

The California Republican Assembly



A History of our first 56 years

This writing of CRA's history was first published as part of a souvenir book for the 50th CRA State Convention in 1983. It has been updated by the author just prior to the 57th Convention. Sources include:

-Official CRA Archives at the University of California at Los Angeles.

-"The California Republican Assembly," written by Alton DuRant, Jr. as a Master's thesis in

Political Science at Stanford University in 1953.

- A series of articles by CRA Historian Louise Leigh for CRA NEWS during 1982-83.

- File copies of CRA NEWS dating back to the 1930s.

- The author's own research and conversations with various CRA members, and his knowledge gained during 11 years as CRA NEWS editor.

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56 Years of Dedication

A History of The California Republican Assembly

By Fred Davis

Franklin Delano Roosevelt's landslide victory in 1932 left the Republican Party in a state of ruin and frustration. While the Grand Old Party's grand old men reeled under the devastating defeat, some younger men in California decided to pick up the pieces and start putting the party back together again.

On Feb. 11, 1934, a small band of young Republicans got together in San Jose. Many of them were there to attend a regional Junior Chamber of Commerce convention. Among these were Edward S. Shattuck of Los Angeles and William F. Reichel of Oakland, both of whom would later serve as presidents of the California Republican Assembly. Paul Mason of San Francisco was elected temporary chairman of the group.

These "Young Turks" were fed up with Republican politics-as-usual, and were determined to re-structure the party in California. They wanted younger men to take control from the Old Guard.

An interesting story is told of how three of the principal founders of C.R.A. got together. In 1932, Ron Button and Ed Shattuck were two of the three Republicans running for nomination in the old 15th Congressional District in the Bay Area. Button's overly-enthusiastic supporters are said to have uprooted most of Shattuck's campaign signs and dumped them late one night in Shattuck's front yard. Shattuck angrily phoned the Button campaign headquarters, and ended up talking to Robert Craig, Button's campaign manager. The more Craig and Shattuck talked, the more they realized that they shared similar views about how to revitalize the Republican Party in California. Shattuck and Craig worked together to form the California Republican Assembly. Button became active, too, and later

became C.R.A. president (in 1952) and Republican National Committeeman from California (1955).

Markell Baer (C.R.A. president 1951-52) in his *The Story of the California Republican Assembly*, wrote that these men "dedicated themselves to promote the restoration of public confidence in the Republican Party, freed from the domination of reactionary leaders. . . and to developing a strong public opinion to offset the dangers of the New Deal administration. . . They saw the threat to the American tradition of freedom, private initiative, and local government, and sought to arouse the people to a re-adherence to the principles of our government, as handed down from our forefathers."

At the informal San Jose gathering, it was decided that a statewide meeting of young Republicans would be called for one month later, on March 11, 1934, in Fresno. Invited to the historic Fresno conference were representatives of Young Republican clubs from around the state, plus individuals from counties that did not have such clubs. Paul Mason took it upon himself to get the word out in the northern counties, and Edward Shattuck issued the call in the southern counties.

It was at this Fresno meeting that the California Republican Assembly was formally organized. Although the C.R.A. was not incorporated as such until July 12, 1935, it could be fairly said that the organization's "date of birth" is March 12, 1934.

On the evening of March 11, delegates gathered in private caucuses. Out of these caucuses came an announcement by Mason and Shattuck that an agreement had been reached to avoid discussing any possible candidates for office. This step was apparently taken so that the spirit of unity would not be endangered by various factions arguing over the mer-

its of individual political candidates. The purpose of the convention, announced Mason and Shattuck, would be to "revitalize the Republican Party, and not to back candidates."

This stance immediately presented the new organization with its first crisis. As the 60 delegates began discussions on March 12, the San Francisco and Alameda County groups said they would withdraw if the group adopted a resolution prohibiting pre-primary endorsements.

The Los Angeles delegation acted quickly to bring about a compromise; they introduced a resolution saying that the question of endorsements would not be written into the by-laws, but would become a subject for study by a special committee. The resolution passed. . . and C.R.A.'s first crisis was resolved.

With Paul Mason acting as temporary chairman, and Robert F. Craig of Los Angeles as temporary secretary, delegates got down to business. They elected Sherrill Halbert of Porterville as the first president of C.R.A. By-laws were adopted. Committees were appointed.

Seven regional vice-presidents were elected, along with secretary Robert Craig, assistant secretary Paul St. Sure of Alameda County, treasurer Gerald S. Toll of Los Angeles County, sergeant-at-arms H. W. Rouff of Tuolumne County, and chaplain Frank B. Gigliotti of San Diego County.

When the convention adjourned, its delegates went back home to organize C.R.A. units throughout the state. It has been estimated that, by the November election that year, there were C.R.A. organizations in two-thirds of California's counties.

Some interesting facts about the ideas and philosophy of that group of founding fathers: They considered themselves to be more liberal or "moderate" than the party's Old Guard.

When they began publishing their first statewide newspaper in July 1935 (*The Independent Republican*), the paper's masthead included the slogans "Militant - Forward Looking - Independent." Membership in C.R.A. was limited to men 45 or younger. No women were allowed at first.

This new movement was obviously young, relatively liberal, and definitely bent on re-shaping the party's staid image.

That they organized themselves quickly, and well, is evidenced by the success of the party in the 1934 general election. Republican Frank Merriam was elected governor, George Hatfield lieutenant governor, Hiram Johnson to the U.S. Senate, plus seven Congressmen, and a GOP majority in both houses of the state legislature. All this despite a heavy voter registration majority favoring the Democrats. (Sound familiar?)

Following the general election, Paul Mason called Northern California C.R.A. groups to a special meeting Dec. 19 in San Francisco. Various issues and organizational problems were discussed, and the delegates decided to go home and make contact with Republicans from counties that had not sent representatives. These other representatives were invited to a second Northern California caucus in Sacramento on Jan. 12-13, 1935.

Meanwhile, Southern California C.R.A. groups met Feb. 9, 1935 in Los Angeles.

The 1935 Convention

Northerners and southerners adopted resolutions which they took with them to the annual state C.R.A. convention on March 23, 1935 in Sacramento.

President Halbert had issued a special call to women to attend the convention. A separate women's division had been organized by the Los Angeles County R.A., and Halbert challenged other counties to do likewise. "I think it would be a very fine gesture and forward step," he said, "if you would have a nice representation from the women's division present."

It should be noted here that C.R.A. was originally organized at the county

level. There were no local units as we know them now, just county organizations. This organizational concept continued until 1948.

Delegates from 33 counties attended the 1935 convention. The convention opened, dramatically, with the reading of a letter from former President Herbert Hoover, addressed to President Halbert. The letter represented the breaking of a two-year silence maintained by Hoover since he left the White House in 1933.

Some excerpts from Hoover's letter:

"The Republican Party today has the greatest responsibility that has come to it since the days of Abraham Lincoln. . . It must furnish the rallying point for all those who believe in (fundamental American) principles and are determined to defeat those who are responsible for their daily jeopardy. . . It is well that the young men and women of the Republican Party would meet and give attention to this drift from the national moorings. . . The present conception of a national economy based upon scarcity must in all common sense be reversed to an economy based upon production. . . The problems of business, agriculture and labor become much easier with a restoration of economic common sense."

Needless to say, Hoover's message gave the delegates quite a lift.

Another shot of adrenalin was administered by Colonel Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., who was the convention's principal speaker.

"We need the active interest in our government of the young people," said the Son of Bull Moose. "Do not, however, lose sight of your objectives. This is no battle between groups of a different age. It is principles for which you fight and qualities that you seek in leaders."

While the C.R.A. was meeting in Sacramento's Municipal Auditorium, the Junior Republicans, Inc. were meeting nearby. The two groups held some joint sessions, and there was talk of merging the two entities. But that talk was soon forgotten when a rift developed over the old bugaboo of endorsing candidates. The Junior Republicans voted to endorse Gover-

nor Merriam for President of the U.S. The press ballyhooed the endorsement as being a sort of "upstaging" of C.R.A. by the Junior Republicans.

The C.R.A. adopted the following resolution:

"Inasmuch as Junior Republicans have chosen to make a specific endorsement of a candidate for the presidency, thereby violating a mutual understanding, the Assembly disavows any affiliation with and responsibility for the state and actions of Junior Republicans or any of its sponsors."

Mark Requa, National Republican Committeeman for California, had pleaded at one of the C.R.A. luncheons for party unit, and avoidance of factionalism.

Some stands taken by resolution of the convention:

- Against Communism.
- For legislation requiring all organizations and persons to make a statement of funds used on behalf of candidates.
- For strengthening of the Armed Forces.
- Against government entering into the field of free enterprise.
- For a thorough study of primary election laws, leading to specific remedies.
- A "pay as you go" state fiscal policy.
- Opposing any further tendencies toward increased bureaucracy.
- Favoring an economically sound old-age retirement system.

The convention adjourned with President Halbert designating the seven regional directors as officers in charge of organizing the counties. The nine original county charters were held by Humboldt, San Joaquin, Contra Costa, San Francisco, Alameda, Ventura, Los Angeles, San Diego, and Imperial. During May of 1935, charters were given to San Bernardino, Tulare and Yolo counties. By June 24, the *San Francisco Chronicle* could report that 47 of the state's 58 counties had C.R.A. organizations, and that individual C.R.A. memberships exceeded 8,000! The California Republican Assembly was "going forward by leaps and bounds," reported Ed Shattuck in a March 24 letter to

Young Republican national president George Olmstead of Iowa.

"In county after county," Shattuck's letter reported, "the officials of the Central Committee are turning their work of organizing the party to the Assembly, and are either stepping out of the picture or into the background." Shattuck claimed that National Committeeman Requa and state Central Committee Chairman Earl Warren "are cooperating, and it should not take long now until the Assembly has succeeded in its program to take over the Republican Party here."

Another Shattuck letter, this one to Colonel Roosevelt just before Teddy Junior spoke to the convention, was also very revealing:

"Here, as in other states, there has been a terrific undercurrent of conflict within the Republican ranks between those who favor 'standpatism' and those who favor liberalization of the party. The Republican Assembly movement grew out of the desire of the younger generation to reconstruct the Republican Party. . . At first, the older party leadership encouraged the movement. However, when they saw it gaining strength, they reversed their position and did everything in their power to kill it. Since that time, the entire party organization has swung towards the Republican Assembly, as has county after county. There cannot be the slightest doubt who will control the party in 1936. Certainly in this progressive state of California, the Republican Party must get into the hands of the liberals or it is doomed."

Whether Shattuck was being overly melodramatic, or just how "liberal" the Young Turks meant the party to become, are questions open to some conjecture; but there can be little doubt about the energy, fervor, and organizational ability of these first planters of the C.R.A. seed.

How Liberal?

If the frequent use of the term "liberal" by C.R.A.'s founders grates on your sensibilities, there may be some comfort in considering this: The term was apparently used with somewhat different connotation in the thirties.

It appears to have been a word used by Republicans to describe a re-birth of the party, a swing to younger, fresher leaders and ideas, and a general broadening of the base of the party. Certainly, the aforementioned resolutions adopted by the 1935 convention can sit well with present day C.R.A. philosophy.

In early 1983, first president Sherrill Halbert, then a semi-retired judge, would write to President Coanne Cubete:

"... I have trouble with the term liberal and conservative which have been used freely over the years. There is an old saying, 'Today's liberal is tomorrow's conservative,' and I have found that to be pretty much true. What I had in mind when we were founding CRA was that the government ought to be gotten back to the people. Many times I have said to myself, 'No citizen should expect the government to do for him that which he can do as well or better himself.' I do not think CRA has ever varied from that philosophy, regardless of how you denominate it."

However, it can be argued that C.R.A. did continue to have a more "centrist" direction until the watershed convention of 1964, when conservatives dramatically overcame a Rockefeller faction and got the convention to endorse Barry Goldwater for the presidential nomination.

Before we move on from the important C.R.A. year of 1935, it should be mentioned that the organization definitely did decide to endorse in the primaries, running the full gamut from state legislative races, through congressional, state and presidential offices.

Also in '35, C.R.A. members were very involved in a Western States Republican Convention held Oct. 4-6 in Oakland. Ed Shattuck was general chairman of the convention. It drew delegates from 11 states. State Senator William Knowland was the convention toastmaster. Speakers included state central committee chairman Earl Warren, national YR chief George Olsted, Melvin Belli, Governor Merriam and former President Hoover.

