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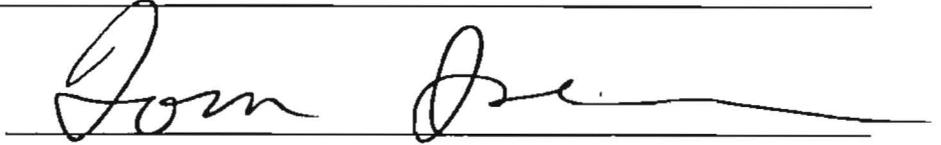
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Title: Gerald Burton Winrod and the Republican Senatorial Primary of

1938.

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The Republican senatorial primary of 1938 was important to the future and respectability of the Republican Party in Kansas. Four candidates ran for the right to meet the Democratic incumbent, George McGill, in the general election of 1938. Of these four, Jesse C. Fisher and Dallas Knapp had slim chances of being victorious. The two candidates that made the primary unusually significant and controversial were Clyde M. Reed and Gerald B. Winrod. Reed was a progressive Republican that had incurred many enemies, as a result of his liberal dealings and his support of Franklin D. Roosevelt in the presidential elections of 1932 and 1936. Reed was controversial, but not to the extent that Winrod was. Winrod led the Fundamentalist movement in the 1920s. In the 1930s he gained the reputation of being a supporter of Adolf Hitler and fascism, which compelled the conservative and liberal Republicans to cooperate to insure his defeat.

The race for the Republican nomination began in January of 1938 and continued without any mishaps through June 30. Through this six month period Winrod built up a great advantage over the other candidates, because of his active campaigning. William Allen White and forty to fifty other Republicans disrupted the calm on July 1, when they met at Emporia to decide how to contend with Winrod's campaign. This meeting was followed on July 8, with a demand by nine Kansas preachers, that the Dies Committee on Un-American Activities investigate Winrod's dealings with Nazi Germany. These nine men and twelve other preachers and laymen also composed a pamphlet that supported their attack on Winrod. Other groups that attacked Winrod were the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the Wichita Beacon, and the Wichita Committee for Tolerance. These groups and numerous individuals from across the state sought to defeat Winrod.

Winrod finished third, behind Reed and Knapp, in the election. He had tried to defuse the attack on his candidacy, but was unsuccessful. He blamed Jewish financial interests in the East for his defeat, saying that these men were paying important Republicans to attack him. Winrod's inability to accept the reality that the conservative and liberal Republicans of the state had banded against him led many people to support one of the other candidates and ensured his defeat.

GERALD BURTON WINROD AND THE REPUBLICAN  
SENATORIAL PRIMARY OF 1938

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A Thesis  
Presented to  
the Division of Social Sciences  
Emporia State University

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Arts

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by  
Darrell D. Garwood  
May 1982

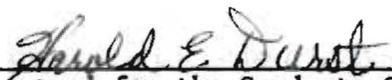
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## PREFACE

When I began my search for a thesis topic the number of choices were numerous. After much thought I decided that the life of Gerald B. Winrod would make a good topic. Winrod was an interesting and controversial Kansan, who gained his fame as a fundamentalist in the 1920's and a fascist in the 1930's. During my initial research of him I became aware that several other undergraduate and graduate papers had been written on Winrod, therefore I decided to write a paper on a particular aspect of his life. There were two periods of Winrod's life when he was directly in the public's eye: his candidacy in the Republican senatorial primary of 1938 and his indictment in the Washington, D.C. mass sedition trial of 1944. The latter had been pursued as a topic, but the former had not. When I discovered that Winrod was not the only important figure in the primary, I expanded my topic to encompass the entire primary. It is difficult to approximate how significant the senatorial primary of 1938 was to the future of the Republican Party in Kansas, but whenever a party or its members make a choice concerning a candidate for the Senate it is a major decision. The candidacy of Winrod made the decision of the party members of major importance, because of his support of Nazi Germany from 1933 to 1937.

The contentions made in this paper are, first that Winrod made it possible for Clyde M. Reed to win the primary. Reed was a liberal Republican that had incurred much of the adhorance of conservative Republicans through the years. Winrod's presence in the election made

many conservative Republicans forget Reed's past performances and support him for the senate. Another contention was that, by August 2, both of the candidacies of Dallas Knapp and Jesse Fisher were of little importance to the outcome of the election. Outside of their support in their home areas, their influence on the outcome of the primary was nominal. Winrod believed that Fisher's candidacy was partially responsible for his defeat, but in actuality Fisher's candidacy did not diminish Winrod's chance for victory. In fact, it can be concluded that Fisher's strength in southwest Kansas hurt Reed more than Winrod. My last contention was that Winrod did a disservice to his own chance of victory, because of his inability to accept the fact that the conservative and liberal factions of the party would not support his candidacy. This distortion of the truth led to accusations, by Winrod, that a Jewish plot was undermining his campaign. This inane defense led many of his supporters to switch their support to one of the other three candidates.

The time and support of many people have gone into the creation of this paper. I would like to express my appreciation to the members of my committee; Dr. Tom Isern, chairman, Dr. Loren Pennington, and Dr. Glenn Torrey. Special thanks must be given to Dr. Isern for his advice and guidance through the composition of this thesis. I am also indebted to my friends at the Kansas State Historical Society Library for their assistance in finding much of the material that made this paper possible, and to the staff of the William Allen White Library for allowing me the use of their services and material.

Thanks also must be given to my parents Mr. and Mrs. H. Dean Garwood, of Topeka, for their assistance. My wife, Donna, and my daughter, Leslie,

also must be given some credit for giving me the incentive to finish  
this project and for living with me through some trying times over  
the last nine months.

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## Chapter One: Introduction

On August 2, 1938, the voters of Kansas went to the polls to decide what candidates would run in the general election to be held the following November. By 1938 Kansas and the United States had suffered through more than eight years of economic hardship. The times were difficult and left lasting impressions on everyone that lived through them. The attitudes of the voters and the candidates in the Republican senatorial primary of 1938 were largely a result of the conditions of these times.

The hardships of the 1930s created a great amount of uncertainty as to the ability of the government to govern the country effectively. Americans saw pictures of breadlines, dust storms, Hoovervilles, and refugees that were overshadowed by one unique person-- Franklin D. Roosevelt. Roosevelt was definitely one of the most powerful presidents in American history, but he was not solely responsible for the reforms of the New Deal. He was only the figurehead Americans placed at the head of the New Deal and its liberal reforms. The policies of the New Deal were radical, not because Roosevelt was radical, but because the problems of the times made radical and sweeping changes necessary.<sup>1</sup>

Roosevelt entered the White House in January, 1933. He attacked the country's economic problems quickly and with little debate as to the direction the new administration's policies should take. The Roosevelt Doctrine concerning domestic issues could be summarized as spontaneous action with minimal attention to the long-run effects of decisions.<sup>2</sup> His unorthodox approach to the nation's economic problems showed some results.

By 1935 New Deal programs, such as the Civilian Conservation Corps, the National Industrial Recovery Administration, and the Agricultural Adjustment Administration, seemed to be reviving the economy.

This improvement of economic conditions was not enough for all of the people or even the entire Democratic Party. Both the conservatives and the radicals in the Democratic Party were splitting with the liberals loyal to the President. Roosevelt reacted to the increasing strength of radicals Huey Long, Francis Townsend, and Upton Sinclair by moving to the left in the spring of 1935. This change in policy is known as the Second New Deal. The Second New Deal was characterized by increased spending for work relief and for aid to agriculture. The Second New Deal is best exemplified by the passage of the Emergency Relief Administration. The Emergency Relief Administration was placed in the control of Roosevelt's close friend, Harry Hopkins. The original budget for the Emergency Relief Administration in 1935 was \$4,880,000, with most of the money being spent by the Works Projects Administration.<sup>3</sup>

Roosevelt and the New Deal had instituted many reforms by 1936, among them the Social Security Act and the National Labor Relations Act, the latter of which made it easier for labor unions to organize and function. Roosevelt's election opponent in 1936 was Alf. M. Landon, Governor of Kansas. Landon's platform concentrated on the issues of fiscal responsibility and the reorganization of the New Deal policies. Landon, a liberal Republican, was thrust into the limelight of a presidential election in 1936 because he had managed to survive the Democratic blitz in his reelection as Governor of Kansas in 1934. Landon managed

to carry only the states of Maine and Vermont in the presidential election, losing by the most lopsided vote up to 1936. After this vote of confidence it would have seemed likely that the Democrats would continue to institute reforms as they had done previous to 1936.

Despite the success of 1936, the Democratic party and the New Deal changed greatly between 1936 and 1938. In 1937 Roosevelt attempted to pack the Supreme Court. In early 1937 the Supreme Court declared the Agriculture Adjustment Administration unconstitutional in the six-to-three decision United States vs Butler. The decision followed the court declaring the National Industrial Recovery Administration unconstitutional in 1935. These moves by the conservative court led Roosevelt to attempt to pack the Court with liberals in line with his views. On February 5 he sent a message to Congress calling for the reorganization of the federal judicial system. The main part of the reorganization plan called for fifty new judgeships to be created, with as many as six seats to be added to the Supreme Court. Roosevelt wanted a new judge to be appointed to the Supreme Court for every member on the bench that had passed the age of seventy without retiring. He claimed that judges over seventy were out of touch with public opinion and that younger judges would be more responsible to the wishes of the people. Roosevelt's attempt at packing the Court failed, but the four judges that had continually attacked his recovery legislation changed their consistent opposition to his reform as a result of the packing attempt. This scheme had other repercussions for Roosevelt. Many Americans turned against Roosevelt, because it looked as if he was attempting to control the

judicial as well as the legislative and executive branches of the government. The Congress also did not agree with the administration, with only loyal Roosevelt supporters, like Kansas's Senator McGill, supporting the President.

Democratic fortunes worsened still more by 1938. At the beginning of 1937 the economy had been improving: industrial production had returned to 1929 levels, farm prices had recovered to 1930 levels, and unemployment had decreased to 14 percent. With the economy improving, Roosevelt decided to ease the country's deficit in 1937 by cutting appropriations for farm subsidies and the WPA. The result of this conservative move was a recession that began in the last quarter of 1937. The recession brought a decline in industrial production and farm prices of 15-20 percent and an increase in unemployment of 2,637,000 persons over 1937 levels. Roosevelt responded in April of 1938 by asking Congress to increase relief aid and stabilize farm prices as had been done in 1935 through 1936. These moves were meant to improve the economy by election day, 1938.<sup>5</sup>

The Democratic Party suffered further by an attempted purge by Roosevelt in 1938. Roosevelt had defused the radicals in 1935, but he realized he would continue to have problems with the conservative faction of the Democratic Party until they were defeated or left office. In the summer and fall of 1938 Roosevelt campaigned in the primaries in the South, chiefly against his conservative Democratic opposition. The purge hurt Roosevelt more than it helped him. In only two instances did the conservative Democrats lose in the primaries of 1938. Roosevelt

succeeded in giving conservative Democrats more confidence to oppose him, for the primaries of 1938 showed that it was possible to oppose Roosevelt and remain in office. Roosevelt's attempted purge not only strengthened his opposition in the Democratic Party, but also gave the Republicans hope that the Democratic Party's cohesiveness was destroyed. The optimism of the Republicans became stronger after the general election of 1938, in which the Republicans gained eighty seats in the House and eight in the Senate,<sup>6</sup> By the end of 1938 the political situation had changed greatly in the United States. Roosevelt had caused a political fiasco in his party by trying to hand pick his backers, and the Republicans seemed to be recovering some of the respectability they had lost earlier in the decade because of the onset of the Depression.

One of the senate seats the Democrats lost to the Republicans was the Kansas junior senatorial seat. Democrat George S. McGill had replaced Republican Senator Charles Curtis in 1931, after winning a special election in November of 1930. In 1932 McGill was reelected, riding Roosevelt's coat-tails back to Washington. In 1938 McGill was up for reelection again, but some of his positions on key issues and the diminishing popularity of Roosevelt made McGill a prime candidate for defeat. McGill had served on the Senate Judiciary Committee in 1937 when Roosevelt had tried unsuccessfully to pack the Supreme Court. As a result of his support of Roosevelt on this controversial issue, McGill was called a "rubber stamp" senator. McGill was also prominent in creating the Senate's version of the Farm Bill of 1938 for the administration. The problem the farmers of Kansas had in receiving aid proposed in the

Senate Farm Bill of 1938 was not all McGill's fault, but he received most of the blame. The Department of Agriculture was slow and inefficient in getting the aid to the farmers, and no matter how hard McGill tried to make the aid more easily available to his constituents, he failed. In the end McGill had to run on an unimpressive record in 1938. The result was his defeat at the hands of Republican Clyde M. Reed.

The Depression caused problems in Kansas similar to those in other agricultural areas across the country, but Kansas had one problem that did not exist on either the east or west coasts. A drought started in 1933 and continued through 1937, which made the climatic conditions in Kansas very difficult. The Depression did not hit Kansas until the early 1930s, but farmers in Kansas felt the crunch of the Depression long before city dwellers did. The farmers first felt the crunch of the Depression by way of lower commodity prices and the restriction of credit. The Depression moved across the country and intensified between 1930 and 1932, resulting in even greater problems for the farmers of Kansas. They were producing more on more acreage, with less manpower through the twenties and into the early thirties. In 1931 they harvested a record wheat crop, with each county setting new production marks. In Kansas, alone, 251 million bushels of wheat were produced in 1931. Finney County increased its wheat production from 276,000 bushels in 1927 to 4,905,230 bushels in 1931. Gove County had a similar increase in its production of wheat with an increase of 3,543,930 bushels over 1927 standards. Despite increases in production the farmer of Kansas was not better off. Increases were created by improved crop strains that were

adapted to the Kansas growing seasons, but more importantly the cultivated acreage of Kansas had increased three-fold over a period of twenty-five years. The result of this massive overproduction was a decline in prices of farm commodities that reached bottom in the Depression.<sup>7</sup>

The farmers in Kansas and the rest of the United States had actually produced themselves out of the market by 1933. Market prices decreased by one-third between 1929 and 1932, with wheat in 1933 selling for 33 cents a bushel. Exports abroad also suffered as demand for farm commodities decreased almost by half because of the lack of capital abroad. The market for livestock also faltered. Prices for cattle, sheep, and swine saw declines, but not as severe as in the crop markets, because overproduction was not as great. By 1933 farmers in Kansas were in economic despair; then came the drought.<sup>8</sup>

The drought hit Kansas in the summer of 1933, and for the rest of the decade Kansas's greatest natural resources, the land, was slow in recovering. Kansans had experienced bad droughts in the 1870s and the 1890s, but before they had not been so widespread. The drought of the thirties added to the economic misfortune of Kansas, as crop production decreased dramatically and living conditions worsened. Then the dust storms appeared. Blowing dust had also been experienced by Kansans before, but the thirties again set new standards for comparison. The drought lasted for four years, with the dust storms increasing in intensity as the drought deepened. The worst year of dust storms was 1935. On March 15, 1935, the worst storm crossed Kansas and was called "Black Friday." Black Friday was a fitting name, because the dust from

the storm was so thick that it blotted out the sun, giving the impression of night. Another bad storm hit on April 10 in western Kansas. This storm was noteworthy because the dust mixed with rain and snow, causing a shower of mud balls to fall on the inhabitants of the area. Tales of trains being derailed by tracks drifted over with dust, people losing their way in the dust and dying, and dust drifts five feet high or higher were the horror stories related in personal diaries, company records, and photographs. Eastern Kansas suffered from drought and extreme heat, but as a result of its hilly terrain and different land use the soil did not erode and blow nearly as severely as in western Kansas. In western Kansas the terrain was flat and most of it was in cultivation. The sparseness of vegetation left to hold the top soil made it easy for western Kansas to blow away. By 1936 the drought was lessening, from 1937 to 1941 the Dust Bowl dwindled, and the lifestyle of Kansans slowly returned to normal.<sup>9</sup>

Kansans living through the Depression and the dust demonstrated ability to adapt. Songs and novels about the thirties depicted families leaving the plains and heading for California and prosperity, but the massive outflux of population to the west coast is a myth in relation to Kansas. Kansas did not lose much population during the thirties because of the Depression or the dust. Most Kansans waited out the drought. They had experienced droughts in Kansas before, and they knew that every drought had a beginning and an end.<sup>10</sup>

Life in Kansas was not enjoyable, but it was bearable. Instead of moving to other areas the people of Kansas changed their lifestyles to

accommodate the problems the Depression and the drought created. Entertainment took the form of team sports and participation in groups. Baseball and football were two of the popular team sports, with social functions at churches and schools being the primary non-athletic entertainment. Pool halls, drugstores and bowling alleys were some of the places where people continued to gather and converse about the times.

