot as a leader of the Reform Party. The second scene reflected Perot's failure to be included in the presidential debate. The third major theme appears in the form of advertisements and Perot's trip through the nation giving speeches. The result of this campaign was disappointing, although with some lasting legacy in the form of the Reform Party. In this election, Perot did not invest in the campaign, but he was satisfied with the 29.2 million federal money that he gained due to his participation in the 1992 elections.

### 1.1.5.1. Building the Reform Party:

On September 25, 1995, Perot appeared on Larry King Live, in which he announced that he is preparing for a new third party. Perot maintained that "we're at a critical time in our country's history, and tonight we're going to start the process of starting a new party" (Posner 337 qtd. in Jelen 27). That work was completed successfully because Perot and his supporters strived to achieve the legal recognition of the Reform Party in all fifty states. Now, the next step was to choose the presidential candidate. The race over the candidacy included former governor of Colorado Richard Lamm and Ross Perot, who announced his candidacy on Larry's show.

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Eventually, Perot received the nomination, although controversially, especially from the standpoint of Lamm, who believed that the vote was undemocratic, and led him Later on to reject the endorsement of Perot. This quest for the nomination was covered by the media, but as Jelen insisted, it had generated little support for Perot as a presidential candidate. It seemed that the popularity of Perot was low even before he was involved in the race to the white house (Jelen 27).

Regardless of the nomination process, Perot confronted another incident in 1993 that undermined his candidacy even before he entered the race. At first, the year appeared promising for Ross Perot because of his activities, which led to anticipation that he would undoubtedly become the next president:

In the months following the 1992 race, Perot's popular appeal had soared once again. He became the cover story in the U.S News &World Report issue of May 17, 1993, which stated on its front cover that "Ross Perot may be the most important force in American politics." He appeared on talk shows, aired more infomercials, gave interviews to selected journalists, and co-authored an inexpensive paperback, Save Your Job, Save Our Country: Why NAFTA must Be Stopped Now. The other author was Pat Choate, a conservative economist. Perot opposed the North American Free Trade Agreement because he believed it would cause America to lose industrial jobs to the cheaper labor market in Mexico (Jelen 27).

However, Clinton's administration became very angry at Perot as he opposed the very important issue they had been pushing through Congress. For that reason, they invited Perot into

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a debate that would uncover the truth about the potential impact of this agreement on the economy.

The debate was a disadvantage to Perot, who had been "defensive" and sarcastic throughout the debate with vice president Al Gore. The latter remained in control, calm, and very forceful in a debate that was watched by a huge number of American citizens. Because Television was always thought of as the vehicle of Perot's campaign and presidency, his failure in the last debate was devastating. Soon, his ratings dropped from 66 percent to 29 percent. Jelen insisted that this decline is comparable to the issue of Republican dirty tricks that Perot mentioned on Larry King's sixteen minutes show. Both incidents strongly limited the chances of winning the presidency (28).

To make the situation worse, Governor Lamm intensified his charges against Perot and allowed the press to destroy Perot's reputation. Still, Perot attempted to ignore those reports and focused on the campaign he was running. As for his running mate, Perot refused to mention his name for several weeks after the convention that gave him the nomination. When he wanted to reveal his name, this man was the co-author that had supported him in raising the risks of making the NAFTA agreement, Pat Choate.

Perot's attacks on the Clinton administration renewed after the passage of the North Atlantic Free Trade Agreement. Revealing that he had previously warned against this agreement, Perot emphasized that "there is a giant sucking sound coming out of Mexico. they're sucking our dollars down there, and both parties were locked arm in arm and bound at the hip to make that happen" (Tollerson 11 qtd. in Jelen 28). Clearly, by the end of this stage, Ross Perot and his

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party's reputation were in a critical position. He realized that it was necessary to design a strategy that would allow him to appear on TV and talk to the public, which would hopefully ameliorate his ratings and increase his popularity.

### 1.1.5.2. Denial of Participation in the Presidential Debate:

On September 17, 1996, Perot attempted to participate in the presidential debate, but his request was rejected by a commission consisting of representatives from the major parties. The Democrats and the Republicans had several reasons to prevent the Texan Billionaire from joining the debate. The Republicans thought that any vote that goes to Perot was originally a Republican vote. From the standpoint of the Democrats, voting for Perot would increase the number of those endorsing him from their own base, and therefore voters going from the Democratic base to that of the Republican.

The committee's decision was met with great anger from Perot, who once referred to it as "a blatant display of power by the Republicans and the large donors who fund their campaign". He also emphasized that his 1992 presidential debates had appealed to an audience of eighty million citizens, and "any candidate who is excluded from these debates cannot present his views to the eighty million voters under any other method" (Brooke A1 as qtd. in Jelen 29). He had also attacked television networks because they refused to sell him some time after the presidential debate, immediately maintaining that the networks" think they're forcing us to our only recourse: being to buy one-minute television ads. And that's what they want. They don't want you to understand these problems in detail," (Jelen 29).

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Perot's team attempted to bring the case into court only six days after the decision, but the decision was very disappointing. The court rejected the case on the basis that it does not have the power to determine who would participate in those debates. The judge also believed that under the first amendment basis, Perot does not have the right to be included in the debate. In response, the team appealed to the court on the basis that the criteria are " subjective," and they complained about the damage caused to the Reform Party and its candidate in maintaining that their chances of winning were low. Indeed, those legal actions contributed to some media coverage, but clearly, they had no impact on increasing the deteriorating support for Perot. Now, the latter had to seek other alternatives that would compensate for the resources he missed because of major parties' pressure.

### 1.1.5.3. Perot as a Conventional Candidate:

Perot's campaign was primarily based on advertisement and reaching voters through infomercials, but because TV networks refused to sell him time, he could not implement his strategy of having fifteen blocks of time before Election Day. Eventually, he could gain a mere five long commercials occurring in a manner unpreferable in terms of time slots. Sometimes those commercials were broadcast at midnight so that few Americans would see them; other times, they were broadcast along with a famous show to prevent the majority of voters from coming across the billionaire's message. Consequently, Perot turned to a short advertisement, but they were not effective in communicating the message to the people as a member of his team emphasized short advertisements "are not a means of communicating the detailed information necessary for the American people to cast informed votes in November" (Jelen 30).

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There was another fundamental problem regarding short advertisements, which manifested in the slow response of citizens. A study conducted by the New York Times revealed that the audience that responded to Perot's advertisement represented half of those reacting to him in 1992. Perot understood that his campaign was suffering from serious shortcomings, primarily because of his exclusion from the debate and the alternative strategy of infomercials that did not attain the desired results. Therefore, he took the conventional candidate strategy as a last resort.

As election day approached, Perot started a long campaign of trips in which he had given speeches that would hopefully attract people, especially the youth, to support his candidacy and the Reform Party. However, as Jelen emphasized, there was a change in strategy as well as the rhetoric in those speeches. For instance, during the 1992 campaign and major parts of the 1996 election, Perot avoided personal attacks on the major party candidates. But this time, he implemented as many personal attacks as he could towards Clinton, especially the source of money for his campaign, Clinton 's lack of military experience, and his scandal-womanizing.

Near Election Day, Perot strived even harder to reach voters. For instance, he spent two million to buy thirty minutes of advertisements each on CBS and NBC and a single hour on ABC. The strategy was to broadcast them the night before Election Day, possibly because Perot thought people make their decision on the very last day of the election. Perot promised voters to watch "two hours of saturation bombing before you go to the polls."He also advertised himself in newspapers believing that President Clinton should be sued because he had issues with the financing of his campaign and other "sins". He had even challenged the president on some moral

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issues related to the presidency and the white house, but Clinton and his administration never offered a reply.

By the end of the election, Perot received 8 percent of the vote, which came to offer hopelessness from the presidency to Ross Perot. However, the Reform party benefited from this experience because it qualified for federal funding in the next presidential election. Hence, the creation of the Reform Party is one of the enduring legacies of Ross Perot. Some studies even compare Perot's candidacy and saw it as anticipation to Donald Trump's presidency since both candidates shared the legacy of being businessmen and the Republican party as well as the fact that Trump had once considered running on the Reform Party ticket for the presidency [26].

Having participated in two presidential races, one might ask why Perot's popularity in 1996 declined compared to that of 1992. After all, no candidate would have his support cut to half without some real factors. A study conducted by Ted Jelen showed some basic differences between the two elections though they were consecutive in terms of their timings. First, Perot's remarkable fame in the 1992 election occurred due to him being an outsider of the political system. In other words, he had no prior experience in politics, which helped him along with the ways he employed television in his campaign. Perhaps, his message was well heard among those who had been publically alienated. The only picture Americans had of him was that he was a

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[26] Donald Trump was an American politician, a businessman who served as a president of the United States between (2017-2021).

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successful businessman capable of effecting the needed change and addressing the nation's economic problems.

That picture, however, changed in 1966. Jelen emphasized that Perot's candidacy became an" eccentric, cranky politician," and the negative media coverage of his story between 1992 and 1996 had a strong contribution to his decline. Perot's candidacy decreased significantly to voters who observed that he was competing to achieve the nomination in a party he had built. Furthermore, Perot initially refused to accept federal funds that came as a result of his strong showing in 1992, yet the billionaire later agreed to the findings that had hurt him in two ways. First voters regarded him as a regular politician, and even worse, this money limited the amount he could spend on the campaign from his own wealth. All these conditions helped in the decline of Perot's candidacy in 1996.

Among all the problems he faced, the most devastating issue to Perot was the decision to dismiss him from the presidential debate. Statistics showed that the Texan candidate could prevail and win at least one of the three clashes that occurred between the presidential nominees that year. Perot was incapable of delivering the details of his campaign programs on the advertisements he bought, nor was he present in the debate that has no equal matching in terms of the attention captured by voters. Therefore, the only explicable justification for this deteriorating significance of the Perot candidacy was that the latter resembled a different candidacy from that of 1992, and the circumstances of the United States changed from the way it was four years ago (144).

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Additionally, the campaign of Perot in 1996 met with the difficulty of running against a major party candidate who had also stressed the necessity of reforming the economy. After all, Clinton, the Democratic candidate, emerged victorious in the 1992 election due to his ideas on the economy. Indeed, Perot's emphasis on the budget and the deficit was making sense to the majority of the American people. Nevertheless, experts insisted that the 1996 election was typical of those elections where voters reward or punish the incumbent president. It was fortunate for President Clinton that he was competing in his four years of economic recovery; the deficit rates declined sharply, and for many Americans, the economy was a source of optimism. Therefore one of the salient issues of Perot's candidacy in his first run no longer resonates with most voters in the next election.

Additionally, some other issues that were issues that were fundamental to Perot's first run had decreased in significance to voters in the next election:

Perot's grab bag of reform proposals _eliminating the Electoral College, shortening the electoral cycle, limiting congressional retirement packages, controlling exit polling, a national referendum covering every future tax increase, campaign finance reform, and the balanced budget amendment_did not capture the voters' imagination in 1996 (Jelen 146).

Although the Texan billionaire was able to deliver some criticism to the incumbent president, his weaknesses resembled his inability to advocate an issue that could appeal to the electorate. For instance, Perot said to his crowds in San Antonio, implying a dishonest president that no one is comfortable having his daughter serve in the White House immediately after college. On the issue of Whitewater's pardon, Perot announced, "surely if our President has the

moral and ethical base necessary to send our troops into combat, he would be strong enough to look the American people in the eye and say 'I will not pardon these people'" (Meet the press, transcript 1996 qtd. in Jelen 146). These attacks did have an impact, but with the absence of a strong alternative plan to stimulate voters, they never made the expected effect.

Another drawback that hindered the candidacy of Perot in 1996 compared to that of 1992 was that voters resented both the Democratic and the Republican candidates in the former election. Bush appeared unable to solve the recession in the economy, while Clinton was regarded as a southerner who would not be trusted to be the president. In the next election, however, people did not appreciate Clinton, but the idea that portrayed him as a risky president disappeared. In fact, voters appeared rather satisfied with the way he managed the economy, and a Gallup study revealed that 54 percent of voters were unsatisfied with the manner Bush managed the economy, yet dissatisfaction from Clinton in 1996 was a mere 31 percent. Therefore, it seems fair to suggest that the conditions under which Ross Perot ran in 1996 were unfavorable to him.

To sum up, several causes collaborated to result in a decline of the Perot voting in 1996. The data gathered suggest that Perot did not act as a spoiler in the 1992 election; instead, he took votes from Clinton and Bush. This means that his votes would return to major parties had he decided not to pursue the presidency that year.

-Perot Continuing Legacy:

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The Campaign that Perot ran may serve to illustrate the growing importance of Television in presidential elections. Along with that came several other developments, including "the continuing importance of advertising, the rise of 'soft news' talk shows as an important forum for candidates, the potential of television and other mass media formats to create an electronic town hall, and finally the potential that television offers Ross Perot- type candidates to make serious bids for the presidency even if they have little political power". Each of these issues requires some explanations.

The power of advertisement in influencing the decision of voters cannot be denied. As Kathleen Hall Jamieson observed, "political advertising is now the major means by which candidates for the presidency communicate their message to voters" ( qtd. in Jelen 31). Thanks to these advertisements, voters gain recognition for their candidates in terms of their personality and capabilities. It is also by virtue of these ads that a citizen can recognize the program and the policies that best suit his interest. Clearly, Perot was a master in using television, and throughout his campaign, he invented the sixty minutes ads that illustrate issues that are deemed necessary and important for voters to decide. He was also skilled in choosing the timing of releasing those ads, believing that the last days before the election may be the best to turn those undecided voters to his side.

The second feature characterizing Perot's campaign was his use of talk shows. The reason for Perot to appear in shows such as those of Larry King was to reach voters and promote his own candidacy. Perhaps, this was better than his conferences with the press, which appeared most of the time confrontational and where it was hard for him to be in control. Additionally, the

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nature of these shows seemed to convince voters that they have a candidate that they could trust since they are not available only for those special candidates that had the potential of winning elections.

Another key feature of the Perot campaign was establishing an electronic town hall, which served as a tightening link between him and his supporters and voters. This technology served well those voters who wanted to interact directly with their candidate in an environment not controlled by a show such as those of Larry King. This strategy was also compatible with the "populist strategy" he had already outlined.

Another remarkable note concerning the Perot campaign was that undecided voters would undoubtedly choose a candidate even without a political power standing behind him. This indeed mingled with Perot's skills in using Television, which led many Americans to endorse him. The actual key to this success was, as Jelen emphasized, "a personalized form of politics," which emphasized that Perot was able to go to Washington and clean up the chaos caused by politicians and corporations. This sense of heroism, as Benett emphasized, represented "a fantasy world, and like those of play, sport or fiction, it can involve people intensely on the basis of catharsis, escape hope, or sheer entertainment" (Benett, News 51 qtd. in Jelen 32). The main issue with this heroism was that it could not last long; this had occurred to Perot would happen to Perot following his involvement in some bad news appearing throughout his campaign, which brought his popularity into a sharp decline.

Perot's second run in 1996 contributed to the emergence of the Reform Party, which received Federal funds for the 2000 elections. Prominent figures considered running for that

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party, including President Trump, but later on, the nomination went to Buchanan [27]. The Reform Party had been victorious at the state level when Jessie Ventura, a wrestler, ran for Minnesota's governorship on a third-party ticket. Ventura was highly successful in overthrowing major party candidates and became one of the rare cases proving the effectiveness of third parties at the state level.

Some studies compare Ross Perot to the recent Republican President Donald Trump because of the similarities that both candidates shared. Both men had been closer to the Republican Party, and both were businessmen. The latter feature suggests that corporations do not support the candidate and that his a bussssinessssman's arrival at the White House is more about serving the interest of the people rather than his own.

One of the Perot Campaign's clear contributions lies in its ability to direct attention towards a possible multiparty democracy in America. Christian Collet believed that before Perot's candidacy, some third parties such as that of George Wallace and John Anderson which attracted the attention of the two major parties, but it was until 1992 that resulted in Perot's 19 percent of vote that scholars considered the destruction of the two-party system by third political party (Collet 431). In other words, Perot's legacy may have suggested that a third political force can defy the historical two-party system and regain the presidency.

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[27] President Trump run on a Republican Ticket on the election of 2016 against the Democratic candidate Hillary Clinton and became a president.

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Generally, scholars emphasized the role of the Perot campaign by integrating the salient issues of Deficit and government spending into the political mainstream after being ignored by the major parties. For some other scholars, it served as a reminder of the necessity to bring the government into the hands of the people, an idea that would be endorsed later by Ralph Nader and the Green Party.

### 1.1.6. Ralph Nader and the Green Party:

Change in America had been tightly associated with third political parties. Whenever a running third-party exist, there is a call for change in America. The Green Party in 2000 was not an exception. The party was founded in 1984 when state-level Greens met to create a national party. Although many social movements had endorsed it, its central ideas remained attached to the environment, grassroots democracy, social justice, and non-violence. In 2000, the party nominated Ralph Nader as a presidential candidate.

Deciding to enter the race was not motivated primarily by the ambitions of the presidency; after all, Nader was confident that third parties did not stand a chance to beat the giant major parties. Instead, Perot hoped that he would achieve five percent of the popular vote, which would allow him to gain federal funding. That money, eventually, would be employed to create a third-party movement, which would, in turn, challenge the duopoly, a term that he used to refer to the domination of national politics by the two major parties: the Democrats and the Republicans.

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Third political parties are repeatedly absorbed by major parties, especially when minor parties show a potential possible impact. This role is true in the case of Ralph Nader, who near Election Day, appeared to hurt the candidacy of Al Gore. When that fear became a possibility, Nader was asked by the Democrats to either endorse their candidate or withdraw from the race. The data gathered suggested that Nader refused to comply with the Democrats, and perhaps he enjoyed being a risk to their candidate after long years of ignoring him. It is difficult to determine exactly what led him to act in this way. Some suggested that his personality, true beliefs in his cause, or even his animosity with the Democratic candidate might have contributed to his decision.

One big challenge that confronted Nader and all the previous third-party leaders was ballot access. In this context, he had been very successful since he could claim 45 out of 50 states along with the District of Columbia. Soon after that, Nader announced his attempt to visit all fifty states. His campaign appeared very weak in terms of management, although he depended on the Green chapter for coordination. For instance, delays in schedules were so common, and the planning was repeatedly submitted to change that only ten people appeared in the auditorium in places such as North Dakota. Nevertheless, Nader maintained his goal of visiting all fifteen states, including Hawaii and Alaska.

The next goal set by Nader was to gain the nomination of the Green Party. Nader won the nomination against the three opponents who had achieved 23 votes to 295 to Nader. He appointed Winona La Duke as his running mate, and a key feature of his acceptance speech was to attack several institutions, including the two major parties, Congress, corporate America, and

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the Commission on Presidential Debates. Nader referred to Bush and Gore as "Bore and Gush," and during the campaign, he saw them as " indistinguishable drab and dreary."

Nader also faced the challenge of raising money. He contacted some of his contact for support, but this did not work well. The only source that he could resort to was donations, and through this strategy, he raised 8 million to finance his campaign. Poor management also appeared here as Nader failed to spend that money effectively. Actually, Nader was a stubborn candidate who was unwilling to employ television in the advertisement of his campaign due to his hatred for the Corporation that stood behind TV networks (Green 132).

Fighting corporations stood as the main issue of Nader's Campaign. He sought to achieve this through public financing of elections. But along with that, he was willing to raise other issues that concerned the American People:

He favored universal health care, investment in mass transit, cuts in military spending, a higher minimum wage, environmental protection, greater voter participation through weekend voting or a special holiday, abortion rights, and gun control. He opposed free-trade agreements embodied in NAFTA and GATT (General Agreement on Trade and Tariff), claiming they were hastily passed with little debate, superseding domestic laws on the environment and consumer protection (Green 133)

Nader later forged views of his own regarding race, the middle east, and minority rights. His speeches were commonly presented to college audiences, although he had spoken to other

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people about the progress of his campaign. He had successfully employed some modern campaigning compromises, but still, he rejected "celebrity endorsement and photo ops."