The basic work of that convention

was an indictment of Roosevelt's New Deal, and an ill-fated attempt to launch a comeback for Herbert Hoover.

Also, the convention re-elected Sherrill Halbert to a second term as C.R.A. president.

The Organization

After the 1935 convention, the C.R.A. was organized along the following lines: A Board of Directors was made up of the president, immediate past president, two vice-presidents, a secretary, treasurer, assistant treasurer, and a director from each of the regions established by the state party constitution (seven regions existed in 1935). Regional directors were responsible for both organization and administration within their regions. There were also Congressional District Councils in all congressional districts containing more than one county. Assembly District Councils existed in each Assembly district containing more than one county.

Presidential Politics

In 1936, the C.R.A. faced its first presidential election year. The fledgling organization showed its political muscle by successfully campaigning for an un-instructed slate of delegates to represent California at the GOP national convention in Cleveland.

There was a faction within the state party that wanted Governor Merriam to be the nominee. Others favored Alf Landon of Kansas, who eventually won the national party's nomination. Former President Hoover also had some supporters.

But, listening to a plea by Earl Warren that Republicans unite behind an un-instructed delegation, the C.R.A. state convention, meeting Feb. 7-9 in Santa Barbara, voted to endorse an un-instructed slate. In the state primary election of May 5 that year, voters followed the lead of C.R.A., and the un-instructed slate defeated a slate of Landon delegates. Warren and his slate of 21 delegates were said to represent all factions of the state party. Included on the slate were C.R.A. members William Knowland of Oakland, Sherrill Halbert of Por-

terville, Arthur B. Dunne of San Francisco, and Franklin Donnell and Edward Shattuck of Los Angeles.

Shattuck, who became C.R.A. president in 1936, was invited to the Hearst Castle in San Simeon for a week, where Fred Seaton of Kansas and newspaper baron William Randolph Hearst tried to convince him to support Landon.

At Visalia on Feb. 29, representatives of county C.R.A. units met again to formally approve the list of 21 delegates picked by Warren. A special Committee of 9 was picked by C.R.A. to work with the Warren group. Approval was characterized as "overwhelming."

Delegates to the C.R.A. convention in Santa Barbara also adopted some recommended platform planks for the national party. These included:

- Withdrawal of recognition of Soviet Russia.
- Restoration of the gold standard.
- Agricultural relief, and local administration of unemployment relief.
- Continued support of a free press.
- Adherence to a policy of neutrality in foreign wars.
- Condemnation of the Roosevelt administration's disregard of civil service rules.
- Support of adequate old age pensions and other social security legislation.

Following the Visalia meeting, Hearst continued to promote Landon's name. Governor Merriam now joined the Hearst effort. Apparently, Merriam wanted to be a "favorite son" presidential candidate, but was willing to throw his support to Landon in return for a vice-presidential nod. This move so infuriated C.R.A. leaders that they called an emergency convention for March 15 in Fresno to combat the move. President Shattuck tried to find out whether Landon had authorized the Hearst-Merriam-Landon delegate slate. He got no answer. "The C.R.A. has been favorable to Governor Landon's candidacy up until the time he refused to talk or communicate with our officers," said Shattuck in a statement to the press.

At the special March meeting,

Harold Holmes of Oakland and Paul Mason of Sacramento headed the Hearst-Merriam-Landon forces. They begged C.R.A. to take no official position in the May presidential primary election. But, the C.R.A. delegates voted 75-25 to support the un-instructed delegation headed by Warren. The resolution of support was sponsored by Murray Chotiner of Los Angeles and Walter Boyd of Long Beach.

The special convention also adopted a resolution asking Governor Landon to repudiate the Hearst-Merriam-Landon slate, and asking that the slate be withdrawn from the election.

Finally, the Assembly issued a report blaming Landon for splitting the Republican Party in California. Next day, a story in the *San Francisco Chronicle* detailed how Merriam had sought the presidency, then the vice-presidency, his attempts to control federal patronage and the state's national Republican committee members, and his eventual tie-up with Hearst. The *Chronicle*, it should be noted, was not a Hearst newspaper.

After the national GOP convention nominated Landon for president and Frank Knox for vice-president, the C.R.A. Board of Directors met June 28, 1936 in Los Angeles and, binding up the factional wounds, endorsed the Landon-Knox candidacy.

Some idea of the size and strength of C.R.A. in 1936 may be had from the fact that more than 500 delegates attended an Alameda County R.A. meeting on Feb. 1 in Oakland. After the national convention, Alameda County R.A. president Bob Barkell brought 12 different organizations together to form the 10,000-member "United Landon-Knox Supporters of Alameda County."

After the November defeat at the polls, President Shattuck called upon C.R.A. to "demand of those in high places within our party, either a performance of the tasks assigned to them. . . or their resignation."

The year of 1937, being a non-election year, and coming in the aftermath of the heavy election losses of November 1936, was a slow year for C.R.A. Northern California units met in Stockton on Feb. 7 and discussed

the idea of alternating the C.R.A. presidency, with metropolitan areas providing a president during election years, and more rural areas taking the leadership in non-election years. The idea was adopted as a general plan, so long as it was not a binding rule. The caucus chose San Francisco-Alameda as the appropriate metropolitan area to represent Northern California in the alternating schedule.

The Fourth Annual C.R.A. Convention was held Feb. 19, 1937 in San Francisco. Bob Barkell of Alameda County was elected president. Speakers included State Party Chairman Justus Craemer, Republican National Committeeman Earl Warren and Governor Merriam.

At a meeting in Santa Cruz in December 1937, the Board of directors considered a plan that C.R.A. and the state's Young Republicans merge into one organization. "We have so few active younger people left in the Republican Party that it becomes more apparent every day that we are wasting our energy and resources in trying to keep alive two statewide organizations," wrote Ed Shattuck in a letter to Bob Barkell. The merger, however, was not carried out.

Governor's Race

In 1938, Governor Merriam sought re-election. He was opposed within the party by Lieutenant Governor George Hatfield. Both sought C.R.A.'s endorsement.

At the Fifth Annual Convention in Riverside on Feb. 13, 1938, delegates decided not to decide. Instead, they voted that the matter of endorsements for statewide candidates be held over to an adjourned session of the convention on April 24 in Fresno.

George Newell was elected C.R.A. president, but died in office, and was succeeded by McIntyre Faries.

The convention recommended the following positions to the national party organization:

- Balance the federal budget.
- Study the feasibility of federal administration of old age pensions.
- Elimination of unnecessary government bureaus.
- Emphasis on marketing and dis-

tribution, instead of controls, to solve farm problems.

– Local administration of relief.

Between the Riverside and Fresno conventions, there was much squabbling and jockeying for position as the Merriam and Hatfield forces worked toward getting the C.R.A. endorsement. When the Fresno convention voted 63-44 to make no pre-primary endorsement for governor, it was seen as a moral victory for Hatfield. Merriam won the party primary, but lost to Democrat Culbert Olsen, despite carrying Los Angeles, San Francisco and Alameda counties.

Earl Warren was elected state attorney general.

The frustrations felt by some C.R.A. members were caustically expressed by one statewide leader (who shall remain anonymous for obvious reasons) in a letter to another leader:

“... I do not believe that the Republicans have any strong candidates. I can see no reason for the Assembly breaking its back trying to elect a bunch of old-guard Republicans who have one foot in the grave and whose brains have long ceased to function. Personally, I think the only way to clean up the Republican Party in California is to let the Democrats have a big victory. The old guard will then retire and there will be some hope that, in the not-too-distant future... we will be able to present the people with candidates who have ability and vision. Until that day comes, I believe the Assembly should concentrate on organization and on the building up of county and state central committee control.”

The attempt to affiliate with the Young Republicans continued. Worth Brown, chairing a Committee on Affiliation, put forth a plan based upon the YRs having an upper age limit of 35 and C.R.A. establishing a lower limit of 30. Those in between could belong to either group, but the idea was that the YRs provide a sort of apprenticeship for future C.R.A. members. The amalgamation never took place.

In 1938, the C.R.A. newspaper was published weekly and had a circulation of 9,260.

At a Board of Directors meeting in Oakland on July 16, 1938, President Newell discussed problems of financing C.R.A. In those days, funds were available from the Republican National Committee. But as the national party's financial finances grew thinner, C.R.A. explored ways of raising its own funds. The Board adopted a resolution calling for the Los Angeles area to provide 11/20ths and the San Francisco Bay area to provide 9/20ths of C.R.A. statewide financing. The resolution also called upon the National Committee to allot \$1,614 to C.R.A. to clear up outstanding obligations. However, half of the money raised in the future by C.R.A. was to go to the National Committee. The other half would be split between county and state C.R.A. treasuries.

Looking Ahead

In 1939, C.R.A. elected Worth Brown president at the annual convention in Santa Cruz on Feb. 13. The platform adopted at the convention included the following planks, among others:

– Reduced government spending and a balanced federal budget.

– For farmers, lower interest rates, long-term financing and tariff protection.

– National legislation to prevent California from being flooded with indigents from other states.

– Business must be encouraged to expand and provide jobs, rather than being persecuted and taxed out of existence.

– Stiffer immigration restrictions, removal of aliens from relief rolls, and deportation of anyone in the country illegally.

– Adequate old age pensions, care of disabled veterans, the blind and unemployables.

– Keep politics out of the civil service system.

Another platform plank was aimed at a resolution that had been adopted by the Young Democrats in their state convention in Bakersfield. The YDs sought repeal of the Criminal Syndicalism Law, which prohibited the teaching of sabotage or the violent overthrow of the government. “We

emphatically condemn such teachings as un-American,” said a C.R.A. resolution, and “agree with that great President Theodore Roosevelt, when he said ‘there is no room in America for any “ism” but Americanism.’”

A Committee of 15 was appointed by President Brown to develop a plan of action and seek a slate of delegates to the 1940 National Republican Convention. The Board of Directors directed the committee to be representative of all Republicans in California, to recognize the fact that more than 50 percent of California's Republicans were women, and to do their work so well that there would be no contest over which delegation would properly represent the California GOP at the national convention.

At a Board of Directors meeting in Oakland on May 27-28, 1939, the Committee of 15 met with National Committeeman William Knowland and with 1938 Senatorial candidate William Bancroft. Both agreed that presidential aspirants should be invited to California by C.R.A. In July, the Committee of 15, along with Worth Brown and other prominent Republican Party leaders, met in Los Angeles with Herbert Hoover. Hoover agreed with the committee's goals, and said he intended to take charge of an effort to see that the California delegation to the national convention would again be un-instructed.

The Los Angeles County R.A. worked out a formula for choosing the state's 44 delegates. The formula, later approved by the committee and by other statewide GOP groups, called for state leaders to control the selection process, but with proper input from all factions and areas of the state.

Officials of all statewide Republican organizations met Dec. 1, 1939 in San Francisco and agreed on an un-instructed delegation.

Dewey Arrives

The 7th Annual C.R.A. Convention was held at the Roosevelt Hotel in Hollywood. Officials made certain that everyone knew that the hotel got its name from TEDDY ROOSEVELT.

William D. Campbell of Los Angeles was elected president.

A highlight of the convention was an anti-New Deal speech by New York Governor Thomas Dewey to a crowd of 18,000 at the Hollywood Bowl.

C.R.A. membership had reached a record 12,000.

Senator Hiram Johnson was endorsed for re-election.

After the national convention nominated Wendell Willkie for president, the C.R.A. Board officially endorsed his candidacy. The Willkie-McNary ticket got 1,351,419 votes in California. The winning Roosevelt-Wallace ticket got 1,877,618.

Who's The Leader?

When the 8th Annual Convention got underway March 7, 1941 in San Jose, an immediate dispute arose over whether Wendell Willkie should be formally recognized as the national leader of the party. A compromise resolution recognized "Wendell Willkie and other national party leaders."

William F. Reichel of Oakland was elected C.R.A. president. He appointed a Committee of 29 (committees in those days seemed to have numbers instead of descriptive titles) to recommend candidates for statewide offices. Worth Brown chaired the panel, which included a member of each of California's 23 Congressional districts, plus six members-at-large.

After interviews, meetings and a lot of study, the committee got together in San Luis Obispo in March, 1942. When the 9th Annual Convention met in Santa Barbara April 17-20, 1942, the Committee of 29 recommended Attorney General Earl Warren for governor, Harry Riley for re-election as controller, and Charles Johnson for treasurer. The delegates unanimously endorsed all three. Added to the endorsed slate were Frederick Houser for lieutenant governor and Frank Jordan for secretary of state. The entire slate was elected Nov. 3, 1942. The only statewide office in which C.R.A. did not endorse was for attorney general. That spot was won by a Democrat.