Life in Kansas did not remain stagnant during the thirties, and neither did the politics of Kansas. Many political reforms were instituted in Kansas during the period. In 1932 an income tax amendment to the Kansas constitution was adopted. The new income tax made the state's property tax more equitable and reduced the state's reliance on its sales tax for revenue. In 1933 the Kansas Legislative Council was created. The Council is a research agency that gives legislators information pertaining to pending legislation. The information compiled by the Council is used by the legislators in making their decisions on bills before the Kansas House or Senate. In 1937, 3.2 beer was legalized, giving Kansas a new source of revenue to support state and local governments. In 1938 the merit system was implemented in the Kansas Civil Service, making the bureaucracy more professional and less political.<sup>11</sup>

By 1938 Kansas was suffering from unemployment, unstable farm prices, and inflation. These conditions caused many people to doubt the abilities of Roosevelt and the Democrats. The attempted court packing by Roosevelt in 1937 hurt many of his followers, among them McGill. McGill's support of the scheme caused many Kansans to distrust him because he had blindly supported the President. Kansans did not like the

idea of the executive branch gaining control of the judicial branch of the government. The Republicans gained further momentum as a result of the attempted purge in 1938. The Democrats were factionalized into conservative and liberal factions, making the party vulnerable to attack from the outside. Republicans in Kansas realized that if their candidate for the senate was moderately appealing to the public, they would win the junior senator seat.

The Republican senatorial primary in 1938 was politically significant in several ways. It was unusually important to the Republican Party because if a popular candidate was not chosen, McGill stood a good chance of winning reelection, and they would miss an opportunity to control both Kansas senate seats. In January, 1938, the type of person they feared the most appeared in the person of Gerald B. Winrod. Winrod was a Protestant minister who had expressed Nazi tendencies in the past. At about the same time another questionable candidate surfaced in the person of Clyde M. Reed. Reed had left the party in 1912 to support Theodore Roosevelt and again had crossed party lines in 1936 by supporting Roosevelt over Landon. Winrod represented the ultra-conservative part of the party, while Reed represented the liberal branch of the party; both were concerns for the Republican old guard at the beginning of the election. Reed and Winrod were the two major candidates, with two other candidates playing minor roles in the campaign. The other candidates were Jesse Fisher and Dallas Knapp. These two men had little chance to win the primary over the two more dominant candidates.

## CHAPTER ONE: FOOTNOTES

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2. Ibid., pp. 177-78.
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5. Shannon, pp. 207-11.
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7. Francis W. Schruben, Kansas in Turmoil (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1969), p. 47; Clifford R. Hope, Sr., "Kansas in the 1930s," The Kansas Historical Quarterly, 36 (Spring 1970), 2-3.
8. Schruben, p. 48; Robert W. Richmond, Kansas, A Land of Contrasts (2nd ed., Saint Charles, Mo.: Forum Press, 1980), p. 235.
9. Hope, pp. 2, 4-5; Richmond, pp. 48, 235-36.
10. Richmond, p. 239.
11. Hope, pp. 6-7; Richmond, pp. 239, 244-47; William F. Zornow, Kansas: A History of the Jayhawk State (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1957), pp. 251-60.

## Chapter Two: The Candidates

Of the four candidates running for the 1938 Republican senatorial nomination, Gerald Burton Winrod was the most controversial. Winrod, a recognized religious leader from the Wichita area, had a reputation of being intolerant of views opposed to his. His candidacy in 1938 was his first attempt to obtain public office, but it was not his first attempt to manipulate the politics of Kansas and the United States. Events of his earlier life and career demonstrated why by 1938 he was considered so controversial.

Winrod was born in Wichita in 1898 to James and Mabel Winrod. Winrod's father had enjoyed drinking, fighting, and dancing with ladies not necessarily his wife. James Winrod had tended bar at the Old Ten Four Saloon in Wichita on the night in 1901 when Cary Nation and her followers smashed the bar to pieces. This adventure, along with the recovery of his wife from cancer in 1911, made him a religious man. Although his father had become religious in the early 1900s, Gerald Winrod was more responsive to his mother's actions. His mother basically raised Winrod by herself until 1911, when his father took more interest in him. Winrod learned from his mother a respect for the Bible and its teachings. In 1912 he became deeply involved in the workings of religion after attending a revival. At this revival Winrod was saved, and he started to pursue his chosen vocation to the best of his ability.<sup>1</sup>

Winrod became a converted Christian at age fourteen. He then left

school, teaching himself all the things he thought he would need to know to survive in the world. Winrod became increasingly involved in religious work along with his father and mother. At seventeen Winrod became a traveling evangelist who preached all across the midwest. His reputation grew, and by the time he was twenty-one Winrod was a respected minister and traveling evangelist. This was despite his lack of schooling in the ministry, a pastorate, a degree of divinity, or a membership in an established religious denomination. By 1920 Winrod had become one of the most respected religious leaders in Kansas and in the near future would become the leader of the fundamentalist movement in the state. He accumulated numerous followers as a result of his fight to lead Kansas and the United States to the path of righteousness.<sup>2</sup>

Various circumstances propelled the unschooled Winrod to leadership of the political right in Kansas. He had a way with the written language that made it possible for him to charm the reader and win him over to his side. His literary fluency was such that he could convert a person to his views almost as easily with his writing as with the spoken word, and he did not waste this gift of prose. Winrod wrote constantly and published his works locally, obtaining a sizeable following. Winrod also had a natural gift for public speaking. He captivated audiences with his speeches and often was compared to another fundamentalist, William Jennings Bryan. Winrod's natural speaking ability was only amplified by the increased use of the radio in the 1920s. The radio enabled Winrod to reach out to more people and also to people who could not attend his speaking engagements. Winrod's character was another advantage over

other religious figures of the time. A high-strung individual, Winrod demanded the center of attention and always gave the impression of being an important person.<sup>3</sup>

With these qualities Winrod led the fundamentalist movement in Kansas. He opposed the teaching of evolution in schools because he said it promoted the cause of the devil. Besides evolution he also disapproved of religious modernism, which accepted not only evolution but other scientific beliefs that were not in conjunction with the writing of the Bible. Winrod saw modernistic preachers and evolution as the two greatest dangers to society in America. Several events occurred in 1925 that both hurt and assisted the fundamentalists and Winrod. The most notable event occurred in the summer of 1925 in Dayton, Tennessee, and was known as the "Scopes Monkey Trial." The verdict of "guilty" returned against John T. Scopes was seen first as a victory for the fundamentalists, but the abuse that Bryan took at the hands of Clarence Darrow led to the fundamentalist leader's death and the decline of the movement. Of equal importance to the fundamentalists was a meeting held in Salina, Kansas, in November, 1925. Fifty pastors and laymen met at a hotel in Salina to decide the next move the fundamentalists would make in their fight against evolution and modernism. One of the men responsible for calling this meeting in 1925 was Winrod. In Salina, four months after the Scopes Trial, the fundamentalists elected a new leader to replace Bryan. It was Gerald Burton Winrod, who became the leader of a newly organized group call the Defenders of the Christian Faith. With this appointment he became the leader of a religious group that would attempt to determine

the religious moves of the state of Kansas and most of the Midwest. The official mouthpiece of the Defenders of the Christian Faith was The Defender Magazine, that was made available to the public at a subscription rate of fifty cents a year. This minimal subscription rate made the magazine available to the poor of the Midwest, who became a group that loyally supported Winrod in his public activities. The magazine, from its inception in 1925, also became Winrod's avenue to attack many of society's ills. The Defender Magazine was to survive Winrod's death in 1957 and is still printed in Wichita by the Defenders of the Christian Faith; it has changed since Winrod's death in that its evangelical urgency has diminished over the years, which shows something about Winrod's characteristics.<sup>4</sup>

The Defender and Winrod focused on such religious issues as evolution, atheism, modernism, and alcoholism. The first edition of The Defender was published in June, 1926. In this first edition the stated purpose of The Defender was "to withstand the powerful, destructive, anti-Christian forces which threaten to annihilate revealed religion, blast away the foundations of civilization and introduce chaotic conditions" into America.<sup>5</sup> These Christian standards were to be protected by "opposition without malice." The Defender had become an important tool for Winrod. By 1929 Defenders of the Christian Faith committees were being founded all over the Midwest, with Winrod being the man most responsible for their existence.<sup>7</sup>

Winrod fought evolutionist theory with every resource at his disposal. He said that evolutionist theory was responsible for "psychology,

modernism, war, crime, anarchy, companionate marriages and mixed gym classes."<sup>8</sup> One activity of the Defender committees was book censorship. In several instances in the Wichita area, book censorship was used to insure that the textbooks in local high schools were teaching good moral values and not evolutionist theories. Winrod supported such actions by concerned parents and public officials. For his stand against the evils of evolution, he received the loyalty and the monetary support of many Kansas Christians.

Although Winrod was devoted to destroying evolutionist theory and modernism in America, he was not an unreasonable man when it came to fighting for a lost cause. By June, 1928, he realized that the public battle against both modernism and evolution was lost. His hope thereafter was that parents would keep a close watch on what their children were being taught in public schools and make sure that Biblical truth was being told. Winrod's admittance of defeat in 1928 was the start of a metamorphosis that saw him and The Defender become more concerned with more strictly political rather than religious issues. Winrod here began to accumulate the enemies that would oppose his candidacy in 1938, for Winrod's political beliefs were even more controversial than his religious beliefs.<sup>9</sup>

His early political activity was still centered around religious issues. The first political issue to which Winrod turned was the nomination of Al Smith as the Democratic candidate for President in 1928. Smith possessed two characteristics that Winrod could not tolerate: he was Catholic and anti-prohibition. In 1928 Winrod attacked the evils of alcohol and Smith often in The Defender. If perhaps Winrod's influence

against Smith was slight, it nevertheless was notable that his interest in politics began with Smith in 1928 because of religious issues. This overlapping of religious issues in politics became less important to Winrod as time passed. By 1932 religious issues were no longer important to Winrod's stands against political candidates. By then Winrod was a politician in every sense of the word, except that he was not seeking a political office.<sup>10</sup>

Winrod's political activity increased in 1932 when the Democrats nominated Franklin D. Roosevelt as their presidential candidate. Roosevelt was Smith's successor as Governor of New York and his platform was similar to Smith's in that he supported the repeal of prohibition. Roosevelt felt that prohibition had been an expensive and disastrous attempt at social legislation that not only failed, but also put an entire industry out of work. Winrod had just the opposite view. He believed that an industry that contributed to the destruction of people should be destroyed. Roosevelt was also an intellectual free-thinker, which meant he supported many of the theories that Winrod fought in the twenties. Winrod turned his support in early 1932 to President Hoover, but Hoover disappointed him by coming out in favor of the repeal of prohibition. Winrod withdrew his support from Hoover and backed the Prohibition Party candidate, William D. Upham. Winrod supported Upham unwillingly, because he realized Upham had no chance of winning the election over Hoover or Roosevelt. Winrod attempted to drum up support for Upham in the East despite the obvious futility of it. Winrod campaigned primarily in New York and Pennsylvania. Perhaps Winrod chose to campaign in

those two states because that area was Roosevelt's home territory, and a defeat in that area could swing the election to Hoover. Winrod may have thought that if he could swing the election to Hoover he would not do anything about repealing prohibition. Winrod's attempt to swing voters to Upham and away from Roosevelt failed, and by October he left the east coast with the belief that the nation was in the grasp of Roosevelt and doomed to destruction.<sup>11</sup>

With the election of Roosevelt in 1932, Winrod's metamorphosis from a religious activist to a political activist had been completed. From 1932 on Winrod exhibited an increased concern for political matters that only resulted in him acquiring a great number of enemies. Winrod wasted no time before attacking Roosevelt in 1933. His attacks on Roosevelt took many forms, but his major campaign against the President dealt with a Jewish plot of world domination. By Winrod's account, he recognized that through history there had been attempts by entrepreneurial groups to control the world. Through research of the Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion, Winrod ascertained that there existed an international movement by the Jews to become the economic rulers of the world. The Protocols were the minutes of a supposed meeting that took place in Basel, Switzerland, in 1897, in which the means for the Jewish domination of the world was set down by the elders. The Protocols were first published in Russia in 1905 by Sergei Nilum and were basically to be propaganda for the Tsarist regime to stave off a political revolution by creating a scape-goat for the Empire's economic problems. In an article in the January, 1933, issue of The Defender, Winrod called this conspiracy

the "Hidden Hand." The Hidden Hand was explained further in an article in the February, 1933, issue of The Defender titled, "Unmasking 'the Hidden Hand,' a World Conspiracy." Winrod connected Roosevelt to this conspiracy as an unknowing follower. Among Roosevelt's advisors were three Jews in important power positions--Felix Frankfurter, Bernard Bauch, and Henry Morgenthau, Jr. Winrod contended that these appointments illustrated a pro-Jewish attitude. Winrod looked into the family heritage of Roosevelt and claimed that the President belonged to a wealthy Danish Jewish clan named Rosenvelt or Rosenfelt, which only led to further Winrod's doubt of him. By the end of 1933 Winrod had defined all of the enemies of the United States as belonging to the Hidden Hand conspiracy. Roosevelt was aiding the Hidden Hand movement, allowing the Jews to take over the world through control of the world's wealth. Winrod credited the Jews with inventing communism and using it to fool the impoverished and destitute portions of the world's population to follow their plan of world domination.<sup>12</sup>