During the early days of the campaign, Nader was very frustrated with the lack of media attention. This disappointment would be lessened with a visit of New York Times political editor Jim Roberts. The process was to determine a date as a "paper of record" for the print as well as broadcast media, and the success of the story suggests that it would receive more attention and coverage. Robert, in his meeting with Nader, revealed the possibility that Nader's campaign might harm that of Al Gore, stating, "you have the potential to do the most damage" in reference to California. The reporter also advised him to turn his campaign into a "real factor in the race" involving the possibility of acting as a spoiler, and he promised that he would cover him as long as he drew large crowds. Indeed, the Green's convention was covered, and there had been an article entitled "Once Seen as Odd Man Out, Nader Is Rocking Gore's Boat." Another article followed dealing with Nader as a spoiler as if the Times was willing to continue on that story of spoiling effect.

As soon as the Democratic Party realized the possible damage that might come from spoiling, they employed two strategies to stop that advancement. In typical situations, the major party is likely to co-opt the causes rallied by those third parties. As Barbara Perry noted, "so, almost as soon as a splinter group goes off and plans their own platform, one of the major parties or sometimes both, try to bring those people in. "the big parties," she insisted," are like amoebas trying to go round the fringe groups and fold them in" (Katie Mcnally news Virginia .edu). Actually, Gore implemented this strategy by positioning himself on the left of the salient issues

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of this election. Therefore, he spoke against oil corporations from exploiting the nation's resources and the economy, and he supported the use of clean energy as well as ensuring efficiency in the use of fossil fuels.

The change in position that Gore pursued was highly effective, especially in terms of some issues such as the environment, which had labeled him as an environmentalist. In addition, he attacked the previous Republican government and the Republican faction in Congress, which did not design " a prescription drug plan or a patient bill of rights" to avoid pharmaceutical pricing. He was meticulous not to provide solutions lest he would harm those corporations that stood behind him, but he continued his attacks similarly. Some analyses claimed that it was by virtue of Nader's populist rhetoric that the Republican candidate Bush enhanced and got better. Nader expressed his confusion and believed that statements such as "the question is whether you're for the people or for the powerful" might be confusing to Gore as well since he had been a vice president and part of eight years of service with Clinton.

The second strategy that Gore implemented against Nader was to apply direct personal attacks on him:

Surrogates like Nevada Democrat Sen. Harry Reid called Nader ''. . . a very selfish person and he's on an ego trip.''51 Even the ''grey lady,'' the New York Times, steadied her walker with one hand as she wacked Nader editorially with the other, calling his campaign, ''a self-indulgent exercise.'' The Times expressed horror with Nader's characterization of Republicans and Democrats as Tweedledee and Tweedledum, stating there were important differences, especially in relation to issues of concern to wage earning

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voters, and also adding that just because Nader was frustrated during the Clinton years, didn't mean he should play the spoiler role by tilting states like California into the conservative column (134).

Eventually, this strategy worked as well, and the Al Gore rating decreased from 6 percent to 3 percent.

To compensate for his loss and confront the Republican strategy, Nader sought a tactic that would render his strength and revitalize the energy in his campaign. Therefore, he agreed to organize events through a visit to Portland. A risky plan was suggested that participants would be charged 7 dollars which was inconceivable, and if ended with failure, the media would seize this opportunity to show their weaknesses. The result was shocking even to members of the Green Party who found that 6000 tickets were sold. Nevertheless, the event was a success for Nader, who spoke about educational reforms claiming the necessity of creating a better citizens out of kids and not better consumers. Tax reform was another issue that should be placed in the right place, especially in the pockets of polluters and not average Americans.

Furthermore, Nader could not waste this opportunity to attack the two major parties or as he named them," the duopoly" and corruption that became a key feature of the American political system. The success achieved in the Portland event led to other events and super rallies such as the New York Madison Square Garden which attracted the support of several important figures such as actors, journalists, and others. There, Nader renewed his attacks on the two major parties and the corrupt corporation that supported them. Other speakers at the event asked voters

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not to worry about fewer votes for Nader because still, those votes will prevent Gore from attaining the presidency and giving office to the least of the two evils George Bush. "the lesser of two evils, you still end up with evil" he emphasized, "You don't make a decision because of fear; you make it on your hopes, your dreams, your aspirations. Follow your conscience, do the right thing" (Green 136).

Despite the relative success of his rallies, Nader believed that these strategies were incomparable to the presidential debate in terms of Consequences. Through the presidential debate, the presidential candidate can reach 100 million citizens in a limited period of three nights. Until 1984, the presidential debate was run by the League of Women Voters, but in 1988, the Commission on Presidential Debate took over. Green insisted that the word commission involves an organization or an official body, but it actually covers " a private organization run by Nader's so-called duopoly: the Democrats and the Republicans and supported by private or corporate donations" (136). This body was the one that decided who could be included in the debate. The shift that occurred via the ruling of this organization is primarily owed to the strong showing of Ross Perot in 1992, who had been a victim of the same organization when he was prevented from participating in the debate in 1996.

This time the commission put some measures for candidates to be included. First, they required the candidate to have an average of 15 minimum in the five national polls in late September. Green believed that this measure was misleading and unrealistic:

However, this self-serving justification flew in the face of certain inconvenient facts. In 1998, Jesse Ventura, the Reform Party candidate for Minnesota governor, stood at only

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10 percent in the polls when he debated Republican Norm Coleman and Democrat Skip Humphrey. He went on to win the election. A similar outcome emerged in Wisconsin when Russ Feingold, who stood at 10 percent for the Democratic nomination for the U.S. Senate before the debates, defeated his Democratic rivals and proceeded to win the state-wide race (Green 136).

Nader attempted to bring the case to the court on the basis that federal funding is given to presidential candidates who successfully managed to take 5 percent of the votes maintaining that corporation intervention violates the Federal Election Campaign Act. But the case went nowhere. Later on, Professor James Raskin, an advocate of Nader's case suggested another criterion to decide on the case. He wanted to bring the case to the people to decide instead of tracing the case to the presidential preferences. The result of the polls was high support for both Nader and Buchanan's appearances in the presidential debate. For instance, Fox poll conducted a survey in July, in which a percentage of 64 percent wanted to see Nader in the debate. This pushed Nader to organize rallies on the slogan of "Let Ralph Debate_Hey Hey Corporate State Let Ralph Debate." Their major protest occurred in Boston two days before the Debate, where a gathering of 12000 protesters volunteered to pay 10 dollars. In Washington, supporters of Nader appeared next to the offices of the Debate Commission, and Nader himself suggested that he would attend as a member of the audience. However, police and representatives of the commission prevented his attendance maintaining that " it was already been decided that whether or not you have a ticket, you are not invited."

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By the end of the debate, Nader's popularity increased, reflecting voters' dissatisfaction with the poor performance of the two major parties in the presidential debate. Viewers of the debate had also declined from 46 million in the first debate reaching 37 million in the second as well as the third debate. Polls also revealed that one in seven voters could not decide on one of the two candidates. This increase in popularity was met with more severe attacks from Gore's left supporters. The list included the National Organization for Women and Human Rights Campaign. For instance, Gloria Steinem, a long-time feminist, had brought " Top ten reasons why I am not voting for Nader." Some of her reasons included the fact that Nader was running not for the presidency but for federal funding; he maintained that little difference exists between the two major parties. The attacks went further to include former supporters of Nader who asked him to withdraw from the race.

 It should be noted that Nader never considered winning the presidency or defeating Al Gore. His campaign came to achieve the necessary 5 percent that would allow him to receive money to start a movement against the two-party dominance. Therefore, his campaign strategy varied. For instance, one of his advisers suggested that the voting campaign should urge voters in the 35 states that are contested between the two candidates to "vote their conscience." The point was to increase voting for him without attempting to support one candidate over the other. For the remaining 15 states where elections were close, an advisor to Nader suggested that they should check elections and cast the ballot for Al Gore in close states. Nader appeared to support this strategy claiming that "tactical voting" is not of his concern. The truth was that he enjoyed his role as a spoiler that would influence major parties.

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Even as election day approached, the media's attack on Nader continued. The Times, for instance, referred to his candidacy as "willful prankishness" as well as "ego run amok." The journals launched a severe attack on Nader, especially on his assertion that there is not a single difference between the Republicans and the Democrats. The Times anticipated a Bush victory in close percentage, assuming that a little influence would come out of Nader's campaign.

Meanwhile, Gore and the Republicans made an official attempt to convince Nader to withdraw from the race because of their desperation. Therefore, they contacted Myron Cherry, a high-ranking advisor who had worked with Nader. The plan if he accepted to withdraw was to implement " Nader's recommendations for several important ranking posts such as head of the Environment Protection Agency. " However, Cherry reported to the campaign that he was unwilling to receive or accept the offer claiming that " it was like we were pariah." Another attempt was made to contact a former close associate of Nader Joan Claybrook, but she apologized, claiming that Nader" is one of the most stubborn people in the U.S." and this attempt would be " a waste of time" (Green 138).

By the end of the election, Nader failed to receive 5 percent of the votes, and accordingly, he was not qualified for federal funding in the next election. He received 2.7 percent and 2,858,843 popular votes. However, the 2000 election became one of those controversial elections in the history of American politics. In terms of the popular vote, Al Gore outnumbered Bush by a difference of 540,519 popular votes. But in the Electoral College, Bush won 271 to 266 electoral votes for Al Gore after winning the 25 electoral votes in Florida. Nader came third, and Buchannan came fourth in the race. Evidence suggested that despite the the small percentage that

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he received, Nader's candidacy hurt the Democratic candidate Al Gore, and threw the presidency to Republican George Bush.

Nader continued his run as an independent in the election of 2004 against Bush and John Kerry, in which he ranked third with 463,655 votes and a percentage of 0.38. Despite this poor showing, Nader came ahead of the remaining 13 third-party candidates. In 2008, he ran as an independent against Obama and John McCain and received 793.051 popular votes and a percentage of 0.58 percent of the votes. Again, he came ahead of 20 third-party candidates, including the Green Party's candidate (Green 140).

What Nader and the Green party had accomplished in this election might not be that huge apart from the spoiling he played against Al Gore. Nevertheless, a deep prospect and success came despite the few votes garnered. For example, almost a third of his voters announced that they would not participate at all had Nader refused to compete in the 2000 election. These voters found out that they were not alone in their call to revive civic values that were truly reflected in Nader's campaign.

## 1.3. Conclusion:

During the last fifty years, the need for reforms and resentment of the status quo was a key feature of American society. At first, that resentment came in the form of hope that the government would favor those minorities that had been subjugated to oppression, discrimination, and lack of civil rights. Therefore, third parties that emerged during this period either supported

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the policies of the segregationist south or attempted to challenge the very party that they sought for the presidential nomination. Other racial parties also emerged but with little significance.

Later on, and especially from the mid-eighties towards the end of the century, Americans appeared not to trust the major political parties as well as the overwhelming political system. The various scandals such as Watergate and Vietnam caused by the succeeding governments may have contributed to this. The third political force showing had been powerful, particularly in the case of Ross Perot, Anderson, and Wallace because of the salient issues they advocated. For instance, George Wallace opposed desegregation while Ross Perot attempted to solve the budget and the deficit issue. Furthermore, the increase in third-party voting during this era was driven by considerable dissatisfaction from major party candidates such as Bush and Clinton in 1992.

The last fifty years were significant for third parties because they signaled the birth of expecting the decline of the two-party system. One signal that may confirm this was the growth in the number of voters identifying as independents. This type of voters had been the grassroots of movements such as that of Ross Perot. This effort persisted towards the end of the century with the attempt of Ralph Nader to achieve the required number of votes and apply for federal funds only to start a movement against the monopoly of the duopoly or the two-party system. Eventually, Nader failed to apply for federal funding, but he was able to change the outcome of the 2000 election with the small percentage he acquired, which helped elect Bush and alienated Al Gore.

From another angle, the growth of independent candidates was not comparable to that large size identifying with the major parties:

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Whereas change has occurred, the decline is a relative one. Most voters continue to be party identifiers, pure independents never constituting more than 16 percent of the electorate. In presidential and Congressional elections, most identifiers continue to vote for their party's candidates, indicated by a defection rate which peaked at 27 percent in 1972. In other words, the proportion of voters casting a vote consistent with their identification never fell below 73 percent. Unchanged also is the predominance of Democrats among party identifiers, an advantage which has lasted for half a century (McSweeney 195)

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## Chapter Four: Locating Challenging Third Political Parties within the Two Party System and the Future of American Democracy

After reviewing third political parties, this chapter attempts to analyse these political parties in various aspects and examines American democracy in the current era in an attempt to determine its challenges. The eventual aim is to address the possible reforms that could fix those problems, and evaluate the possibility of their implementation.

### 1.1. Varieties of American Third Parties in the American Two-Party System

There seem to be two types of parties. The former refers to the type of parties that usually continue to nominate candidates and endures for decades despite the substantial lack of success they suffer in most elections. For the most part, doctrinal parties sustained themselves due to the loyalty of their constituent rather than any hope of partisan victory. With all the constraints that hinder the advancement of third parties, doctrinal parties are alienated by the extremism of their creeds and the loyalty of their members. Throughout their lifetime, these parties could not exceed 6 in elections, and to many others, the American election process is wholly seen as a "Sham or fraud" and does not deserve their candidate's running. This type of party was common in the 19th-century party systems, while transient parties are profoundly seen in the twentieth-century third parties. (Gillespie 10)

On the other hand, a short-lived party refers to parties that may last for a short period but do impact public policy and elections. This category of parties is remarkably transient in the sense that they cannot last for an extended period of time. Some may even call these parties

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"eruptions" to emphasize this feature. Other historians believed that third parties of the twentieth century might have a lower life span than their 19th-century counterparts. The data gathered suggests two ways by which they emerge. They could come as a reform movement from the people or after splitting from one of the major parties:

> The genesis of parties of this particular kind has taken two different forms. Some of these parties begin as factions that secede from one of the two major parties. Their leaders try to incorporate many voters who gave their support in the past to the major party. Second, a secessionist party may seek by its withdrawal to punish the major party and force it to reformulate its being and essence. The secessionists may intend, if not that, to leave for good and to work to alter the party system itself (Gillespie 42)

Some leaders of third parties also believe that another category exists referring to parties that disappeared after being major parties. The two-party system, they argued, did not continue without interruptions since 1790. For instance, the Democratic-Republicans opposed the Federalists; the National Republicans opposed the Democrats; the Democrats opposed the Whigs, and finally, the Democrats opposed the Republicans. New third parties like the case of the Whig Party and the newly founded Republican Party have replaced the fading major. Although some historians doubt this theory believing that these interruptions of the two-party system were "interludes of one-partyism rather than multi-partyism," and that some contemporary third parties find hope in this theory (Gillespie 11).

Indeed, the reason why these parties disappear varied, yet resources appear as a prominent cause:

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Transient parties die quickly because their appeal proves transitory. It is difficult to organize effectively for the long haul. American major parties, pragmatic beings that they are, always keep the upcoming election in their sights. A major party, like a sponge, sops appropriates or steals things that have value or that pose a threat to the position and the electoral objectives of that major party. The more popular an idea or issue put forth by a third party, the more likely it is that one of the major parties (one at least) will take it for itself. The purpose is, of course, to win over to the major party's electoral coalition all but the third party's most irredeemable loyalists. Major parties rarely if ever (Gillespie 43).

## 1.2. Constraints against Third Political Parties:

Indeed, the failure to bridge the two-party system for over hundred and sixty years is not a coincidence. Indeed the possibility that third parties would be successful had these obstacles been removed is quit high. The best Narrative of these obstacles can be traced to a study done by Rosenstone in his book *Third Parties in America* that acknowledged the existence of three fundamental types of obstacles preventing a multiparty Democracy in America. These constraints include barriers, handicaps, and major party strategies.

### 1.2.1. Barriers:

By barriers, the study deals with prominent laws that prevent the success of third parties in America. In contrast to the common view, election laws are not neutral in the U.S.A. and they do influence the outcomes of elections:

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They form barriers that block the emergence and discourage the growth of more than two parties. These biases help ensure that the Democrats and Republicans retain their position of dominance. The founding fathers created some of these barriers; the two major parties have helped erect others (Rosenstone et al. 16).

Actually. most of these constraints on third parties had their origins during the turn of the century. This period is considered as the birth of modern political parties, and the two-party system, as Dish emphasized in his controversial thesis. This contradicts the view that emphasizes the mid-nineteenth century as the period when the Democrats and Republicans had tightened their control over congress and the presidency and ran candidates on all levels. It was also the period when major parties constituted three forms of parties: party organization, party in office, and party in the electorate. This last feature distinguished "the mass parties of representative democracy" from "the party caucuses of the early decades of the republic. Dish, however, defended her thesis on the platform that major parties did not ban fusion, which was the sole element that allowed real competition between parties at that time (15). If the two major parties are strong, it would be through these laws elected at the state level, which banned fusion and eliminated the chances of third parties until the modern era (Scarrow 634)

### 1.2.1.1. Constitutional Biases:

The single-member district represents a historical challenge for third parties in the USA. This system is dominant, representing the most form of election practiced in the USA at all levels, and it highly contributes to the collapse of any third-party movement. Under this electoral system, parties that compete over seats could gain seats only if they successfully won

the majority of the vote. In other words, even if a third party gained a considerable number of votes, he will not win any actual seat because the one who takes the majority of votes in the state, local, or even national election will undoubtedly gain all the votes, including those of his failed opponents. This system contradicts proportional representation, where winning a percentage of votes would determine an equal percentage in Congress.

The impact of this system on the American government is tremendous because voters are conscious about the chances of third parties, especially in a national election. Therefore, they would assume that a vote cast to a third political party is a wasted vote. This, in turn, leads to suspicion among members of third parties who had either to disappear from the political stage permanently or to locate themselves within one of the two major parties. Meanwhile, major parties will absorb the main issues proclaimed by those third parties to extend the size of their base supporters. Therefore, the single-member district or the winner-takes-all system crashes third parties while making major parties eminent and secure against any potential challenge.

At the national election, the single-member district had another impact on both third parties or third party leaders. It limits the possibility of gaining the power to one single option: securing enough electoral votes not to win elections per se but to throw the election to the House of Representatives in case no major party secured the majority of these votes. Again, this might seem even more difficult considering the fact that the national election occurs in fifty states along with the District of Columbia. Therefore, even though third parties might gain some electoral votes, it is very unlikely that this might occur in all states within the same election.

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One aspect confirming the discrimination between third and major parties appears clearly in national third parties that failed to secure the majority of votes in every state. The Electoral College favors those parties that are strong regionally than those who might gain the popular vote only. For instance, Strom Thurmond in 1984 successfully secured 7.3 of the votes in the Electoral College with only 2.4 percent of the popular vote. Meanwhile, John Anderson had barely gained a single electoral vote despite securing a larger number of popular votes (6.6 percent) compared to Thurmond (17). Another example was Ross Perot in 1992, who had been very successful as a third party generating almost 20% of the popular votes, but he failed to attain any single vote in the Electoral College. This case really depicts the tyranny of the two-party system, and for that reason, one of the demands of Ross Perot in his campaign was to abolish the Electoral College.

Since it is the most historical and significant barrier, some may reckon that Abolishing the electoral college might appear the most significant barrier that had long supported the two-party system over pluralism and third parties. Yet Rosenstone et.al. believed that this popular ideal is wrong, and is not likely to support the growth of third parties (17). One argument they put forward was that the alternative proportional representation system would be applied, and major parties had to gain 40 percent of the votes to win the presidency. The latter condition suggests that third parties had to secure 20 percent of the popular votes, which occurred only three times after 1840.

The single-member district results in the short life span of third political parties. For a third party to survive, they had to reward and benefit their supporters. The data gathered suggest

that the majority of third parties could run only once (58 percent) or twice (16 percent) before they deteriorate. David Gillespie referred to them as transient third parties. For that reason, voters must continue to lay support to these parties regardless of the election outcomes. However, even this support might be difficult to continue considering the withering feature of third parties. Therefore it is vivid that "the single-member-district represents "the single largest barrier to third party vitality" (17).