The Ninth Annual Convention elected Carlyle L. Lynton as C.R.A.

president.

The Tenth Annual Convention in Los Angeles on Feb. 20, 1943 was held during a non-election year, and there is no record of any significant happenings at the convention. Governor Earl Warren addressed an afternoon session. His basic message was that the men in uniform who were fighting World War II expected the folks back home to "look after the home front" and to support the troops in the field. William Troyer of Santa Cruz was elected president.

The convention did set the stage, however, for the beginning of an all-out push to unite California Republicans for the 1944 presidential election. At the Board of Directors meeting in Sacramento on May 2, 1943, President Troyer named a Fact-Finding and Candidates Committee. The panel's tasks were to screen candidates who might challenge incumbent Democrat U.S. Senator Sheridan Downey, and to recommend names to serve as delegates to the 1944 National Convention. Past President William F. Reichel chaired the committee.

Also named at the Board meeting was a National Contact Committee. This group was to invite GOP presidential candidates to California prior to the May 1944 presidential primary. Chairman of this committee was Gordon X. Richmond of Orange.

At their San Jose meeting Nov. 6, 1943, the Board began the actual process that would lead to national delegate selection and to the endorsement of a U.S. Senate candidate.

The Fact Finding and Candidates Committee made it clear that they did not favor any particular candidate for president, but would look for "the man who could beat Roosevelt."

Prospective senatorial candidates under study were Lieut. Governor Frederick Houser, Assembly Speaker Charles W. Lyon, Los Angeles attorney Lloyd Wright, Raymond Haight of Los Angeles, State Treasurer Charles Johnson, railroad commissioner Justus Craemer, State Superintendent of Schools Philip Bancroft (who had run in 1938), Wallace Ware of Los Angeles, Board of Equalization member William G. Bonelli,

Judge Goodwin Knight of Los Angeles and State Senator George Biggar of Mendocino.

Warren Pushed

In late 1943, strong sentiment began to come forward favoring Governor Earl Warren as the 1944 Republican presidential nominee. The Fact-Finding and Candidates Committee prepared a resolution which claimed that a survey of public opinion in the state showed Warren as the favorite. The record is not clear as to who took the survey. At any rate, the committee voted 15-4 to recommend that California Republicans send to the National Convention a delegation instructed to support Warren for President. The resolution also noted that the committee's decision was "not antagonistic to any candidate," and was "in the interest of party harmony."

Warren, however, had already written to the committee to make it "clear and plain" that he was not a candidate "for either position on the national ticket." In fact, said Warren, it was really too early to be thinking about endorsing candidates.

The Board of Directors went ahead and recommended a Warren delegation, anyhow. But, there was said to be widespread sentiment throughout C.R.A. and the party for Dewey, Taft, Stassen, Bricker and Willkie.

When the election-year Eleventh Annual Convention was held April 16, 1944 in San Jose, the principal speakers were Governor Warren and Governor John Bricker of Ohio. Other party leaders at the convention included Lieut. Gov. Houser, state Central Committee Chairman Edward Tickle of Carmel, and Congressman John Z. Anderson of San Mateo.

The Fact-Finding and Candidates Committee recommended that C.R.A. give its pre-primary endorsement to Lieut. Gov. Houser for U.S. Senate. There was also strong C.R.A. sentiment for Justus Craemer and others, so a dispute developed. Governor Warren sidestepped the issue by saying, "I'm too busy with state business right now to take any interest in the senatorial campaign." Some conven-

tion delegates wanted C.R.A. to make no endorsement. Spokesman for this group was Gordon X. Richmond of Orange County. Houser won the endorsement.

In the May 16, 1944 primary, the Warren delegate slate won the nomination of California's voters. Houser won the party nomination over Bonelli and Craemer. Again, the C.R.A. endorsements had given a powerful boost to the chosen candidates.

In sharp contrast to the national political situation, the Republicans were very much in control in California, and the C.R.A. was largely responsible for that fact. The Assembly controlled the Central Committee, the campaign fundraising apparatus, and the precinct organizations.

Murray Chotiner of Los Angeles was elected C.R.A. president at the 1944 convention. He would later play a major role in the meteoric rise of a young California politician named Richard Nixon.

Chotiner sent a letter to all C.R.A. officers, including presidents of county units, in which he set forth a simple strategy for getting out the vote on the precinct level:

"...polls disclose that 85 to 91 percent of Republicans will vote for our candidates. . . as high as 36 percent of the Democrats will vote our way. . . average number of voters to a precinct is 300. . . assume that the average percentage of Democrats is 60 percent. . . 180 Democrats to a precinct. . . 90 Democrat homes. . . it is not necessary for us to spend time making a canvass of Republican voters. . . conduct a telephone poll of Democrat homes. . . find out for whom the Democrat voter intends to vote (Chotiner suggested posing as a poll taker)."

Chotiner went on to tell in detail how the precinct worker should go to the polling place at 10:30 a.m., check off of his list the names of those Republicans and "friendly" Democrats who had voted, then start phoning those who had not. The process was to be repeated at 2:30 p.m. and kept up until all Republicans and all friendly Democrats had voted.

Despite the best efforts of Chotiner and C.R.A., the Democrat national

ticket carried California.

A Fateful Year

As Allied forces wrapped up World War II, one of the heroes of that war, General Dwight David Eisenhower, was already being courted by both Democrat and Republican party leaders.

In California, C.R.A. held its Twelfth Annual Convention on Feb. 19, 1945, in picturesque Lake Arrowhead. The convention voted, among other things, to go on record against a proposed increase in state gasoline taxes. A resolution also recommended a change in the State Constitution that would eliminate the voter initiative from general election ballots and place all initiatives on special or primary ballots.

Arthur C. Carmichael was elected president. Many C.R.A. members who had gone off to war were beginning to come home.

President Roosevelt's death on April 13, 1945, brought Harry Truman to the presidency.

At a C.R.A. Board meeting May 19 in San Jose, a resolution opposed pending state legislation which would have made all state constitutional offices, except governor and lieutenant governor, non-partisan.

At Santa Barbara in September of 1945, the Board appointed a new Committee of 29 to study aspiring GOP candidates for the next election. Past president William Troyer was chairman.

As C.R.A. delegates gathered in San Jose on March 30, 1946, for the Thirteenth Annual Convention, they faced an impressive array of California Republicans seeking their endorsement. The Committee of 29 recommended the re-nomination of Governor Warren, Senator Knowland, Secretary of State Frank Jordan, Treasurer Charles Johnson and Controller Thomas Kuchel. They recommended Judge Goodwin Knight for lieutenant governor. Their pick for attorney general was past C.R.A. president Edwin Shattuck, who was serving as a colonel in the Army, but was due to be mustered out soon. Shattuck, however, declined the en-

dorsement before the convention began.

Seeking the attorney general nomination were Los Angeles D.A. Frederick Howser, Assemblyman Harrison Call of Redwood City and Deputy Attorney General Walter Bowers of Los Angeles.

Besides Knight, aspirants for lieutenant governor were Assembly Speaker Charles Lyon and Assemblyman Sam Collins of Orange County. Assemblyman Walter Fourn of Ventura, a Lyon supporter, sought a "no endorsement" vote, claiming that the endorsement of Judge Knight would split the party. His move was voted down 81-4. Some split! Leading the fight for Goodwin Knight were Worth Brown and G. Revelle Harrison. They prevailed easily, and Harrison of Los Angeles was elected C.R.A. president.

C.R.A. endorsements were given to Warren, Knight, Jordan, Kuchel, Johnson and Howser. All won their primary nominations. . . and all won handily in November.

Earlier that year, a young Navy veteran and his wife, Pat, had been introduced to C.R.A. members at a meeting in Pasadena. They liked him, endorsed him, and helped him win his first term in Congress. His name was Richard Milhouse Nixon.

Warren Again

When more than 400 C.R.A. members met at the Fourteenth Annual Convention March 30, 1947, in Long Beach, Arthur Strehlow of that city was elected president. Strehlow said it was his opinion that most delegates to the convention were behind Earl Warren for President of the United States.

Strehlow named a Fact-Finding Committee, chaired by Arthur Carmichael, to work with the State Central Committee and other groups in picking delegates to the 1948 Republican National Convention. Arthur Carlson of Oakland, chairman of the State Central Committee, immediately began discussions with Strehlow and the committee.

When the Board of Directors met in October, 1947, at Riverside, the Fact-Finding Committee unanimously

urged that Warren be named head of the National Convention delegation, and asked the governor to permit the use of his name as a candidate for President. Meeting at the same time in Riverside, the executive committee of the State Central Committee took similar actions.

There could be no doubt that California's Republican leaders wanted Earl Warren to run for President.

The C.R.A. Board adopted a resolution throwing C.R.A.'s wholehearted support behind the Warren effort.

A special C.R.A. convention was called by Strehlow for Jan. 17, 1948, at Pebble Beach. That convention officially endorsed Earl Warren for President.

After the convention adopted a resolution calling upon all delegates to the National Convention in Philadelphia to nominate Warren, an old-fashioned floor demonstration rocked the convention floor at the Del Monte Lodge. Banners reading "Warren for President" flooded the floor. Delegates sang "California, Here We Come." When the demonstration was brought under control, former past C.R.A. President McIntyre Fairies, then serving as National GOP Committeeman, addressed the delegates. He reminded them that C.R.A. had acted as a "sounding board" for the party in the past by:

- Heading up the Warren delegation in 1936.
- Endorsing Warren for attorney general in 1938.
- Giving Warren a successful pre-primary endorsement for governor in 1942.
- Supporting a delegation pledged to Warren for President in the 1944 National Convention.

The California Republican Assembly had nurtured, promoted and virtually created the rising political career of Earl Warren. Later, when Warren's liberal policies as Chief Justice of the United States became a bitter thorn in the side of California conservatives, they would seek his impeachment.

At the Fifteenth Annual Convention of C.R.A. in Santa Cruz on May 14, 1948, Governor Warren announced that he would become an

active presidential candidate. He thanked C.R.A. for its support.

It was also at that 1948 convention that C.R.A. decided to change a basic philosophy of its organization. No longer would the counties be the major organizing level for units. Beginning in 1948, local communities could organize C.R.A. units and appeal directly to the state organization for chartering. The late Frank Adams, writing in a 1974 C.R.A. information booklet, noted that the old organization plan "tended to center the activities of the C.R.A. in the larger, highly-populated counties, while counties with more widely-scattered population found the plan less effective." The new, broader organization plan was aimed at changing that.

Gordon Richmond of Orange County was elected C.R.A. president.

In the 1948 primary, Warren won California's GOP contest. At the National Convention in Philadelphia, Governor Thomas Dewey of New York was nominated for President and Warren for V.P.

In November, the Harry Truman-Alben Barkley Democratic national ticket upset Dewey-Warren. Truman-Barkley carried California by a margin of less than 18,000 votes.

Later, in a letter to delegates of the 40th C.R.A. Convention in 1974, Arthur Strehlow would recall the excitement of that 1948 campaign, and the national publicity which focused on C.R.A.'s demonstration for Warren at Pebble Beach.

Foreign Affairs

At the 16th Annual C.R.A. Convention Feb. 4, 1949, in Santa Barbara, Ed Shattuck, past C.R.A. President, speaking as chairman of the State Central Committee, called upon the party to "put aside the bi-partisan foreign policy and urge the United States to give genuine world leadership" by asking "the people in every land to join with us to establish a world constitution based on law and order and a guarantee to all mankind of individuality and dignity." Shattuck's remarks touched off much serious discussion.

Ernest L. West of San Francisco

was elected C.R.A. President.

When the Board of Directors met in Los Angeles on April 24, 1949, Gordon Richmond, chairman of the Resolutions Committee, discussed a feud which had apparently developed between Governor Warren and Attorney General Frederick Howser. Reasons for the feud are unclear now, but Richmond said C.R.A. would be "derelict in its duty" if it did not recognize the feud "and do something about it."

President West named Richmond to chair the Fact-Finding Committee, and said the committee should not only seek good candidates for 1950, but also report back if any "Republican office holder was not acting properly." The latter task was an obvious reference to the Howser matter.