Winrod had defined the Jews and communism as enemies of America in 1933, and from 1933 to 1937 he fought to defeat these enemies. Winrod attacked his enemies hardest in 1933, but let up very little until 1937. His attack was centered around the Hidden Hand conspiracy. Winrod saw the Hidden Hand as a collection of three hundred or fewer leaders of the Jewish community that planned to create world chaos through economic manipulation. Winrod based all his contentions on the authenticity of Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion. Winrod was using the Protocols for the same reason they were used in Tsarist Russia, except the liberal

Democrats in Washington, D.C., were taking the place of the Jews. Winrod accepted the Protocols as the truth and the Hidden Hand conspiracy as real, but not accomplished as of 1936.<sup>13</sup>

In 1935 Winrod's position concerning world and domestic affairs changed. He had recognized that the worst had occurred in the Soviet Union, with the Jewish-dominated communist party in control. He feared that the same outcome might occur in the United States. Winrod found hope for the future of the world in the person of Adolf Hitler. Winrod's respect for Hitler and what he stood for increased after he returned from a trip to Europe in early 1935. Winrod never explicitly stated why he went to Europe or how the trip was financed. Some people opposed to Winrod believed that Hitler paid for Winrod's trip. Winrod reportedly had in his possession, upon his return from Germany, photostatic copies of documents that outlined communist activities in pre-Nazi Germany. Winrod thought that Hitler was doing what was necessary to defeat communism and the Hidden Hand in his country. He wrote many times that dictatorships were wrong in that they suppressed the rights of free people, but in the case of Hitler, Winrod felt that dictatorship was justified in that it kept communism out of Central Europe.<sup>14</sup>

Whether Winrod was fooled by Hitler is difficult to say, but it does seem that Winrod and Hitler had several qualities in common. Both had dreams of grandeur and distrusted Jews and Communists. Winrod was credited with saying that Germany was the only country that "has ever dared to try to completely extricate itself from the control of international Jewry."<sup>15</sup> Upon being asked to explain the persecution of the

Jews in Germany, Winrod commented to the affect that it was pure fabrication that the Jews were being persecuted; besides, he said, the Soviets had slaughtered many faithful Christians in 1917, and no one was appalled about that. After 1935 Germany was treated with much more respect in articles appearing in The Defender, and some of Winrod's works were available in Germany through the German Propaganda Ministry.<sup>16</sup>

Winrod became recognized as a possible leader of the anti-semitic forces in the mid-thirties. He had the qualities of a good leader in that he was a good organizer, an affective speaker, a prolific writer, and a realist concerning his strengths and weaknesses. Potential leaders of the anti-semitic movement like William Dudley Pelly in North Carolina, Father John Coughlin in Detroit, and Gerald L.K. Smith in Los Angeles went their separate ways and made no attempt to coordinate their efforts. Winrod chose a different route to power than the others did; he chose to enter the political field, first by trying to change politics from the outside and then by trying to change politics from the inside.<sup>17</sup>

Winrod's greatest attempt to initiate political changes from the outside was his opposition to Roosevelt. Winrod placed Roosevelt in the middle of the Hidden Hand conspiracy as early as February, 1933. From this first attack in 1933 until his final attack on Roosevelt in January, 1937, Winrod continually tried to defame the President to the point that he would not be accepted by the public as the leader of the country. Winrod's disgust with Roosevelt took many forms. Many of Roosevelt's moves that brought about the increased importance of the federal bureaucracy and economic aid to the needy greatly bothered Winrod.

The National Recovery Administration's blue eagle, Winrod stated, was representative of the demon, and through the Jewish-controlled Brain Trust the President sought to usurp from Congress as much power as possible. Winrod saw the National Recovery Administration as the ultimate attack on democracy, in that it destroyed competition and created socialistic standards that insured laziness and apathy. In April, 1934, Winrod began publishing an attack sheet against the Roosevelt Administration titled, The Revealer. By 1935 this publication had a circulation of 50,000 and The Defender had a circulation of over 100,000. In 1936 Winrod challenged Roosevelt again. In the October Revealer he published that Roosevelt was a descendent of a Danish-Jewish clan. The attempt to defame the President did not succeed, for Roosevelt won reelection in November overwhelmingly over Landon. Winrod did not back the Prohibition candidate in 1936, because it was obvious to him that this third party had little chance of success. Instead, Winrod's characteristic of pragmatism pushed him into supporting Landon. Winrod supported Landon only reluctantly because Landon had instituted many reforms in Kansas similar to those Roosevelt had instituted for the country, and Landon was not as concerned with the prohibition issue as Winrod wished him to be. His resounding defeat convinced Winrod that the people of the United States wanted a dictatorial system set up and that they wished Roosevelt to be their tyrant.<sup>18</sup>

Winrod saw Roosevelt start his second term in 1937 and his fears for the survival of a democratic United States increased. Up to 1937 Winrod had spoken with urgency in respect to the dangers of Roosevelt

and the Hidden Hand conspiracy, but after 1937 that tone of urgency turned to violent demands. Winrod's opposition to Roosevelt can best be exemplified by his response to the President's effort to pack the Supreme Court. Winrod heard of the plot to pack the Court on his way to Mexico, while he was taking his wife south for her health. Upon reaching his destination, Winrod contacted his office in Wichita and ordered that a public opinion campaign be started to stop the attempted packing. Form letters were sent out to the people on The Defender mailing list (The Revealer was not being printed after January, 1937), and all that needed to be done was for the constituents to sign the letter and mail it to their Senators and Congressman in Washington. There were further instructions asking the recipients of the form letter to persuade their friends to write to their representatives in Washington. Winrod hoped to double his circulation and swamp Capitol Hill with the country's popular opinion. The packing attempt was defeated, and Winrod claimed major responsibility for the victory. He estimated that his supporters sent more than a million letters to their representatives. Winrod finally could claim a victory in his fight in the political realm. This may have prompted his decision to run for the Senate in 1938.<sup>19</sup>

By 1938 Winrod had enemies of both his religious and his political views. From 1933 to January, 1937, Winrod supported fascist Germany and attacked Roosevelt as being a puppet of a Jewish-communist conspiracy to take over the world. Winrod's prejudiced views of Jews also painted him as a member of the radical right that instead of protecting human freedoms sought to destroy them. Winrod's position in relation to the

attempted Supreme Court packing in 1937 was notable, but Winrod was not the only opposition to the packing scheme. Many saw this scheme as a political move on the part of Roosevelt to gain control of the judicial branch of the government, and few wished to have so much power entrusted to one person. Corresponding to Winrod's stand on the packing issue, The Defender had become moderate in its attacks on Roosevelt and the Jews and the The Revealer was no longer being published after the December, 1936, edition. All of this intimated that Winrod was planning to run for public office before the Supreme Court issue arose in the summer of 1937, and that the success he had in defeating Roosevelt made Winrod more confident in his chances to win the election and become a Senator. Winrod announced his candidacy for the Senate in March, 1938, but most people around the state were not surprised by the announcement. Winrod had intimated in late 1937 that he might run for the Senate, but few people viewed Winrod as a challenger for the nomination. Winrod was to surprise many people by the effective campaign he would run. His mailing list consisted of some 150,000 names, and after thirty days of campaigning 400,000 pieces of campaign literature favorable to him were in circulation throughout Kansas. Winrod was serious about becoming a Senator, but unfortunately for Winrod, there were many other Republicans that would not brook his nomination. When it seemed possible in mid-June of 1938 that Winrod might win the Republican primary, many of Winrod's activities from 1927 to 1937 were brought out in the open, and he was forced to run on his less-than-perfect record.<sup>20</sup>

The three other candidates in the Republican senatorial primary of

1938 did not have controversy follow them as Winrod did. The most controversial aspect of the three was that none of them were native Kansans. All three had moved to Kansas either in their youth or in their young adulthood. Of the three--Clyde Reed, Dallas Knapp, and Jesse Fisher--Reed seemed to be the best bet to defeat McGill in the general election in November.

Reed was born the son of Mr. and Mrs. Martin V. Reed in Champaign County, Illinois, on October 19, 1871. In 1875 the Reed family moved to a farm house in the Parsons area. The family lived comfortably, but they were not blessed with many luxuries. Reed's education was limited to the eighth grade, because his father died and he had to find a job and help support the family. After leaving school Reed taught in a country school for a year before he entered a more permanent position with the Railway Mail Service in 1889. Starting as a mail clerk, Reed advanced to become the Superintendent of the Railway Adjustment Division of the Railway Mail Service in Washington, D.C., being appointed to the office by President Roosevelt in early 1908. Before becoming Superintendent Reed held regional field superintendent positions in Cleveland, Cincinnati, New Orleans, Omaha, and St. Paul. Reed's thirty years of railway service taught him much concerning the railway business. Reed put this knowledge to good use in 1908 when he brought out information concerning corruption in the mail rates system of the railway industry. Reed found out that some railways were falsifying the amount of mail they reported to the government and received more monetary compensation from the government than they deserved. Reed compiled the evidence

against the railways and made it available to Kansas Eighth District Congressman Victor Murdock. Congressman Murdock led the investigation into the allegations made by Reed. The result of the investigation was the issuing of fines and the repayment to the government of the embezzled money. Reed became prime political material as a result of the honesty and integrity he showed in the railway investigation.<sup>21</sup>

Reed ended his career with the Railway Mail Service in 1917 and returned to Parsons to become the editor of the Parsons Daily Sun, a paper that he acquired a controlling interest in while he was working for the mail service. Reed's political aspirations now began to unfold. In 1918 Reed backed fellow publisher-politican Henry J. Allen in his candidacy for the governorship of Kansas. Allen won the gubernatorial election and in 1919 appointed Reed as his personal secretary. From December 14, 1919, to late 1920 Reed served Allen in this unofficial capacity. In 1920 Reed was appointed to sit on the newly established Court of Industrial Relations. This group was created to control relations between industry and labor in the state, but in the 1920s this type of regulation was seen as undemocratic. The Court of Industrial Relations accomplished little in controlling the troubles between industry and labor while Reed was a member, and he left the Court for a more rewarding position. In 1921 Reed was appointed to the Public Utilities Commission (now the Kansas Corporation Commission). Reed was much more at home debating utility rates than making decisions on labor-management relations. Reed served out his term on the PUC and retired back to Parsons in 1924. In 1924 Reed made his first attempt at elected office

when he ran for the Republican nomination for Governor. Reed failed to secure the Republican bid primarily as a result of the opposition of the Ku Klux Klan. The KKK was opposed to Reed because of the progressive reforms that Reed supported, such as a representative election process and tax reform. Following his defeat, Reed returned to what he enjoyed most, debating public utility rates before the PUC. This time Reed argued from the opposite side of the table. Reed formed a law partnership with Bernard L. Glover in 1925, with Reed's primary responsibility being to take the partnership's cases dealing with utility rates before the PUC. Reed spent most of his time before the PUC from 1925 to 1928 debating railway freight rates in an attempt to keep them down, but again in 1928 Reed attempted to become the Governor of Kansas.<sup>22</sup>

Reed's platform in 1928 was based on progressive idealism. This is easily understood by Reed's close affiliations with Theodore Roosevelt and Henry Allen, both prominent Progressives. Reed's liberal background would lead him to many problems in the future, but in 1928 his proposals seemed sound and he was elected. Reed had many plans for Kansas when he entered the Governor's Office, but most of them were foiled by a hostile Legislature. He planned to increase the desirability of Kansas to outside business interests by implementing a better highway system and remodeling the state's tax structure. Reed's highest priority, a state highway system, would benefit not only industry but also farmers. Reed contended that a series of connecting state highways would make it easier for industries to transport their goods and for farmers to get their produce to market. His plan was instituted, and the present Kansas highway

system can be traced back to the administration of Reed. Reed's second priority was to reform the state's tax system to make it more equitable. Reed proposed a reformed property tax system that would benefit the farmers by evaluating their property at a lower rate. Reed went further by proposing that a state income tax be instituted to help take some of the bite out of the state sales tax for the poor. Reed's proposals were opposed by the rich because they would be held primarily responsible for funding the state if these reforms were passed. To Reed's dismay the wealthy of the state controlled many seats in the Kansas Legislature, and his tax proposals failed.<sup>23</sup>

Reed also found out that a little advancement in economic reform was not enough to get reelected in a period of Depression. Reed had given the state a fine highway system and had attempted to implement a reformed tax system, both meant to help the average Kansan. Reed thought his record was good enough to be reelected, and he failed to take the reelection campaign seriously until it was too late. In the primary of 1930 Reed lost despite being the incumbent. Reed counted on his strong integrity and the implementation of the highway system to gain reelection, but dissension within the Republican Party spelled his doom.<sup>24</sup>

Reed had not realized he had made so many powerful enemies in the Republican Party until he failed to win the primary in 1930. Reed had gained a reputation with conservatives of being a "lone dog" within the party. He saw the issues only in his own way and failed to notice that he needed the help of his fellow party members to be successful. This

neglect surfaced in the 1930 gubernatorial primary as conservative Republicans like Dave Mulvane, John D.M. Hamilton, and Frank Haucke opposed Reed. The conservatives successfully disrupted Reed's support from the farming community and the newspaper clique of William Allen White, Allen, and Reed. Haucke was nominated in the primary to run against the Democrat Harry Woodring of Neodesha. The final count in the November election was close, with Woodring winning by 251 votes over Haucke and 33,893 over Dr. John R. Brinkley (the Independent candidate). Although Haucke lost the election, he had the characteristics that the "old guard" of the Republican party liked. Haucke was a loyal Republican that would never think of leaving the party, unlike Reed, who bolted the party in 1912 to back Teddy Roosevelt and the Progressive ticket. Haucke was also a more easy-going person, while Reed was a cantakerous liberal that ranted and raved until someone listened to what he said and did what he suggested. Haucke was basically easier to control and constituted no threat to the control of the old guard as Reed did.<sup>25</sup>

Reed left public life for seven years after his defeat at the hands of Haucke. In 1930 Reed had thought of himself as a respected leader of Kansas, but the voters of the state had proved him wrong. The Depression may have had a great deal to do with Reed's defeat, but much of it had to be attributed to his inability to see the other man's side of an issue and compromise. After leaving Topeka in 1931, Reed returned to Parsons and became the managing editor of The Sun. He continued to be content writing about the political issues of the times until 1937, when he let it be known that he was interested in the senatorial seat held by George

McGill. Reed, like Winrod, had made many enemies through the period of 1920-38, but he was by no means as despised as Winrod. Reed entered the 1938 race for the Senate with many people opposed to his nomination, among them Alf Landon. To Reed's advantage, his enemies learned to oppose Winrod more actively than they did Reed.