### 1.2.1.2. **Ballot Access Restrictions:**

One of the constraints that hinder the success of third parties is restrictions on the ballot, which refers to the ability of a party to be recognized as a competitor in an election. This constraint had been linked to the effort of major parties to sabotage other third parties:

> Ballot access is one provision that contemporary party scholars have studied as a strategy in a war of maneuver by looking for patterns in the ways that states imposed restrictions on third-party electoral participation. Regulations of ballot access, then, was no simple consequence of ballot reform but a highly politicized tactic in a war of maneuver (Disch 50)

These reforms had created a biased environment that predominantly benefits the Democrats and the Republicans:

> Whereas major party candidates automatically appear on the ballot, third parties must petition state election officials to be listed. A candidate whose name does not appear is obviously disadvantaged: voters are not cued when they enter the polling booth; it is difficult and at times embarrassing for a voter to cast a write–in ballot. (Rosenstone et al. 19)

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During the nineteenth century, ballot access was not a requirement in American elections. Rosenstone et.al. asserted that "prior to about 1890, the political parties, not the states, prepared and distributed election ballots (or 'tickets,' as they were called), listing only their own candidates. Thus, "Party workers peddled their ballots, usually of a distinct color and shape, at polling stations on election day." So, the custom was that parties could distribute tickets instead of states, and voters would vote publically, not secretly. Gillespie listed some negative impacts of the old system, including the fact that it was hard to vote third party publically, and voters were hesitant to take a third party ballot, especially when third parties could not nominate candidates for all potential seats. However, at least, this old system "allowed all parties equal access to voters on election day" (35). In other words, it was not difficult for third parties to compete in the elections.

Additionally, the old system of voting had another advantage to third political parties. It was easy for parties to practice fusion among themselves and make the party influential and effective [28]. Lisa Dine Dishe insisted that thanks to this system that fusion was a common feature of the nineteenth century; those voters never considered the vote for a third party as a wasted vote:

In the nineteenth century, third parties and 'major' parties not only resembled each other structurally; they actually depended on each other. As a result, voters from the mid-to the late- nineteenth century did not regard a third party ballot as a wasted ballot: it was a

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[28] From the time it twas banned, there was an attempt to restore fusion in 1990s in the supreme court Timmons v. Twin Cities Area New Party, but the case was not approved by the judges.

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force that enabled dissenters to swing the 'balance of power'. Dissenters wielded power, in part, because elections then were more closely contested than they are today. But they could not have done it without recourse to fusion, a nominating strategy that is no longer available (Dish 41).

Indeed, this old voting system had some shortcomings, including practices such as fraud and intimidation that accompanied the process of election, and these shortcomings constituted the major factor that led the government to replace it. Nevertheless, the Australian ballot that was introduced as an alternative had a deadly impact on third political parties. In this context, David Gillespie believed that when the power of printing ballot papers moved to states, the latter responded with recommendations or conditions for those who wanted their name on Ballot. Those regulations were devastating to third party forces:

> States intended through these laws and regulations to support both the two-party system and the dominance of the two existing majors within it. They developed loftier and more persuasive rationalizations for these acts: keeping the ballot more comprehensible to voters, deterring dangerous radicalism, facilitating consensus building and mandate giving. Many states assumed the major parties' right both to appear on the ballot and to keep their ballot positions from election to election (Gillespie 35)

Even in states where major parties had been submitted to these laws, other severe laws were put on those third parties compared to the two parties that had resources to fulfill those conditions throughout all other states. From then on, ballot access functioned properly to alienate any possible third voice. For instance, in Ohio, there had been a law that prevented the participation

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of third parties for four consecutive elections (1952-1964). This law reappeared in 1968 with the candidacy of George Wallace, who had to collect half a million signatures by February before the next election in November. When the case moved to the court, the state of Ohio confirmed attempted to preserve the hegemony of the two-party system within the state. Although the Supreme Court repealed the statute, some other practices remained in effect in the state.

Certainly, these barriers represent an "arduous task" for third parties who had to confront fifty-one different sets of bureaucratic hurdles (Rosenstone 20). The deadlines for petition signatures had been made challenging. As soon as John Anderson announced his presidency on April 2, 1980, he realized that five deadlines had expired, including those of (Ohio, Maryland, New Mexico, Maine, and Kentucky). From the standpoint of some historians," this lack of a uniform petition period of filing deadline that a third party or independent candidate can not mount a nationwide effort." Instead, Rosenstone continued, "he must hold fifty-one different drives at different times during the campaign" (21). In addition to deadlines, there had been some restrictions on the people eligible to sign petitions. For example, recording detailed information that is possibly unknown to many people is an obligation in South Carolina, while some other states prescribed conditions on the distribution of these signatures.

In recent years, some of these laws were repealed but this did not change the fate of third parties because it was a marginal victory, and these laws challenged all third parties of the twentieth century without exception. Some candidates such as Robert La Follette even ventured

to run under different names such as "Progressive", "independent", "progressive –independent" and "socialist"_ running the risk of confusing his voters and implying the temporary nature of his movement. In 1936 William Lemke, the presidential nominee of the Union Party could overcome ballot restrictions only in thirty-four states and was compelled to run under different names as well. The situation might have been worse for other independents like Henry Wallace in 1948 who confronted not only statutes that excluded Communists from the ballot but also "capricious administration of other access laws as well ((Schmidt 124-52 qtd. In Rosenstone et al. 24). George Wallace ran under several labels as well, and almost all third parties had confronted the same issues.

Another consequence of the Australian ballot on third parties was linked to the costs of printing tickets:

> Under the unofficial ballot system, a party needed organization and resources to print its tickets and distribute them on election day. But organization and resources are two commodities that third parties have always lacked. The shift to the official ballot eliminated these costs; the ballots were now printed and distributed at public expense. (Rosenstone et al. 25)

### 1.2.1.3. **Campaign Finance Laws:**

Campaign finance laws play a major role in alienating third political parties. One prominent example can reflect this animosity towards third-party challengers. In 1998, Jessie Ventura successfully gained the governorship of Minnesota, which had been dominated by the

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two major parties. Ventura had been able to break this monopoly of power primarily because of the campaign finance laws that were enacted in the state of Minnesota:

> Jesse Ventura was every inch the Minnesota phenomenon the pundits made him out to be. But this was due neither to the state's "populist" political culture nor to its hick susceptibility to Ventura's star appeal. The state's election and campaign finance law made it uniquely possible for Ventura's supporters to defy the most prominent of our 'copybook maxims about democracy.' Ventura invoked this maxim on election night when, finding the one place where the vernacular of action heroes meets that of political scientists, he boasted, 'Well guess what? Those 'wasted votes' wasted them' (Disch 2)

This historical incident showed how fragile the two-party system is when stripped off the laws guarding its position.

Money in politics had grown over the years and had harmed American Democracy. Even those candidates who had succeeded in being elected came to denounce this game; Zill Miller is one of them:

> Make no mistake about it: When it comes to winning political races by raising millions of dollars and buying lots of TV time, I'm as competitive as they come. I've done it three times in a row now -- once for the Senate and twice for governor -- and it's the formula for success in politics today. But frankly, it's a rotten formula, and the rules of this game need to change. (Miller)

Some observers even regard American democracy as a monocracy to reflect the powerful impact of money.

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## 1.2.2. Handicaps:

The term "handicaps" refers to those issues that did not stem from an official discriminatory law but similarly had the same impact of making the vote for a third party very consuming. These elements include few resources, poor press coverage, and unqualified legitimate candidates.

### 1.2.2.1. Campaign Resources:

The success of any political party is bound by the availability of resources. Generally, third parties lacked resources in comparison to the major parties. Even before the two parties came with the Federal Election Act, third parties spending had been deficient:

Even the most successful minor party challengers amass only a fraction of the resources available to their Democratic and Republican opponents. Former president Theodore Roosevelt , the best financed third party candidate on record, spent only 60 percent of the average major party total in 1912; George Wallace spent 39 percent and John Anderson only 49 percent when they ran (Rosenstone 27).

Rosenstone et.al. concluded that the scarcity of resources meant that third political parties "are significantly disadvantaged, if not crippled. Their ability to rent Technical expertise, gather political intelligence, and campaign_especially through the media _ is obviously restricted" (29). Superiority in resources could result from the ability of major parties to have ballot access without too much spending, unlike other third parties. As McSweeney Dean emphasized, if the two major parties are extremely powerful today, then it is through the " institutional reforms of the decline period, such as the provision of the public funding of the

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major parties' presidential campaigns in advance of the election, that have strengthened the Republicans and Democrats against smaller competitors" (195).

Without reaching a huge number of voters, presidential candidates are incapable of attracting a considerable base of voters. Advertisements and other forms of campaigns require resources. With the absence of capital that supports campaign finance, third parties are "able to purchase only a fraction of the political advertisement bought by the Democrats and Republicans" Rosenstone 30). Statistics showed that George Wallace, who is considered the well-financed contemporary third party presidential candidate, could receive only one-sixth of the time allocated to candidates of major parties. Other minor parties could not acquire one-twentieth of the time in comparison to major parties.

Money and finance constitute one aspect of resources needed to win voters' support; other aspects include "elite support or a well-oiled, experienced party or candidate organization, which was an element that third parties lacked. Major party. Hayne wrote in 1924 that "party machinery has become so complex and requires so much technical skill in its manipulation that there seems less and less chance of its overthrow or seizure by inexperienced workers. It almost seems as though the Republican and Democratic parties must go on indefinitely(Hayne 156 qtd.in Rosenstone et al. 32). This conclusion seems logical considering the experience of some minor parties, including the liberty party and the Free Soil Party organizations, compared to Whigs and Democrats in the nineteenth century. In recent years, Henry Wallace and William Lemke have all been victims of weak organizations.

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Why do third parties share a consistency of poor organization? Historians outlined some major causes:

> Because third parties are short-lived, they have a little time to build an electoral apparatus. Moreover, unlike the major parties, most presidential third parties do not run slates of congressional, state, and local candidates. So, they have no other campaign organization to draw upon. (Rosenstone et al. 32)

The above-outlined facts served to prevent any third party victory in federal, state, or local elections, and this, in turn, did prevent parties from building patronage or loyalty among voters, which had been a prominent factor for winning elections during the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century.

Third political parties might have been able to over some of these issues had they been successful in attracting prominent leaders and elected officials to endorse their cause and party. But in most cases, this effort resulted in failure. For example, Robert La Follette lacked support from other Republican senators who had some concerns about their future careers in the Republican Party. Actually, the most successful third-party leader, President Theodore Roosevelt, was not an exception; he failed to attract "elite support" to his side, and the majority of Republicans who supported him against Taft, including seven of eight governors, never explicitly denounced the Republican Party. Other candidates, including William Lemke and Anderson, had also confronted similar conditions.

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### 1.2.2.2. Media Coverage

Additionally, media reports portraying third parties as hopeless losers constituted another strategy of undermining the importance of third parties. Anderson's candidacy stood as a typical example. At the beginning of his campaign, the Times saw Anderson in terms of his intellect and skills and potentially strong politician citing some statistics about his popularity in California and New York; however, as Rosenstone et.al. noted, "the media 's tendency to focus on the Horserace soon brought stories highlighting hopelessness of Anderson's cause (34). The press delivered reports about him focusing on aspects of decline. One reporter wrote that "with some exceptions? Anderson's leading supporters and advisors have abandoned their dream of winning the election". A New York Times reporter made it clear that "the independent candidate no longer has a serious chance of winning," and the Washington Post reporter referred to Anderson's candidacy as "a fiasco" and noted that it did not stand any chance. The media focus was later directed predominantly towards the decline of the movement, financial problems and resources, and failure to win endorsement" so that as the election became close, Anderson, a well speaker, and clever orator was "fuzzy," "humorless," and "highflown" candidate.

The media possibly did not intentionally destroy the reputation of third party candidates, particularly Anderson, but as observed by historians, "the media can affect voters' perceptions by concentrating on who will win instead of what the candidates are saying" (Rosenstone 34). Consequently, major parties will undoubtedly prevail, and third parties cannot. Although estimating the impact of that damage caused by the media is quite difficult, the apparent

unquestionable result was that by the end of the election, voters were overwhelmingly convinced that Anderson had no chance, at least from the standpoint of the media.

Another spotlight area where third political parties are excluded is the presidential debate, apart from the two major parties candidates Nixon and Kennedy, in 1960, Ford and Carter in 1976. Anderson constituted an exception when he debated Reagan in 1980, but the legitimacy of that case was undermined when Carter refused to participate. Additionally, ABC's film "the Orient Express" was broadcast at the exact timing of the debate, and accordingly, decreased the number of audience in comparison to that of Carter and Reagan in the election of 1960, which occurred a week before the decisive election. Towards the end of the century, Ross Perot stood as a typical example of how participation in the debate helped him in the first election and how the major parties prevented him from the debate in 1996.

Perhaps, the media 's little coverage lies in the fact that their audience mainly feels disinterested regarding third-party candidates, which is indeed true. James M.Perry, for example, spoke on behalf of the Wall Street Journal when he noted,

> We base (our decision) on the simple proposition that readers don't want to waste their time on someone who won't have a role in the campaign. we're not going to run a page-one spread on a fringe candidate. We don't have a multiparty system. Until we do, nobody's going to cover these candidates (Bass qtd.in Rosenstone et al. 32)

Another reporter also confirmed this as he wrote, "the country is run by a two-party system and those candidates chosen by the people are not the ones who deserve serious consideration" (McCarthy 1980, p 149 as cited in Rosenstone 36).

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This apparent neutrality of the media was not constant. Throughout their history with third parties, the media was even hostile towards them. Rosenstone highlighted some instances:

> Metropolitan newspapers routinely attacked the populists. The press committed two sins against the progressives in 1924: one of omission (lack of coverage), and the other of commission ( the distorted reporting of progressive issues and activities, sometimes accidental, sometimes intentional) (36).

These biased tendencies could also be understood through the case of Henry Wallace, who would have the names of those who signed his petition exposed in the media as having communist affiliations.

Clearly, third parties did not just ignore those hostile practices; instead, they had developed a strategy of their own to combat those obstacles posed by the media. In other words, each movement sought its path and strived to find alternative channels by which it could deliver its message to the people. One of those historic channels was the journal, which constituted a common strategy shared by several third parties:

> The union party had the Towensend National Weekly with a circulation of 300,000; the prohibitionists had several periodicals such as the Voice, which began in 1884 and rose to a circulation of 700,000 by 1888. In addition to his own publishing house, Socialist candidate Eugene Debs could rely on over three hundred English and foreign language newspapers and magazines with a combined circulation exceeding two million( as quoted in Rosenstone 36).

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Journals might be helpful to third parties, but at the same time, they have their limitations. For example, they could reach only the people that are loyal readers of that newspaper. By contrast, television and radio could communicate with a larger size of population. This lack of impact could also lead to disappointment of those who may endorse the third-party candidate due to the fact that voters do endorse third parties having the word despite instead of because (37).

### 1.2.2.3. Unqualified, Unknown Candidates:

Another justification for the failure of third parties is the selection of weak presidential candidates. Voters generally consider several issues about the potential president that they will vote for. Although it is difficult to conceive how voters viewed their candidates, it is assumed among many voters that a commander in chief should have prior experiences, such as being a previous governor, senator, or member in the House of Representatives). Without that experience, voters possibly undermine that candidate. Statistics confirmed that major parties differ from minor parties in terms of those preferences. Rosenstone et.al. maintained that almost all 97.2 percent of the 72 major party presidential nominees between 1840 and 1980 had held the post of president, vice president, U.S senator, congressman, governor, military general, or cabinet secretary". Meanwhile, only 20 percent of minor party candidates held those positions (37).

But what is the reason behind third parties' failure to attract a candidate of prior servitude? One explanation claimed that the various institutional biases created by the single-member district and ballot restrictions combined with other disadvantages such as lack of

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financial resources, organization, and media coverage served as a barrier to any qualified candidate to run under the banner of those parties. After all, considering the chances of a third party, any prestigious candidate would conclude that this might erode his career as a legitimate politician. Therefore, only "extraordinary circumstances will push established politicians (and voters) into a third party camp" (Rosenstone 38).

The constraints mentioned above collectively lead to the undisputable result that voters are not well informed about third-party candidates, and basically, voters do not endorse a candidate whom they do not know about. Statistics were made about the 1980 election, which confirmed that a quarter of the candidates did not possess enough information regarding major party candidates, while a considerable portion maintained that they know nothing about other third-party candidates.

Additionally, unqualified candidates had usually limited the chance of victory for a third party. For instance, Ralph Nader ran on the basis that not a single difference exists between the two major parties. Nader went against a large number of the Green Party who believed that a vote for Bush is different from Al Gore. Thus, Nader "betrayed his base as major party candidates betray theirs"(Disch 154). Thus, the fact that third-party candidates employ the tactics of the major parties hurt their legitimacy and eventually contributes to their failure.

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### 1.2.2.4.    Negative Attitudes Towards Third Parties:

Third-party candidates also lack the people's belief in their ability to win: in other words, an average citizen who had deeply analyzed all these constraints and obstacles would expect a third party not only to lose but to receive a tremendous failure. Studies made about third parties candidates such as Wallace revealed this lack of faith in third parties candidates and cause. A study about Anderson concluded that two-thirds of the electorate believed Anderson to "lose big" compared to Reagan and Carter. This idea hinders third parties because it sustains the belief that a vote for a third-party candidate is a wasted vote.

Again the wasted vote theory contributed to wasting votes for third parties, even though it is difficult to determine an exact number. Studies conducted about the probability of voting third party had they stood a real chance revealed that many voters might endorse Anderson in 1980. Another study concluded that 45 percent of those who at some time considered voting for Anderson switched to vote for other candidates on the basis that he did not have a real chance to win the presidency.

Another concern that voters had about voting for a third party is the fact that if they vote for a third party that supposedly would not win the election, they will end up electing the least preferred candidate among the two major parties. For instance, one of the supporters of Anderson said, " if at the time of the election a vote for Anderson would cut into Carter's lead, and let Reagan win, I'd probably vote for Carter" (Roberts D22 qtd.in Rosenstone et al. 40). Actually, this argument is very common in the rhetoric of major parties who believe that third parties are stealing votes from them and contributing to their defeat by the other major party.

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Other obstacles to the success of third parties include the belief that the two-party system is as important and legitimate as Congress or perhaps the constitution. In fact, Americans always viewed the Two-party system as a sacred and unquestionable institution. Historian Dickinson asserted that "there is something sacred about it":

It is like the decalogue, or the practice of monogamy, or the right of the Supreme Court to declare a law of Congress unconstitutional. Right-minded citizens never question the wisdom of such a division of political forces. They see in the two parties a sort of guarantee of good government. (Disch 4)

Additionally, Historian Rosenstone et.al. believed that the two-party system functions as an "unspoken pact" between citizens and major parties:

The two-party system in the United States embodies this unspoken pact, and this arrangement has rarely been challenged. A major party candidate wins nearly every election, the leaders of major political parties organize both houses of the U.S. Congress and all but one state legislature. For well over a century the president had been either a Democrat or a Republican. (Rosenstone 3).