When the Board met again on Oct. 8, 1949, Richmond's committee noted the possibility of a coming clash between Governor Warren and Lieutenant Governor Goodwin Knight over the Assembly's 1950 endorsement for governor. The committee set up a plan to hold extensive hearings on that issue, and on expected similar contests for U.S. Senator, Lieutenant Governor and Attorney General. Contenders for the Senate nomination were Superior Court Judge Frederick F. Houser (not the same Frederick HOWSER who was subject of the earlier discussion), L.A. County Supervisor Raymond Darby and Congressman Richard Nixon of Whittier. Frederick N. Howser and Ed Shattuck were leading attorney general hopefuls. William Reicher of Oakland chaired a fact-find subcommittee to screen gubernatorial candidates, Worth Brown of Capitola chaired the lieutenant governor panel, G. Revelle Harrison of Riverside chaired the U.S. Senate sub-committee.

By a 6-3 vote, the U.S. Senate fact-finding group recommended Judge Houser over Nixon. The full Fact-Finding Committee, on a secret ballot vote, reversed the sub-committee and voted 13 to 12 for Nixon. By such a narrow margin was Nixon able to get a key boost at an important juncture in his political career.

Shattuck was the unanimous com-

mittee choice for attorney general. Recommended for re-election support were Governor Warren, Lieutenant Governor Knight, Controller Tom Kuchel, Treasurer Charles Johnson and Secretary of State Frank Jordan.

At the 17th Annual C.R.A. Convention at San Francisco's Fairmont Hotel on March 25, 1950, incumbent Attorney General Howser urged party unity and asked C.R.A. to make no endorsement for attorney general. The *San Francisco Chronicle* characterized his plea as "almost tearful."

The *Chronicle* story disclosed testimony before a Sonoma County Grand Jury that "the punchboard monopoly put \$50,000 into Howser's 1946 campaign as the purchase price for immunity from interference" by the attorney general's office. Before C.R.A., Howser reportedly called such charges "scurrilous and scandalous lies."

The C.R.A. delegates unanimously endorsed Shattuck for Howser's job, and accused Howser of having allowed "vicious growth and development of organized crime and rackets."

Congressman Richard Nixon addressed the convention. He proposed that Republican leaders "such as Senators Taft and Vandenburg, former President Hoover, Governors Warren and Dewey, John Foster Dulles, Harold Stassen, and General Eisenhower" confer with President Truman on national policy. Nixon also urged Republicans to back "a consistent, realistic foreign policy," rather than "mere negative opposition to the course being pursued" by the Democrats.

Convention delegates backed the Fact-Finding Committee's recommendations for endorsements.

The 1950 convention also took the unusual step of kicking 65th District Assemblyman John W. Evans out of C.R.A. over Evans' alleged switching of his party registration. Evans was said to have been elected as a Democrat at the high tide of New Dealism, and had switched to the Republican side only after the New Deal tide had ebbed.

All pre-primary C.R.A. endorsees for state and U.S. Senate offices won the party's primary nomination in

1950. All won election in November, except Ed Shattuck. He was beaten in the attorney general's race by a man named Edmund F. (Pat) Brown.

Richard Nixon went to the U.S. Senate.

Gearing Up Again

At the 18th Annual Convention March 2-4, 1951 in Long Beach, the main topic was the 1952 Presidential campaign. Arthur Strehlow was named to chair a 36-member Candidates' Committee.

At the November, 1951 Board of Directors meeting in Palm Springs, the committee urged Governor Warren to again allow himself to be endorsed for President.

This move followed a similar action by 17 Republican leaders, including Nixon and Knowland.

The Warren resolution sparked considerable discussion. Ed Shattuck said he favored General Dwight Eisenhower, but still felt that the California delegation should be pledged to Warren. Modesto's Horace Dryden was critical of Warren (the nature of his criticism is not available), and said folks in his neck of the woods favored Senator Taft of Ohio. Shattuck said a combination of either Eisenhower-Warren or Warren-Taft would be "unbeatable."

President Markell Baer presided over the 29th Annual Convention of C.R.A. in San Francisco on Jan. 13, 1952. The convention endorsed Senator Knowland for re-election, and endorsed Warren for President.

Joe Russell of Ventura challenged Warren's "Republicanism." Russell said either General Douglas MacArthur or Senator Bob Taft should carry the GOP banner in November.

Gordon Richmond, too, was skeptical of the Warren movement, but for a different reason: "Until the . . . party gets back to the people and adopts some of Warren's forward-looking ideas, we will be defeated by the Democrats as we have been in the past," said Richmond. It is unclear what he meant by Warren's "forward-looking ideas."

Warren, vacationing in Hawaii, wired his regrets that he was missing

the convention, and noted that it was only the second convention he had missed since C.R.A. was formed 20 years before.

David Ingalls spoke on behalf of Senator Taft's presidential candidacy. Senator Henry Cabot Lodge spoke for Eisenhower. Harold Stassen spoke for himself. Senator Knowland delivered the main address.

In the June 3 primary of 1952, the Warren presidential slate was opposed by a slate headed by Congressman Werdell. The Werdell slate was for "candidates other than Warren." The Warren slate won, although the Werdell "anybody else" slate carried Orange County.

In those days of cross-filing, Senator Knowland won the nomination of both parties, making his November run a mere formality.

Historic Convention

The C.R.A., which had helped spawn the political career of Richard Nixon, and which made him a narrow choice for its senatorial endorsement in 1950, played another key role in his becoming the Republican vice-presidential nominee in 1952.

Excerpts from a letter written by past C.R.A. president Markell Baer to fellow past-president Dick Krugh in 1975, recall the intrigue of the 1952 National Convention in Chicago:

"Then, in 1952, Warren was again a potential candidate for the Presidency. I had the privilege of being on the train with him en route to the Chicago Convention. He reminded me of his experiences with Dewey and made it definite he would not again play second-figure as V.P. or with someone else.

"At that convention, I was appointed the Chief Page for California which gave me the privilege of attending the many committee meetings etc. Then, I was asked to serve as aide to Senator Knowland who was our floor leader.

"On the way to Chicago, Dick Nixon left the train and flew into Chicago and on returning to the train, informed the delegates that Earl had no chance; that Eisenhower or Taft would win out. Earl never forgot this, and never

since trusted Nixon and thought Nixon had betrayed him. Anyway, Warren did lose the nomination.

"At the Convention, I was finally assigned in charge of the special telephone from the Convention to Warren's and Eisenhower's headquarters. The night when Eisenhower was nominated, I first got a call for Earl Warren, and learned Earl had been offered the Vice Presidency nomination and had promptly refused. Days later, Eisenhower's office in Washington phoned me as to my ideas as Earl being Associate Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court. As years before I had been a special secretary of the Supreme Court of California I was interested and did approve Earl's appointment. As it turned out, a vacancy occurred in the Chief Justiceship, and in time I regretted Earl being appointed to such a post. But that is another story.

"With Earl's emphatic refusal to Eisenhower, I was told to get Senator Knowland. I did so, and he came to the office where I was and with his father walked up and down, arm in arm, discussing the matter. The father kept saying Bill would be pushed aside and wreck his career, and besides the father almost daily telephoned him regarding affairs at the Tribune (as I personally know) and would not be able to do so with Bill running around as Vice President. Meanwhile, the father's wife sat with me and cried over and over, that Bill should not give in, and I tried to console her. Well, Bill finally did refuse. And that was it.

"Being told to return to the said phone the next morning, I did so, and soon came a call to get Nixon. I called in the pages and was told he was at the Stockyard Inn and so reported. Then someone in Eisenhower's headquarters phoned me that I had given misinformation, that history was at stake, and it was serious, and I must produce Nixon at once, or else!

"Well, I left my post, and personally hurried to the said Inn. The clerk at first wouldn't talk to me, said he did not know Nixon and he was not registered. However, I did learn that Murray Chotiner was in the hotel and I knew Nixon was running around with Chotiner. So I managed to get up

to Chotiner's apartment and in it and found Dick lying on a bed, unshaven, still in his clothes (he had been up much of the night) and looking upset. I told him to get out, get dressed up and get to Eisenhower's at once.

"Soon after returning to my telephone post, he appeared, in better shape, and again I explained all that had happened. We called a taxi and about an hour later, there he was on the platform with Eisenhower, waving to the crowd of delegates, and was nominated. Since then he has at times talked to me of this affair and laughed about it.

Sincerely,
Markell Baer

Past President, 1949-1950"

Where would history have led us if Markell Baer had not been able to locate Dick Nixon that fateful day at the Stockyard Inn?

Murray Chotiner, who served as C.R.A. president in 1944-45, was one of Nixon's top confidantes, and would later serve as a key White House aide. He died from the effects of an auto crash in 1974. He had served Nixon for three decades.

Earl Warren's quest for the presidency was at an end. The curious period during which he was the darling of the C.R.A. was also drawing to a close. The first time (1942) that C.R.A. held a pre-primary endorsing convention, they endorsed Warren for governor. At every convention since then, they pushed his candidacy for whatever office he sought, up to and including 1952. That year, C.R.A.'s romance with Warren ended, but the romance with Dick Nixon, which had begun in Pasadena in 1946, began to reach full blossom.

By 1962, C.R.A. members were circulating petitions calling for the impeachment of Chief Justice Earl Warren.

But in November 1952, C.R.A. members were beside themselves with joy. Dwight David Eisenhower and Richard Milhouse Nixon had carried the Republican Party to national victory. Twenty California Republicans were elected to Congress. Ike-Nixon carried California by almost 700,000 votes.

For the first time since the New Deal began in 1932, the Grand Old Party had captured the White House.

And C.R.A. enjoyed tremendous power and importance in California politics.

A Gathering of Winners

It is easy to visualize the euphoric atmosphere of the 20th Annual C.R.A. Convention in Los Angeles, which opened March 6, 1953. Present-day C.R.A. members who went to the 1981 meeting, following the victory of President Reagan, can easily understand the feeling.

Speakers at the 1953 convention included Robert Kirkwood, newly-elected Controller of California, James Silliman, the new Speaker of the State Assembly, and at the Saturday night banquet, new U.S. Senator Thomas Kuchel. Kuchel was another California Republican who enjoyed a period of support by C.R.A., but who, like Earl Warren, would later fall into disfavor with the organization over what were considered to be "liberal" attitudes.

When Governor Warren addressed a luncheon meeting of the '53 convention, he was introduced as "the friend of the California Republican Assembly."

Vice-President Richard Nixon, who had enjoyed C.R.A. support when he ran for the House and Senate, had this to say about the organization in 1953: "Volunteer organizations are the lifeblood of a political party. That is why all Republicans in California should give their wholehearted support to the C.R.A., which is the outstanding Republican organization in the state."

Hal Ramser, who served as C.R.A. President in 1954-55, once wrote that he could recall nothing terribly exciting about his year as president, except for an undefined "hassle" with some San Diego Republicans. The period was certainly one of relative happiness for C.R.A. members, because Republicans controlled state politics, and California Republican Nixon was part of the White House team.

The 22nd C.R.A. Convention was held March 11, 1955 in Pasadena, and wasted no time in pledging its support to the re-election of the Ike-Nixon team in 1956. That convention also adopted a resolution calling for a lifting of secrecy which shrouded the infamous Yalta agreements. It was at Yalta, near World War II's end, that Roosevelt, Stalin and Churchill and their advisors had met to carve up Europe and sign away the freedom of the peoples of Eastern Europe to Communism.

Robert H. Power was C.R.A. President in 1955-56. During that year, the group did what Power calls "research in depth" on UNESCO, the controversial United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

According to Power, the national American Legion convention that year had condemned UNESCO in what Power regarded as a "scurrilous" report. After C.R.A. did a study and report praising UNESCO, its findings were published by the United States Commission for UNESCO, which labeled the C.R.A. work as "one of the three best reports" on the scope and activities of UNESCO written in the U.S.

Principal researchers of the UNESCO study were identified as John Phillips (later a C.R.A. President) and Betty Merritt.

A C.R.A. News headline in July 1955 proclaimed that a gentleman named Howard Jarvis was chairman of the "We Want Ike" rally scheduled for the Pan Pacific Auditorium in Los Angeles later that year. The rally was sponsored by the National Republican Finance Committee. Jarvis became president of the Los Angeles County Republican Assembly in 1960. Later, of course, he would author Proposition 13 and other important tax control legislation, and would become a personal symbol of conservative opposition to Democrat tax-and-spend policies.