The third candidate for the nomination was Dallas Knapp of Coffeyville. Knapp, the son of L. Jay and Mary Catherine Knapp, was born on December 23, 1883, in Western, Michigan. He received his public and formal education in Michigan and graduated from the University of Michigan Law School in 1907. In 1908 Knapp moved to Coffeyville, and after being admitted to the Kansas Bar Association, he opened up a law office in the Kansas community with Charles D. Welch on July 12, 1912. Knapp's political background would have to be considered the best of all of the candidates. He started at the local level and graduated up to running for the United States Senate in 1938.<sup>26</sup>

Knapp began his political career in 1917, when he became the Coffeyville City Attorney. He proved himself in this position and continued to serve until 1921. In 1920 Knapp successfully ran for the Kansas House of Representatives. He served two terms in the House, from 1921 to 1924. In 1924 he was elected to the Kansas Senate, serving three terms in this state body. Knapp ended his tenure in the State Senate in 1937 when he decided to run for the United States Senate. Knapp had some serious disadvantages in his race for the Senate. The first was his character. Knapp did not possess an outgoing personality or the ability to relate to people. In his success in the Coffeyville area

he had always been elected by people who had known him for many years and knew they could trust him. In the election for the Senate that took in the entire state, Knapp was at a disadvantage because he could not put up the face that a successful candidate must have. Knapp's other disadvantage in the campaign was that his physical stature did not impress people. Knapp was a small man that could not command attention like the more physically prominent Reed or Winrod. Knapp also was a soft-spoken man who tried to reason with the people instead of bullying them into decisions. Reed and Winrod would rave about conditions in the economy while Knapp would calmly express his views to the people in an attempt to win them over. This unwillingness to fight turned many voters against Knapp. Despite his imperfections Knapp was a well respected politician with a reputation of fairness, honesty, and respectability. Knapp did have one advantage over Reed and Winrod: he was a conservative Republican whom the Republican old guard in Kansas respected and in the long run would have preferred to win the election for the Senate. His inability to canvass votes left Knapp out of the race and forced the conservative forces in the party to support Reed in order to insure the defeat of Winrod.<sup>27</sup>

The fourth candidate for the Republican Senate nomination was the Rev. Jesse C. Fisher. At the time of his announcement in February, 1938, Fisher was a Methodist minister in Garden City. He stated that his reason for entering the race was that it was every religious man's civic duty to do all that could be done to help the country. Fisher distrusted the men who had exhibited interest in the senate seat and was afraid

that the New Deal would destroy democracy in America if respected men were not elected to the Congress. He saw the Democrats in Washington were not giving the country the aid that it desired and demanded. Fisher noted the examples that the government was not aiding the farmers in their fight to survive the Depression and that unemployment was still at uncalled-for highs in early 1938.<sup>28</sup>

Fisher was born to Asa and Sarah Fisher in Magnolia, Illinois, in 1874. The Fisher family moved to the Valley Center area, near Wichita, when Fisher was twelve years old. Fisher was raised and received most of his education in Valley Center, and after finishing there he attended the Lewis Academy in Wichita. The Lewis Academy was a preparatory school that Fisher attended before entering Southwestern College. Fisher completed his studies at Southwestern in 1900, graduating with a Bachelor of Divinity degree. He was ordained a Methodist minister in 1902, but he did not remain in Kansas to preach. He left Kansas with his wife Effie (whom he married in 1903) to become a missionary in India. The Fishers spent nearly nine years in India, returning to Kansas in 1912. The next year Fisher received his Master of Arts degree from Chicago University. He then became a teacher and the chairman of Theology at Kansas Wesleyan College in Salina and continued in these activities until the Depression.<sup>29</sup>

In 1932 Fisher left his position at Kansas Wesleyan and became the district supervisor for the Methodist churches in western Kansas, which was called the Liberal District. This district consisted of about sixty churches that were controlled from the central office in Liberal.

Fisher's main objective as supervisor was to see that none of the churches under his supervision went into bankruptcy. He also became the superintendent of the Epworth Hospital in western Kansas, which was the only grade A hospital in the area. In keeping this hospital and the many churches of the area alive, Fisher allowed the people of the Dust Bowl to continue to have spiritual and medical aid. Fisher was the one candidate that had the closest ties with the people who had suffered the most from the Depression and the Dust Bowl, but his lack of political experience and political connection within the Republican Party made him an also-ran candidate.<sup>30</sup>

Of the four candidates, Reed and Winrod had the strongest popular followings, with Knapp getting the nod from the old guard within the Republican Party. Fisher was a minor candidate that had good qualifications but lacked the state exposure that was a prerequisite for winning a state-wide election. Reed had the advantage of having a state-wide name as a result of his governorship in the late 1920s, but he also had the same enemies in 1938 as he did in 1928. Winrod was surely not an unknown person in 1938, but his effective and expensive media attack would make him a household word in Kansas and across the nation. When the campaign for the primary began, Reed seemed to be in a battle with Knapp, but that changed by mid-June, when Winrod and not Knapp was seen as the major competitor to Reed.

## CHAPTER TWO: FOOTNOTES

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14. Hope, p. 62; Chasen and Riesel, p. 7; Schragg, pp. 22-23, 26; Waltner, "Gerald B. Winrod and the ... Trial of 1944," p. 25.
15. Chasen and Riesel, p. 8.
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17. Sullivan, pp. 31-32.
18. Ibid., p. 75; Schragg, pp. 11, 30; Waltner, "Gerald B. Winrod and the ... Trial of 1944," pp. 20, 22, 24.
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### Chapter Three: The Early Race

In 1937 commentators speculated on which Republican would have the best chance against McGill in the election of 1938. A.L. Schultz wrote often in his weekly column in the Topeka State Journal about the political climate of Kansas. In his July 17, 1937, edition of "Kansas Political Gossip," Schultz mentioned three possible candidates for the primary--former Governor Landon, State Senator Lambertson, and Reed. Schultz said that Landon was the preferred candidate of the party, but he had announced after his defeat in 1936 that he would not seek another political office. Schultz therefore counted Landon out of the race. Reed was a political figure well-known to Kansans, but he had accumulated many enemies while he was Governor, Landon among them. Schultz wrote that the candidate that had Landon's support would probably win the primary. Because of Reed's problems with Landon, Schultz doubted that Reed could win his party's nomination. As for Lambertson, success seemed unlikely. He was a little-known state senator that had a slim chance of victory in the primary and an even slimmer chance in the general election.<sup>1</sup>

In his column of July 22, 1937, Schultz paid much attention to the probable candidacy of Reed. Schultz saw Reed as having many powerful enemies in the party, but pointed out that the political favors of a senator have a way of turning enemies into friends. The Republicans were not going to receive favors from McGill, so Reed could gain the support of his enemies by promising favors. Schultz noted that Reed's

greatest asset was his alliance with White, but his greatest liability was the bad feelings between him and Landon. Schultz thought Landon never would support Reed, because Reed had supported Roosevelt for the Presidency in 1936. Indeed, it was highly possible that Landon would do everything in his power to see that Reed did not win the primary. Schultz wrote in the November 18, 1937, edition of "Kansas Political Gossip" that Reed would be a candidate, but Schultz was uncertain who would run against him and whether Landon would allow Reed to win the primary. Reed announced in January, 1937, that he would accept the candidacy if it was offered to him. The problem with Reed's candidacy was that his progressive background and his lack of support from the conservative elements of the party lessened his chances of getting complete party support.<sup>2</sup>

Winrod meanwhile intimated on January 27, 1938, in a radio address over WIBW and KCKN, that he was considering running for the Senate. The January 30, 1938, Kansas City Star ran an article titled, "Cheer in Big Race." The article dealt with Reed's candidacy, but some attention was given to the possibility of Winrod being an active candidate. The Star reported that Winrod was welcome, because the Republicans did not fear him. Winrod appeared to be a weak candidate, but this appearance would change as the campaign matured.<sup>3</sup>

Although Reed was the first Republican to express interest in running for the Senate, he was the last candidate to file in the Secretary of State's office. When Reed did start campaigning actively, he used many of the standard campaign practices. He spoke at women's clubs, veteran

organizations, and Republican fund-raisings. Outside of these formal speaking engagements Reed also went out on the campaign trail and stumped for votes. Radio was not the most important part of Reed's campaign, but he did campaign over the airways in the closing weeks of the primary. Reed did not start campaigning actively until mid-June, because he was in poor health as a result of getting a new pair of dentures. Reed received extensive attention from the press from mid-June on, but before then he was poorly publicized. In fact most of the attention that Reed received prior to June dealt with attacks on his candidacy.

Reed's numerous conservative enemies in the party, recalling his lone dog tactics as governor from 1929 to 1931, attacked him. They feared he would do the same thing in Washington that he had in Topeka--forget his party and its platform. In early 1938 a pamphlet titled, "What Every Republican Should Know About Clyde Reed, As Stated by Republicans," appeared. The material presented in this pamphlet dealt with Reed's activities as Governor. The pamphlet consisted of editorials from newspapers across the state that attacked specific aspects of Reed's administration. One editorial dealt with Reed's appointment of Allen to serve out the rest of Senator Charles Curtis's Senate term. Curtis had been inaugurated the Vice-president of the United States in March of 1929, and Governor Reed was responsible for choosing a replacement for Curtis until a special election could be held. An editorial from the El Dorado Times stated that Reed attempted to use President Hoover's position as the head of the Republican Party to placate the popular opinion in Kansas against his appointment, Allen. Another section

of the pamphlet dealt with Reed's loyalty to the Republican party. It was a partial transcript of Wichita attorney John Blood's address over KANS on January 26, 1938. Blood said Reed was a disloyal Republican and therefore was undeserving of the Republican nomination. Blood explained that Reed left the party in 1912 to support the Progressives led by Theodore Roosevelt and in 1936 to back Franklin Roosevelt and the New Deal. Blood stated that loyalty to the party was a member's primary responsibility. He considered Reed an opportunist who supported the Republicans in 1938 only because they had the best chance of winning. Other examples from the pamphlet attacked Reed's integrity and honesty as a politician. Reed also was scored in many of the large city papers in the state. The Topeka Daily Capital, the Wichita Beacon, and the Kansas City Times all printed articles uncomplimentary of Reed. Only with the increased fear of Winrod would Reed's enemies quiet and his support from conservatives increase. Without Winrod, Reed never could have won the unwilling support of such conservatives as Republican National Chairman John D.M. Hamilton. Hamilton disliked Reed, but in the last weeks of the race he would ask the public to defeat Winrod, which threw support to Reed.<sup>4</sup>

Reed's platform for the primary was similar to those of other Republicans. His major stand was on the preservation of the American system of government. Reed stated that "the fundamental question before the American people is the preservation of our system of government with the legislative, executive and judicial branches, each independent as contemplated by the constitution."<sup>5</sup> He explained that the

deficit spending of the Roosevelt Administration and the way that McGill had placed his stamp of approval on all the measures of the administration were not conducive to constitutional government. Reed promised that he would see that the Constitution was upheld, that the economy was stabilized, that farm legislation to help but not enslave the farmers was passed, and that he would not be a rubber stamp for administration policy.<sup>6</sup>

Jesse Clyde Fisher was the first surprise candidate to enter the primary. Reed had intimated for a year that he would run, and Winrod had hinted in January that he might run, but Fisher had given no indication that he was a candidate. He was even more of a surprise than Winrod, because Fisher had not expressed any political aspirations before. He became the first candidate to file when on February 15 he paid the necessary fee to the Secretary of State at which time he cited several reasons for entering the race. He was mainly disappointed in the candidacies of Reed and Winrod. The men Fisher favored were Landon, Frank Carlson, and Clifford Hope. When these men showed no interest in the Senate, Fisher decided it was his civic duty to offer himself as a candidate.<sup>7</sup>

Fisher feared for the nation as long as it was under the control of the "riotous New Deal spending" of Roosevelt.<sup>8</sup> Fisher ran on a four-point platform directed at revising the New Deal. He saw the New Deal as treating business, especially small business, badly. He believed that business was a major part of the American economy, and in order for the United States to recover, the business community had to

recover first. Fisher also thought oil and farming interests had been treated badly. The oil industry was not receiving from the New Deal the freedom it needed to turn a profit. With oil the third largest industry in Kansas, behind agriculture and mining, a senator from Kansas must take stands favorable to it. The third part of Fisher's platform dealt with the New Deal's treatment of the American farmer. Fisher argued the New Deal placed too many restrictions on farmers and failed to regulate industries, such as the railroads and banking, that needed to be regulated. He said that by regulating farmers' output and trade the government was enforcing dictatorial control over the farming industry. The tax system of the United States placed too much pressure on farmers, according to Fisher. By raising tariffs the government was reducing the farmer's ability to export his surplus grain to other countries at a profit. Fisher pledged that if elected to the Senate, he could stop these infractions by the New Deal and help the farmer, the small businessman, and the oilman back to respectability.<sup>9</sup>

Fisher's campaign was muck like the other candidates'. He toured the state in a car outfitted with a loud speaker, and by August 2 he had planned appearances in each county at least twice. Fisher often found himself following Winrod across the state, and Winrod stated several times that Fisher was put up to running for the Senate to split his support. But Fisher's fear was not Winrod, but the future of America. In many ways Fisher was better qualified to represent Kansas. He was the only candidate that was a farmer, with interests in several farms outside Wichita. He also had witnessed the Dust Bowl first-hand in western

Kansas as Liberal District superintendent from 1930 to 1937. Fisher also addressed the public at luncheons and infrequently over the radio. He primarily stuck to the proven types of campaigning like stump speaking and left radio to Winrod. Fisher ran a clean campaign, and generally McGill and the New Dealers were the only people he attacked.<sup>10</sup>

Dallas Knapp was another surprise candidate, but not as much of a surprise as Fisher or Winrod, because of his previous political experience in the Kansas Legislature. Knapp's most important quality was his practical legislative experience. In a pamphlet titled "Dallas Knapp, Coffeyville, Kansas Republican for United States Senator," A. Lewis Oswald, pro-Knapp editor of the Hutchinson News, reviewed the qualities of all of the candidates in the Republican senatorial primary. Oswald characterized Fisher as a man of integrity and ability, but referred to him as "the class orator who was honored by being made fullback on the (football) team!"<sup>11</sup> Oswald believed that Fisher was outclassed in running for the senate. Concerning Reed, Oswald only referred to him as "a one term governor," implying that the good people of Kansas had seen fit not to reelect him in 1930. Oswald's view of Winrod was that he was sincere and respectable, but like Fisher, Winrod was outclassed in the realm of statewide politics. Oswald did say that Winrod had one advantage over Reed and Fisher in that he was colorful and would pull some votes with his personality. In presenting Knapp, Oswald stated that he was everything that his opponents were not: he was experienced, respected by other Republicans, hardworking, and intelligent. Oswald's view of Knapp was fairly accurate, but Knapp did not

possess the charismatic character to become the popular choice for senator.<sup>12</sup>

Knapp had a standard platform. In his words the problem with America was that

no American can view our unbalanced budget situation indifferently, with the huge deficit growing larger and larger each month. The New Deal tampering with the fundamental structures of government; a designed centralization policy for further political power; punitive as well as oppressive taxation and regulations, together with the uncertainty as to what the next wild scheme and its effect will be, are direct causes of our economic ills.<sup>13</sup>

In this statement Knapp spoke for many Americans who believed that in six years Roosevelt and his New Deal had accomplished little. Knapp stated that government should be run like a business, with a balanced budget, business encouragements, and jobs provided for the populace by the government when needed. Knapp also placed emphasis on returning America to a constitutional democracy with the executive office having only the powers enumerated in the Constitution. He spoke of the issue of restoring to Congress constitutional power, and he promised not to degrade his office by being a "rubber stamp" Senator like McGill.<sup>14</sup>

Knapp's campaign was run much like the other candidates'; he made speeches, traveled across the state, and used radio. Knapp had such a stiff personality that his public speeches, either in person or over the radio, often fell flat. Knapp eventually would manage to come in second behind Reed in the primary, but his inability to use radio handicapped him.