Even among those supporting third party in defying the power of the two-party system, the mission had always been challenging:

Loyalty to the two-party system is a central feature of their political being. To vote for a third party, citizens must repudiate much of what they have learned and grown to accept as appropriate political behavior, they must often endure ridicule and harassment from neighbors and friends, they must pay steep costs to gather information on most obscure

candidates and they must accept that their candidate has no hope of winning (Rosenstone et al. 3)

Some sources suggest that the claimed legitimacy of the two-party system includes some fundamental beliefs. Lisa Jane Dish suggested three premises that would be met in every American textbook dealing with politics. These premises include the idea that the two-party system is "original, immutable, and indispensable to democratic progress" (04)

Believing that the two-party system is constitutional motivates voters to consider third parties as foes of the constitution. This, in turn, revealed that voters might not see major parties and minor parties similar, and third-party candidates are compelled to establish a constitutional legitimacy that people take for granted towards major parties. This lack of legitimacy explains why a third party performs poorly in elections. Additionally, those who advocated changing the electoral system to benefit third political parties are a minority. The data gathered suggested that only 2 percent in 1976 advocated changing the presidential debates for third parties to gain access and an opportunity to communicate with their voters. In the same year, a study confirmed that less than 1 percent felt the necessity of considering the case of third parties or paying more attention to their cause. The two-party system is well-rooted in American history that few citizens are willing to seek alternatives or even question its legitimacy.

Third, party candidates may enjoy the early days of their campaigns, but indeed, near the day of the election, rhetoric regarding their inability to win and the wasted vote theory constitutes the dominant ideology. As the day of the election approaches, third-party candidates' support declines enormously, and this situation is likely to be a shared feature among third party

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candidates with the exception of Strom Thurmond in 1948, who was capable of taking deep south states due to regional support.

Apart from major parties, the base of voters loyal to both major parties also functions as an obstacle to minor party success. For instance, C. Vann Woodward emphasized the cost of voting for Southern Populists in the nineteenth century:

Changing one's party in the south of the nineties involved more than changing one's mind. It might involve a falling-off of clients, the loss of a job, of credit at the store, or one's welcome at church. It could split families, and it might even call into question one's loyalty to his race and his people. An Alabamian who had "voted for Democratic candidates for forty years wrote after breaking with the old party that he had "never performed a more painful duty." A Virginian declared after taking the same step that "it is like cutting off the right hand or putting out the right eye" ( Woodward 244 qtd. In Rosenstone 42).

A businesswoman shouted in Middletown following the election of 1924, " if we could discover the three people who disgraced our district by voting for La Follette, we w'd certainly make it hot for them!"(Schmidt 243 as cited Rosenst 42).

Perhaps the socialist party suffered the most from the violence of the mass supporters of the two major parties. Following their objection to the American intervention in World War One, and out of fear from a Bolshevik revolution in the USA commonly referred to as "the red scare," Socialist leaders were prosecuted under the Espionage and the Sedition Acts of 1918.

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### 1.2.3. **Major Party Strategies:**

The American electoral system as it exists today does not favor third political parties. That system encourages the other parties to be opposed to each other. In this context, third parties decline not because they are fought against; after all, major parties fight each other, but because they are powerful enough to repudiate those attacks.

#### 1.2.3.1. **Cooptation:**

Third political parties receive votes primarily due to the issues that they stood for. When those issues are powerful, major parties endorse them to capture that segment of voters who might consider switching their vote towards the major party, though as Rosenstone et.al. insisted, "often these new positions can be accommodated with relatively little discomfort to the party" (43). Gillespie saw this strategy as the "process whereby a major party appropriates the ideas of a third party and eventually absorbs the third party itself (74). Actually, this strategy is not a matter of choice for the major party for the reason that the party's survival requires establishing a "broad heterogeneous" coalition. Third parties that were an exception had either advocated extreme issues or their cause was so small that major parties did not consider them worthy of attracting votes. For instance, ideological parties such as prohibition, socialist and communist had been extreme and mostly attracted a small size of voters. The Democratic Party, however, endorsed the ideas of the populists in 1896:

> Cooptation was high among objectives of national Democratic strategies in 1896. Taking for themselves Populism's popular free silver issue, the Democrats in 1896 also endorsed People's party stands on income tax, railroad regulation, and other things. Democrats re-

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pudiated their own gold standard incumbent, Grover Cleveland, and gave their nomination to a Nebraska free silverite who had warm friendships with scores of western and midwestern Populists. This was William Jennings Bryan, the young, good-looking silver-tongued orator. In 1896 he would make the first of his three tries as the Democratic nominee for president (75).

The strategy of pragmatism or what is referred to as "the politics of convenience" is responsible for the fading of the third party movement. This strategy also revealed that major parties do not possess a fixed ideology. Indeed, George Wallace was right in his assertion that there is no difference between the Democratic party and the Republican party. Furthermore, this strategy represents" a big burden to the longevity and sustained vitality of those smaller parties, even if a benefit to mainstreaming their demands" (Gillespie 75).

Additionally, major parties are willing to bring back those candidates who at times sought alternative third parties. Strom Thurmond, for example, considered running as the Dixiecrats, then he returned to the Democratic Party and then ended up in the Republican camp. George Wallace also returned to the Democratic Party after his third-party movement failed. All these tactics served as an obstacle to the continuity of third party movement.

Cooptation can occur at three fundamental instruments, including campaign rhetoric, policy proposals, and actions. The latter element appears in two main tactics: appointment and patronage. Thus, cooptation influences third parties negatively, but at the same time, these parties had their policies endorsed and realized. In this way, these minor parties lose the battle but eventually prevail in the war ( Rosenstone 44).

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### 1.2.3.2. **Delegitimizing Tactics:**

Another strategy employed by major parties is preaching that third parties are illegitimate and visualizing their candidates as outsiders of mainstream politics. Major party candidates repeatedly employ rhetoric that delegitimizes third parties. For example, President Truman mocked progressive candidates in 1948, stating that "the simple fact is that the third party cannot achieve better conditions at home, because it is powerless….I say to those disturbed liberals who have been sitting uncertainly on the outskirt of the third party: think again. Don't waste your vote" ( Ross 189 qtd.in Rosenstone et al. 44). Indeed, major party candidates attempted through rhetoric in 1912, 1924, 1948, and 1968 to convince the American people that a crisis in the Electoral College that may stem from a third-party vote could motivate the system to collapse.

Money, as well as other "dirty tricks," were also employed to stimulate those dissenters as well as potential voters to the major party side. For instance, it was common for populist speakers in 1892 to confront "hecklers, and dodging rocks, rotten eggs, and tomatoes, all courtesy of the major parties." Robert la Follette lost the endorsement of the Omaha Tribune after the Republican National Committee provided 10,000 dollars (44). In the contemporary era, the Watergate scandal during the presidency of Nixon stood as an example. Confessors admitted that the president's strategists contributed with 400,000 dollars to Wallace's 1970 gubernatorial primary opponent. They were also complicit in the making of an IRS investigation of the candidate's brother. Another aspect of sabotage can be seen in the attempt of major parties to prevent minor parties from gaining access to the ballot. The case of Anderson and the

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Democratic national committee stood as an ideal example. Similar cases include the candidacy of Wiliam Lemke, Henry Wallace, and Eugene McCarthy.

### 1.2.3.3. **The Creation of Feca:**

The original intent of Congress in 1974, when they passed the Federal Election Campaign Act, was to purify American politics from wealthy donors who had exploited politicians, especially after the Watergate scandal. Yet, this act served another aim, which is deemed as a major constraint against the success of third political parties. The FECA put under the control of the major parties a substantial amount of resources and prevented other third parties from these resources:

> It is normally impossible for a third-party nominee to take federal money during the fall campaign, when the funds are most needed. This makes it more likely that private lenders will turn down third-party loan petitions as too risky. If the party received 5 percent of the presidential popular vote four years earlier, its present nominee may receive federal money to wage the campaign. The receipt by such a third-party campaign would be pro-rated on the basis of that party's share of the popular presidential votes four years ago; its allocation always would be far less than the funds given in equal shares to the Republican and Democratic campaigns. Otherwise, the campaigns of third-party presidential nominees may qualify for funds (on a prorated basis) only after the November election and only if they have received at least a 5 percent slice of the votes (Gillespie 31).

As Jelen emphasized, major parties could have their funds from the federal treasury during the primary season, and federal financing would be guaranteed in the general election.

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Meanwhile, "the campaigns of John Anderson (in 1980) and Ross Perot in 1992 had to be financed privately under restrictions that are similar to the prestigious major parties as well as a "possible reimbursement" by the Federal Election omission after the election. Furthermore, "the amount of such post hoc support for relatively successful third party candidates (e.g. those who qualify at all) is contingent on the level of electoral support such candidates receive"( Jelen 4)

One negative effect of the FECA was that it asks for public disclosure including the names, addresses, occupations, and employers of those who provide as much as 200 to a presidential or congressional campaign. Donors who support third parties might fear the potential they throw on third parties, and perhaps, they "justifiably suspect more serious repercussions."

## 1.3. The Rise of Third Political Party: a Theory.

The aim of this part is to explain the conditions underlying the rise of third parties within the American two-party system. Indeed, the third party phenomenon could be explicable on the basis of the preceding American third parties that emerged over the last two centuries. In this context, Rosentone's theory seems to provide a comprehensive framewok to this phenomenon.

### 1.3.1. Voters and American Third Political Parties:

Third parties are the creatures of the two-party system. It is common that " typical third party derives its support because, in some way, the Democratic and Republican parties have

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failed and its most important impact on the two major parties typically occurs after the third party disappears". (Rapoport and Stone 4)

Voting for a third-party candidate does not occur accidentally unless certain conditions are leading to it. One explanation for this phenomenon is the claim that citizens votes for third parties when their concerns cannot be addressed through major parties. This means that citizens usually look for their candidate within the Democrats and the Republicans, and only when they are left unrepresented by the Duopoly would they vote for the third party. In brief, voting for a third party is bound with rejecting both major parties. The change does not occur in the American two-party system because major parties try not to lose their voters. As Ronsenstone emphasized, "because the costs of defecting are so high, small transgressions by the major parties do not cause people to bolt" (215). Because of these dimensions, major parties are more privileged than their counterparts third parties deemed as "the path of last resort."

Citizens had some expectations from major parties. These expectations include "issue responsiveness, competent management, and attractive electoral choices" (216). These expectations also serve as a contract between voters and major parties. As one historian put it, " as long as one of the major parties comes close to representing their views on specific issues, as long as the candidates nominated are not hopelessly incompetent, and as long as their economic survival is s not threatened, voters will remain loyal to the major parties." (216).

It is also remarkable that third parties are expressions of dissatisfaction and negativity of voters. The gathered data on the history of third parties suggest that their supporters could agree only if they could oppose an issue or a candidate. This reveals that the parties are not an

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independent entity but only a reaction, and for that reason, they fail to endure over a long period of time.

Several other theories accounting for the rise of third-party voting exist, but some of these theories had been prominently out of the American context. For instance, class theories do not account for the rise of third parties in the United States despite the fact that some third parties had rallied on behalf of the poor and the disadvantaged in America. According to Rosenstone et.al. this is not surprising as it is" consistent with the generally muted impact of class on most political preferences, cleavages, and political activities in the United States (217).

The second element responsible for generating support for third parties is the change in the economic, political, and social environment surrounding voters. Citizens do connect between the election results and policy change and adjust their opinion accordingly. Another factor is the replacement of the old voters with new ones. The independent candidates are likely to score well in elections where allegiance to the major parties is not tightened.

The previously mentioned remarks are particular to the American political system, and they can not be applied to the other party systems of other countries. This is because the American system is unique and as Rosenstone et.al. emphasized, "differences in the electoral rules of the game, the greater legitimacy that Americans bestow on the Democrats and Republicans, and the tendency of American third parties, particularly in the twentieth century, to rely solely on the individuals who head the ticket makes the situation in the United States fairly special (218).

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## 1.3.2. Explaining the Rise of Third Parties:

To understand the dynamic of third-party voting, a very prominent question seems urgent: why do people vote for a third party? From the standpoint of historians, three main factors may increase third-party voting. These factors include major party deterioration, which refers to the condition where both the Democrats and Republicans fail to satisfy the ambitions of their voters. The second condition occurs when third parties run a candidate that attracts voters. Third, voters are likely to abandon major political parties when third parties successfully build allegiance to their movement.

### 1.3.2.1. The Deterioration of Major Parties:

When considering the American two-party system, one can conclude that it functions as an agreement between the people and party leaders. There is a mutual exchange of benefits between both sides, even if that benefit appears through promises. The promises that major party candidates give during their campaign, especially regarding the economy, government management, and the reflection of the people's demands, seem convincing to many voters. Eventually, those voters are going to choose a candidate that suits their preferences or as Rosenstone put it, "they cast their ballot for the candidate who seems most able to carry out the charge of office, or against the candidate who has betrayed their faith or who appears least capable of delivering on his promises or both" (126). Indeed, the idea that many of those loyal to major parties have about the candidate is extremely practical and limited in terms of choices: they choose a candidate that best represents their concerns, and if he fails in addressing their demands, they will not back him in the next election especially if he sought a second term.

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However, there are cases where citizens are left with no choice and refuse to throw support for a major party candidate. This is likely to happen if both parties disappointed their base supporters with candidates that are not preferred or trusted or if their platforms do not reflect voters' needs to achieve prosperity through better policies. Within those cases, major parties seem to violate this implicit agreement, and accordingly, citizens may pursue two difficult roads alternatively. They either abandon the election and refuse to vote, or they could endorse the path of third parties. In this way, the choice of a third party voting comes last and usually late because people wait until they are certain of major parties' uselessness, for they know that even within the third party choice, the possibility of having their demands achieved is usually low. Additionally, third-party voting is usually vague, and citizens consider what they are running from and not where they are heading when they pursue this path. Therefore, the vote that goes to a third party is interpreted as a vote against major political parties, but even when citizens pursue this choice, they strive to attain the same goals and reforms that major parties did not carry.

The first factor that drives voters to vote for a third party is the extent to which major parties respond to the important issues of voters. Basically, the point of view of major party candidates on prominent issues may attract or deter a number of voters from its base depending on the distance between citizens' expectations and candidates' points of view. In other words, the more these sides' points of view on the salient issues are contradictory, the likelihood that those angry voters would leave major parties. Similarly, the increasing number of voters leaving the camps of major parties contribute to an even turnout, which would eventually lead to the

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emerge of a third party willing to cover the interests of those citizens. The intensity of voting for a third party may depend on the prominent issues that led voters to leave major parties in the first place. As Rosenstone et.al. suggested:

> Only when citizens feel a sufficient amount of distance between themselves and the major party nominee will they begin to contemplate a third party vote. Thus, they need not gather information on all third party choices in every election, nor must they judge which of the many candidates they are closest to. Indeed, given the paucity of information on most minor party contenders, it would be unrealistic to expect voters to do so. Only when voters feel estranged from the major party candidates will they seek out information on the other alternatives (128).

This equation suggests that people may miscalculate the candidate who is supposed to be closer in terms of their preferences, but they are willing at the same time to generate enough support through third party alternatively. And clearly, this third party path is not an easy one, especially knowing that voters' beliefs about the possible success that those minor parties could realize.

The second key term to understanding third political parties is related to the issues neglected by major political parties, which would create a place for a third-party vote throughout elections. This had occurred repeatedly, and as Rosenstone et.al. posit, "this explanation of minor party support has surfaced sporadically" (133). The case of the 1840 election may stand as an example of how ignorance of a prominent and divisive issue like slavery by both major parties, including the Democrats and Whigs, gave birth to the Liberty Party. Actually, major parties at

that time held similar views regarding the Wilmot Proviso, which had been also a prominent issue at that time.

Additionally, the period between 1876 and 1892 also witnessed the inability of major parties to address some salient issues. These issues included "currency deflation, debt, industrialization, and monopoly." These concerns caused tremendous pain for farmers who confronted severe economic conditions. Meanwhile, major parties refused to include those issues, and they approached carefully. This led farmers to claim the establishment of a party of their own, and it was until the coming of William Bryan in 1896 that the two major parties' presidential candidates saw those issues as fundamental. Therefore, the Greenback and the Populist parties could be interpreted as a normal reaction to the unwillingness of major parties to address the issues of labor and farmers. As Sundquist emphasized,

> The postwar parties responded to new divisive crosscutting issues just as the prewar parties had defensively. They evaded and straddled and postponed, just as the prewar Whigs and Democrats had evaded the demands of the abolitionists. And so the farmers in their zeal for a redress of grievances were driven to the recourse the abolitionists had found_third party action. The economic issues that became the dominant conflicts of society in the 1870s were fought for more than two decades not between the major parties, but between them on one side, and a series of minor parties on the other (94).

Third, economic performance represents another prominent issue that is deemed sensitive to voters' turn out. Undoubtedly, one of the main concerns of each group in society is to improve its economic conditions. Generally, hard economic times appeared disadvantageous to the

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incumbent major party. Severe economic conditions had usually led voters to abandon the major party fold, especially in case they confronted the alienation of their concerns by major parties. This resort to the third-party option may come for two reasons: improving their conditions or believing that these parties are unable to effect the change and deal with the challenge of a healthy economy. Voting for a third party may come even higher if one of the two reasons occurs comparatively to a time when there is prosperity.

The fourth factor influencing third party voting is agricultural adversity. The story of farmers in the United States is associated with the road of third parties, for they have resorted to this strategy several times in their attempts to force major parties to hear their cause. This had occurred following the Civil War when the prices of their goods declined, and they were incapable of paying back their debt. This occurred, for instance, between 1865 and 1897 as well as the period from 1894 to 1897. Another issue that farmers suffered from was their dependency on businesses. As Rosenstone et.al. emphasized,

> Western and Southern farmers had to ship their crops to market by rail, and since the rai-
> lroads held virtual monopolies, local freight rates were considerably higher than charges
> for longer hauls in the East. Grain farmers were also at the mercy of elevator owners who
> arbitrarily set prices and undergraded the farmers' crop. (135).

Those circumstances genuinely account for the rise of the Greenback and the Populist parties that emerged during the nineteenth century. Notably, third parties such as the Greenback party emerged during the poorest years of the depression, at least in Iowa, when it first appeared. Over the next two years, it had increased in popularity to receive a million votes and fourteen

congressional seats. The decline of the party came immediately after the economic recovery and the return of prosperity in 1879 when jobs became available and the intensity of the depression decreased. For that reason, the party attracted few votes in 1880 3.3 percent to 1.7 percent in 1884, and it did not run a presidential candidate in the next election. This historical analysis proves the theory that the rise of a third party from the perspective of farmers could be linked to their economic conditions.

When prices of farms declined again in 1879, farmers pursued the third-party road once again in the form of the Populist Party. Fine believed that the party was" born out of the economic tribulations suffered by the southern and western farmers" (72). These economic tribulations came in the form of the increase in debt, the decline of prices, farm foreclosure, and the 1890 drought that had extremely hurt production. In a similar manner to that of its predecessor Greenback Party, the Populists' first two years were characterized by huge support for the party, especially in 1892, but the situation changed in the next election as farm prices improved and prosperity returned, which eventually led farmers to lessen their support to the party.

The aforementioned return of farmers to the third-party road occurs only in the long-term decline of prices. The gathered data suggest that farmers endorsed a third party not until the late 1870s, for it was the first time prices went below the pre-civil war period. This attitude was met with different interpretations. One explanation was that a short-term decline response might appear as giving an opportunity to the major parties to respond to the farmers' cause. Therefore, the only case that may lead to farmers' mobilizing is when the major parties fail to manage the

issue properly, and therefore, a third party was needed. Another explanation for this slow response lies in the fact that farmers could manage the consequences of short-term decline, and only a repeated occurrence of such decline might resemble the problem insolvable and increase the threats of bankruptcy and farm foreclosure. One last account considers the development of a third party as a complicated process because it requires the collaboration of both social and economic networks that take years to flourish. For instance, the Grange Movement, which was vitally important for the birth of the Greenback Party, took ten years of development. These networks promoted the interest of farmers over the years using different strategies among which the third-party road stood as a possibility.

From the standpoint of Rosenstone et.al, this relationship between farmers' economic conditions and third political parties could be generalized. During the nineteenth century, farmers were loyal to major parties during the years of prosperity and resorted to third-party tickets, especially at the beginning of the 1920s and 1930 when economic conditions declined. Farm prices witnessed their zenith following World War I when farmers doubled their income only in four years. This led them to buy more machines to increase production and make more profits. Farmers' sources of finance were banks that charged interest on each loan. When the dramatic fall in prices occurred in 1921, which was the first hint of the Great Depression, farmers lost 40 percent of their income. To make the situation worse, industrial prosperity came in 1923, which led to the inability of farmers to make profits; therefore, in a manner that is not different from their late-nineteenth-century predecessors, they decided to go on a third-party option, which was embodied in the Progressives this time.