An April, 1955 edition of C.R.A. News revealed that the State Republican Central Committee wanted to endorse certain party candidates in the 1956 primary election, and C.R.A. was invited to participate in the pre-

primary endorsement process. C.R.A. refused, pointing out that it opposed any pre-primary endorsing by any official state party organization, and would have no part of it. Such a policy was, after all, illegal, C.R.A. correctly pointed out.

Vice-President Nixon spoke to the banquet meeting of a C.R.A. Board gathering in Palm Springs in 1956.

As the 1956 national election campaign heated up, Senator Knowland was cheered by an audience of more than 500 as he spoke to a Los Angeles County R.A. meeting on Sept. 25, 1956, and lambasted the Democrat national ticket headed by Adlai Stevenson of Illinois. A few weeks later, on Oct. 23, former GOP national standard bearer Thomas Dewey came to Pasadena to address an Ike-Nixon rally at the Civic Auditorium.

During that presidential campaign year, C.R.A. boasted of more than 11,000 members.

When the 1956 Republican National Convention was held in San Francisco, C.R.A. was one of the first grassroots groups in America to make its support of Ike and Nixon known to all. More than 100 prominent Republicans, including the President and Vice-President, were given special C.R.A. plaques at the convention.

In November of that year, the Ike-Nixon ticket swept to an even more impressive win than in 1952. California belonged to them as completely as if it were a large ranch carrying the "Ike-Dick" brand.

In 1957, George Milias replaced Robert Fenton Craig as C.R.A. President. At a Board meeting that year, Craig praised Senator Knowland (who spoke at the meeting) as one of the founders of C.R.A. Craig noted that the organization had grown to 116 units. That Board meeting in Long Beach was attended, incidentally by 1,100 members.

Knowland made it clear that he favored a statewide water project.

At the 1958 C.R.A. Convention, delegates endorsed Senator Knowland for governor, Goodwin Knight for the U.S. Senate and Assemblyman Caspar Weinberger of San Francisco for Attorney General.

Weinberger, incidentally, was pick-

ed by the Capitol Press group as the most able member of the legislature.

The C.R.A. choices won their primaries, but all were defeated in the Democrat sweep later that year. The sweep included the election of Attorney General Edmund (Pat) Brown, Sr. as governor.

During 1958, a series of columns by political observer Jack McDowell in the *San Francisco Call-Bulletin* detailed how C.R.A. members (including state vice-president Bill Nelligan) were actively trying to overcome the "old guard" Republican leadership in San Francisco. Caspar Weinberger was considered a part of the Nelligan group, according to McDowell. Later that year (Dec. 12), an editorial cartoon in the *San Francisco Chronicle* showed a bandaged, sad-sack elephant labeled "Old Guard GOP" being pushed by a younger Republican through the doors into a glue factory.

Nelligan, who was also a labor official, chaired a committee of San Francisco Republicans who called upon the party to include labor and other minority factions in the party organization. A report to that effect was drawn up by Nelligan and his vice-chairman, Leon Markel. They conferred with San Francisco Mayor George Christopher on the matter. Nelligan would later serve as C.R.A. President in 1963-64. President in 1958 was John Phillips. He was succeeded in 1959 by Gardiner Johnson, a man who would play a key role in C.R.A.'s move toward a more conservative viewpoint.

Johnson made no bones about his support of Richard Nixon for the Presidency, after Eisenhower had completed the legal two-term limit. In fact, Johnson is reported to have told the 1959 C.R.A. Fact-Finding Committee to not waste its time on the matter of Nixon.

"Richard Nixon (is) an outstanding and unusually-qualified candidate for the Presidency," wrote Johnson, "and the Resolutions Committee should so report." At the C.R.A. Convention in Coronado in February, 1959, the Resolutions Committee did just that.

Also in early 1959, the intra-party

struggles in San Francisco were still going on. The *San Francisco Chronicle* reported that a C.R.A. paper on the matter attacked the local Central Committee as being an "in-bred" group run by "small cliques." The C.R.A. is said to have called for a reorganization of the party in San Francisco to give it a grassroots flavor. The C.R.A. committee making the report was headed by Bill Nelligan, and included Leon Markel, Eleanor Rossi Reno and Allen Vejar. Listed as an "advisor" to the study was Assemblyman Caspar Weinberger. The report charged that the Central Committee had used GOP funds and literature to support its own members in their campaigns for re-election to the Central Committee.

(Editor's note: The internecine fight in San Francisco may or may not have been typical of similar battles around the state as C.R.A. tried to organize a more responsive state party apparatus. We have been able to chronicle the Frisco fight here to a certain degree because of good coverage of the subject by San Francisco newspapers, and the availability of clippings from those newspapers in the C.R.A. archives.)

In 1960, Harvey Mydland succeeded Gardiner Johnson as president of C.R.A. Nixon got strong C.R.A. backing for President. The record of other endorsements is not available.

The great TV debates of 1960 between Nixon and the handsome young John F. Kennedy ushered in the showbiz age of electronic politics. Make-up became more important than issues. Kennedy rode the TV waves to a narrow victory. Uncertainty about the accuracy of the vote count in Illinois (what else is new?) clouded the result, because the vote there was extremely close, and there were widespread charges that the Democrat machine in Chicago had manipulated the vote count. The Illinois electoral votes were critical to the outcome of the presidential race. Kennedy recognized the Illinois problem in a message to Nixon. But Nixon said he did not want to cause a Constitutional crisis by disputing a presidential election. Kennedy got the tainted

victory.

(Your editor was in Chicago at the time, and can attest to the scandalous state of political life there. Votes of dead men were recorded, for example, and their address was listed at a certain hotel—said to be a common Chicago Democrat trick—but the hotel had long since burned, and the address was a vacant lot).

In 1961, C.R.A. helped the Republican Party pick up the pieces and start again. Kennedy was in the White House and Pat Brown sat in the governor's seat.

The gubernatorial election of 1962 became a major focus of C.R.A. concern. Possible candidates included Goodwin Knight, Lieutenant Governor Harold Powers, Assemblyman Joe Shell. . . and Nixon.

At a December 1961 Board meeting in Santa Maria, 500 C.R.A. members heard Nixon make his pitch for the governor's race.

It was also in 1961 that Earl Warren fell forever out of favor with C.R.A. During the year, his liberal interpretations of the Constitution as Chief Justice had embittered old friends. On Jan. 30, 1961, conservative writer-broadcaster Dan Smoot issued a Smoot Report calling for Warren's impeachment. By the end of the year, many C.R.A. members who had supported Warren's political rise were circulating petitions calling for his impeachment as Chief Justice.

Had C.R.A. become more conservative?

Had Warren simply become more liberal?

Was it a combination of both?

Winds of Change

As the C.R.A. began its third decade in 1962, the winds of philosophical change were blowing strongly through the organization. The young liberal Republicans who had founded the organization in the early Thirties were seeing their ideals slowly erode away as conservatives gained strength throughout the California Republican Party. To their credit, it must be said that the GOP liberals had helped keep the party alive and prospering in California throughout a period of Democrat domination of national

politics. But the time had come for the party to return to its traditional values.

Fred Hall was elected president of C.R.A. at the 1962 convention. It has been said that 1962 marked the beginning of the end of liberal control of C.R.A. The ultra-liberal Democrat John F. Kennedy was President. In November of 1962, Richard Nixon, whose political career had peaked with C.R.A. support, hit one of its lowest valleys as Nixon was defeated by Democrat Attorney General Edmund "Pat" Brown in the race for governor. Many, including Nixon himself (remember his "you won't have Nixon to kick around any more" speech?) thought the defeat marked the end of his political career. But he still had a strong residue of support in C.R.A.

The 1963 C.R.A. Convention is remembered as one of the most bitterly-fought in the organization's history. Labor unionist William Nelligan, representing the liberal wing of the party, was elected president over conservative Harry Waddell. There were cries of foul play and claims that ballot boxes were stuffed. The Waddell group walked out of the convention and formed an ultra-conservative group called United Republicans of California (UROC).

In 1963, C.R.A. claimed a membership of 14,000. The long struggle to establish the group as a true statewide organization, with a strong network of active local units, was paying off.

On Nov. 23, 1963, President Kennedy was assassinated. Lyndon Johnson became President.

Barry vs. Rocky

As members prepared for the 1964 convention at the Hacienda Inn in Fresno, a presidential endorsement battle was shaping up between supporters of Nelson Rockefeller and Barry Goldwater. This classic, critical confrontation between the liberal and conservative forces of the California Republican Party was fought in a series of parliamentary moves, back-room arguments and passionate speeches at the Hacienda.

Gardiner Johnson, who had served

as C.R.A. president in 1959-60, was a leader in the floor fight for the Goldwater forces. He sparred with presiding president Bill Nelligan and the Rockefeller forces, which included C.R.A. founders Ed Shattuck, Ronald Button and Harvey Mydland. Arrayed with Johnson on the Goldwater side were such emerging C.R.A. leaders as Nolan Frizzelle, Dick Darling and Charlie Lavis. A Fact-Finding Committee appointed by the reigning Board of Directors had voted to recommend that no presidential endorsement be given.

Gardiner Johnson and friends, fearful that the committee report would not even be brought up for discussion on the convention floor, elicited promises from the Board that the report would be presented. When it did come before the convention, the Goldwater forces pounced upon the committee recommendation, and insisted that the convention endorse a presidential candidate.

The Rockefeller forces were blamed for using stalling tactics which carried the debate late into the night, causing some delegates to miss airline connections. When the chairman tried to adjourn a meeting without hearing the Fact-Finding Committee report, the delegates over-ruled the chair.

"They voted to stay here tonight, they voted to stay here tomorrow or to stay here all week," Gardiner Johnson reminded the chairman. "...we are not going to leave this room, sir, no matter how many rulings you may make, until we have voted on the convention committees reports, which either says this convention goes on record against endorsing someone for President of the United States, or we are going to have courage enough to stand up and be counted, and I think this is what we will do. We will make a substitute motion and carry it by majority vote and, if the last is any indication, we will carry it by over 80 percent, and Barry Goldwater is going to be the endorsed candidate of this convention."

An official court reporter who had been hired to make a transcript of the proceedings, noted that, after Johnson's remarks, there was "loud and

sustained standing applause."

Chairman Jack Owens took a one minute recess. When he gavelled the meeting back to order, he noted that a delegate had asked that "singing be permitted in order to relieve the tension." One of the delegates led the convention in song. It is not recorded what songs were sung.

Ed Shattuck made an appeal that the rights of the Rockefeller minority be respected. Ronald Button, another Rockefeller supporter, pleaded that no endorsement be made, because the party had gone through "enough bloodletting" during Richard Nixon's candidacy for governor.

Goldwater Named

William Ebert then formally placed the name of Senator Barry Goldwater before the convention for consideration for endorsement for President of the United States. Jack Schall seconded the motion. Darvin Paddock also spoke in support of the Goldwater endorsement. Gardiner Johnson, in support of Goldwater, reminded everyone that a grassroots movement for Goldwater was sweeping the state.

Ronald Button spoke against the motion. Ed Shattuck then yielded so Button could also use his time. As Button finished speaking, he suggested that "...those people in this convention hall...who feel that the party and the Assembly will be damaged by any endorsement, either walk out of this convention at this time, or do not vote, and then Mr. Gardiner Johnson and the Goldwater forces, if that is their desire on how they want to see our party operate in this state, take over and make any votes they desire."

"Let's go," screamed one delegate.

Sorehead!" yelled another.

"Order in the house," demanded chairman Jack Owens.

"Sit down," yelled another delegate.

Walkout

The court reporter's next notation is that "Whereupon, some of the delegates began to leave."

Delegate John Schmitz of Tustin tried to speak and was ruled out of order.

Chairman Owens said he was ready to take the vote on the motion to endorse Goldwater.

Darvin Paddock asked that a count be taken of those voting. Owens said a roll call vote would consume several hours. "The vote shall be taken by standing vote," he ruled.

Cyril Stevenson demanded that a count be taken of those who would stand up for Goldwater. He was over-ruled by the Chair.

"Those in favor of the nomination of Senator Goldwater, please stand," ordered Owens.

There was a standing vote accompanied by loud, long applause.

"The ayes have it," ruled Owens.

Pandemonium reigned. The Rockefeller forces packed their bags and left.

The convention also endorsed George Murphy for U.S. Senate, but that was a fact almost lost in the Goldwater landslide.

We dwell upon the drama of the 1964 Goldwater endorsement because it is probably the historic moment at which C.R.A. reached a philosophical watershed. From that moment forward, there has been no doubt that the California Republican Assembly represents the conservative Republican viewpoint in the state.