Reed, Fisher, and Knapp had similar platforms that all attacked the New Deal policies, but Winrod's campaign was different in substance and method. Winrod tended to attack Roosevelt the man more than Roosevelt's programs. As for campaign spending, Winrod again was different than the other three. Reed spent a moderate sum of money on newspaper advertisements, and he spent more time on the radio by the end of the campaign. Fisher and Knapp were less free with their money. Knapp put out a few campaign pamphlets, but there was no evidence that Fisher printed even one pamphlet. Knapp and Fisher also did not speak over the radio very often, though by the end of the campaign they did show more willingness to use that medium. Reed, Fisher, and Knapp conducted conservative and clean campaigns, whereas Winrod's campaign featured some mudslinging at Roosevelt and his New Deal policies.

Winrod ran on a seven-point platform called his "Statement of Principles." These principles called for the defense of constitutional democracy, the rebuilding of moral and religious sentiments in the America, the rigid observances of state's rights versus centralized bureaucracy, the absolute adherence to neutrality in foreign policy, the restoration of the budget function to the United States Congress, the repeal of experimental legislation that had hindered the country's recovery from the Depression, and the creation of a more confident attitude in the federal government so that the country would feel secure about the economic future of America. These points were similar to what the other candidates expressed, but Winrod went beyond

his basic platform. Winrod told the voters that Roosevelt was trying to turn the Presidency into a dictatorship according to a plan that originated in the Wilson Administration. The attacks on Roosevelt increased as the primary drew nearer.<sup>15</sup>

Winrod's campaign techniques were different than the other three candidates, but were by no means revolutionary. He used radio a great deal, but Roosevelt and Dr. John R. Brinkley both had used the radio as much or more than Winrod in their campaigns for office earlier in the decade. On January 27 Winrod delivered his first radio address over KCKN and WIBW. Following January 27 Winrod spoke over these stations every Thursday until the primary was over. On the radio Winrod sounded like a man that had a deep concern for the common folk of the state. He usually used a simple story to reinforce to his listeners that he was on their side with his opposition to Roosevelt. Along with his media blitz Winrod used his printing facilities in Wichita to print around 400,000 pamphlets by the end of June. Some of the pamphlets consisted of transcripts of his radio address, which were printed because the stations that carried his address could not transmit across the whole state. Winrod spoke at social functions, but he rarely mingled or shook hands with the people. He infrequently attended luncheons, because he was a vegetarian.<sup>16</sup> Despite his shortcomings Winrod ran a well-devised campaign that was adapted to the times.

Winrod's reasons for running for the Senate were evident in his campaign literature. He termed the Senate, "as a sounding board for the gospel of Jesus Christ,"<sup>17</sup> and he preached to the voters of Kansas

on the evils of Roosevelt. Of his radio addresses, some were important enough to be formed into two campaign pamphlets titled Terse Talks and Three Talks.

Terse Talks consisted of five of Winrod's radio addresses:

"Kansas Leadership" (February 17, 1938); "Moral Consciousness in Government" (February 24); "Man Without a Job" (March 3); "Our Relationship to the Present International Situation" (March 17); and "The Red Network" (April 21). All five of these transcripts dealt with a different aspect of the Roosevelt Administration.

In "Kansas Leadership," Winrod explained that Roosevelt was attempting to make the Presidency as powerful as possible. He stated that Kansas had had an outstanding group of political leaders in the past that had made the state a leader in political initiative and innovation. This advantage in foresight came from hereditary influences of geographic location in the middle of the country, an extremely high rate of literacy, and a great belief in the Bible and its teachings. Winrod was quick to point out that the changes that Kansas had initiated in the past had not resulted from spur-of-the-moment thinking and were in harmony with the state's morals of freedom and democracy. He foresaw a trend in the leadership of Kansas that was allowing itself to be influenced by the destructive elements in the nation's capitol. Winrod wrote that this destructive influence would gain complete control of the country if Kansas and the other states in the union did not send respectable leaders to Congress.<sup>18</sup>

"Moral Consciousness in Government," delivered by Winrod on February

24, dealt with the exploits of the non-elected men in the Roosevelt administration. Winrod believed that the Constitution was one of the greatest works of man. He explained how the Roosevelt "Brain Trust" was trying to subvert the Constitution and strengthen the Presidency by misinterpreting it. He used the example of the attempted packing of the Supreme Court in 1937 to support his claim. The Supreme Court was supposed to be free from interference from the executive, but as a result of the attempted packing, the court became more conciliatory to Roosevelt's opinions. Winrod argued that the Congress was the last stronghold for constitutional democracy and could only be maintained by defeating pro-Roosevelt men in the Congress.<sup>19</sup> The pressure of saving the nation from dictatorship fell into the hands of the voters, for Winrod believed that "the final safeguard of a constitutional system lies in the right purpose, in the character of the people who vote."<sup>20</sup>

The third transcript, "A Man Without a Job," attacked the New Deal for the way it handled the problem of unemployment. Winrod pointed out that unemployment in 1938 had reached 12 million workers, which was higher than the 1933 figure of 8 million. In the 1932 Presidential election Roosevelt had promised to reduce unemployment by improving the economy. Winrod explained that Roosevelt had neither reduced unemployment or helped the economy recover by 1938. Winrod used a homespun story to explain to the listener or the reader how poorly the New Deal had performed. The story was about a teacher from western Kansas who was unemployed because the community he had taught in had gone bankrupt. This man had lost his teaching position two years prior to Winrod going

on the air in 1938 and had only been able to find odd jobs since then to support his family. Winrod exclaimed that this man was only asking for the chance to work at what he was qualified to do; he was not asking for a dole from the government, but a job. As long as the "Brain Trust" in Washington was allowed to continue in power, Winrod contended that the nation would not be able to recover from its economic problems. A time would come, he warned, when America would be destroyed by the dealings of the government or by the revolt of the unemployed. He believed that the solution lay in giving back to the Congress and the voters fiscal and budget policy, thereby taking it out of the hands of the Brain Trust. Making the financial situation of America more responsive to the voters would in turn make fiscal policy better able to attack the problems of the Depression and thereby head off social unrest.<sup>21</sup>

The next facet of the Roosevelt administration that Winrod attacked dealt with its stand on European involvement. In "Our Relationship to the Present International Situation" Winrod explained his stand on the United States' involvement in Europe. Winrod noted that Europe and the Orient were in turmoil in 1938, but America was not directly involved in either area. Winrod made it plain that he was an isolationist. He said that the government should conduct a hands-off policy towards Europe and the Orient. The situation in the Far East was favorable to the United States, with Japan fighting the communist threat in China. Winrod noted that Chiang Kai-Shek had failed to expell the communists from his country, but the Japanese were doing the job for him. Winrod thought that Chiang should ally himself with the Japanese and aid them

in their fight. He did not like the idea of China becoming a vassal of Japan, but it was what was necessary to defeat communism in the Orient.<sup>22</sup> Winrod's greatest concern was not American relations in the Orient, but what the administration's position in Europe would be. Winrod feared a repeat of World War I with the United States paying greater costs in men and machines to bail out France and Great Britain. In his view Roosevelt was moving the country closer to another European war.<sup>23</sup>

The final transcript in Terse Talks, titled "The Red Network," dealt with the Roosevelt administrations' policy towards communism. In the presentation Winrod portrayed a communist propaganda attack encompassing the entire world. In America a minority of propagandists were attempting to cause enough distrust in government to provide a communist revolt. He had come to the conclusion that the propaganda attack of the communists was in direct correlation to the world-wide Depression, with the pamphlets written by the communists being directed to the unemployed in each country. He blamed the Roosevelt Administration for not establishing a healthy economy; the only alternative to social revolution, he said, was a Congress that would reduce unemployment and increase prosperity.<sup>24</sup>

Terse Talks was a political pamphlet that supported many of Winrod's platform points. It made clear his stands on unemployment, international affairs, and communism, but all were highlighted with attacks on Roosevelt and his administration. In the political pamphlet, Three Talks, Winrod expanded his attacks on Roosevelt. The first transcript, titled "A Man Without a Job," was broadcast on March 3 and printed previously in Terse

Talks. This speech mainly condemned Roosevelt for not reducing unemployment below 1933 standards. The result of Roosevelt's failure was an increased chance of political and social revolution by the disenfranchised masses.<sup>25</sup>

In the second transcript of Three Talks Winrod took direct aim at the New Dealers and what he considered their intentions for the Country. In "Blueprint of the New Deal" (April 7) Winrod viewed the New Deal policies of increased government spending and expansion of the executive office as parts of a plan that was created in 1912. The plan was based on the novel, Phillip Dru, Administrator, which was about a man named Phillip Dru who was a bureaucrat in a large industrialized nation. The bureaucracy had established control over the country through government regulation of business and the implementation of public works. Phillip Dru was the man who came to control the bureaucracy and became dictator of the country. Winrod contended that Col. Edward House, Wilson's principal advisor, had written the book and the Wilson administration had set the plan into motion. Winrod compared the bureaucrats in the novel to the New Dealers in Roosevelt's administration, and depicted Roosevelt as the prototype of the character Phillip Dru. Winrod intimated through several of his radio speeches that Roosevelt was attempting to create one-man rule in America.<sup>26</sup>

The last of the three transcripts in Three Talks was titled "The Spoils System" and was delivered on May 26. In this address Winrod likened the Roosevelt administration to that of Andrew Jackson. Jackson had tried to bully the Supreme Court and had gathered a group of private

advisors that he relied upon. He had given jobs to men that had done favors for him, and these men had almost ruined the country. Winrod feared that Roosevelt would cause as many problems as Jackson had. Roosevelt was spending millions of dollars that the government did not have, and to Winrod this proved that Roosevelt would bankrupt the country. Winrod noted that in election years New Deal relief increased. He saw this as the most cruel form of spoils system, because Roosevelt and the Democrats were playing with people's lives. The only solution was to defeat the New Deal and all of the Democrats who supported it.<sup>27</sup>

Three Talks was an accumulation of the most adamant of Winrod's attacks on Roosevelt. While Knapp, Fisher, and Reed structured their attacks against McGill, Winrod attacked McGill only in relation to Roosevelt. The same tone dominated other addresses not published as pamphlets. "Immigration and the Unemployment Problem" (March 31), "Enemies of Labor" (May 12), "Government by Bureaus" (May 19), and "The Farm Problem" (June 9) were four of Winrod's important unpublished addresses.

In "Immigration and the Unemployment Problem," Winrod proved that he was a conservative Republican again. Winrod attacked the Roosevelt administration's policies towards unemployment, and he cited two reasons for its rise. Winrod blamed Roosevelt for not being able to reconstruct the economy as one reason and the increasing number of immigrants who were entering the United States as the second reason. According to Winrod's figures, as of 1938 there were 16.5 million naturalized citizens, 7.5 million legalized aliens, and 3.5 million illegal aliens in the

country. Winrod believed that the number of unemployed was not a result of a decrease in the number of jobs, but an increase in the number of outside workers taking jobs away from American citizens. Many of the immigrants were doing more than taking away jobs, they were also promoting revolution. These people were being fed, clothed, and housed at the expense of the American taxpayer, and in repayment these aliens were founding communist groups. The answer to the problem was first to vote the New Deal out of power and second to set up a strict immigration policy to protect the American laborer from cheap foreign labor and American society from communist sympathizers.<sup>28</sup>

In the radio address, "Enemies of Labor," Winrod contended that Roosevelt was destroying the common laborer. A worker's major desire was to put in an honest day's work for an honest day's pay, and the Roosevelt administration was not allowing them this right. The American farmer was also being punished by the administration. The administration's inability to distribute goods to needy parts of the nation, its use of the scarcity doctrine to destroy grain and livestock, and its attempts at dictating to the farmer what could be produced made farmers puppets of the government. Winrod used the example that many millions of bushels of wheat were destroyed in Kansas, while miners in western Pennsylvania were starving. Winrod argued that the Brain Trust was purposely upsetting the supply of goods to other parts of the country in order to create economic chaos. The reason for the administration's stand was to further develop one-man rule in the United States.<sup>29</sup>

In Winrod's "Government by Bureaus" address he heightened his

attack on the Roosevelt Administration. Winrod contended that the purpose of the huge federal bureaucracy was not to aid the people but to create a force capable of controlling the country. Roosevelt's reorganization of government was increasing centralization and destroying state's rights. This attack on the Constitution was a dictatorial move by Roosevelt. Winrod contended that the only hope for the survival of constitutional democracy in America fell into the hands of the voters of America.<sup>30</sup>

Winrod clarified his stand on the problems of the American farmer in the address titled "The Farm Problem" on June 9. Winrod stated that agriculture was the backbone of the American life, and without this the United States would fall. The American farmer was a laborer, a borrower, an interest-payer, a tax-payer, and a consumer in a monopolized market. According to Winrod, Hoover left the White House in 1932 with a pro-farm policy, but Roosevelt failed to continue the policy. Roosevelt increased importation of foreign commodities and destroyed domestic products. Winrod's solution again was simple--destroy Roosevelt and the New Dealers in Congress.<sup>31</sup>

Winrod distributed more material than the other candidates combined and used the radio to the best of his ability. He was seen as an also-ran candidate in January of 1938, but as a result of his popular platform, he had become the frontrunner by July. Winrod spoke for isolation from European and Asian problems, for a balanced budget versus deficit spending, and against the concentration of power in the executive branch of the government. Winrod discussed the issues and supplied

answers to the nation's problems. These answers were simplified and naive, but the people in America and Kansas were eager to see the country's problems as simple.

Winrod was the popular candidate by the end of June, and many Republicans, especially Winrod's supporters, viewed him as unbeatable. Winrod had followed the Republican Party's platform of attacking the New Deal, and he had showed that he was a capable campaigner. On July 1 a group of Republican leaders met at Emporia to discuss what could be done about Winrod's candidacy. This group's reason for opposing Winrod was not his stand as a senatorial candidate but his actions as a Wichita minister the previous twenty years, especially Winrod's support of Nazi Germany and Hitler from 1933 to 1937. The meeting at Emporia was led by White, a Reed supporter. White and his friends decided to attack Winrod and destroy the advantage he had built up over the previous five months. This meeting began the last phase of the 1938 Republican senatorial primary.