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Some historians believe that farmers are not the only segment of the population that is sensitive to the change in prices. Instead, they argued that economic threats among the electorate might also lead to third-party organizations. In other words, farmers are not alone in perceiving economic conditions as a sign of failure for major political parties. Some of the historical evidence about this claim include the organization of the Liberty Party around the issue of the 1837 depression and the fact that it was undermined following the 1844 recovery (Hesseltine 13). Additionally, Communists received tremendous support even among those native-born Americans during the crisis of the Great Depression in early 1920 (Greer 187). Another support for such a claim was proposed by Schmidt, who believed that Henry Wallace's chances decreased because of the prevailing prosperity in 1948 (242).

The previous claim met with some criticism that there were cases where third political parties were absent in the presence of striking economic conditions. One of these instances stressed by Rosenstone et.al included the 1932 election when third political parties won only 3 percent of the popular votes. Reverse instances could be traced to the 13.9 popular vote in a year characterized by prosperity. Therefore, the claim that "third parties are bred in prosperity as well as depression" is valid.

Finally, Presidential candidates play a major role in third-party voting because the American presidential race is perceived as a contest between candidates rather than parties. Therefore, if voters perceived a candidate as trustworthy and able to bring effective change in the office on behalf of voters, this will be reflected in the polls. In other words, strong candidates would render strong performance in elections.

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In cases where voters saw major political parties lacking the ability to manage the office, they might be confused, and accordingly, they might decide not to vote for either candidate. To draw a solution, voters may prefer a third party voting where they would not worry about the qualifications of the office because they are hopeless of winning elections on a third-party ticket. Therefore, regardless of the personal qualifications of third-party candidates, voters may decide to support them. As Rosenstone et.al noted, this scenario is likely to occur when citizens are attempting to vote motivated by fulfilling their duty or punishing a major party candidate whom they were not satisfied with. In this way, voting for a third party might seem to occur against major parties instead of being for a third party. One case that revealed this logic occurred in 1980 when Ronald Reagan and Jimmy Carter became a source of support for John Anderson's third-party movement.

### 1.3.2.2.    Powerful Third-Party Alternatives:

Another factor that can lead to third-party voting is a third-party candidate that bears credibility from the standpoint of voters. In other words, "when citizens view a minor party candidate as legitimate_ that is, when the candidate has attributes that resemble those of most major party nominees, voters are more likely to choose the third party alternative"; thus, "the greater the legitimacy of the third party candidate, the higher the probability that voters will cast their lot with him" (Rosenstone et.al. 139).

One of the qualifications that render the third party attractive to voters is experience. A third-party candidate who served in public office is more likely to receive votes than a new face that runs for the first time. This occurs because the candidate recognized by name in public is

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more advantageous than those other obscure names that voters may not bother to know before the election day. As Rosenstone et.al insisted, " earlier campaigns and tenure in office have sharpened his political skills, and he has probably built (or could restore) a well-oiled campaign organization staffed by loyal and experienced supporters"(140). Of course, the extent of that prestige depends on the position that the candidate held prior to his participation in the presidential race. For instance, the experience generated on behalf of a Congressman might be higher and generate a larger number of voters than a Mayor or a city councilman. The greatest experience of all, however, is reserved for a former president who generally appeals to a large number of voters.

In theory, it is useful to divide third-party candidates into three groups. The first type of candidate is called "nationally prestigious "third-party candidates, and it refers to those candidates who had been former presidents and vice presidents. Additionally, current or former members of the senate, house of representatives, or those who had been state governors could be included in this category provided that they run on a third-party ticket. The second category is referred to as "non-prestigious" third political parties, and it includes those independent candidates who challenged major parties or the two-party system with no public experience.

Generally, nationally prestigious third-party candidates perform better in elections than other prestigious candidates, not to mention non-prestigious candidates who usually come last. This occurs due to several causes.

Political elites, potential contributors, the media, and ultimately the voters view third par-

ty challengers who have held prominent elective office as more legitimate aspirants for

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the White House than those who have not. Current or former senators, congressmen, and governors have a pre-existing electoral base, political organization, and political experience. And, by virtue of having won at least one major election, they are as a group probably better candidates than people who have not held these offices; their track records indicate they have the qualities and skills that attract votes (140).

Another advantage that nationally prestigious third-party candidates have is reflected in the recognition of their names among voters. The fact that they acquired the necessary experience of campaigning would enable them to be perceived as legitimate candidates, and it would certainly boost their support in addition to their old base of voters who backed them in the previous election. In other words, they would have a national base of their own. A typical example that confirms this theory is George Wallace, who ran in the 1968 election for president. Wallace's campaign was a reflection of his 1964 run for the nomination of the Democratic Party ( Clarston qtd 141). An additional significant factor that supports the candidacy of those nationally advantaged is that data related to their campaigns can be easily accessed. For instance, in 1980, John Anderson was compared to other candidates, and the result was that three times more voters identified his name comparatively to non-prestigious candidates such as Ed Clark or Barry Commoner (141).

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Figure 01 Vote for Non-Prestigious ; Prestigious, and Nationally Prestigious Third Party Presidential Candidates, 1840-1980.

Vote for Non-Prestigious, Prestigious, and Nationally
Prestigious Third Party Presidential Candidates, 1840-1980

| | Minor Party Candidate | | |
| Popular Vote | Non-Prestigious Candidate | Prestigious Candidate[a] | Nationally Prestigious Candidate[b] |
|---|---|---|---|
| Less than 1% | 87.7% | 35.3% | 11.1% |
| 1-3% | 9.8 | 41.2 | 11.1 |
| 3-6% | 2.5 | 11.8 | 0 |
| 6-9% | 0 | 5.9 | 11.1 |
| Over 9% | 0 | 5.9 | 66.6 |
| Total | 100.0% | 100.1% | 99.9% |
| (N) | (122) | (17) | (9) |
| Median vote | .5% | 1.7% | 13.5% |

SOURCE: Congressional Quarterly, *Guide to U.S. Elections* (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly, Inc., 1976); *Guide to 1976 Elections* (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly, Inc., 1977); *Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report*, January 17, 1981, p. 138.

[a] John Hale, 1852; John Bell, 1860; Green Clay Smith, 1876; James Weaver, 1880; Benjamin Butler, John St. John, 1884; James Weaver, John Bidwell, 1892; John Palmer, 1896; Thomas Watson, 1904, 1908; J. Frank Hanly, 1916; William Lemke, 1936; Strom Thurmond, 1948; John Schmitz, 1972; Lester Maddox, 1976; John Rarick, 1980.

[b] Martin Van Buren, 1848; Millard Fillmore, 1856; John Breckinridge, 1860; Theodore Roosevelt, 1912; Robert LaFollette, 1924; Henry Wallace, 1948; George Wallace, 1968; Eugene McCarthy, 1976; John Anderson, 1980.

(Source: Rosenstone, Steven J., et al. *Third Parties in America: Citizen Response to Major Party Failure*. Princeton University Press, 1996, P.141)

The above chart confirms the theory about nationally prestigious candidates and the re-maining third-party leaders. It monitors the period between 1840 and 1980. Nationally presti-

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gious candidates during this period participated in the presidential race as leaders of third parties nine times. Prestigious candidates' participation reached seventeen. The table revealed that nationally prestigious candidates gain 13.5 percent on average in comparison to 1.7 percent for prestigious candidates, while the category of non-prestigious candidates gained a mere 0.5 percent.

Another way to visualize the importance of the candidate in the contribution of third-party voting is to trace the immediate consequences of a prestigious candidate's entrance and withdrawal from the third-party ticket:

The Greenback Party vote, for instance, went from .9 percent in 1876 when (non-prestigious) Peter Cooper was its standard bearer to 3.3 percent in 1880 when (prestigious) James Weaver led the slate. The Free Soil Party's total dropped from 10.1 percent in 1848 when (nationally prestigious) former President Martin Van Buren ran to 4.9 percent four years later with (prestigious) U.S. Senator John Hale on the ballot. Similarly, the American Independent Party went from 13.5 percent in 1968 with (nationally prestigious) George Wallace heading it to 1.4 percent in 1972 with (prestigious) U.S. Representative John Schmitz as its leader (Rosenstone et.al. 142)

The main conclusion stressed in this context is that the quality of the candidate may alter the percentage of the votes cast for a third political party because prior public experience gives legitimacy and credibility to that personality over those who are newcomers to the political scene. But apparently, this variable is not enough to account for third-party voting. For instance,

nationally prestigious candidates had not been successful all the time. Their percentage ranged from 0.9 to 27.4 percent of the presidential popular votes. Meanwhile, there were cases where non-prestigious third-party candidates would attract over 3 percent of the votes. Moreover, the above result does not determine precisely whether it was by virtue of the candidate's quality, or perhaps they came as a result of the time and circumstances relative to each election. Again, this revealed that other factors are in the play to account for this sensitive process of third-party voting.

### 1.3.2.3.    **Voter's Loyalty to Third Political Parties:**

The durability of running may lead to creating a base of voters who are likely to support the third party. In cases where a third party disappears, the vote would go to its alternative and successor. This feature is shared between the two major parties and third political parties, and apparently, the difference can occur only at the level of base size. Throughout history, several instances confirmed this theory. For instance, voters who supported the liberty party backed the Free Soil party; the Constitutional Union Party received the vote of the base of the Know-Nothing Party, and the Greenback party formed an alliance with the Populist Party. These instances reveal the existence of a continuing base of voters loyal to third-party causes. Additionally, immigrants who developed their allegiance to a particular ideology are likely to act upon it when they arrive to the United States; therefore, studies by Fine Shannon and Weinstein revealed that immigrants following the Socialist ideology had endorsed the cause of the populists, progressive, and socialist parties (qtd in Rosenstone et.al 143).

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This loyalty variable could better fit the nineteenth-century third political parties for they had revealed a certain continuity and consistency in terms of the issues they endorsed, unlike those of the twentieth century that had been described as "sporadic and centered on candidates." When a minor party draws some loyalty from voters, the percentage of voting for that party would likely depend on other previous levels of support.

### 1.3.2.4. **Constraints on third Party Voting:**

As argued previously, constraints against third parties hurt the possibility of strong support for their candidates. Clearly, the historical obstacles _the electoral College and the single-member district _had limited the potential voting for third parties. However, other constraints deter voters from the third-party base, and as Rosenstone et.al emphasized, "The lower the barriers to exit, the easier it is for people to abandon the major parties and to cast ballots for a third party alternative." (143)

Indeed, loyalty can be understood as a barrier to third-party voting because of several reasons:

Loyalty raises the cost of exit and hence reduces the likelihood that citizens will pursue a minor party option. The stronger a citizen's allegiance to a major party, the more apt he is to interpret events in ways that are consistent with the outlook of his party, and the more difficult it will be for him to cast a third party ballot. By the same token, the more loyal voter is to the political system, the more likely she will continue to look exclusively to the major parties for solutions (Rosenstone et al. 144).

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It also seems fair to suggest that citizens who are detached from major parties are easy to go in support of third-party candidates. The same could be true for those who had no party loyalty at all.

Indeed, major parties are strong not only because they hinder the development of their rival third political parties but because they also possess a strong base of voters that enable them to prevail throughout elections. The data gathered suggest that nearly all American citizens endorse one of the two major parties. Voters use this endorsement well to fathom policies influencing their lives and evaluate candidates as well. A citizen who is free from this contract is likely to support any other candidate. And the increase in the percentage of third-party voting will depend on the decrease in allegiance and loyalty to major political parties.

Tracing this factor of loyalty, it is important to stress that it is usually strong at the beginning of the party system and would decrease afterward. This process occurs at the realignment election in which a major issue appears and divides candidates parties as well as voters. The result that comes out of this debate is what highlights loyalties and defines them. This debate might appear as the main distinction between the Republican and the Democratic party for example. This situation is likely to change with other external factors. For instance, a new segment of voters is created because they gained the legal status that allowed them to vote and perhaps become the major part of the electorate. " new voters come of age, the franchise is expanded (new states are admitted to the union, blacks are enfranchised in 1865, women in 1920, 18- to 20 year-olds in 1972) immigrants arrive" are all factor that may alter loyalty in the party system because of the fact that these new comers may not endorse issues responsible for the

creation of the party system; additionally, they lack the guidance of loyalty that characterized the previous generation that experienced realignment (Bak Clubb Flanigan and Zingale qtd. in Rosenstone et.al. 145). Therefore, those new voters easily endorse a third-party candidate, unlike the previous generation that bears loyalty to major parties.

The possibility of the newly enfranchised youth joining a third party movement is very high compared to those of the generation during which the critical election occurred; thus, those supporting third parties would increase steadily over the years. The second anticipation was that the new voters would likely cast vote for a third party at their first election. The reasons why they should act in this way is summarized in the fact that they do not possess any prior "experience in electoral politics". The anticipation put forward by some historians is that the increase of that cohort of voters would certainly increase third-party voting. Historically, some evidence proved the vitality of those newly enfranchised to back third-party candidates. Progressive La Follette received the endorsement of those under 40 and who had been students at Columbia, Harvard, Yale, and other universities. The same holds true in the case of George Wallace in 1968, Henry Wallace in 1948, Eugene McCarthy in 1976, and John Anderson in 1980. Apparently, even the candidacy of Perot had been dominated by enthusiastic youth (Rosenstone et al. 144).

The evidence that third-party voting is quite high at the end of the party system is tremendous. Rosenstone maintained that except for the 1860 election, " the first four elections in a party system are relatively dormant periods for third parties". The years 1840, 1864-1872, 1896-1908, and 1932-1944 elections. The result increased by over 6 percent at least following

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five elections from the beginning of the party system. Although this variable does not construct strong evidence because of varieties in the election results and sometimes weak voting in the polls near the end of the party system, as in the 1888 and 1952 elections when third parties won less than 3 percent of the presidential vote.

Because the American two-party system is rooted in American politics, citizens had developed loyalty towards the political system itself as derived from the constitution. As long as this loyalty remains strong, citizens may prefer to vote for one of the two major parties. Meanwhile, citizens may not consider third parties as legitimate as the Democrats and the Republicans, and therefore, they never attract their votes. This loyalty is likely to decrease during the years when third parties stand on very fundamental issues that citizens feel the necessity of change within the government.

Another case when voters are likely to abandon major parties is dissatisfaction from the major parties, which could occur when citizens feel the inability of the government to affect the change within the state. It is assumed that this trust may result from the weaknesses of the candidates as well as the tendency of the government not to make the right decisions. Within those cases, citizens may not go straight to the other party to seek their preferences. Instead, they would express their dissatisfaction about the whole system, which could be revealed through third-party voting (Citrin 976-78qtd. In Rosenstone 147). Similarly, alienation could occur in cases where citizens feel incapable of affecting their own lives and deciding for their state, for example.

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The economic status of the citizen as well constitutes a fundamental factor in causing frustration towards the political system. "Economic powerlessness" may drive those citizens serving in low-income jobs as well as those jobless to vote for third political parties. Perhaps, the economically disadvantaged as well as the poor had been a major component of the third-party movement. For instance, evidence points out that the poor and manual workers threw their support for the Know-Nothing cause during the 1850s. Additionally, it was the same class in Tennessee and Georgia that constituted the populist movement. More recently, the poor served well in the movement of George Wallace in 1968.

Losing status due to social and economic changes may also push citizens to consider voting for a minor party. One historical evidence that confirms this claim is the Know-Nothing movement, which stood against the growth in the economic and political fear of immigrants and held Xenophobic sentiments towards immigrants coming to the United States. A similar instance could be traced to the farmers' movement in the 1880s and 1890s, which could be understood as a "perceived loss of power to commercial interests in the industrial east." In recent years, George Wallace's base of support could be interpreted as whites' fear of being displaced by blacks (Lip qtd. in Rosenstone 148).

Structural Barriers represent another measure that determines third-party voting. The burden of those barriers alienating the third party is high, and therefore, the least of those barriers, the more votes that the third party movement would attract. The ballot access may constitute a typical example of barriers associated with low voting for a minor party. A candidate listed on the official ballot might have a better chance than those that are not because citizens

usually choose a candidate that they "recognize" than that they have to recall his name. Rosenstone et.al. expected that the number of candidates seeking third-party voting might also increase voting for those minor parties in general.

To sum up, voting for a third party from the standpoint of citizens occurs with incentives pushing citizens to leave major parties, but voters do not venture unless those incentives are high:

> When the two major parties deteriorate_when they fail to provide prosperity, responsive policies, and competent trustworthy leadership voters pursue the third party alternative. As the quality of minor party candidates and loyalty to third party causes increase, so does the probability that voters will abandon the major parties. Citizen loyalty to the American political system and to the two major parties makes it costly for people to choose the minor party route (Rosenstone et al. 150).

On the reverse, citizens may decide to ignore third-party tickets when they confront a less-known candidate and in case those candidates fail to gain access to the ballots. The fewer constraints put on third parties, the more likely that citizens would support a third-party candidate.

### 1.3.3. **Evaluating the Theory of Third-Party Voting Theory:**

The previously mentioned theory on third parties appears reflective of what the situation of third political parties is. It traced them in terms of their beginning and the way they had declined and came up with valid observations regarding their merit. However, some of the

conclusions might contradict other political scientists who came later. Actually, these reservations are natural given the year this study was produced, and therefore, its scope did not cover Ross Perot and his 1992 elections in which he generated almost 20 percent of the vote as an instance. It did not also cover the case of Ralph Nader who had gained a small percentage but successfully managed to give the presidency to George Bush instead of Al Gore.

Therefore, in analyzing the case of Perot, for example, it is reasonable to suggest that Rosenstone et.al conclusion that third parties are part of the two-party system might not be correct a hundred percent. Third parties might present themselves as outsiders to the system as Ross Perot himself believed. Certainly, the theory appears very practical as far as the growth of resentment of citizens as the leading factor for the appearance of third parties, but apparently, the intensity of dissatisfaction during the end of the nineteenth century played a major role in that tremendous support for third political parties.

### 1.4. **The Role of Third Parties in America:**

Third parties had their power in elections, and they continued to shape American policy. Perhaps, one sign of that strength appears in the fact that out of 36 elections, 14 presidents failed to carry out a "popular vote majority". Additionally, several major political achievements are owed to Third parties, including Women's suffrage, the imposing of an income tax, and senators'

direct election. Historian John Dicks metaphorically emphasized that role believing that the third party vote is "the most important vote that has ever been cast":

> Ultimately, if the demand has merit it will be probably translated into law or practice by the major party that has taken it up. The chronic supporter of third-party tickets needs not to worry therefore, when he is told as he surely will be told that he is "throwing away his vote" (Rosenstone 8).

Although the two-party system reflected on the Democrats and Republicans lacks constitutional credibility and confronted opposition from those noted as dissatisfied in American society, it remains a system widely accepted by the majority of the American voters especially in periods when the spirit of patriotism is common. For example, during the post-1991 Gulf War, Americans wanted to feel proud of themselves and the nation they live in. Third parties as angry voices of the dissatisfied should not be looked at as outsiders; instead, they are still within mainstream American politics since they react to the failures of major political parties. To pursue a unique and reflective vision is a necessity to third parties because as Gillespie emphasized, third parties are usually "drawing much closer to the politics of redemption". For that reason, they are compelled to have a very clear vision that marks their existence as different from major parties.