There were accusations by liberal Republicans that the John Birch Society was trying to take over the Republican Party. A historian reports that "it was said that five members of the C.R.A. executive board at that time were members of the Birch Society."

Nolan Frizzelle, a leader in the Goldwater movement, was elected C.R.A. president in 1964. Later that year, Barry Goldwater was nominated at the National Republican Party convention in San Francisco. He lost to Lyndon Johnson.

Frizzelle, in a report summing up his year as president, made these points:

- 33 new units were chartered.
- Nearly 5,000 new members were added.
- Almost 90 percent of delegates to the GOP National Convention were

greeted by C.R.A. volunteers at the airport and driven to their hotels.

- A C.R.A. hospitality room at the Del Webb Townhouse in San Francisco was crowded by national delegates 16 hours a day.

- Delegates from North Dakota, Illinois, Nebraska and all of the Southern states credited C.R.A. and its host committee with helping to develop and hold their majorities for Goldwater.

- Leaders from nine states asked for assistance in establishing Republican Assemblies in their states, based upon the performance of C.R.A. in San Francisco.

- C.R.A. members contributed 3 million work hours to the campaign during the 60 days prior to election day.

Frizzelle stated that "liberals, moderates and conservatives are all represented in the C.R.A. and all are urged to participate."

The Year of Goldwater had been, despite the failure to elect him president, a year of growth and new direction for C.R.A. It is a year that old-timers look back upon with reverence and misty nostalgia.

A New Star Rises

On Jan. 16, 1965, a group calling itself Citizens for Constructive Action met at the International Hotel near Los Angeles International Airport. Included in the group were C.R.A. leaders Frank Adams and Gardiner Johnson. Among the 50 founding members were Walter Knott of Orange County, former Senator William Knowland, Ivy Baker Priest and other prominent conservative California Republicans, and some Democrats. Also listed on that roster of founding members was the name of Ronald Reagan, an actor who had been a union leader and a former Democrat, and who was beginning to emerge as a charismatic advocate of conservative American principles.

Reprinted elsewhere in this publication is an article written by the late Frank Adams following that historic meeting. Many conservatives date the political career of Ronald Reagan from that meeting.

Cyril Stevenson of Sacramento was

elected president of C.R.A. in 1965. During his administration, the Reagan steamroller began to pick up speed and, at the 1966 C.R.A. Convention, Ronald Reagan was enthusiastically endorsed for the Republican nomination for governor. It was the beginning of a long romance between C.R.A. and Reagan.

Dick Darling was elected C.R.A. president in 1966. He had the pleasure of leading a C.R.A. campaign year which swept the entire Reagan team into every statewide office, except that of controller, which was won by Democrat Alan Cranston.

A side note on the September 1966 C.R.A. Board meeting: The meeting held at the now-historic Hacienda Inn, was chaired by Mary Stanley. Gubernatorial nominee Reagan was there. According to the October 1966 edition of the *C.R.A. Newsletter*, Mary had not been a Republican before she was married, but had agreed with her husband that she would re-register as a Republican. Her marriage vows included a vow to become a Republican.

Prophetic Words

In August 1966, Ronald Reagan issued the following statement on Social Security, which was reported in the *C.R.A. Newsletter*:

"...Not only do I accept it as a fact of life, but as a good fact. It is here to stay...at least it ought to be, in its proper form. My principal concern about Social Security results from the mismanagement I have observed in the administration of this program. Social Security should be a genuine insurance program, run on a sound actuarial basis. Instead, Washington has allowed Social Security to fall into the welfare category...If Social Security is made secure once more, present and future generations need have no fear that, when it comes their turn to draw Social Security payments, the cupboard will be bare."

The prophetic words were uttered 16 years ahead of their time. In 1982, an emergency commission appointed by President Reagan, would finally come to grips - at least temporarily - with the problems he had identified in 1966.

The national elections of 1966 saw an off-year gain by Republicans which sharply reduced the Democrat majorities in Congress. In a message to C.R.A. members in March 1967, former vice-president Richard Nixon called the GOP sweep "a sharp rebuke to the President's lack of credibility and lack of direction abroad."

Governor Reagan addressed the C.R.A. Convention April 1-2, 1967 at the Lafayette Hotel in Long Beach. Dr. Max Rafferty, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, and a new darling of the C.R.A., was keynote speaker. Frank Adams was elected president.

Los Angeles District Attorney Evelle Younger, a member of the Los Angeles R.A., addressed a November meeting of the group.

Birth of the News

Bunster Creely, editor emeritus of *C.R.A. News*, recalls that it was Frank Adams who firmly established the *News* as the statewide regular official publication of C.R.A. "He paid for the first year of publication from his own pocket," recalls Creely, who was a boyhood friend of Adams, "and upon leaving office as president, he successfully pushed a by-laws amendment to guarantee a regular source of funds to keep the newspaper in publication." The newspaper, later reduced to bi-monthly publication, is supported by a designated portion of membership dues. There had been earlier, sporadic statewide publications, some produced as frequently as every week, and the Los Angeles R.A. produced its own newsletter for many years. But the 1967 decision by Adams and his Board of Directors launched *C.R.A. News* as a continuing, financially-supported voice of the Assembly. Mr. Creely was the paper's editor for almost all of the first decade of its existence. Fred Davis became editor in January 1979. The tabloid news format of the paper dates back to the issue of May 1968.

C.R.A. began 1968 with a Jan. 19-21 Board Meeting in San Diego. Speakers included State Senator Jack Schrade, Congressman Bob Wilson and former Congressional candidate Shirley Temple Black, who

had been upset in a special primary election earlier that year by Paul (Pete) McCloskey. The February issue of *CRA News* reported that Mrs. Black "stole the hearts of C.R.A." at the meeting's banquet.

In May 1968, the annual convention was held at the historic old Claremont Hotel in Berkeley. Tirso del Junco was elected state president. The convention endorsed Richard Nixon for President and Dr. Max Rafferty for U.S. Senate (to oppose incumbent Republican Tom Kuchel). Rafferty won in the primary, and was the target of an all-out C.R.A. effort in the general election, but lost to Democrat Alan Cranston.

Nixon, of course, went on to be elected President in November.

Favorite Sons

Once again C.R.A. could bask in the sunshine of major victory. Ronald Reagan was governor of California. Richard Nixon was President of the United States. Both could be claimed as "favorite sons" of C.R.A.

The C.R.A. state convention for 1969 was held in San Diego March 21-23. James Kraemer of Piedmont was elected president. Assemblyman Pete Wilson (later mayor, then U.S. Senator) introduced luncheon speaker Congressman Bob Wilson. State Central Committee Chairman Dennis Carpenter introduced Lieut. Gov. Ed Reinecke. Navy Commander Lloyd Bucher, just released by the North Vietnamese, who captured him and his "Pueblo" spy ship crew, was a surprise attendee at the convention.

Riots and other disturbances on the campuses of California colleges and universities drew the ire of C.R.A. during 1969 and was the subject of several speakers, writers and other leaders during the year.

Barry Goldwater, Jr. addressed a quarterly Board Meeting in Santa Maria on Sept. 27. A panel discussion tackled the problem of campus unrest. Panelists were State Senator John Harmer, Senator Bill Richardson, Assemblyman Bill Campbell, and Assemblyman John Stull. C.R.A. circulated a statewide petition demanding a crackdown on campus

troublemakers.

Also in 1969, C.R.A. budgeted \$8,000 to appoint John Bohn as official legislative counsel. His job was to act as liaison between C.R.A. and the State Legislature and to keep legislators informed of C.R.A. positions on various legislation.

Senator George Murphy addressed the January 1970 quarterly meeting in San Jose. Also on hand were the four GOP candidates for state attorney general: Evelle Younger, George Deukmejian, John Harmer and Spencer Williams.

At the 1970 convention, April 3-5 in Sacramento, David Gater of Orange County was elected president in a three-way race over Jerry Werner and Bill Bradley. Primary election endorsements went to Reagan for governor, Reinecke for lieutenant governor, Harmer for attorney general, Houston Fluornoy for controller, and George Murphy for U.S. Senate. Governor Reagan addressed the convention. But he arrived 45 minutes late because someone fired a .22 caliber shot from the parking lot into the hotel entrance just before he was scheduled to speak. Highway patrolmen sealed off the area and searched, unsuccessfully, for the gunman.

C.R.A. member John Schmitz left the state senate to serve in Congress after winning a special election following the death of Congressman James Utt of Tustin.

A September quarterly meeting in San Francisco featured talks by Max Rafferty and James (Johnny) Johnson, a member of the Federal Civil Service Commission.

Treasury Looted

On October 23, 1971, the C.R.A. leadership learned that the organization's treasury had been looted. Paul Casattas, who served as treasurer in 1969, and was re-elected to the post in 1970, was convicted of the theft after confessing to the crime.

President Gater learned of the crisis when he called Casattas to ask why a number of C.R.A. bills had not been paid. Casattas told him there was no money to pay the bills because he, Casattas, had taken the money. Gater

called C.R.A. vice-president Hugh Koford, an attorney (later a judge) and asked Koford and congressional district director John Zobel, who was a C.P.A., to go immediately to the home of Casattas in San Jose and secure his resignation as treasurer and his signed admission of the crime. This was done. It was later determined that about \$23,000 had been taken.

C.R.A. was flat broke. An all-out effort was launched to get donations and loans from units and individuals to pay the organization's past-due bills. The drive was successful.

Another crisis developed in Los Angeles. The L.A. County R.A., which claimed more than 2,000 members, was torn by dissension and friction. The county unit had held the power to charter units within the county, and thus held considerable power within the state organization. When a power struggle broke out within the L.A. unit, the state C.R.A. finally had to act as arbiter in the dispute. The struggle was won by leaders of the 43rd District, Griffith Park Hills, 41st District and Glendale assemblies. One result of the dissension was that the state C.R.A. withdrew L.A. County's power to charter units. The power fight also led to legal action in which a judge displaced some L.A. County leaders. The Los Angeles County R.A. became a county coordinating council.

There are those in Los Angeles who still argue that the revocation of the county unit's chartering power weakened C.R.A. in Los Angeles County to an extent from which it still has never recovered.

Hugh Koford was elected president at that interesting 1971 convention, which was held at the Los Angeles Hilton. Congressman Phil Crane of Illinois delivered the convention's keynote address. Governor Reagan also addressed the gathering.

McCloskey Censured

The convention adopted a resolution censuring Congressman Pete McCloskey, accusing him of "siding with radical groups to promote violence."

At a quarterly meeting in Septem-

ber 1971, the Board of Directors put President Nixon on notice that he was not automatically assured of getting the C.R.A. endorsement in 1972. A policy paper adopted by the Board outlined "criteria and conditions that will enable us to conscientiously support and work hard for a Republican presidential candidate in 1972, whoever he may be."

The criteria called for immediate steps to restore military superiority, reaffirm support of the Republic of China on Taiwan, restore the right of Americans to own gold, reaffirm the Monroe Doctrine, establish a national Pearl Harbor Day holiday, end all foreign aid giveaways, and restrict donations to the U.N.

A "dump Nixon" group within C.R.A. was called a "tiny minority," but the 1972 convention, held in Palo Alto in April, was described in a C.R.A. *News* headline as "the wildest in history." The dissident anti-Nixon group was only part of the excitement. Left-wing demonstrators tried to storm the meeting at the Cabana Hyatt House, and there were threats to bomb the meeting. Target of their ire seemed to be Vice-President Spiro Agnew, who was scheduled to address the Saturday night banquet. To cross up the demonstrators, Agnew's speech was switched to the luncheon meeting. The anti-Nixon forces could muster only 86 votes as the convention voted to endorse the President's re-election.

The star-studded convention cast also included Governor Reagan, Congressman (and presidential hopeful) John Ashbrook of Ohio, and former deputy defense secretary David Packard.

Don Pretzer was elected C.R.A. president.

Some C.R.A. members in Orange County bolted from the organization to join the late-blooming campaign of Congressman John Schmitz, a C.R.A. member who left the party in the summer of '72 to become the presidential nominee of the American Independent Party. Schmitz had been defeated in the congressional primary after criticizing President Nixon.

In November, the Nixon-Agnew ticket won a landslide victory. C.R.A.,

which had been splintered slightly by the anti-Nixon dissidents, pulled itself together and looked forward to the 1974 campaign.