## CHAPTER THREE: FOOTNOTES

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24. Gerald B. Winrod, "The Red Network," Terse Talks (Wichita: n. pub., 1938), pp. 37-40, Kansas State Historical Society Library.
25. Gerald B. Winrod, "A Man Without A Job," pp. 16-22.
26. Gerald B. Winrod, "Blueprint of the New Deal," 7 April 1938, transcript of radio address over KCKN (Kansas City) and WIBW (Topeka), Kansas State Historical Society Library.
27. Gerald B. Winrod, "The Spoils System," 26 May 1938, transcript of radio address over KCKN (Kansas City) and WIBW (Topeka), Kansas State Historical Society.
28. Gerald B. Winrod, "Immigration and the Unemployment Problem," 31 Mar. 1938, transcript of radio address over KCKN (Kansas City) and WIBW (Topeka), Kansas State Historical Society Library.
29. Gerald B. Winrod, "Enemies of Labor," 12 May 1938, transcript of radio address over KCKN (Kansas City) and WIBW (Topeka), Kansas State Historical Society.
30. Gerald B. Winrod, "Government by Bureaus," 19 May 1938, transcript of radio address over KCKN (Kansas City) and WIBW (Topeka), Kansas State Historical Society Library.
31. Gerald B. Winrod, "The Farm Problem," 9 July 1938, transcript of radio address over KCKN (Kansas City) and WIBW (Topeka), Kansas State Historical Society Library.

## Chapter Four: The Attack

Winrod's well-organized campaign had started early in January and had allowed him to get a jump on the rest of the candidates. He had gained such an advantage that he had changed from an also-ran candidate to a strong contender. Republican stalwarts therefore sought ways to deprive Winrod of victory. The primary means of attacking Winrod was to use his past articles and speeches to discredit him.

Winrod's attackers were numerous and came from a wide range of vocations. White led the Republican establishment against him using his paper, the Emporia Gazette, and many other papers to attack Winrod frequently. In July, 1938, a group of ministers published a pamphlet which brought accusations that Winrod was a Nazi sympathizer and anti-semitic. In Wichita the attack was shared between clergymen, the editors of the Wichita Beacon, and former U.S. District Judge W. D. Jochems. Others who considered it their duty to judge Winrod were Republican National Chairman John D. M. Hamilton, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and Reverend Samuel E. West. These people and groups all openly opposed Winrod by July.

White's opposition to Winrod stemmed in part from his friendship with Reed. At the meeting on July 1 at the Broadview Hotel in Emporia, forty to fifty Republicans met and discussed positions of the candidates in the primary. By the end of the day most in the group had signed a statement that declared their alliance with Reed in what was seen as a two-man race between Reed and Winrod. The statement, signed by

forty-five Republicans, questioned Winrod's extraordinary fund-raising and spending. Most important, the statement brought out Winrod's Nazi sympathies. It also criticized Winrod's record of public service over the previous two decades. Winrod, it said, had done little to aid the needy or serve the Wichita community in any other way. The news of the Emporia meeting spread over the state during the following weekend. It was front-page news in the Emporia Gazette, the Kansas City Times, the Topeka Daily Capital, and the Wichita Beacon. The result of the meeting in Emporia was a call to arms against the candidacy of Winrod--a call that many answered.<sup>1</sup>

White's actions in the campaign did not end with the end of the meeting on July 1. He was a respected Republican, and he used this position to aid Reed as much as possible. In the Gazette he ran many editorials and articles complimentary to Reed and hid most of the articles complimentary to Winrod either below the fold on page one or inside the paper. Among the editorials that were complimentary to Reed were "Clyde Reed Announces" (January 26), "Clyde M. Reed" (June 24), "Clyde Reed's Announcement," (June 27), "Clyde Reed Opens" (July 2), "Reed's Lead" (July 26), and "Clyde Reed" (August 3). Each editorial explained Reed's advantages in experience and character over Winrod, but each one also included an insult to Winrod in some form. White attacked Winrod in his July 2 editorial, "Clyde Reed Opens," for his stands of anti-semitism, anti-Catholicism and pro-Nazism. White contended these were not respectable causes for a potential Senator to pursue.

Aside from these attacks in editorials concerning Reed, White also

wrote articles dealing directly with Winrod's candidacy. An example of an anti-Winrod editorial was "Pit it Out Jerry" on July 27. Winrod had said that millions of dollars were being spent in Kansas to have him defeated. White dared Winrod to come forth with the evidence that would demonstrate that outside forces were attacking his candidacy. White's response to Winrod's accusations was that Winrod was attempting to get some sympathetic votes for himself. In another editorial on August 3 titled, "The Rev. Gerald Winrod," White criticized Winrod for his oversimplified view of what was wrong with the country. White, a loyal Republican, did not believe that Roosevelt was trying to take over the entire country, and neither did he discern a Jewish plot for world domination. White did say that Winrod was courageous in standing up against the great tide against him, but he was thankful that the voters of Kansas were intelligent enough to see through Winrod's distorted perceptions.<sup>2</sup>

White also used a one-time political advertisement against Winrod in July. The advertisement was not meant to bring out Reed's advantages, but rather to attack Winrod's ability to be an unbiased representative. The paid advertisement, headed "To the Republicans of Kansas," appeared first in the Gazette on July 20. Winrod, it declared, was a danger to Kansas because of six handicaps. The first was that Winrod had attacked the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People as being a communist organization, thus alienating the black vote. NAACP officials said Winrod "stirred up bigotry and prejudice against other races and religion."<sup>3</sup> Another handicap of Winrod was that he had insulted the

Catholic church. Winrod had referred to the Catholic church as the "Harlot women of the Bible" and the Pope as "Mr. Pius." Both of these examples made Winrod unacceptable to the members of the Catholic church. Winrod's next handicap was his connection to the Nazi movement in America. From 1935 to 1937 Winrod had made anti-semitic pamphlets available through his bookstore in Wichita and through The Defender. His doctrines alienated Jews and liberals that defended freedom of religion. Winrod also insulted labor union members by having The Defender printed only in non-union shops in order to keep printing costs down. Organized labor therefore joined the ranks of the opposition to Winrod. His fifth shortcoming was that many considered him a destructive force in his own city. In a newspaper article on July 7, twenty-one ministers in Wichita denounced Winrod as unconcerned with the good of the community and a destructive force in a city's religious community. White concluded his assault on Winrod by comparing him to the Ku Klux Klan. White stated that Winrod was anti-semitic, anti-Catholic and anti-black, all three of which were part of the doctrines of the KKK, which White had helped destroy in Kansas in the 1920s. White claimed that Winrod's prejudices had alienated at least a quarter of the voters in Kansas. He concluded that Winrod had little chance of winning the primary. In the event that Winrod did manage to succeed in August, White conceded, it would be the duty of all Republicans to back Winrod as the party's choice for Senator in the November election. White stated that having to support Winrod would be a degrading experience and a death blow to the Republican party in Kansas.<sup>4</sup>

White's advertisement ran in the Topeka Daily Capital, the Wichita Beacon, and the Kansas City Times on July 21, occupying at least three columns in each paper. White hoped that this advertisement would ensure Winrod's defeat. Through advertisements, editorials, and radio broadcasts White tarnished Winrod's reputation enough to facilitate his defeat. Although White did a great deal, he was not the only person or group to attack Winrod.

The second major attack on Winrod surfaced on July 8. Nine ministers from across the state demanded that Winrod's activities over the previous five years be investigated for un-American activities. The ministers, led by Rev. J. C. Cleveland of the First Congregational Church of Kansas City, asked the Dies (House) Committee on Un-American Activities to examine Winrod's dealings. The ministers quoted numerous excerpts from Winrod's publications that implied he was a fascist. The ministers in turn questioned the origins of Winrod's limitless campaign funds and explained that they feared Winrod was obtaining some of his money from Nazi Germany. The ministers printed a pamphlet to support their claims against Winrod. The pamphlet was compiled by the nine ministers and by twelve other ministers and educators from across the state. The fifteen page pamphlet looked like a scrapbook, with articles from Winrod's many publications pasted on the pages. The pastors and educators quoted articles pertaining to the attacks on Jews, Masons, the Catholic church, and the National Council of Churches.<sup>5</sup>

The pastors and educators made front-page news across Kansas. Reed supported the pastors' attack on Winrod and claimed they had every right

to demand an investigation of Winrod's activities and to publish a pamphlet. Reed stated that a representative should have alliances only to his constituents and saw the pastors' work as evidence that Winrod was inconsistent with the views of the voters of Kansas.<sup>6</sup> The ministers' and educators' attack was not solely responsible for Winrod's ultimate defeat, but as reported in the Topeka Daily Capitol on July 10, "the action of the religious leaders undoubtedly is a serious threat to Doctor Winrod's ability to win in the November (actually the August) election."<sup>7</sup>

In White, Winrod had an enemy that attacked him because he was running against Reed, but the Levand brothers despised Winrod for being Winrod. The Levands attacked Winrod solely because of his anti-semitism. Max M. Levand was the president and general manager of the Wichita Beacon, and his brother John R. was the circulation manager. The Levands used their paper to expose Winrod starting in 1931, when Winrod first began to attack the Jews. The Levands were Jews, and they used all their power to help destroy the man they considered an enemy. Winrod had connected the Levands with the Jewish conspiracy in the Wichita area, and primarily for this reason the Levands took great care in their attack on Winrod. Although the Beacon had many fine writers on its staff at this time, not one article written by one of its writers pertaining to Winrod was printed in the paper during the election. All of the articles that pertained to Winrod were reprinted from outside sources that mainly originated from Topeka, Emporia, and Kansas City. It seemed that the Levands did not want to risk fueling Winrod's campaign by

attacking him with their own material. They may have believed that a flagrant attack on Winrod would have been viewed as only Jewish propaganda against Winrod. By using articles from non-Jewish papers the Levands may have believed they could hurt Winrod more than if they used their own writers and articles.

One example of the material the Levands used was a reprint of an article that appeared in the June 23 Kansas City Journal Post. The article, "Looking Behind Winrod," was printed in the June 25 Beacon and quoted White as he condemned Winrod for his dealings with Nazi Germany. It concluded with White's declaration that the state that produced the Republican Party presidential candidate in 1936 and the current Republican National Chairman in 1938 would be disgraced if Winrod was its candidate for the Senate in 1938. Another example was an article reprinted from the July 9 Kansas City Times: "Not for Kansas" was an editorial that attacked Winrod for having Nazi contacts and for being intolerant of opposing religious and political views.<sup>8</sup> Many more articles appeared from June 30 to July 31 in the Beacon, as the Levands attempted to make certain Winrod did not win the primary.

The Levands kept Winrod from getting favorable attention by hiding any articles that were complimentary to him inside the paper and by displaying articles complimentary to Reed on page one. For instance, on July 8 the ministers came out with their attack on Winrod. The Beacon ran two articles concerning the ministers' and educators' stand. One article titled "Kansas Must Not Go Fascists, Says Pastor's Report" dealt with the charges of Winrod being a Nazi sympathizer and his attacks on

the Catholic church and the National Council of Churches.<sup>9</sup> This article was on page one; the charges were in bold capital letters and darkened type. The other article that appeared on July 8 was titled "Pastors Seek Source of Big Expenditures." This article dealt with the demand that the Dies Committee look into the sources of Winrod's campaign expenditures. It was also on page one along with the pictures of the pastors that were bringing the charges. Winrod's answer to the charges was hidden inside the paper in normal print. On Sunday, July 10, a follow-up article reminded the readers that Winrod was under the threat of being investigated. Although this article contained no new information, it also was on page one.<sup>10</sup> Many other articles appeared in the Beacon that related other attacks on Winrod to the people of Wichita.

The Levands' attack on Winrod made them supporters of Reed. In late June and early July the Beacon supported Reed's candidacy with articles like, "Clyde Reed in Senate Race," "Reed Senate Stock Booms," "Reed to Stand on Platform of Tolerance and Freedom." As August 2 neared, the Beacon stepped up its attack on Winrod, but also increased its support of Reed. The July 18 Beacon printed the article, "Reed Gaining Ground Fast In Senate Race." In this article the Beacon established Reed as the frontrunner in the primary. It said Reed's success resulted from his active campaigning and the truth being revealed about Winrod.<sup>11</sup> In the next edition of the Beacon an article appeared on page seven titled "Reed to Stand on Platform of Tolerance and Freedom." In this article Reed was pictured as a candidate concerned with the fundamental American views of freedom of speech and religion. The Beacon established

that Winrod opposed freedom of religion and speech because he wished his views to be heard and the voices of his opposition silenced.<sup>12</sup> Outside of the great number of pro-Reed articles that appeared in the Beacon, a large number of advertisements for Reed also appeared in the Beacon.

Reed's advertisement campaign in the Beacon began on July 10. All of his ads were full-page, and each featured a picture of Reed. They all claimed that Reed was the best qualified and most capable man for senator. The words "able and experienced" were the two words used most often to describe Reed. After July 10 ads appeared on July 17, 24, and daily from July 27 to August 1. On the other hand, Winrod did not have one ad in the Beacon, probably because he did not pursue space in the Beacon and it definitely was not offered to be sold to him.

Another attacker of Winrod was Republican Party National Chairman John D. M. Hamilton, who attacked Winrod late in the race. He waited until late because he disliked Reed. Hamilton and Reed had battled in 1928 for the Republican gubernatorial nomination, which Reed had won. Hamilton was bitter about this defeat, and with Reed's support of Roosevelt over Landon in 1936, Hamilton's respect for Reed diminished further. Still, by June 22 Hamilton had decided to come out in opposition to Winrod. He believed that his position in the politics of Kansas could sway some votes. In denouncing Winrod, Hamilton did not ask the voters to support Reed, but simply asked them not to vote for Winrod. It would be reasonable to assume that if Reed had been assured victory by July 22, Hamilton would not have announced his opposition to Winrod.

Newspapers across Kansas all treated Hamilton's announcement

differently. The Emporia Gazette ran an article on page one titled, "State Primary Race Enters Home Stretch," with a subtitle of "John Hamilton's Call for Defeat of Winrod Leads the Developments." The article briefly explained Hamilton's stand on the defeat of Winrod.<sup>13</sup> In the Topeka Daily Capital of July 23 an article appeared on page eight titled, "Hamilton Asks Kansas Voters to Beat Winrod." The article reported much the same facts as the article in the Gazette, except that the Capital quoted Winrod's answer to Hamilton's press release.<sup>14</sup> The Kansas City Times and the Wichita Beacon dealt with the announcement in similar fashion by summarizing Hamilton and burying Winrod's reply in the article or inside the paper.