The vision carried out by third parties has not been good and positive all the time. Some might seem "silly" or even "sinister." The following list of third parties and their demands proves this point:

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-An open polity freed of secrecy and elitism (Antimasonic Party, People's Party);

-A free society purged of the stain of slavery (Liberty Party, Free Soil Party);

-Structural democratization of the polity, an American version of what the Soviets called perestroika (Prohibition Party, People's Party, 1912 and 1924 Progressive parties);

-Women empowered by the franchise (Prohibition Party, Greenback Party, Equal Rights Party, People's Party, Socialist Party, 1912 -Progressive Party, National Woman's Party);

-A nonracial polity with full participation by African-Americans as well as whites (Greenback Party, People's Party, Communist Party);

-An enlightened public policy attuned to the needs of producers and of society's least fortunate (People's party, 1912 and 1924 Progressive parties, Socialist party, others);

-A society freed from various social afflictions (Prohibition party, American Independent party, others);

-A peaceful and harmonious new world order, casting aside the Cold War, its frightful costs and horrifying dangers ( the 1948 Progressive Party).

Third parties do matter in American politics because major parties' coalitions cannot represent all voters. Historically, third political parties serve two main goals. First, they publicized issues that major parties had ignored. Second, they represented the voice of the dissatisfied and those who did not identify with major parties. Therefore, through voting for third parties, citizens have the chance of changing the election outcomes, and in return, they gain attention from major parties.

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The role played by third parties can take different shapes. First, major parties usually react to the considerable reaction of voters. This reaction might be well-intentioned and explicit to stimulate third-party voters toward major parties. Therefore, third parties had been vehicles of profound policy change in American politics, although this adoption is not motivated by the intention of fulfilling the people's concerns as much as being intended to isolate third political parties. The result eventually satisfies both supporters of major parties and third parties as well. A typical example that one could consider is the impact of George Wallace's candidacy on Nixon in terms of civil rights policies.

Through a third party, people can claim certain control over their government, yet it is not a choice for those who are angry and demand radical change. In this context, third parties are a check that citizens pursue as "natural, reasonable means of recourse when other political avenues have failed." They could also be deemed as a weapon that could compel the major party to be more accountable to their citizens and therefore support American democracy:

> The threat of exit provides voters and their leaders with an important resource when bargaining with both major parties. Third parties are not aberrations in the American political system; they are in fact necessary voices for the preservation of Democracy. They represent the needs and demands of Americans whom the major parties have ignored (222).

Third political parties could also be regarded as "policy innovators". Policy ideas may not likely come from major parties since they are usually concerned with critical issues within the last election. Generally, major parties are reluctant to endorse new issues even if those issues are

popular among a sizable population. That ignorance might lead major parties with an "irrelevant agenda", and only then a third party becomes a necessity. This confirms the proposal that third parties should not be considered outsiders from mainstream politics but rather an integrated part of it, and perhaps third parties are among the prominent measures that could be used to evaluate the performance of major parties in the election.

The role played by third parties was not all the time reasonable. In fact, as David Gillespie maintained, "most of the issues that third parties raise die at a distance far removed from the mainstream," ranging from "an American Nazi dream to consolidate Canada and the western, Midwestern, and northeastern regions of the U.S. into an Aryan Republic of North America" to the consign of an "all American Blacks to a separate black nation in the southeast " (25). These dreams ended in obscurity, and perhaps, they never stood the chance of being incorporated into mainstream politics.

The third party's view as policy innovators does not exclude the possibility of weak pushing and a symbolic role in achieving those policies. In other words, sometimes, other powerful forces and interest groups might lead to the actual implementation of policies rather than a third party that merely publicizes the issue. A typical example of this case may appear in the case of the Prohibition Party and the effort to enact the eighteenth amendment, which called for the banning of alcoholic drinks in American society. Historians, nevertheless, highlight the Anti-Saloon League as the leading power beyond this achievement. Additionally, no standing third political party could claim leadership over the civil rights movement. It was by efforts of organizations such as the National Association for the Advancement of the Colored People,

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Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, and Southern Christian Leadership Conference, that the movement attained some of its goals. This does not exclude the fact that before the civil rights movement, socialists and other extreme groups had spoken on behalf of the African American community, but this intense tone occurred in a period when major parties were silent on this issue (Gillespie 25).

Historians highlight the Populist Party as the most successful third political party based on incorporating issues into the major party. This occurred in 1896 when the (GOP) endorsed most of its program, which marked the end of the Populist Party.

Sometimes the previously mentioned functions could be halted, especially when third parties are shackled with all the biases that render them ineffective. In those situations, holding major parties accountable by independent candidates is impossible. If major parties successfully close elections on third parties, the risks are high. As Rosenstone et.al. insisted, "as long as minorities can threaten to damage both parties by a third-party campaign, the major parties are encouraged to compromise with these groups" however, "it is not clear what strategies disgruntled minority factions would pursue if third party option were unavailable"(224).

Even those parties that Americans had considered a threat to American Democracy and security might have been of great use in the sense that they turn into committed members to freedom. This helped the United States to balance current threats and the principles which represent the foundations of the United States. For instance, the rise of Joseph McCarthy and the accusations he directed based on suspicion and the blacklisting undermined the principle of freedom and targeted several groups during the beginning of the Cold War:

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Soviet influence in America and the Communist Party –USA with its links to Moscow were presumably this witch –hunt's main targets. Its many victims included almost the entire non-communist left, prominent liberals and progressives portrayed either as Communist fellow travelers or as soft on communism. Another casualty of this hunt was the very freedom to associate without being presumed guilty by association. In 1951, the Supreme Court sustained the Smith Act, notorious legislation declaring it a crime to teach, advocate, or to conspire to teach or advocate the overthrow of the government; to join or conspire to join any group so teaching, advocating or conspiring; or even to correspond with such a group (Gillespie 24).

Therefore and based on utilitarianism, even small strange, and weird parties may benefit American politics and society as well.

## 1.5. **The Two-Party System as a Form of Tyranny in American Politics:**

The good sense of Americans when going to the polls to choose their leaders led to the selection of men capable of managing crises and overcoming obstacles; Abraham Lincoln and Woodrow Wilson stood as an example of this rationalization. But considering the two major parties that are holding American politics, one can clearly understand that the vision of the nation might be lost. As Gillespie emphasized, "…but the Republican and Democratic parties, those pragmatic, relatively non-ideological practitioners of the politics of convenience, are not in the business of selling visions." Indeed, the two major parties reflect a monopoly of power that many refer to as a two-party dictatorship. For instance, Michael Dukakis reminded voters in 1988 that

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the competition and the fight between parties is a fight over "competence, not ideology" (Gillespie 283).

In contemporary America, talks about the effectiveness of the two-party system and the changing form and function of the major political parties continued. In criticism of major parties' performance, Rosenstone et.al. wrote that parties " no longer perform their traditional functions. "They do not develop policies, they stand for no consistent ideology, they are of a little use in elections, and they rarely command loyalty within the Congress or state legislatures." (219). Actually, third parties too failed to preserve their vitality of changing the election outcome and remained in the image of independent candidates whose fame might last for a single election and then disappear.

The literature about the two party system is sometimes contradictory; one could see that studies supporting and opposing this political system exist. For instance, some studies believe that the two-party system matters to American voters even when they vote for a third party. They argue that the third-party vote is a response to "major party failure and not decline." Therefore, it is still deemed as a feature that characterizes or even defines American Democracy. Its endurance serves as proof of that:

> It has withstood massive shocks_ the replacement of a major party, a civil war, the desertion of three ex-president, changes in the rules of the game, sweeping changes in the prominent issues, and continual replacement of the electorate. Only egregious major party failures have produced significant levels of third party support. And even the most fervent third party activity has not eroded the two-party norm. Nearly a century has elapsed

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since a single minor party has been able to mount a sustained challenge (Rosenstone et al. 219).

Another aspect revealing the two-party system's immunity is that it could hold not only voters but also politicians from abandoning it. Statistics showed that over a century and a half, the number of politicians who challenged major parties on a third party ticket included seventeen prestigious, from which only nine were prestigious nationally. The elite who serve in major parties recognizes the impact of abandoning the party on the future since it is hard to return after leaving. Therefore, they try to preserve their careers within their respective parties.

Because of heavy constraints, the two-party system seems to prevail. The suggestion that "major parties will take steps to equalize the resources available to them to third party challengers" seems to be unreal. Additionally, no strong incentive could be expected to push major parties to take some of the constraints imposed on third parties. Instead, major parties will continue to visualize third parties' votes as wasted and meanwhile try to absorb those parties when they have strong potential. Actually, even citizens are not calling for the abolition of the two-party system, and with the absence of a third party gaining enough votes to threaten the duopoly. As Rosenstone et.al. noted, "there seems little reason to believe that the basic pattern of Democratic and Republican dominance, with intermittent periods of third party activity, will change" (220). This result, however, does not reflect the hopes of many Americans who consider major parties as monopolizers or "two sided for the same coin"; it is only through heavy constraints serving to protect its constituent that the two-party system had endured.

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The durability of the two-party system does not necessarily prevent the rise of third parties in the future. That segment of citizens who are dissatisfied and share weak allegiance to major parties will always strive to push for a third-party candidate, but it should be noted that the fact that new voters do not identify early with major parties does not reveal that the two-party system is weak; instead, it signifies its success and strength.

The two-party system, however, had some weaknesses as well. Although major parties survived and appeared skillful in "managing conflict, building majority coalitions, and holding voters' loyalty," Perhaps, they reveal an important deficiency which is reflected in their inability to appeal to the concerns of the minority, especially when they are opposed to the majority that identifies with it. The gathered data suggest that farmers reached a level of representing a third of the electorate, and major parties continued to ignore their cause. Only when those voices came as threats of losing votes and the possibility of failure appeared clearly, that major parties respond to their cries. Rosenstone et.al. insisted that " so long as each party calculates that it can capture the Electoral College without the support of a minority faction (such as farmers, southerners, or whomever), that group whose preferences run counter to those of other larger groups in the coalition, will be ignored. In other words, for a particular group to be heard, it should be threatening to the electoral majority of the major party. Additionally, strong voting for third parties suggests that major parties could not aborb the political variations and interests within American society. It also reflects its inability to address the economic and political concerns of citizens, and as Herring insisted," a new party does not arise until the existing institutions have clearly proved their unreadiness to respond 180).

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On the other hand, evidence suggests that the American two-party system lacks a constitutional basis, and at the minimum, it prevents a qualified candidate from implementing his vision for the nation. Bennett, in a book that aimed to establish a multiparty system in America, draws a simple comparison between recent candidates and how the media may act with tremendous bias:

> A rather odd figure like Al Gore, raised in a Washington hotel, a pompous recycler of environmentalist clichés, wins Noble Prizes and Academy Awards; a much more substantial man of the regulation-happy left, consumer activist Ralph Nader, who whatever his fault and misconceptions about capitalism, has actually thought hard about American Democracy and put forth propositions worth debating, is reviled by the establishment that formerly revered him, and all because he had the temerity to challenge the duopoly (Bennett 4).

Additionally, the two-party system seems unbalanced. For instance, not a single vote was assigned to Ross Perot who attained 19 percent of the popular votes, but another third party like John Anderson with less percentage would get a number of electoral votes. The explanation for this disturbing fact is that the concentration of voters in a particular region helped along with the complexities of the American electoral system.

Benett also believed that in Washington, few can criticize the two-party system that he saw as a "sacred cow," and it is at the level of voters that this system seems at risk. The interpretation of this resentment may come compatible with theories believing that voters' dissatisfaction is temporary and it does not threaten the system itself. But from the standpoint of

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Bennett voters' "restlessness, unhappiness with the status quo, is not a sign of immaturity or unsophistication…Instead, it is evidence that the philosophical assumptions of the American Founders and the spirit of the American revolutionaries of 1776 are not dead (4). This spirit may appear in the increasing number of citizens who refuse to vote on election day.

Other scholars emphasized that the two-party system lacks constitutional legitimacy, linking it to American exceptionalism [29]. Benett argued that the two-party system is deemed an integrated part of the national ideology, and scholars have taken it as a measure to see how American democracy developed, considering that it was a field where the conservative and liberal versions of exceptionalism fought each other. Benett emphasized that " despite its dubious empirical validity, the two-party system provided a moral orientation for popular government and an organizing framework for academic political inquiry"(16).

In an attempt to defend the current two-party system, some theorists of democracy attempted to emphasize the role of citizens as a factor leading to low participation in elections [30]. The majority of scholars, however, stress the conflicting system rather than citizens, maintaining that the main problems are traced to third parties themselves since they had been unable to act similarly to their nineteenth-century counterparts and redirect the party system to a more reasonable trend (Bennett 16).

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[29] American exceptionalism is the belief that sees the United States as superior to other nations. It is rooted in certain historical incidents such as the puritans legacy and John Winthrob speech at the arabella ship.

[30] This idea was referred to by E. E. Schattshneider as "blind spot" for political parties  (benett 16).

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Actually, another view regarding competition in American politics exists suggesting that there is no real competition between the two parties, and that the two parties are "two sides of the same coin", A statement that appeared dominant during the candidacy of George Wallace who assured the nation that "there is not a dim difference between the two major parties". Certainly, those who emphasized this view believe that competition is nonexistent within the current American political system. But being the same does not render consensus on the issues related to the American nation; for instance, both the Democrats and Republicans would acknowledge the existence of problems related to the economy such as the deficit, but they are both unable to seek a solution that might either hurt their status or benefit the other opponent. Therefore, some may suggest that the current two-party system monopolizes power and destroy the essence of American Democracy. Perhaps, they confirm the fear of John Adams, a notable Founding Father who wrote, "There is nothing I dread So much, as a Division of the Republic into two great Parties, each arranged under its Leader, and concerting Measures in opposition to each other. This, in my humble Apprehension is to be dreaded as the greatest political Evil, under our Constitution" (Adams)

## 1.6. **American Democracy in the 21$^{st}$ Century: Reform and Replacement**

From the beginning of the twenty-first century up to modern days, the political system was repeatedly challenged and revealed some weaknesses in solving issues. For instance, in 2000 the United States elected a president with no majority when Al Gore outnumbered Bush in terms of the popular vote. The same occurred in the election of 2016 when Hillary Clinton received

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48% of the popular votes compared to Trump's 45%, which happened because the white blue-collar who backed Obama had turned against the Democrats in this election. Even worse, the whole election was dominated by scandals and fraud as it witnessed the Russian intervention in elections through hacking voters' databases, Clinton's campaign, the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, and the Democratic National Committee. Russian hackers had also spread propaganda on social media targeting the Democrats:

> In an operation that cost millions of dollars, the Russians studied U.S. political groups, traveled to gather intelligence in several states and developed a network of fake accounts that they used to infect the American electorate. Throughout 2016, they posted divisive content about topics such as Black Lives Matter, immigration and gun control; they bought political ads criticizing Clinton; and they pumped out hashtags like Hillary4Prison and #TrumpTrain to their masses of followers. All of this was incredibly successful, according to University of Pennsylvania professor Kathleen Hall Jamieson(Abrams)

The Republican candidate Donald Trump was accused of conspiring through secret meetings with Russians. This event came shocking to many Americans. For instance, one American expressed his shock through these words:

> I had nightmares after each drill. Never in my worst nightmare, however, could I have imagined that someday a president of the United States would be subservient to a Russian leader -- and that millions of Americans would not be horrified by that betrayal…I am convinced our American democracy will not survive four more years of Donald Trump. (Brittain)

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Additionally, Gallup websites asked Americans about the performance of Major parties and whether a third party is needed from 2003 and the data found suggest a growth in the desirability of a third party. In 2003 56% of voters said that major parties did an adequate job. In the year 2021, however, that number fell to 33%. Meanwhile, voters believing in the need for a third party had gone from 40% to 62%.

Another recent study by US today Suffolk poll confirmed Gallup finding. When asked about whether the two major parties represent the American people only 25% of participants said yes, 26% believed a third party is needed, while 34% believed the need for a multi-party system for representing American people.

Figure 02: Perceived Need for a Third U.S Political Party at High Point.
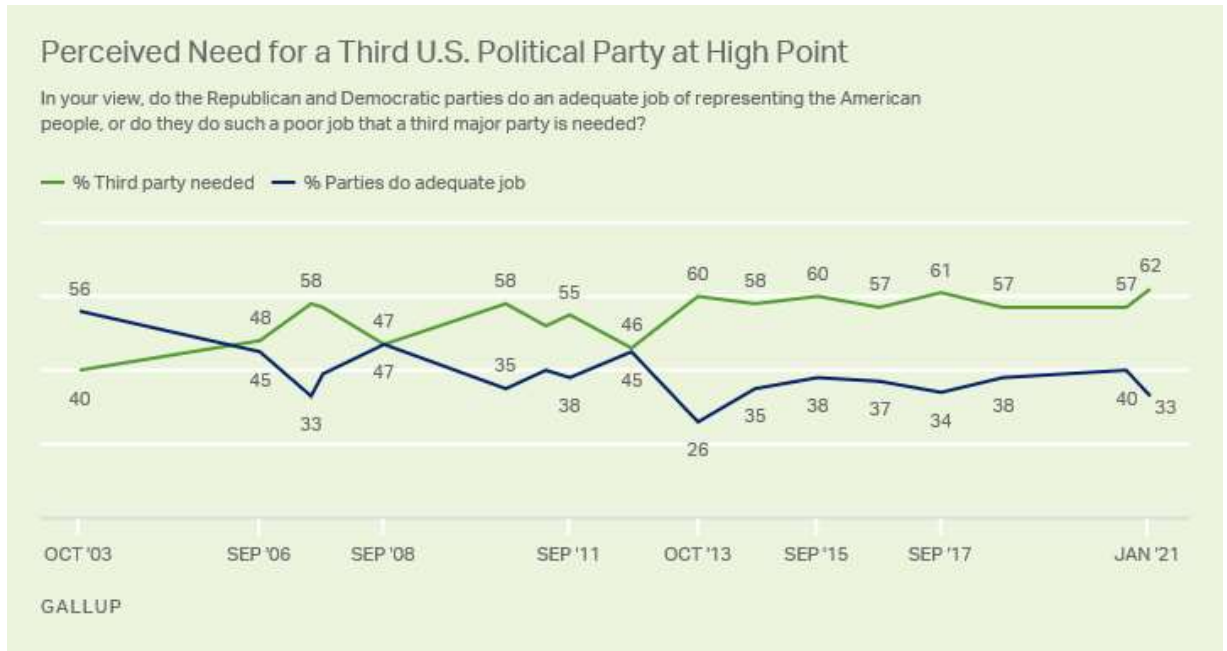
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(Source: Jones, Jefferey M. "Support for Third U.S. Political Party at High Point." *Gallup.Com*, 15 Feb. 2021, https://news.gallup.com/poll/329639/support-third-political-party-high-point.aspx.)

### 1.6.1. Enhancing American Democracy through Reforms:

Reforming the American two-party system is a necessity if American democracy is to survive in the future. Several studies fell in this direction. For instance, Jessie Ventura in his book Democrips and Rebloodlicans: no more gangs in government believed that the only way to reform the system is to motivate a third party to use the same strategies as the major parties. Lisa Dish in the Tyranny of the Two Party System believed that the system would be set on track if fusion was institualized once again. Others believe that certain changes have to be made to the electoral system such as voting through the internet as Daniel Ziblett emphasized in How Democracies Die. Reviewing this part would rely on two studies, including John Maisel and Neil Simon.

Despite the apparent strength of the current two-party system, it appears very fragile if the reforms needed were enacted. As Theodore Lowi, a political scientist noted,

> One of the best-kept secrets in American politics is that the two-party system has long been brain dead – kept alive by support systems like state electoral laws that protect the established parties from rivals and by Federal subsidies and so called campaign reform.

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The two-party system would collapse in an instant if the tubes were pulled and the IV's were cut (Bennett 3).

Regarding the present era, Maisel suggested that American democracy is far from being perfect but kept hope that it could heal if immediate fixes are introduced for the system to function correctly. These solutions assume that problems within the two-party system could be solved if politicians are willing to implement them.