At the quarterly Board meeting Jan. 19-21, 1973 in Fresno, host committee chairman Mary Stanley came up with a special "Inaugural Banquet." The Saturday night banquet coincided with the Nixon-Agnew inaugural ball in Washington, which was televised into the banquet room of the Del Webb Townhouse in Fresno. The C.R.A. members who had worked hard for the national party ticket's victory, got to share in the celebration of the inaugural.

The January '73 issue of *C.R.A. News* had an editorial welcoming John Schmitz home from his American Independent Party presidential campaign, and inviting him to rejoin the Republican Party and C.R.A. Eventually, he did so.

In April of '73, past president Hugh Koford was seated on Alameda County's Superior Court, where he would serve for many years as a distinguished jurist.

A month later the University of Southern California honored past C.R.A. president Robert Fenton Craig at a special awards ceremony which was attended by many C.R.A. members. Dr. Craig was honored for his years of service as a USC teacher.

The 1973 C.R.A. Convention was held in Anaheim in April. Governor Reagan and Lieut. Gov. Reinecke addressed the gathering. Dick Krugh of Morgan Hill was elected C.R.A. president. An informal *C.R.A. News* poll of those attending the convention showed that 74 percent favored Ed Reinecke for governor in 1974 (after Reagan completed the limit of two terms). Attorney General Evelle Younger was favored by 11 percent.

When the Watergate crisis developed into a TV show starring Senator Sam Ervin and his Select Committee on Presidential Campaign Activities, it was viewed as a "lynching bee" in a front-page *C.R.A. News* article in September, 1973. Also during September, the C.R.A. Board met in Palm Springs and adopted an agenda of issues to be addressed during the 1974 election year. C.R.A. took

positions opposing any subsidies or price regulations on food products, opposing all wage and price controls, favoring off-shore drilling for oil, insisting on continued U.S. ownership of the Panama Canal, and favoring the sale of government property to private business. "We feel that the average voter is more knowledgeable than many politicians give him credit for being," the position paper summed up, "and he knows full well that money crises are not born from nature, but are caused primarily by the Federal Government."

Former Los Angeles Mayor Sam Yorty, a "reformed" Democrat, was welcomed into the Griffith Park Hills R.A.

Agriculture Secretary Earl Butz spoke to the January '74 Board meeting in Monterey. It was also announced that month that U.C.L.A. had accepted the historical files of C.R.A. to be kept in the University Research Library. Since then, the archives have been enlarged by continued donation of files, news clippings, photos and other memorabilia.

C.R.A. celebrated its 40th anniversary at the 1974 convention, held March 22-24 at the Sheraton Inn, Fresno. Governor Reagan, Phyllis Schlafly and Congressman Barry Goldwater, Jr. were among the luminaries taking part. Darell Meyer of Granada Hills was elected C.R.A. president. The convention endorsed Ed Reinecke for governor, John Harmer for lieutenant governor, Bill Richardson for U.S. Senate, Evelle Younger for attorney general, Brian Van Camp for secretary of state, Marian La Follette for controller and John Kehoe for treasurer. Younger, Harmer, Van Camp and Kehoe won primary victories, but Younger was the only one to win in November. Jerry Brown led a near-sweep of state offices by the Democrats.

The 1975 CRA Convention was held at the International Hotel in Los Angeles. Governor Meldrim Thompson of New Hampshire, one of America's staunchest conservatives, spoke at the banquet. Dr. William Banowsky, who was then president of Pepperdine University, addressed the luncheon. Attorney

Truman Campbell of Fresno was elected CRA president.

Convention delegates approved the following changes to the by-laws:

- Only one candidate may be endorsed by CRA for any particular office.

- A separate account was established for financing CRA News, with part of each member's dues to be specifically set aside for that purpose, with transfers to and from the publication account requiring Board of Directors approval.

- A public accountant to audit CRA's books would be hired each year.

- The editor of CRA News was given the responsibility of attending all Board meetings and conventions.

At the June meeting of the Board of Directors, three men, S.I. Hayakawa, Dennis Carpenter and Alfonso Bell, announced their candidacies for the US. Senate seat held by democrat John Tunney. A fourth candidate, Robert Finch, was represented at the meeting.

There were signs in early 1975 that CRA was leaning heavily toward supporting Ronald Reagan for the presidential nomination over incumbent President Gerald Ford.

State party vice-chairman Mike Montgomery was greeted with spontaneous applause at the June CRA meeting when he called for an "open primary" and the CRA Board adopted a resolution to that effect.

The following month, Nevada Senator Paul Laxalt headed a national "Citizens for Reagan" organization.

At the quarterly meeting in Palm Springs on Oct. 3, Reagan spoke and was obviously a huge favorite of those attending the meeting.

By January, Reagan was a declared candidate. An up-and-coming young Republican named Mike Curb was co-chairman of Citizens for Reagan in California. At the January CRA meeting in Sacramento, Senator Laxalt carried the Reagan message. "Bo" Callaway, chairman of President Ford's national committee, also spoke. Things were heating up for an exciting 1976 convention for CRA and for the National Republican

Party.

When the votes were counted at the Palm Springs convention, Wendell Cutting, a 29-year-old former mayor of San Jacinto, had squeezed out a 15-vote win over Len Bock to become CRA President. But the Reagan-Ford endorsement vote was nowhere near that close. By a vote of about 260 to 15 (according to a San Jose Mercury article), CRA said "We want Reagan."

Wendell Cutting had come a long way in a hurry. At 21, he had been named to the State Central Committee by Lu Schlack after "years of precinct work." At 22, he was a veteran of nine political campaigns and was named 38th Congressional District Director for CRA. Next, he became mayor of San Jacinto and a founding director of the California Conservative Union. He was walking (perhaps "running" is a better word) proof that young people can get ahead in the Republican Party.

The Panama Canal was becoming a national issue in 1976, and CRA was up front in arguing the case for keeping U.S. control over the canal.

Police Chief Ed Davis of Los Angeles spoke to the CRA Board meeting at Newport Beach in June, 1976, and called for abolition of the federal income tax.

The national convention of 1976 in Kansas City counted 45 CRA members among Reagan delegates. President Ford was re-nominated, but a lot of Reagan's CRA supporters came home with a "just-wait-until-next-time" attitude. However, they also came home committed, as President Cutting reported, to supporting the Ford-Dole ticket in November.

Their support could not keep a Georgia peanut farmer named Jimmy Carter from winning the presidency.

Past CRA President Truman Campbell was elected vice-chairman of the Republican State Central Committee in 1976.

The March 1977 issue of *CRA News* listed long-time editor Bunster Creely as "editor emeritus" with Larry Campbell and Rita Lavelle as co-editors for the south and north, respectively.

At the 1977 convention in Santa

Barbara, CRA elected its first woman president, as Mike Evans defeated Bob Thierry. She had been a CRA member since 1964, and was a founder of the Lafayette-Orinda RA.

Judge Halbert (CRA's first president) had this to say in 1983 about the historic role of women in the organization:

"Admittedly, CRA was top-heavy with men in the beginning, and even then the situation worried me. . . What would we have done without the help of Edith Van de Water, Louise Ward Watkins, Ruth Comfort Mitchell, Gladys O'Donnell. . . Mrs. Eubanks. . . Mrs. Wayne Switzer. . . and the dozens of other distaff citizens who helped us tremendously and sought no reward for themselves."

As 1978 began, Mike Curb and Mike Antonovich were candidates for lieutenant governor. The lineup for governor was a crowded field which included Ed Davis, Pete Wilson, Ken Maddy, John Briggs and, the eventual primary winner, Evelle Younger.

Phyllis Schlafly and Congressman Phil Crane addressed the January Board meeting in Newport Beach.

The 1978 convention was held in Fresno. Mike Evans sought a second term as president, but was defeated by Dennis Catron of Orange County. The margin was only 20 votes. Endorsements went to Ed Davis for governor, Mike Antonovich for lieutenant governor, George Deukmejian for attorney general, Dixon Arnett for controller, Jay Margosian for secretary of state, and Don French for treasurer. Margosian, French, Ware and Deukmejian won primary nominations, but Deukmejian was the only winner in November.

CRA was also solidly behind the tax-limiting Proposition 13, drafted by long-time CRA member Howard Jarvis. When the Board met in San Francisco in July, celebration of Prop. 13's victory brightened the occasion.

The Board met in Santa Cruz in January and heard Ben Fernandez, a self-made business success who was an early-announced candidate for President.

Two former CRA presidents, Truman Campbell and Tirso del

Junco, were elected chairman and vice-chairman respectively, of the state central committee in 1979.

More than 125 CRA members attended CRA Day in Sacramento, a growing tradition that was becoming a part of the biennial state party convention.

The 1979 convention was held in Los Angeles at the Hyatt House near the airport. Ronald Reagan and Congressman Phil Crane of Illinois were featured speakers. Both were already running hard for the GOP presidential nomination for 1980.

Delegates adopted resolutions condemning the Carter administration's foreign policies, calling for the abolition of state and federal industrial safety administrations (OSHA and CAL-OSHA), opposing bi-lingual election ballots, for a constitutional amendment requiring a balanced budget, and against forced school busing.

Mike Carrington of Sacramento was elected president of CRA for 1979-80. Past president Gardiner Johnson got special commendation at the convention for his many years of dedicated service.

On April 3, 1979, Bill Royer, who had CRA backing, won a special congressional election in the 11th District, and Ollie Speraw, also with CRA help, captured the 31st State Senate District seat. On June 19th, the same winning formula worked for Ken Maddy as he took the 14th State Senate District back from the Democrats.

At a June CRA Board meeting in San Diego, retired Army General John Singlaub warned that American arms were inferior to those of the Soviet Union.

In September, tax-fighter Paul Gann asked for and got CRA support for his "Spirit of 13" initiative, which was aimed at putting limits on state and local government spending.

Ralph Morrell of the Dixon RA was waging war on the practice of ghost voting and ghost switching by State Legislators. Legislative rules allowed members to have someone else "ghost vote" for them in their absence from the floor, and also allowed a legislator to change his vote after a bill was voted upon, so

long as the change didn't affect the bill's outcome. Under pressure from Morrell's statewide campaign, the rules were eventually changed.

The 1980 convention, which proved to be the California launching pad for one of the greatest Republican victories ever, was held April 11-13 in Santa Clara.

When Ronald Reagan walked into the convention banquet room, he was greeted by a thunderous ovation and a chant of "We Want Reagan. . . We Want Reagan." As he addressed the banquet gathering, he reminded CRA, "We have been together so many times. . . so many times." He was already in the midst of a nationwide campaign for the presidential nomination, and he certainly didn't have to court the CRA to get its blessing, but he came anyway to Santa Clara, tired but smiling, to bask for a while in the warm affection of old friends.

Reagan was given a symbolic key to the White House. He was also given the CRA's overwhelming campaign endorsement. "This time," he promised, "we will win."

Steve Frank was elected CRA president in a closer race over Jack Marshall, 131-126. Sam Yorty and Paul Gann ended up in a 83-83 tie vote for CRA's endorsement for Democrat Alan Cranston's seat in the U.S. Senate. Gann would win the nomination, but would lose to Cranston in November.

In June, CRA launched a new campaign tool, putting out a special edition of CRA News as a campaign mailer for endorsed candidate John Lewis in the 70th Assembly District. Lewis won an upset primary victory and was elected in November.

Quarterly Board meetings in Berkeley and Palm Springs helped get CRA fine-tuned for the big race in November 1980.

At the September meeting, former Lieutenant Governor Ed Reinecke made his formal re-entry into party politics and was given a warm welcome by CRA members. There had been a rumor, he said, that he was seeking the state primary vice-chairmanship. He cleared up the rumor by admitting it was true. He got a standing ovation.

As the crucial Reagan-Carter election date drew near, Americans were being told by the national pollsters that it was going to be very close. But when long-time CRA member Bunster Creely was asked by the CRA News editor for his opinion, Creely blew out a long stream of cigarette smoke, waved his hand, and pronounced, "It will be Reagan in a walk." The one-man poll by the News was one of the more accurate taken in America that year.

When Reagan won "in a walk," it set off one of the greatest statewide celebrations in CRA history. There were other significant victories for CRA, too. Past CRA President Nolan Frizzelle, for example, unseated a popular Democrat in the 73rd Assembly District. There were at least 7 state senators, 20 assemblymen and 12 congressmen who won with CRA backing. The headline of the Glendale RA's unit bulletin said it for all of CRA: "Victory at last - how sweet it is."