Winrod did come out with a substantial reply to Hamilton after July 23. Winrod claimed that Hamilton was being forced to denounce him by large financial interests in Washington. The article dealing with this accusation in the Gazette was titled "Forced to Denounce Winrod, is Claim." The Gazette ran the article below the fold on page one with it continued on the inside of the paper.<sup>15</sup> In the Times "A Reply to Hamilton" was printed on July 23 on page two. This three-paragraph article did not aid Winrod's cause.<sup>16</sup> The Hamilton attack did not defeat Winrod, but it did add credence to some of the other attacks on Winrod, because Hamilton was the Republican National Chairman.

The other notable attacks on Winrod were by the NAACP, the Wichita Committee for Tolerance, Rev. Samuel G. West, and Alf Landon. The NAACP denounced Winrod on July 19 from its headquarters in Kansas City. It was against Winrod because he had "written, sponsored and

published articles tending to create race hatred against the law abiding colored persons of the state of Kansas and of this nation, and ... he has falsely charged the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People with being a communist organization."<sup>17</sup> Winrod had decided as early as 1933 that the blacks in America and across the world were being used by Jewish-communists to attack established democratic institutions. As a result of Winrod's racial stand, the NAACP considered him a hostile candidate and encouraged the blacks of Kansas not to vote for him. The black vote was not substantial, but it might decide the outcome of a close race.

The Wichita Committee for Tolerance was another group that denounced the candidacy of Winrod, because of his record of intolerance. The spokesman for the Wichita Committee for Tolerance was former U.S. District Court Judge W. D. Jochems. In an article that appeared in the Beacon on July 21, "Gerald Winrod is Denounced in Radio Talk," Jochems explained his position. Jochems cataloged Winrod's record of religious and racial intolerance. A politician must run on his record, said Jochems, and Winrod had been trying to keep his suppressed. Whenever his record was discussed, Winrod claimed that he was being slandered. Jochems argued that mudslinging was bad, but making a candidate run on his record was not mudslinging. Jochems also attacked Winrod's platform of "Preserve Constitutional Democracy." Jochems stated that the First Amendment of the Constitution protects the freedom of religion. Jochems pointed out that Winrod claimed he only attacked bad Jews, Catholics, and Protestants. If this had been the case, Jochems wished to know

why ministers from across the state had denounced Winrod on July 8. Jochems final two points were that Winrod had made fascist and anti-semitic material available to the public through his printing company and that he had been honored by the American Fascist Party as being a loyal, patriotic American. A Senator with these qualifications, Jochems asserted, would not be accepted in Washington.<sup>18</sup>

The Episcopal Rector of St. James Church in Wichita, Rev. Samuel E. West, also spoke out against Winrod. The Kansas City Times reported on July 20 that West had lived a long time in Wichita and had seen Winrod at his worst. West stated that although he was a devout Republican, he would not vote for Winrod in the primary or in the general election. He said Winrod had no political experience and would be lost in Washington. West also pointed out that Winrod had always stayed out of public affairs in Wichita, and he foresaw Winrod concentrating on his own affairs and not those of Kansas if he were elected senator. The most important reason that Winrod would not make a good senator was that his characteristic of religious intolerance would make him an undesirable representative. West believed that the average Kansan did not have such feelings against the Jews; in the end Winrod would tarnish the heritage of Kansas.<sup>19</sup>

Another political influence harmful to Winrod was Landon. Landon seldom spoke against Winrod, but his general reticence aided Reed, thereby hurting Winrod. Landon was the strongest candidate for the senate seat, but he had stated in 1936 that he would never attempt to gain public office again. His popularity in the state gave him the

power to appoint a candidate of his choice and probably have him elected. In remaining quiet and not supporting a candidate, Landon was tacitly supporting Reed. It is reasonable to assume that if Landon would have come forth and supported a candidate, it would have been Knapp, which could have cost Reed much of his support and swung the election to Winrod. By remaining quiet, Landon helped to defeat Winrod. There was one occasion that Landon did attack Winrod indirectly. On July 30, at a bridge dedication, Landon did say that religion and politics must be kept separate, and that intolerance was inexcusable. Many newspapermen took this as an attack on the candidacy of Winrod. Landon has never stated if it was meant in relation to Winrod or just a statement of principals.<sup>20</sup>

It would be impossible to write about all of Winrod's enemies, because his stand on religious and political issues made him an unpopular man. The people and organizations outlined above were by no means the only attackers of Winrod, but they were the ones that were the most responsible for his defeat.

Winrod attempted to answer all the accusations against him. He sought to defuse the accusations and defame the people making them. Winrod had stated that the attack on him was dirty politics, meant solely to discredit him and not at bringing the truth forward. At the beginning of July the connection between Winrod and Nazi Germany was brought forth. Winrod protested, stating that he had changed his view concerning Nazi Germany and Hitler. The attack continued, and Winrod's only recourse was to answer the attack the best he could.

The attack on Winrod was instigated by conservatives within the Republican party and religious figures from across the state. Yet Winrod theorized that the people responsible for the attack were Jewish elements from the east coast. Winrod explained to the voters of Kansas as early as April 21 that he was being attacked by the Jewish financial interests from the east because of his stands against communism and Roosevelt. The Jewish group was making millions of dollars available to the groups attacking Winrod. Winrod thought an audit of all the people attacking him would prove his theory.<sup>21</sup>

The assault on Winrod's character changed his campaign tactic from one of attacking Roosevelt and the New Deal to answering his detractors. Winrod did not address the attack on his candidacy until after the announcement by the ministers and educators from across the state occurred on July 8. The accumulation of this announcement and the assault being made by the conservatives that had met at Emporia on July 1 made it necessary for Winrod to address the accusations instead of dismissing them. In his July 14 address over WIBW and KCKN Winrod began his counterattack. Winrod's address that night was titled "Viewing the Facts" and dealt with the accusations from the pamphlet that the ministers and educators had released on July 8.

Winrod took the time in his address to explain his positions on each of the accusations of campaign finances, anti-semitism, his attacks on the Federal Council of Churches and the Free Masons, and the theory he was a Nazi. Winrod explained that the accusation that he was receiving campaign funds from Germany was a communist lie to defeat him.

He asserted that his funds came from three sources. He used money from subscriptions and advertisements from The Defender, book sales from his bookstore in Wichita, and money contributed by responsible Kansas citizens to fund his campaign. The subscriptions and contributions from The Defender readers paid for his weekly radio addresses, and the sound truck that he used when he campaigned across the state belonged to a rich friend who allowed him to use it.<sup>22</sup>

Concerning the accusation that he was anti-semitic, Winrod maintained that he was opposed to only one group of the Jewish population. He opposed the apostate or atheistic communist Jews. Winrod explained that this group was responsible for the Hidden Hand movement and planned to take over the world. He had a deep respect for the religious Jews, but apostate Jews such as Leon Trotsky and Karl Radek were his enemies. Winrod answered the statement that he was opposed to the Catholics and Protestants by saying that it was an attempt by the communists to split the two religions and make it easier for the world to fall in communist control. Catholics and Protestants would have to stick together if communism was to be defeated.<sup>23</sup>

Winrod did not retreat from his assertion that the Federal Council of Churches was a communist-controlled group. He claimed that the New York-based council made money available to communist groups and distributed communistic material to the public. Winrod furthered his argument against the council by announcing that the American Legion had also condemned the council for its communist leanings. Concerning the Free Masons, Winrod explained that he had never said this group

had communist leanings. The quote that the ministers had used was out of context. In the article that appeared in The Defender of May, 1936, he charged that the Free Masons in Britain were controlled by a Jewish-led communist group and said nothing concerning the Free Masons in America. Winrod charged that this was a cheap attempt by the religious leaders to defame him by creating evidence to support their claims.<sup>24</sup>

Winrod used the greatest amount of the time during his address to disclaim any possible connection between himself and the Nazi movement in the United States. Winrod explained the pro-Nazi articles in The Defender as not being necessarily in harmony with his views. As editor of The Defender, he said, he did have the determination if articles would or would not be printed. He said that because of his busy speaking schedule across Kansas and the Midwest he was often away from Wichita for as much as nine months out of the year. In his absence he did not have the time or the ability to read all of the articles that would be presented in The Defender. As a result, many articles that appeared in The Defender from 1933 to 1937 would not have been printed if he had been able to read them all before-hand. Winrod ended the address by reaffirming his stand against communism and his support for America.<sup>25</sup>

In the two addresses that immediately followed July 14, Winrod attempted to reintroduce the issues that had built a large lead for him in the primary. In the July 21 address, "What's Blocking Recovery," Winrod explained that the administration was inhibiting economic recovery in order to continue the sense of emergency necessary to

establish one-man rule. He again stated that at least a million dollars had entered Kansas for the purpose of ensuring his defeat because of his stand against Roosevelt and communism. The next week Winrod delivered an address titled "Instruments of Power." He again tried to reintroduce the issues that had made him a strong candidate. He stated that there was one issue for the voters to decide in August and November of 1938. That issue was to choose between one-man rule or the continuation of constitutional democracy in the United States. Winrod reiterated his claim that the economy had fallen off since 1933, that the federal bureaucracy was increasing in size and strength, and that the country was incurring a deficit for the first time in over 150 years. Winrod attempted on July 21 and 28 to reintroduce what he saw as the problems that the people of Kansas would have to decide in the elections, but he was not able to defuse the attack that was destroying his chances of victory.<sup>26</sup>

The answers Winrod gave to his critics brought another volley of attacks. After his address on July 14 a number of editorials and articles were written to reintroduce the original charges against him. The address by Judge Jochems was an answer to the excuses that Winrod had given for printing Nazi propaganda in The Defender and also for his explanation concerning his views on good and bad Jews. Jochems was a major figure in the campaign against Winrod after July 14, but the primary figure was White. In an editorial in the Gazette on July 15, White analyzed Winrod's defense of his record. White wrote, "Why does he not say that he is against the bad Methodists, the bad

Congregationalists and the bad Red Headed men?"<sup>27</sup> White was trying to make evident to the voters that Winrod was harboring bad feelings to all Jews, because not all of the bad people in the world were Jews. White was inferring that Winrod was against the Jews because he was anti-semitic. White went one step further as he accused Winrod of being a fascist. White used the example of the Spanish Revolution. In the articles that Winrod had written concerning the revolution, he never once had blamed the fascist leader Francisco Franco for the destruction of the Spanish Catholic Church. Winrod only had blamed the Spanish communists. White further supported his claim by pointing out that Winrod was on the American Vigilante's (a pro-Nazi newspaper) Roll of Honor. Being on the roll did not make Winrod a fascist, but White pointed out that Winrod did not demand to be taken off the roll, which left the impression that he was honored by the act. White implied that Winrod had not justified any of his actions from 1933 to 1937 adequately.<sup>28</sup>

Winrod could not undo the harm the attack had done to his candidacy. In a circular letter on September 8 and a radio broadcast on September 15, Winrod addressed his loss to Reed in the primary on August 2 and the reasons why he lost. After losing Winrod no longer had to be diplomatic to protect votes, and he explained to the public where they had gone wrong. Winrod asserted that he had been defeated by a conspiracy that had originated from the east coast. These conspirators had gone to well-known Kansas Republicans and demanded his defeat. Again he said that eastern Jewish financial interests supported the attack

against him, with over a million dollars being used to defeat him. Winrod claimed that at least \$50,000 of the conspirators' money was used to print and distribute the pamphlet and letters of the preachers and educators during the campaign. He also contended that radio stations and newspapers in Wichita refused to use his advertising because they were paid not to use it. Winrod took the attack on his candidacy as a compliment to himself, but as a disservice to the people of Kansas.<sup>29</sup>

Winrod believed that his attempt to stop the dictatorship of the United States had struck a nerve: "the destroyers (the Jews) knew that I possessed inside information concerning their plot of world revolution," he announced. "They knew I was informed regarding the true nature of the international communist conspiracy to wipe out Christians from the earth. They knew also they could never hope to control me by the power of gold, or otherwise."<sup>30</sup> Winrod's greatest disappointment was that he was not given the chance to prove that he was a fine Christian who only wanted to bring back to federal government the respect that it had before Roosevelt took office.

## CHAPTER FOUR: FOOTNOTES

1. Emporia Gazette, 2 July 1938, p. 1; Kansas City Times, 2 July 1938, p. 1; Topeka Daily Capital, 2 July 1938, Wichita Beacon, 3 July 1938, p. 14.
2. Emporia Gazette, 3 Aug. 1938, p. 4; Wichita Beacon, 28 July 1938, p. 7.
3. Emporia Gazette, 20 July 1938, p. 10.
4. Ibid.
5. Emporia Gazette, 8 July 1938, p. 1; Topeka Daily Capital, 9 July 1938 p. 16; Topeka Daily Capital, 10 July 1938, p. 2B; Wichita Beacon, 8 July 1938, p. 1; Wichita Beacon, 8 July 1938, p. 1.
6. Emporia Gazette, 9 July 1938, p. 1; Kansas City Times, 13 July 1938, p. 6; Wichita Beacon, 9 July 1938, p. 1.
7. Topeka Daily Capital, 10 July 1938, p. 2B.
8. Wichita Beacon, 9 July 1938, p. 6.
9. Wichita Beacon, 8 July 1938, p. 1.
10. Wichita Beacon, 10 July 1938, p. 1A.
11. Wichita Beacon, 18 July 1938, p. 1.
12. Wichita Beacon, 19 July 1938, p. 7.
13. Emporia Gazette, 23 July 1938, p. 1.
14. Topeka Daily Capital, 23 July 1938, p. 8.
15. Emporia Gazette, 25 July 1938, p. 1.
16. Topeka Daily Capital, 16 July 1938, p. 1.
17. Emporia Gazette, 19 July 1938, p. 3.
18. Wichita Beacon, 21 July 1938, p. 8.
19. Kansas City Times, 25 July 1938, p. 1D.

20. Sullivan, p. 87.
21. Topeka Daily Capital, 2 Aug. 1938, p. 14.
22. Topeka Daily Capital, 28 July 1938, p. 3.
23. Ibid.
24. Ibid.
25. Ibid.
26. Topeka Daily Capital, 28 July 1938, p. 14; Topeka Daily Capital,  
29 July 1938, p. 2.
27. Emporia Gazette, 15 July 1938, p. 4.
28. Emporia Gazette, 15 July 1938, p. 4.
29. Topeka Daily Capital, 28 July 1938, p. 14.
30. Emporia Gazette, 26 Jan. 1938, p. 4.

## Chapter Five: Results and Conclusions

Clyde Reed won the primary easily over Knapp, Winrod, and Fisher. He polled 104,918 votes to Knapp's 64,068, Winrod's 53,149, and Fisher's 26,034.<sup>1</sup> Winrod had failed primarily because of the attack on his character that he could not repudiate, while Fisher and Knapp suffered from the inability to become recognized statewide contenders.

Reed was popular across the whole state, but was particularly popular in the northern half (see fig. 1, p. 80). In the northeast Reed won seventeen of the nineteen counties, with Winrod claiming victories in Jefferson and Wabaunsee Counties. Of the seventeen counties where Reed polled a majority, he carried eight by margins of two-to-one over his nearest competitor. In north-central Kansas the situation was similar. Reed won all but Clay and Cloud Counties, and in seven counties Reed won by two-to-one margins. In the northwest Reed was dominant. He claimed victory in all the eighteen counties, two by margins of two-to-one.