The first fix that Maisel deemed necessary for an ultimate functional democracy is increasing citizen participation in government. Although turnout in proportional democracies is remarkably high than in the winner-take-all system, a huge number of Americans still refuse to participate in the election. For instance, the election of 2004 was marked as a high rating year in turnout and the highest in thirty –six years and an unprecedented case that occurred only four times since 1920, when women achieved the right of voting. That year three-fifths had gone to the polls to elect the president of the United States. At the state level, the situation appears more complicated as the number may decrease substantially. Maisel observed that there are serious differences between those voting and those who do not:

> African Americans and Hispanics vote in lower numbers than do Caucasians. Poor people vote in lower number than do rich people. Less educated people vote in lower numbers than do those with more education. The chorus of the electorate, in short, sings with a distinctively privileged voice. In a representative democracy, one must worry if policies reflect the desires of the electorate more than those who do not vote. The privileged vote more, and therein lies the problem (136).

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Why this turnout is low might have different explanations. For instance, social scientists believe that plurality systems witness low turnout in comparison to those of proportional representation, and usually, the percentage between the two reaches 15 percent. Additionally, laws governing the political system depress voters, and in fact, even the first system established by the Founding Fathers discourages citizens from participating in elections.

Maisel suggested some reforms to laws to increase citizens' participation in government. Firstly, legislatures should enact laws to facilitate registration laws. Second, the frequency of elections had contributed to voting fatigue; therefore, a timing change was possibly necessitated. Additionally, the day of the election should be planned in a manner that allows citizens to participate. The concept of voting is also worth reforming since it is a citizen's choice and not an obligation. Finally, the way votes are counted should change, and perhaps a consideration to the winner-takes-all principle should be implemented. Through these reforms, citizen participation is likely to increase (Maisel 137).

The second area that should be considered is the way parties nominate presidential candidates and the process of election. In this context, it is useful to refer to the 2000 election, which had been characterized by two resented candidates: George Bush and Al Gore. These two personalities came to lead a nation of 280 million people despite their rejection. The republican candidate was seen as "not too smart, unaware of the nuances of the monumental issues facing the nation, but likable, friendly, and very sure of he who was" while the Democratic candidate appeared "incredibly smart, uncomfortably stiff, uninspiring boring, and insecurely willing to transform himself into anything just so voters liked him." The result was a low turnout in the

polls. Perhaps, this conclusion does not account for all aspects of the 2000 elections, but it is clear that dissatisfaction was a major aspect of this election, and the process that brought these two candidates was not perfect.

Several remarks about the electoral process should be mentioned, including the fact that the Electoral College is outdated and evidence that calls for its preservation does not exist today. It is possible that Ross Perot's attempt to abolish the college was justified in this sense. The current political system resists change because it had concerns over the consequences that might influence its status and political position. The qualifications of a presidential candidate and the various biases also stood as a barrier to a more functioning democracy.

The third element to be considered lies in the price paid for that expensive presidential campaign. For instance, in 2006 the estimated amount of money to enter the presidential nominations of the two parties reached 100,000,000 for each candidate. This huge amount of money is enough to deter candidates who aspire to compete but lack resources and money. This also suggests the necessity of reforming the finance of campaigns in America. Although politicians agree on the existence of such problem, they never acknowledge a solution for it. Interest of both parties cannot be denied as a reason for that situation, since new rules might be advantageous to a particular group and not the other, and accordingly preventing the design of any tangible solution. Therefore, some fundamental questions remained unanswered including the high cost of a campaign, the source of money and finance, disclosure on those contributing to the campaign, as well as the extension to which these reforms could cover (141). Some scholars criticized this system, which is biased in terms of finance to particular candidate over the other,

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and how it stood in a nation built supposedly on the principles of freedom enshrined in the American first Amendment of the constitution.

The fourth concern emphasized by Maisel relates to the lack of competition, whose existence is deemed fundamental for the system of democracy. Evidence indicates that democracy provides the people with the power to abolish the government in case the government fails to serve its citizens. Observers noticed that the American political system does include some competitiveness with few exceptions, such as the election of 2000. Nevertheless, considering the citizen contribution from the level of states, the competition seemed to be very strong. As an instance of this fact, the data gathered suggest that the presidential winner in elections is clear in thirty-five states, and the final outcomes of elections are determined by only fifteen states that the major parties contest over (Maisel 142). This suggested that citizens in the majority of American states are stripped from the right to value their candidates. The same is likely true in the elections of the House of Representatives; actually, many observers confirm that the elections of 2002 and 2004 were the least competitive in modern history when 98 percent of incumbents were reelected. The same could be said of the 2006 election with slight improvement comparatively.

To remedy the last issue, reforms should be introduced to establish some equality between incumbents and the other disadvantaged candidates, but others might contend that the incumbent candidates are skilled and, therefore, they have earned those advantages. Thus, a choice has to be made between decreasing the advantages of incumbents or increasing resources for those who defy them. Additionally, the issue of funding should receive enough attention to

achieve equality between incumbents and challengers. Furthermore, Maisel highlighted the necessity of some reforms to the way presidential candidates are selected to bring a qualified candidate. Through these reforms, Maisel hoped that democracy within the two-party system would improve.

The last issue worth of reform addresses the discourse used in the campaign to help the system to function properly. In other words, candidates should indulge in a debate over important issues for voters, which would permit a well-informed citizen to decide the kind of candidate worth of his vote. The method to enhance this element varies. Some scholars emphasized that candidates should be clear on the issues; others emphasized that it does not require huge effort since a citizen's wish is to feel that their nation is generally heading in the right direction. Therefore, the differences are based on the assumptions made about voters. The point that is mostly suggested, however, is that citizens should be able to know the record of the incumbent candidate as well as the potential of the new challengers so that they can reach a decision.

The aforementioned discussion on the political system proves that American democracy suffers from some flaws. The American two-party system depresses voters because they do not feel part of the change. Even though any American citizen is entitled to run, it has been always very difficult in practice. Change from within the major parties is difficult because it is not about the quality of the candidate but rather the financial supporters of these candidates, whom they are not known to the American voters. While it is also assumed that citizens share the same opportunity to serve in government, the real decision would come from the financial supporters. The assumption that the system functions with the majority-rule principle is also not accurate, as

it occurs only occasionally when a candidate wins with the majority, not to mention that third parties have no opportunity to compete with those in power. Even the type of campaigns conducted does less to produce well-informed voters because salient issues do not receive huge attention in the campaign rhetoric.

To make matters worse, the possibility of carrying out these reforms is doubted in the American political system, and it might be impossible because as Maisel insisted, the people entitled to the implementation of these reforms are the ones who had always been in control of the government. As Gillespie insisted, one should not count on the nation's legislators, virtually all of them Democrats and republicans, volunteering to make such a reform" because "Improving the quality of representative government may rank lower on most politicians' priorities list than preserving their own prerogatives and influence" (Gillespie 262). Therefore, "when citizens' dissatisfaction with the system reaches a sufficient level, change occurs," although "these changes lead to another cycle of assessment, adjustment, and perhaps further change" (Maisel 147). Real leadership in the current era signifies preparedness for fixing the system, although few leaders are willing to venture with their careers to realize it.

Those reforms might be very helpful in improving the American political system from the perspective of those who believe that the system has scored well performance and it is still functioning correctly. When incumbents lose, they leave office and peacefully turn over power to those who have beaten them. And this representative process has flourished for more than two centuries, a period of citizen rule unequaled in human history (Maisel 147). They also insist that the system is not universal; in other words, it fits only the context of the American nation

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because it encompasses the culture and traditions of the American people that cannot be applied to other countries.

Another reforming strategy aiming to uphold the two-party system is owed to the study of Neil Simon, whose book contract to Unite America suggested a ten-resolution plan to enhance the two-party system democracy in America. Simon' study revealed five determiners that prove the failure of the current system, and he referred to them as signs of « the breakdown of the U.S Electoral system ». These determiners are listed as follows:

1. Less than 10 percent of congressional general elections are considered competitive.

2. The results of the other 90 percent of races are determined in a party primary by less than 20 percent of registered voters.

3. The cost of elections rose from $1.7 billion in 2000, to $4.2 billion in 2016, and to $5.7 billion in 2018.

4. In 2014, four years after the Supreme Court's decision in Citizens United, .001 percent of the population donated 29 percent of all political contributions.

5. 10 Incumbents get $9 in special interest money for every dollar that goes to a challenger." ( Simon 7).

At the level of congress, five negative aspects had been noted revealing that American Democracy is at risk:

1. The congressional approval rate is just 18 percent.

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2. Over the past seventy years, the share of congressmen and congresswomen who are moderates has fallen from 60 percent to just 12 percent.

3. Over the same time period, the share of salient issues deadlocked in Congress has risen from about one in four to about three in four.

4. The number of bills passed per congressional session has declined by half over the past forty years.15

5. Virtually zero percent of policy changes approved by Congress benefit the average American" (8)

From the standpoint of Neil, ten reforms have to be introduced to the current electoral system lest it becomes ungovernable and witness challenging crises. First, primaries that help nominate future presidential candidates within major parties should be opened to all registered voters and not only those who affiliate with the party. Possibly, this would encourage the average citizen to consider participating in the election and cut the alienation of the people from politics. The second act that would improve the current American Democracy is what Neil referred to as the "Educated Electorate Act," in which he suggested establishing a nonpartisan federal commission that would fairly run the presidential debates at all levels. If implemented by major parties, these two measures would indeed increase participation within the electorate and other parties who would compete with major parties.

At the constitutional level, the study emphasized the necessity of two amendments. "Term Limit Constitutional Amendment" that would limit the terms in the House of Representatives to three terms of two years and that of the Senate to two terms of six years. The

second amendment is related to financing the campaign for political parties, and it would acknowledge the difference between corporations, congress, and people in terms of financial support. Therefore, through this amendment, the government would limit the intervention of corporations and perhaps foreign countries from intervening in American politics. Another area worth of reform is the election. In this context, Simon suggested that legislation should ensure transparency by disclosing the identity of any donors that provide a candidate or any "political entity" with more than 100 dollars. If these financial reforms were implemented, trust might be restored in the political system. For instance, the victory of Donald Trump in 2016 was regarded by the democrats and a huge number of Americans as a Russian intervention and trick. This renders that parties do not trust each other and so the electorate.

Another strategy to improve American democracy is to create a culture of unity. By this term, Simon recommended calling "next presidents to form bipartisan administration, for Congress to sign a civility pledge, for Americans to participate in national service, and for our schools to revive civics education" (17).

In terms of representation, the study suggested that Ranked-choice voting be introduced in both federal and state elections. Meanwhile, states that had more than one member in the House of Representatives would build multi-member districts, preferably of 5 members. In addition to that, cooperation and bipartisan legislation should be encouraged in Congress so that congressmen would consider policies in their voting rather than party affiliation. In other words, the intensity of ideological division should decrease.

Through these reforms, Simon believed that the American Republic would be restored:

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Collectively these actions will help create a republic that lives up to the promise of America's founding. We ask our fellow citizens as free and independent people to champion these reforms and pledge their names to this contract to unite America (17).

Out of this study, Simon was possibly right about one issue: America needs to be united. It is not that these resolutions and the ones suggested by Maisel do not work, but because the political ideology of the major party does not welcome a change that hurt its power and monopoly. If the Democratic and Republican leaders did not back this ten-resolution initiative, then not a single act would be enacted in Congress. How to drive major parties towards these reforms is hard to answer if we consider the increasing intensity of ideological differences between the two major parties. Therefore, citizens, not politicians, had to take the initiative to build a multiparty Democracy in America.

## 1.6.2. Multi-party Democracy as an Alternative to the American Two-Party System:

Assuming that major parties are not willing to satisfy the ambition of voters because it might cut the benefits of their respective parties, and if the American political system is running the risk of being devoured by the challenging crises, then it is crucial to consider the multiparty system in America and how it would be achieved. Although it is expected that politicians would oppose the change, some observers believe that interest groups might support it:

While leaders in both parties would likely oppose such reforms, enough entrepreneurial politicians chafing at top-down leadership might embrace a change that gives them new opportunities. Few elected officials enjoy the zero-sum binary polarization strangling

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Washington. And solid majorities of both Democratic and Republican voters say they want more than two political parties—a rare demand with bipartisan support (Drutman 27).

> Broadly speaking, building a multi-party democracy requires an open wide strategy:
> There are many means to improve America's political parties, and surely there is much to remedy in the American condition. A three-party system, or even more parties, is one possible direction of change…Perhaps we can still hope as an earlier scholar did, that 'whatever America finds necessary to do in the years to come the politics of American Democracy will surely make possible'(Lowi 15)

Thus, the hope for a multi-party democracy is not impossible, yet it is difficult to achieve in the current American system. From a theoretical perspective, pluralism in the American government might lead to potential fruitful results for the business as some articles suggest, but the two major parties stood as a barrier preventing the success of any strong third party. Even in cases where they prove themselves to be a real threat, major parties would certainly co-opt issues to strip the third parties from their base of voters. Whether this scenario would continue towards the end of the mid-twenty-first century or not is debatable, but scholars had been not very optimistic regarding the future of the third party in America:

> Minor parties in America are condemned to their fate as third party finishers. We perceive the circumstances under which a third party could replace a major party to be so extraordinary as to be unrealistic. The parties that compete for control of the government will, in all likelihood continue to be the Democrats and the Republicans. How much of

their energy they can safely devote to combating one another, however, will ultimately depend on how well they develop issues, respond to the electorate's concerns, and manage the country's governmental and economic affairs ( Rosenstone 230)

Still, scholars emphasized the need for the creation of a third party movement, and as recent as 2000, Nader attempted to achieve the necessary 5 percent of the vote so that he would receive federal funds from the government, and despite the small percentage of 3 percent, he was able to change the outcomes of the election: imagine how American politics would change had the Americans elected Al Gore instead of Bush. Jim Nowlen, a campaign manager and a professor of politics, believed that a third party is a necessity

One comprehensive study on Multiparty Democracy in America is owed to Matt Grossman, who suggested a clear and coherent framework to help pluralism flourish in the current system. First, activists have to strive to enact some state-local laws that would interest major parties as well. Whatever laws help increase voting for third parties should represent a case of reform. Then if activists successfully hit the major party at the local law-making body, then they had to seek Instant Runoff Voting. It is clearly in the interest of the Republican interest to ensure that the second preference for Green voters would be a Republican candidate since they had been a historical opponent for the Democrats, provided that the Green Party wins some local elections against the Democrats. Additionally, this may motivate the Republicans to build fusion with the Green Party, which if it happens, activists have to increase the pace of achieving reforms that are in the interest of a third party:

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If the Republicans are in power because the Greens have cost Democrats several seats, for instance, it is in the interest of the Republican leaders to remove the barriers to Green success. In these situations, activists should pursue ballot access reform, public financing for ballot-qualified candidates, and third-party debate inclusion (Grossman 273).

Second, a multi-party Democracy is a large goal that requires the support of elite and average voters. Therefore, activists had to generate the support of academics, interest groups, leaders, and former politicians, and these reports would be distributed throughout the United States. In this way, electoral reforms such as fusion, public financing, IRV as well as proportional representation would be included in any research committee. Other interest groups, including "League of Women Voters, should be lobbied along with religious groups, campaign finance reform advocates, and ethnic organizations Columnists, editorial boards, and radio commentators could also be informed via a media outreach campaign by several interest groups."

The third condition to pursue pluralism within American politics is to encourage building ethnic parties to create voting rights cases that had been mostly concerned with the voting rights of minorities. After the 2000 census redistricting, several voting rights would appear in response to race-based gerrymandering. In that case, proportional representation would be suggested to solve these cases, which would be even stronger if ethnic parties had been established. For instance, in states or districts where Republicans are dominants, "local black-led parties could produce a large protest vote with the explicit purpose of pursuing representation through the courts." Grossman confirmed that even if the case failed in court, the support generated by the media would advertise these reforms and increase public awareness. This

procedure would be more effective at the local level, especially in states such as Florida, Illinois, Michigan, and California (Grossman 274).

The fourth proposition suggests the necessity of forming a third party at the state level whenever the opportunity permits. Meanwhile, independents that were successfully elected had to continue the process of enacting reforms. Activists should concentrate at the local, state, and gubernatorial levels, and if they realized victory, their leaders would strive for legislation benefitting third the multi-party democracy agenda. It would be preferable that these reforms that guarantee the longevity of a new third party take priority.

Fifth, a huge effort to generate support from the foundation community has to be implemented. It is assumed that a significant pool of resources available for legal challenges, interest group organizing, initiatives, and legislative lobbying is available in grant-making accounts dedicated to the generic idea of improving American Democracy. Activists had to exploit these resources. For instance, financial support should be encouraged, because as Grossman believed, without money, the legislation of the IRS at the state and local levels would be impossible. What financiers such as George Soros need is the possibility of the success of these initiatives.

The sixth mechanism that could build political pluralism in America is linked to applying the IRV initiative in California. This step is very important because it could raise issues from local to national levels, and in this way, it would create reforms throughout the United States. The strategy to attain this goal might include convincing donors to support this initiative in California, especially if they had succeeded in winning IRV in Alaska. Several local IRV

victories would certainly generate a state-wide campaign sufficient to effect the change. Activists also had to build a large coalition of interests and legislators to lower the cost of the initiative. As Grossman emphasized, activists' priority should target key interest groups, media, and legislators before the grassroots organization. As soon as this initiative succeeds, other third parties would claim this state to be a base of support and eventually spread to other states.

Furthermore, activists have to work on proportional representation by arguing that it is an effective mechanism by which a state could control voting systems. As Neil Durtman emphasized,

> The only way to break the destructive stalemate is to break the electoral and party system that sustains and reinforces it. The United States is divided into red and blue not because Americans want only two choices. In poll after poll, majorities want more than two political parties. Few Americans enjoy the high-stakes partisan combat. The United States is divided because in winner's-take-all plurality elections, third parties can't emerge. And even if Americans agree on wanting a third party, few are willing to gamble on an alternative for fear of wasting their vote. Nor can Americans agree on which third party they would want, either (Drutman 26)

As a model to follow, Grossman highlighted the effort of activists in 1967 to repeal a law preventing the use of multi-member districts for congressional elections. Activists had to convince interest groups and sometimes reward them by combining the proportional representation plan with another that gives states the power to determine the term limits that apparently had been advocated with inconsistent arguments. If proportional representation was

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implemented, the 1967 law might likely be overruled. Activists also had to approach proportional representation carefully, especially in terms of the arguments they proposed:

> The argument for the legislative proposal would certainly be stronger if a state were to ask to switch to multi-member districts, either as a remedy in a voting rights case or as an alteration to match state-level elections. Enacting proportional representation in any state legislature might therefore be the best precursor to national proposals for electoral reform. A switch back to cumulative voting in Illinois probably represents the most plausible initial reform.

The eighth suggestion points out to the aftermath of the 2000 election as a way to build an electoral reform movement. Activists had to make an effort to move towards "voting equipment modernization all over America," which "will make alternative voting systems more plausible and could also open the political debate to electoral reforms. For instance, various groups contributed to electoral reforms at many levels in the Florida fiasco. Activists had to create coalitions and use the internet and collaborate with other groups to achieve those reforms. Additionally, they could also collaborate with the" anti-globalization movement that organized the convention protests and the civil rights protest movement that was angered by Bush V. Gore. (277).

The ninth strategy recommends that independent presidential candidates have to work on a framework that would allow the movement to flourish. After all, independents had a fundamental role in creating multi-party democracy, especially if they ran to create legislation

and electoral reform necessary for the movement. In this context, nationally prestigious candidates and those who would split from major parties should be backed.

The tenth strategy that Grossman's study emphasized was that activists had to work on a movement of electoral reforms and not a third political party because the latter would never prevail in these heavy constraint conditions. Even though a third party may associate with other organizations, the movement would be even broader:

An electoral reform movement should include everyone willing to participate, including people from all ideological perspectives. There may be room for coalitions among third parties, but the electoral reform movement will need to include members of the major parties and independents as well. It should not, therefore, attempt to enact reform through a giant umbrella party or by organizing the left or the right. Instead, the movement must be organized as a loose group of activists and interest groups working for the same changes. (278).