The 1981 convention in Orange County's Irvine was one of the happiest in history. Lieutenant Governor Mike Curb gave a major speech. For the second time in its history, CRA elected a woman president, Jean Mary Orr.

Attorney General George Deukmejian addressed a special "Red, White and Blue" weekend, which was the theme of the quarterly Board meeting in Berkeley in June of 1981. There was a special salute to military veterans.

By late 1981, Republicans were lining up for a spirited U.S. Senate race the following year.

CRA jumped into the middle of an important Reapportionment Referendum, aimed at overturning a blatantly unfair redrawing of state and congressional districts in California by the Democrat-controlled legislature. The referendum would be overwhelmingly passed by voters, but would be foiled by another unfair reapportionment measure adopted by the Democrat legislature.

The 1982 state convention in Fresno was one of the most exciting and controversial ever. The focus of attention was the race between Attor-

y General George Deukmejian and Lieutenant Governor Mike Curb the nomination for governor. The ce divided CRA into two hard-working factions. Curb and Deukmeian debated before the delegates. here was considerable maneuvering by delegates and officers at the onvention, and complaints which rose from the battle resulted in a special Committee being named to ook into various charges and counter-charges.

Curb almost got the CRA endorsement, but fell just short of the needed two-thirds majority, getting 203 votes to 103 for Duke.

Bob Dornan was endorsed for U.S. Senate over an impressive list of other candidates.

Coanne Cubete of Fountain Valley was elected president of CRA for 1982-83, becoming the third woman in history, and the second in a row, to head the organization.

Curb and Deukmejian attended a special "unity" meeting of the CRA Board in Anaheim in June, just three days after the primary election. Curb congratulated Deukmejian, and pledged to help elect him governor in November over Democrat nominee Tom Bradley. Also at the unity gathering were other Republicans who lost in June, including Bob Dornan, who came to show his support for U.S. Senate nominee Pete Wilson. Wilson defeated Jerry Brown for the U.S. Senate seat given up by Republican Sam Hayakawa, and there were other key state legislative and congressional wins for the GOP throughout the state. CRA also helped defeat a gun control initiative.

As CRA began its Golden Jubilee Year in 1983, it could look back upon a long history of real contribution to the party, the state and the nation. It had survived the kind of intense intra-party fights that have crippled or destroyed some organizations. It had peacefully (more or less) gone through the changes which had affected the Republican Party over half a century. Its basic principles remained unshaken and unchanged. Ronald Reagan was President of the United States, and that fact gave CRA and its members a strong sense of accomplishment.

As C.R.A. began its 50th year, Founding President Halbert quoted the warning words of Alexander Fraser Tyler, written 100 years before:

"A democracy cannot exist as a permanent form of government. It can only exist until the majority of voters discover they can vote themselves largess out of the public treasury. From that moment on, the majority always vote for the candidate who promises the most benefits from the public treasury, with the result that democracy always collapses over a loose fiscal policy, always to be followed by a dictatorship."

It could be said that CRA's reason for existence is to help prove that the American Experiment with democracy, based on a bedrock of Constitutional Law, CAN withstand the human weaknesses that are sometimes manifested in majority rule. The philosophy of CRA has been that the Constitution's guarantees must be upheld in order to strengthen the chances of our democratic republic to survive.

With the election of Ronald Reagan as 40th President of the United States, CRA members could take considerable personal and collective pride in their part in bringing to the White House a man that they believed could strengthen the Republic's foundations, and could return America to the kind of responsible fiscal policies that would survive the temporary whims of a sometimes-imprudent majority.

As they began their Golden Jubilee year, the membership could see the tide of history turning in their favor - and in America's favor.

The Second 50

The 50th convention was a very big affair. Party bigwigs and CRA old-timers from the early days of the organization mixed with gawking delegates at the Los Angeles Airport Hyatt Hotel. They included Gov. George Deukmejian, U.S. Sen. Pete Wilson, and 19 of the 24 living past presidents of CRA. Bob Barkell, president in 1937-38, was the earliest of the presidents on hand.

Bob Thierry of Fairfield was elected president, succeeding Coanne Cubete of Fountain Valley, as the north-south alternating of the

presidency was observed.

Reapportionment

During 1983, CRA worked hard at two efforts that fell short: The Sebastiani Reapportionment initiative, and an attempt to unseat Tom Hayden from his new job in the State Assembly.

Charlie Lavis, long-time favorite of CRA, and a state vice-president for several years, passed away that year. Charlie was best known for suddenly bursting into song. When tempers would flare at a statewide meeting, Charlie would restore order by leading a sing-along. Myron Way of Kensington-El Cerrito RA joined in the musical spirit by writing an official CRA song, "C'est CRA," sung to the tune of "C'est Cera, Cera."

CRA News was published monthly during this period.

Past-president Mike Evans helped Texans start the Texas Republican Assembly.

The officially-adopted CRA issues for 1984 included opposition to abortion, expansion of free enterprise, a balanced federal budget, opposition to the ERA for women, tougher sentencing of criminals, and reduced government regulations.

Reagan endorsed

At the 1984 endorsing convention, President Reagan was endorsed for re-election, and Joe Gilmaker of Santa Ana was elected CRA president. The convention, held at the Sacramento Red Lion Inn, had 287 delegates. Governor Deukmejian was there. Assemblyman Bill Baker of Walnut Creek was named CRA Legislator of the Year. A month after the convention, its chairman, Norm de Young of Sacramento, would present a \$4,811 check to state CRA as the state's profit from the very successful convention.

David Balsiger, a member of the Costa Mesa RA, led a successful "Ban the Soviets" movement, which resulted in the Soviet Union deciding to not participate in the 1984 Olympics in Los Angeles. Dave's organization offered to help Soviet athletes defect. They also kept up heavy lobbying pressure in Washington.

Dr. Robert Craig, one of the co-founders of CRA in 1934, died Sep. 19, 1984, at the age of 81.

Minority groups

The rising importance of Asian-

Americans in U.S. politics prompted extra GOP efforts to register them. CRA Past President Dennis Catron led a drive in what has become known as the "Little Saigon" area of Orange County, and helped form several Asian American GOP groups.

Ezola Foster helped organize a black CRA unit in the Marina-Venice area.

Barbara Rathbun of the Sacramento area, who had held almost every local and state post in CRA over the preceding 13 years, was elected president at the 1985 convention in Irvine.

There were 98 active units reported at the convention.

An important by-laws change adopted in 1985 made it possible, by two-thirds vote at a Board meeting, to expel any CRA member who publically supports, or uses his or her name in connection with CRA to support, any candidate of another party or a candidate opposing any CRA-endorsed candidate.

Mike Uland of the Lyn Nofziger RA in San Francisco was named Young Republican of the Year by the national organization.

Seven of the eight GOP primary candidates for Alan Cranston's U.S. Senate seat spoke at the January 1986 Board meeting in San Francisco. The meeting's theme was a salute to America's veterans. At the annual endorsing convention in Fresno, none of them could get the two-thirds vote needed for a CRA endorsement. The convention elected Dr. Ralph Waugh of Palmdale to the presidency. Party unity was in evidence at Fresno. Governor and Mrs. Deukmejian were on hand, along with the leaders of Republican Federated Women, the California Republican League, and the Young Republicans.

Growth in North

Growth of CRA in Northern California was being led by Jim and Bess Vinson of Paradise. They started several new units, including an Oroville unit which chartered with 95 members.

In June of 1986, special CRA honors went to Bunster Creely of Newport Beach, who edited *CRA News* for many years, and Marsha Corzine, long-time volunteer who kept the newspaper's circulation files.

At a special convention on Sept. 13, 1986 in Santa Clara, CRA voted to oppose all incumbent Democrats, including Chief Justice Rose Bird, in the upcoming election of State Supreme Court Justices. Honored at the convention was Charlie Conrad of Thousand Oaks, who had been a CRA member for 50 years.

David Jacobsen, just freed as a hostage in Lebanon, came to the CRA Board meeting in Ontario in January of 1987. Also at that meeting, President Ralph Waugh reported that a survey he conducted showed that about \$160,000 was raised and donated by CRA units to GOP candidates during 1986, and that some 40,000 hours of volunteer work had been done for candidates by CRA members.

54th Convention

At the annual convention in March in Irvine, Bob Byerley of Fairfield was elected CRA president. Bob, a retired military man, vowed to devote "full time" to the job. The by-laws were amended to forbid any CRA member from using his or her CRA name or title in endorsing candidates for state party office.

As 1988 began, the Palm Springs and River City (Sacramento) units were battling for the honor of being called the biggest CRA unit. Each claimed more than 300 members.

Conservative Republicans in Vermont founded the Vermont Republican Assembly, fashioning it after CRA. The VRA issued a statement of principles similar to that of CRA. State party and CRA officials pondered a new state court ruling which lifted the ban on official party endorsements of primary election candidates.

Campaign reform

The state party first endorsed, then backed away from an initiative proposal by Congressman Bill Thomas of Bakersfield. The Thomas proposal, which he discussed at a CRA meeting, would have placed more emphasis on local fundraising, thus weakening the power of legislative leaders such as Democrat Willie Brown, the Assembly Speaker, who raised money and distributed it statewide to help elect his favorite Democrat candidates. At the annual convention in Redwood City, Dr. Ev Roden of Glendale was elected CRA president. Bill Allen, popular CRA

member, was named by President Reagan in late 1988 to become chairman of the U.S. Civil Rights Commission.

The CRA Board of Directors voted to support none of the several insurance-related propositions on the Nov. 1988 election ballot. The Board supported a proposition requiring AIDS testing for certain suspects, and opposed several bond issues and a measure that would restore funding to the state Occupational Safety Hazard Administration.

National effort

During the 1988 GOP National Convention in New Orleans, there was an historic first meeting of people representing Republican Assembly organizations from California, Vermont, Texas and Illinois. Talks began on the idea of a national Republican Assembly. In the November general election, the Bush-Quayle national ticket, endorsed by CRA, won the White House. Senator Pete Wilson, endorsed by CRA, was re-elected to the U.S. Senate.

Later, President Roden would report that CRA was credited with almost 13,000 new registered Republicans during the election campaign. This earned the organization two more seats on the state party central committee.

New directions

During the 1988 campaign, CRA's membership was swelled as many supporters of GOP primary presidential candidate Pat Robertson joined our ranks. These and other new members brought with them strong convictions about family values, including the prohibition of abortion and opposition to the political power of homosexuals.

By the time the 1989 CRA convention got underway in Costa Mesa, these new members, joined by long-time CRA members of similar opinions, had a majority of the delegates. They swept into office a new slate of CRA officers, including President Bill Hoge of Pasadena. Symbolic of the sudden shift was the treatment of Los Angeles Police Chief Darryl Gates. Chief Gates was invited by the outgoing Board of Directors to address the convention. After new officers were elected, the new Board condemned Gates for his department's treatment of anti-

abortion demonstrators.

Some long-time CRA members, particularly in Northern California, dropped out. But membership grew in the San Diego and Sacramento areas, where the new leadership had strong organizations. Also, some CRA old-timers, who had held diminished roles in the CRA during recent years, again came to the forefront as activists. Some expressed a belief that the new leadership was returning CRA to a stricter observance of conservative doctrine and basic CRA principles.

The dramatic changes probably represented the biggest change in CRA's directions since the historic 1964 convention in Fresno, at which supporters of Barry Goldwater wrested control of the organization from advocates of the more liberal

Nelson Rockefeller. Goldwater got the convention endorsement for President, and the Rockefeller liberals never again had any real influence in CRA.

With the new leadership installed in 1989 came new ideas, plus the active pursuit of some older CRA ideas. For years, the organization had talked of computerizing its membership rolls and of hiring a full-time staff person. New membership secretary Kelly Krug, a computer specialist, completed the computerization of the rolls by mid-89. In early 1990, the Board of Directors voted to hire a full-time field coordinator.

Several conservative GOP state legislators pledged to make annual donations of \$5,000 each to CRA to help fund operations.

As CRA members headed for the 57th Annual Convention in San Diego at the end of March, 1990, they could look back upon a 56-year record of service to their party, state and nation, and ahead to new challenges: Trying to overcome the Democrat gerrymandering of the state's political districts; working to elect a new Republican governor to succeed George Deukmejian, who was retiring; influencing state and national legislation to block abortion; and the election of a new generation of conservative Republicans to lead California and to keep the torch of GOP conservatism burning brightly. If they are as successful in their efforts as those who first lit the torch in 1934, we will enjoy reading of their exploits in later editions of CRA history.

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