In the southern half of the state Reed had more competition. In the southeast he had to contend with Knapp. Both Knapp and Reed came from the area. Reed was popular in the Parsons area, and Knapp stronger near Coffeyville. Of the fifteen counties in the southeast, Knapp claimed four, Winrod one, and Reed ten. One of Knapp's county victories and two of Reed's were by two-to-one-margins. In south-central Kansas Reed was again dominant. Although this was Winrod's home region, Reed had saturated the area with an intense advertising campaign and had obtained the exclusive use of the radio system in the Wichita area.



Of the twelve counties, Reed claimed victories in ten, with Knapp and Winrod each claiming one. Six of Reed's county victories were by two-to-one margins. In the southwest Reed had trouble with Fisher. Fisher had been popular in the Liberal, Kansas, area as a result of his work for the Methodist church earlier in the decade. Fisher claimed fifteen of the twenty-eight counties and made southwest Kansas the only section of the state where Reed could not win at least half of the counties. This showing by Fisher had little broader effect. He won only one of the counties by a two-to-one margin over Reed.

The difference in population from county to county in Kansas made the number of counties won by that candidate inconclusive in regard to the final vote in the primary. But the strengths and weaknesses of the candidates are evident in the number of counties they carried in specific areas. The regional pattern of voting demonstrated that Fisher and Knapp were strong only in their respective home areas. Winrod, on the other hand, had no area in which he was dominant. In northeastern Kansas he did show some strength, but in south-central Kansas Winrod was badly defeated by Reed. Reed proved to be the popular candidate because his name was well-known across the state from his years as Governor. Over the state Reed won the plurality of votes in seventy-eight counties, Knapp in seven, Fisher in fifteen, and Winrod in five. Winrod had only managed to claim victory in Clay, Jefferson, Kingman, Wabaunsee, and Woodson Counties.

Reed followed his victory in the primary with an easy victory over the Democratic incumbent McGill. Reed sustained his deliberate campaign

through to the general election, as he continued to attack McGill's rubber-stamp policy and his inability to aid the farmer of Kansas with the Polk-McGill (Farm) Bill. Reed's victory owed much to the loss of respect that the Roosevelt administration had been experiencing in Kansas and the disgust many Kansans had for the inability of McGill to be independent of the administration.

The distaste for McGill resulted especially from two episodes that occurred during 1937 and 1938. The first was the attempted courtpacking scheme in 1937. McGill, as a member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, was in a position to oppose Roosevelt, but he did not do so. McGill's inability to recognize this harmful campaign issue caused him much trouble in the 1938 election. In the same year another problem for McGill occurred. Throughout the 1938 Congress McGill battled to have the Polk-McGill (Farm) Bill passed. The bill would have provided price supports and low-interest loans for farmers. The bill was passed, but the Department of Agriculture's inefficiency in implementing the provisions of the bill caused many farmers in Kansas to doubt that McGill was sincere in his effort to aid them. Reed often took the opportunity to attack McGill on both these issues, and McGill was forced onto the defensive.<sup>2</sup>

McGill had other problems in that he was not a World War I veteran, had not attended one of the states' larger colleges, and was a poor public speaker. Moreover, McGill lacked the unanimous support of his own party. Guy T. Helvering and Harry Woodring were two Kansans that held important jobs in Roosevelt's administration. The unusual situation

was that neither of the two men was very fond of McGill. McGill had a reputation for being a "lone wolf" conservative in the liberal Democratic party. As a result of his conservative leanings, many Kansas Democrats viewed McGill as expendable. Between his lack of support from the Democrats and his connection with the increasingly unpopular Roosevelt administration, McGill had little chance of victory in the general election.

Reed, sixty-seven when he took office, quickly became a thorn in many politicians' sides. His qualities of making decisions based on what he thought was best despite party lines made him unpopular with many Republicans. Reed supported many of Roosevelt's proposals, but he kept his campaign promise by watching all of the President's spending proposals closely. Reed supported the National Transportation Act in 1939, favored aiding the Allies before 1940, and supported Roosevelt's Lend-Lease policy for Great Britain after the war had begun. He backed the administration in these cases because he felt they were bi-partisan issues.<sup>3</sup>

On occasion Reed fought the President. In April, 1940, Roosevelt had proposed that eight new federal judgeships be created. Reed contended that the proposal by the President was wasteful and unnecessary, and he labored in the Senate to defeat the proposal. Reed's greatest fight in the Senate dealt with the increase of railroad freight rates. In February, 1940, Reed took a stand against "unwarranted" increases by the roads. Reed's doctrine was that if the country gave in to the railroad's demands in 1940, the roads would soon run the country the way

they had from 1890 to 1920. Reed planned to keep the railroads from reestablishing themselves as the power base of the country. In his decade of service in the Senate, Reed was successful in moderating railroad demands for increases in freight rates. Reed won reelection in 1944 over the Democrat Thomas Hill. After more than ten years in the Senate, Reed suffered a fatal heart attack on November 8, 1949, at his home in Parsons. Reed had done a commendable job in the United States Senate, despite being a questionable candidate in 1938.<sup>4</sup> Reed was described by Sen. Robert Taft of Ohio as "one of the most able and determined leaders" in the United States.<sup>5</sup>

The remaining candidates continued their disparate careers after the primary, with Winrod again the most controversial. Winrod accepted the outcome of the election as the true feelings of the people of Kansas and gave the entire Republican ticket his support, except for the nomination of Payne Ratner for Governor. Winrod explained that Ratner had changed his mind too often in the campaign for Winrod to feel confident in Ratner's ability to run the state. Winrod did not mention that Ratner being a Jew had anything to do with his stand against him. Not long after the completion of the primary election, Winrod resumed his campaigns against Jews and communists. He continued to contend through The Defender and public speaking engagements that the Jews were behind the world communist conspiracy and that Roosevelt was a puppet of the Jewish financial interests. Winrod took his attack one step further after 1938, announcing that all the spies that were giving American secrets to the Soviets were Jews.<sup>6</sup>

The Winrod household had some changes in 1940. On June 20 Winrod's wife sued him for divorce because she feared for the safety of herself and her children. In a newspaper interview Mrs. Winrod explained that her husband had become convinced that there was a plot by the government to kill him and that he had armed himself against this plot. The Winrods' divorce was granted on June 19, 1941, with Mrs. Winrod receiving custody of the couple's two children. An unusual episode occurred in 1942 when the Winrods remarried and Mrs. Winrod retracted all the claims she had made in 1940.<sup>7</sup>

On July 23, 1942, another episode in Winrod's life began. Winrod and twenty-seven other men were indicted by a federal grand jury under the Espionage Act of 1917 and the Smith Act of 1940. Many commentators believed Roosevelt was trying to make an example of Winrod and show to the rest of his political enemies what their destiny could be. Winrod entered a plea of "not guilty." The July 23 indictment was dismissed as was a similar indictment of January 4, 1943, because of lack of evidence. A third indictment, filed on January 3, 1944, charged the defendants (among them Winrod) with being confederated with the Nazi movement in the United States and attempting to undermine the United States government and the American military effort in World War II.<sup>8</sup>

On April 17, 1944, the mass sedition trial began before Judge Edward C. Eicher in Washington, D.C. Both Eicher, and the prosecutor, O. John Rogge, were appointed by Roosevelt, which lent credence to Winrod's supporters' claims that Roosevelt was behind the episode. On May 16 Rogge opened his remarks by claiming that the defendants were creating

a world-wide Nazi conspiracy to aid Germany in winning the war. The trial received a great deal of national attention in the beginning, but as it dragged on for over eight months, the notoriety diminished. The trial ended on November 30 because of the sudden death of Judge Eicher. All charges against the defendants were dropped on June 5, 1947, and the mass sedition trial had ended without a single person sentenced to prison. Many people explained the trial as an example of the war hysteria that had gripped the nation and compared it to the massive relocation of Japanese-Americans to the interior of the United States. Winrod blamed the entire affair on eastern Jewish financial interests that wished to see him and other patriots out of their way so they could control the United States. Other Winrod supporters attributed the trial to an attempt by Roosevelt to have his enemies silenced by either imprisonment or the threat of imprisonment.<sup>9</sup>

Winrod continued to preach his views to the people of the Wichita area until his death. Winrod had not trusted doctors since his mother had suffered from the treatments she had received for cancer. He rarely visited a doctor for his health, and he had few good things to say about the medical profession. He died on November 11, 1957, of Asian flu, an illness that could have been treated easily with the medical methods of the day.<sup>10</sup>

Fisher and Knapp kept low profiles after the primary. Fisher retired from active ministerial work in 1940 and became a farmer and civic worker in Wichita. He lived with his second wife, Lola Lowter, in Wichita until his death on September 22, 1951. Knapp remained active in public

life after 1938, but never again sought elective office. From 1942 to 1945 Knapp was the Montgomery County Deputy Attorney. From 1945 until his death on November 16, 1966, he practiced law in Coffeyville with his son and partner Charles Knapp.<sup>11</sup>

The Republican senatorial primary of 1938 had been bitter and divisive. The attack on Winrod had a devastating effect on his chances of victory. Winrod seemed to be the popular choice for the primary nomination, but after the exposure of Winrod's record, his lead diminished quickly. A person seeking public office must be prepared to run on his record, and Winrod could not run far on his, Winrod then seized upon scapegoats. His obsessive declaration that his troubles were the result of a Jewish-communist plot drove many voters to doubt his ability to function in Washington. Winrod's aloofness and his alienation even from the conservative faction of the party contributed greatly to his defeat.

Another condition that assisted Reed's victory was that Winrod could not carry the Sedgwick county area. The reason why he could not carry south-central Kansas was that the media in the area totally refused to aid him in his campaign. Wichita radio stations would not carry his weekly radio broadcasts, and the Wichita newspapers would not print any of his political advertisements. In 1938 this type of political prejudice was common and not against the law. Despite these outward examples of prejudice, Winrod never offered to attack the beneficiary of it, Reed. Winrod only retaliated against the people whom he believed responsible for the actions. The major problem with Winrod's counter-

attack was that it was hard for him to explain his actions from 1933-1937, except by telling the truth that he was anti-semitic and had supported Hitler.

Fisher and Knapp were not major figures in the primary. Fisher was not familiar enough to have a legitimate chance at victory. It would have been much wiser for Fisher to have run for the House of Representatives from western Kansas, rather than trying to win in a statewide senatorial race. Knapp finished second behind Reed, but the final returns were misleading. If the election had been held in the middle of July, Knapp probably would have finished no better than third.

The answer to Winrod's charge that Fisher's sole purpose for running was to destroy Winrod's chances for victory is that no evidence exists that the campaign of Fisher hurt Winrod. In south-central Kansas, Winrod should have been strong. The returns from the twelve counties in south-central Kansas showed that Reed was the people's choice. Winrod and Knapp each won one county, with Reed winning the remaining ten. Only in Marion and Sedgwick counties did the number of votes for Fisher and Winrod exceed the number for Reed. In Rice county again the Fisher-and-Winrod total was less than the vote for the winner, Knapp.

Fisher's stronghold was in southwestern Kansas, where he had a following because of his work for the Methodist church during the early years of the Depression. If Fisher had not run, southwestern Kansas might have voted similarly to northwestern Kansas. With Knapp and Winrod winning only nominal support in the west, then without Fisher in the primary, Reed would have been able to capture the entire western third

of the state without competition. In this sense the candidacy of Fisher actually harmed Reed more than it did Winrod.

Whereas the Fisher candidacy harmed Reed, the Winrod candidacy actually helped Reed. Reed might have lost had it not been for the Winrod candidacy. Reed had many enemies in the Republican Party, and many of these conservatives favored Knapp. Knapp was a more acceptable candidate because he had been a loyal party member through good and bad times. Knapp also expressed the values of the pro-business and conservative faction of the party, while Reed was pro-consumer and liberal.

The problem the party elite had in 1938 was that the Republican Party members, not the party hierarchy, would decide who would represent the party in the general election. With the entrance of Winrod into the election, the Republican hierarchy continued to favor Knapp, but by mid-June Winrod had become the apparent frontrunner in the election, and some action had to be taken. Reed was seen as the candidate with the best chance of defeating Winrod. Intra-party differences had to be set aside to assure that Winrod would not win the election.

By July the first goal of the Republican Party leadership was to defeat Winrod. This attempt went so far that in mid-July some Republicans attempted to persuade both Knapp and Fisher to withdraw from the race and swing their support for Reed. Both candidates refused, but other sources of support sprang up for Reed. The example of the support given to Reed by Hamilton was obvious, but a type of silent support also occurred. Reed had been criticized by the conservative factions of the party on his record as governor. This criticism was muted by the threat

of Winrod. If Winrod had not run for the senate, the attack on Reed would have continued and intensified. Without the presence of Winrod, Reed would have had to justify his political record more and would have not been able to run such a successful campaign.

In the 1938 Republican senatorial primary, many different political factions in the Republican party were fighting to control the outcome of the election, and in the end a coalition of the two major factions was necessary to defeat a popular minority candidate. Knapp and Fisher represented the conservative right of the party, Reed the liberal wing, and Winrod the radical right. A coalition of the conservative and liberal factions was necessary to ensure the defeat of Winrod. Winrod was most responsible for the controversy in the election. He had the questionable background of anti-semitism and fascist doctrine. Winrod's introduction into the primary made it one of the more unusual and interesting primaries in the history of the state.

## CHAPTER FIVE: FOOTNOTES

1. Kansas, Secretary of State, Thirty-first Biennial Report of the Secretary of State, 1937-1938, (Topeka: State Printing Office, 1938), p. 7.

2. Donald R. McCoy, "Senator George S. McGill and the Election of 1938," Kansas History, 4 (Spring 1981), 5-7.

3. Kansas: The First Century, (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, Inc., 1956), pp. 215-16; Topeka State Journal, 27 Jan. 1939, Kansas State Historical Society Library.

4. Topeka Daily Capital, 6 Feb. 1942; Topeka Daily Capital, 9 Nov. 1949; Topeka State Journal, 12 June 1942; Topeka State Journal, 6 Aug. 1942, all at the Kansas State Historical Society Library.

5. Kansas: The First Century, p. 213.

6. Larry B. Sullivan, "Gerald B. Winrod," (n. pub. MA thesis, Fort Hays State University, 1967), p. 39; Gerald B. Winrod, "Letter to Voters. . .," 5 Nov. 1938, Kansas State Historical Society Library.

7. G. H. Montgomery, Gerald Burton Winrod. Defender of the Faith. (Wichita: Mermont Publishing, 1965), pp. 60-62.

8. Ibid., pp. 63-77; Clifford R. Hope, Jr., "Strident Voices in Kansas Between the Wars," Kansas History, 2 (Spring 1979), p. 58.

9. Montgomery, p. 63; Hope, p. 58.

10. Hope, p. 59.

11. Kansas: The First Century, p. 559.

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