Perhaps, this movement could be modeled after the progressive movement, which included various social groups, including presidents from major parties (Roosevelt Taft and Wilson), with the condition that some coordination would be necessary for the continuity of the movement.

The twenty-first century still reveals some third political parties that hope to make inroads into the major parties, but with one striking difference that distinguishes them from that of the Twentieth century. It seemed that the current strategy of third political parties emphasizes a change from within the major parties instead of being fully independent. In other words, the

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concept of an independent candidate that defies the major parties deteriorated, and the current trend sees the change possible only through winning the presidential candidacy in the Democratic and Republican primaries.

Two instances could be taken to confirm these observations. First, the Democratic Socialist Bernie Sanders ran as an independent since 1978 but he was recently competing to gain the nomination of the Democratic Party as in the election of 2016 [31] . In this way, Sanders, along with his supporters, drove the party to the left. In the case of the Republican Party, Ron Paul, from the Libertarian Party, turned into a Republican and ran in 2008 and 2012, advocating limited government ideals. If that holds true, then the scenario of a newly founded third party winning the presidency is not likely to occur soon.

Certainly, this does not mean that third parties no longer exist; a total number of 48 third political parties ran from 1948 to 2008, and some of them ran in the new century. But these parties vary in terms of the size of their voter base. Equally important, the supposed decline of third political parties does not suggest that the beginning of this century lacks salient issues; still, the corporations, foreign policy, the deficit, and even social reforms are still left unsettled. The point is that transient third political parties fully independent and anti-duopoly may not appear due to the tremendous increase in constraints placed as a burden on third political parties.

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[31] This shift led many supporters of a third party force to denounce Bernie Sanders including the previous governor of Minnesota Jessie Ventura.

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Another scenario that is closer to scholars' interpretations is the division of one of the major parties [32]. Evidence indicates that the Democratic Party is a bit stable on the left, and if division occurs, it would target the Republican Party, which fills a position between the far rights and the moderates. The majority of American voters stood at the center of the spectrum, and the number of voters identifying as independent is tremendously increasing; therefore, a major party must position itself appropriately to capture the majority of votes. From the standpoint of Green, the Republican Party might appear as a new party if it will move to the left because it may result in the alliance of the Republican moderates, independents, and Democratic conservatives against the Democratic party. This scenario occurred in the case of Anderson in 1980, whose candidacy did not suggest that he would generate strong support, but he was able to get over 6 percent of the popular vote. The fact that Anderson was a conservative Republican but liberal on several social issues appealed to many voters who backed him in that election. The Democratic Party may also be challenged by a movement from the center if the far left that controls the party appeared ineffective in seeking a solution to the various issues that are challenging the American nation (155).

The development of an ideal third political party requires two fundamental conditions (Nowlan). First, third parties should win some political posts to show their potential, and even harder, one of the two major parties had to falter or be fragile. The first condition is likely to be achieved in rural America, but according to Nowlen, third parties confront the tradeoff between

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[32] This scenario occured in the election of 1860 when the Democratic Party split and the newly founded Republican Party replaced the already deteriorating Whig Party.

being radical and appearing risky and so not attractive to the people or being a moderate third party which would eventually fail in generating the passion needed to attract voters. His anticipation in terms of the issues includes:

-A plan to reduce the debt burden on our grandchildren, which will take sacrifice.

-Environment action to drive toward a sustainable climate for our grandchildren

-Social policy that focuses on rebuilding depleted cultures within many rural and urban neighborhoods rather than simply to spray more money on the problems from the top down

-Pro-choice yet also pro-reduction even working with pro-life groups, that is, joint efforts to reduce abortion.

Despite the existence of a theoretical framework that aims at fixing the American political system, till the first-fifth of the 21$^{st}$ century non of these reforms were implemented. Activists were also incapable of breaking the two-party system, and consequently, some observers concluded that American Democracy is on the way to decline. Symptoms of this collapse are tackled in the remaining part of this study.

1.7. **The Decline of American Democracy Current Status:**

Apparently, the decline of American democracy seems to be a scholarly diagnosis rather than a myth or a dream of the opposition. To arrive at these conclusions, Historians had put forth several signs that American current major parties are in the middle of a crisis. Five symptoms seem to account for this decline including a lack of political pluralism, polarization and the lack of tolerance, the rise of demagogue presidents, and the decline of the American middle class.

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The current literature suggests that American democracy is in decline. For many others these conclusions seem unreliable, believing that the current situation constitutes one more challenge added to the record of this democracy that continued for over 230 years. Yet considering the threatening remarks of this decline, American democracy seems full of tribulations that one could anticipate its death if no actions were taken. Five signs support this view, including polarization, mistrust of institutions, lack of tolerance, middle class's decay, and lack of political pluralism.

First, American democracy lacks pluralism because the two major parties monopolize power. Although scholars recently emphasized the necessity of abolishing the Electoral College and resorting to proportional representation as a remedy to those problems, the possibility of implementing these reforms is doubted because of the possible damage that they would do to the two major parties. the multiparty democracy requires huge effort and resources while a real competing third party seems impossible in the current era, which scholars have labeled "no party period". At worst, the system might collapse, and the most optimistic view may consider the possibility of division and fragmentation as the only tangible option:

> Democrats would probably split into two parties: The Social Democrats, representing the very progressive left, and the New Democrats, representing the center-left. Republicans would probably split into three: a center-right Reform Conservative Party (think Marco Rubio), a consistently conservative Christian Republican Party (think Cruz), and a populist-nationalist America First Party (think Trump). Maybe a small Libertarian Party would win some seats (Drutman 27).

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From an economic point of view, the decline of the middle class may seem like a symptom of the decline of American Democracy. Since the foundation of the American constitution, the middle class's role was crucial in securing the political system in the sense that equality was secured. As Ganesh Sitaraman said, "the idea is that the Constitution relies on a relatively equal society for it to work.". even Tocqueville, who came to study American democracy during the founding era had realized that the main theme of American democracy was equality. The pressure on the middle class continued especially during the gilded age, but it was able to survive due to the various reforms of the progressive movement. Yet what happened later in the 1980s was to crash the middle class: this had had devastating results:

> When the middle class starts to crumble, people increasingly see themselves as different from others. They sort themselves by wealth, by education level, and the result is that there's an increasing fracturing of society, a loss of the solidarity that comes with having a large middle class. And that can be very destructive to a republic, because part of what makes our system work well is that we have a shared sense of who we are as a people, and that we see each other as part of a shared project that's called America(Rosen).

This large middle class continued to perform its role during the nation's major challenging eras such as the civil rights movement and the Cold War until it was weakened through the revival of the capitalist philosophy. Thus, middle-class participation ceased as rich corporations took over. Without an effort to revive the middle class's role, democracy may come to an end.

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   The third threat to American democracy apparent in the modern era is polarization, which is the extent of division between opposing parties or their voter base in a particular nation. In theory, polarization may have positive results, especially in participatory democracy, but within the context of the United States it had caused great damage:

> Recent research in psychology has primarily highlighted the negative consequences of polarization in America. Americans accept smaller paychecks to avoid listening to opposing partisans, move to new places to surround themselves with ideologically similar residents, and swipe left on people with whom they disagree politically. Polarized Americans are more willing to exclude people with opposing political beliefs than to exclude people of other races—a jarring comparison considering the prevalence of race-based exclusion (Heltzel and Laurin).

Distrust and animosity between the Democrats and Republicans had recently been linked to the following of the 2000 election. While George Bush's election had helped in strengthing the religious conservative in government, it had deterred the Democrats to the far left through his 2003 invasion of Iraq. The coming of Obama to the White House in 2008 fueled the conflict between both sides resulting in a lack of compromise and tolerance between the two camps. While the rise of President Trump came to reflect the most intensive rate of polarization in America, with both parties incapable to form a common ground; the socio-cultural groups only worsened the situation:

> The problems of U.S. politics are deeper than the results of a single presidential election. They reflect a binary party system that has divided the country into two irreconcilable
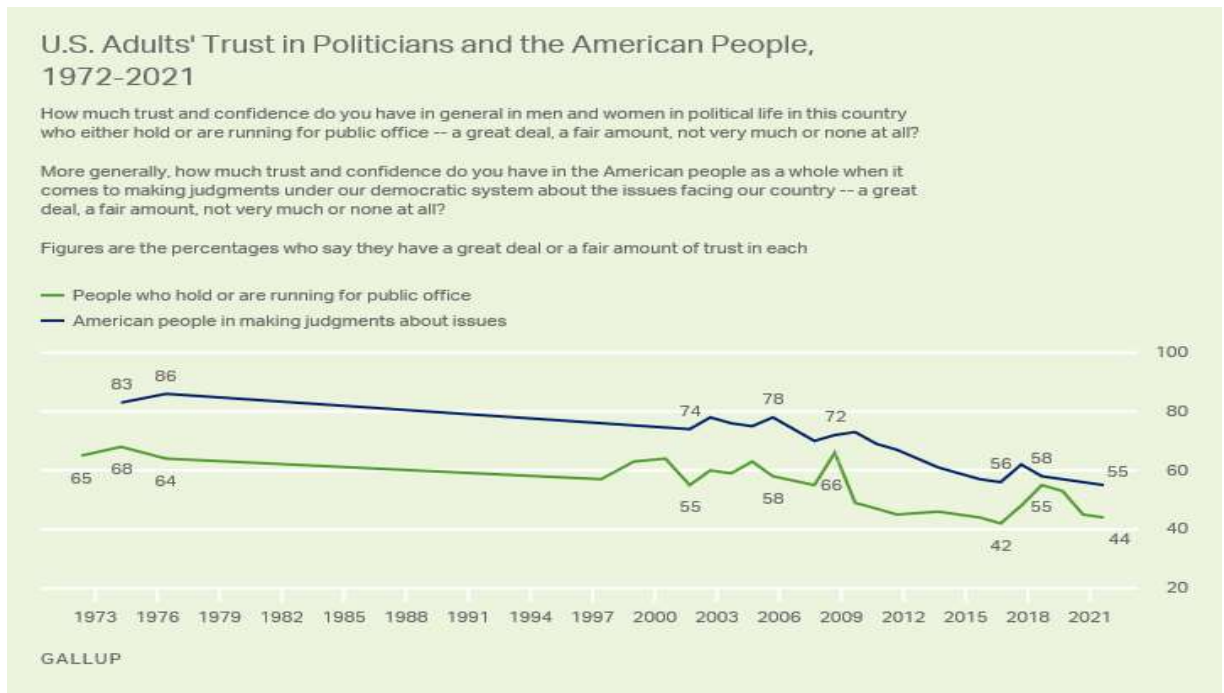
teams: one that sees itself as representing the multicultural values of cosmopolitan cities and the other that sees itself as representing the Christian values of the traditionalist countryside. Both believe they are the true America. The many individuals and groups that don't slot neatly into one of these two teams have no other place to go. (Drutman 22)

This lack of trust is continuous as a Gallup study had recently confirmed that American trust in Americans to make decision under the current political system was under 60 during the six years after 2014. The study also confirmed that 55% have trust in the judgment of the American people, a new low, and 44% have confidence in politicians, also historically low, which concludes that if Americans continued to loose confidence in the coming years, then a "crisis for overall confidence in the U.S. democratic system" (Newport).

Fig 03: U.S. Adults' Trust in Politicians and the American People, 1972-2021

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U.S. Adults' Trust in Politicians and the American People, 1972-2021

How much trust and confidence do you have in general in men and women in political life in this country who either hold or are running for public office -- a great deal, a fair amount, not very much or none at all?

More generally, how much trust and confidence do you have in the American people as a whole when it comes to making judgments under our democratic system about the issues facing our country -- a great deal, a fair amount, not very much or none at all?

Figures are the percentages who say they have a great deal or a fair amount of trust in each

— People who hold or are running for public office
— American people in making judgments about issues

| | 100 |
| 83 86 | |
| | 78 | 80 |
| 74 72 | |
| 65 68 | 56 58 55 | 60 |
| 64 66 | |
| 55 58 55 | |
| 42 44 | 40 |
| | 20 |

1973  1976  1979  1982  1985  1988  1991  1994  1997  2000  2003  2006  2009  2012  2015  2018  2021

GALLUP

(Source: Newport, Frank. "Americans' Trust in Themselves." *Gallup.Com*, 8 Oct. 2021, https://news.gallup.com/opinion/polling-matters/355553/americans-trust-themselves.aspx.

The polarization had contributed to extremism between parties and their bases. In his book How Democracies Die, Daniel Ziblatt asserted that the rise of demagogic presidents such as Donald Trump represents a threat to American Democracy. Ziblatt believed that the American political system had been effective to control demagogue candidates such as Henry Ford, Joseph McCarthy, and George Wallace, though alienating them from the mainstream. But if "fear, opportunism, or miscalculation leads established parties to bring extremists into the mainstream," as the Republican Party had done with Trump then "democracy is imperiled". The

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suggestion that the American Constitution through the system of checks and balances would contain this demagogue is not guaranteed because, as Ziblatt emphasized, checks and balances performed well throughout the years, not because they were the founders' invention:

> Two basic norms have preserved America's checks and balances in ways we have come to take for granted: mutual toleration, or the understanding that competing parties accept one another as legitimate rivals, and forbearance, or the idea that politicians should exercise restraint in deploying their institutional prerogatives. These two norms undergirded American Democracy for most of the twentieth century (Ziblatt and Levitsky 11).

Donald Trump represented another tribulation of American Democracy although many historians believe that he was much of a symptom rather than a cause. His term in office was characterized by demagogic deeds and mob pressure directed by his speeches that up to this moment CNN's reporters such as Jake Tapper's special reports such as Trumping Democracy: an American Coup, are struggling to interpret those events believing that Trump had intended to make a coup against President-Elect Joe Biden through the attack on the capital.

The more recent of these events was the attack on Congress in 2021 by Trump's supporters to stop certifying the results of the election which had gone to the Democratic candidate Joe Biden. It was a shocking incident to many of those who believed in American exceptionalism and the system's immunity. Based on this event several studies came to confirm that indeed, American Democracy is at risk, even though the current suggestion seems to target Republican extremism. For instance, Ziblatt and Levitsky's study confirmed this.

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The last threat to American democracy is the lack of tolerance. Amy Chua and Jed Rubenfeld were right when they asserted that "Americans on both the left and the right now view their political opponents not as fellow Americans with differing views, but as enemies to be vanquished." (Rubenfeld). This type of thinking serves as a justification for several evil deeds committed by mobs, criminals as well as extremists: the attack on the capitol is perhaps the first incident. No doubt, without tolerance, a nation with various ethnicities and races can not remain unified:

> On the other hand, and more troublingly, polarization's most destructive consequences have worsened in recent years. For example, Americans' support for tear gassing counter-party protesters has risen since 2012, and 5–15% of partisans support violence against political opponents. Likewise, politically motivated hate crimes and aggression have increased recently, especially among the alt-right. For example, after Trump's election in 2017, the United States witnessed 1600 more hate crimes than its annual average.(Heltzel and Laurin 181)

1.8. **Conclusion:**

This chapter attempted to locate third Political parties in the context of American Democracy, which is a two-party system. Third parties appear to be an important element within American Democracy. However, with a powerful two-party system, it is unlikely that these parties function as outsiders of the political mainstream. Therefore, they are simply a response to the major party's failure to handle issues or to run adequate candidates.

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Constraints against the rise and the continuation of third parties are so huge that it is unlikely that these minor parties would break the duopoly and gain the status of major political parties. Yet it is not that Americans are loyal to the duopoly that account for its endurance. Instead, the two major parties had created some barriers to prevent competition within the political system. Ballot access, federal funding, and access to the presidential debate may stand as evidence of that.

Recent studies showed that American Democracy is endangered by the monopoly created by the two major parties. Hence, a change to a multi-party Democracy may serve to fix the shortcomings of the current two-party system. Therefore, a movement to combat third-party barriers and establish some reforms may be useful.

Despite these recommendations, it is most likely that third parties are likely to remain fragile because major parties would certainly object to that change. In addition, change may require a considerable amount of time and resources in the twenty-first century. One sign of this difficulty is that third parties of the twenty-first century had resorted to major parties to locate themselves in the coalition of the political system. Meanwhile, signs proving the decline of American democracy are clear to many scholars.

# General Conclusion

## General Conclusion:

The United States Constitution did not construct the current two-party system defining American Democracy. Instead, it was the result of the growth of major parties at the turn of the twentieth century. Before 1900, third parties were very successful in replacing major political parties, as in the case of Republicans who succeeded the Whig Party as a major party. The post-Civil War era was also favorable to third parties represented in the Farmers' mobilization through the Greenback and the Populist parties. The latter had been very successful that it caused the Democrats to create fusion ostensibly to avoid being absorbed or even replaced by that powerful movement. However, at the turn of the century, major parties indulged in a reform campaign to silence third-party competitors. Among these reforms were banning fusion, ballot access, and single-member district.

Third parties of the twentieth century had been candidate-centered, and they lacked several advantages compared to their nineteenth-century counterparts. Despite these constraints, they had achieved results and came to represent many Americans who resented and felt hopeless toward major parties. From the progressive movement to opposing the new deal and until the civil rights movements, these parties were the vehicle of the change. The last part of the century was dominated by a sense of resentment, which led Americans to give almost 20 percent of the vote to the Texan Ross Perot. But like its predecessor, major parties survived these challenges by absorbing third-party issues and combining the psychological and constitutional barriers that ensured the short life span of third parties, if not their entire exclusion from politics.

# General Conclusion

The claim the American two-party system is a weak one is unreliable; otherwise, it would not be able to survive for more than 160 years since the first victory of the Republican Party and even longer considering the case of the Democratic Party. However, forces reckoning that the current system represents fraud, monopoly, and failure to sacrifice the party interest for the public interest is also common. Third-party forces had been functioning within the system as a safety valve that would absorb that resentment and keep citizens within the peaceful means of releasing dissatisfaction, but the twenty-first century seems challenging for the American political system for two reasons. First, third political parties were destroyed, and the last prominent attempt was that of Ralph Nader in 2000, throwing the presidency to Bush over Al Gore. Second, the two major parties turned into two independent self-interest institutions that no longer advocate salient issues of average Americans; their primary concern is to prevail in their own ideology. In this way, American democracy is much about a peaceful transfer of power rather than voters' demanding policies. Actually, even the peaceful transfer of power is no longer guaranteed considering the last election of 2020.

Studies attempting to improve the two-party system are likely to fail, ostensibly because a major party does not enact a law that undermines its status and deters its constituents and base of voters. For instance, politicians adhering to the two major parties would not enact a proportional representation to leave the possibility of a third party taking the red states from the Republicans and the blue states from the Democratic fold. Instead, a broad reform movement similar to that of the progressives seems urgent. It requires a huge effort made at the local level to defy the two-

# General Conclusion

party system or the duopoly, as well as huge resources from the foundation community and the media. In that movement, a third political party might be a single strategy.

A multi-party democracy may require other conditions, including a division of one of the major parties over a salient issue. Perhaps, if it occurs, that division would target Republicans rather than the Democrats, who seem to be stable on the left endorsing liberal issues such as minority rights. The Republicans, however, do include sectional forces threatening the unity of the party in a manner comparable to that of the Whig Party in the 1850s. The movement's success in the twenty-first century is doubted, but the devastating consequences of the monopoly of powers by the two major parties might be more prominent unless a potential third party loosens its intensity.

The picture seems gloomy in the current status of American politics with the rise of Demagogic presidents, populism, and the remarkable signs of a dysfunctioning Democracy. Thus, it seems fair to suggest that American democracy is witnessing a dramatic decline. Therefore, the study strongly recommends that a reform campaign should start regardless of who will execute it. Perhaps the No Label Movement that started recently making effort to attract members of both major parties is a good start. This might decrease the intensity of polarization and pave the way for a constructive reform campaign that would purify the field and restore democratic vitality. Future research should concentrate on the main reforms that should be addressed and determine the best procedures for enacting these reforms. How far could American democracy survive these challenges is debatable, but the current situation is much of a warning or threat to its survival that only time and deep political studies could anticipate.

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