The presidential election of 1864 was characterized by a persistent and strong movement within Lincoln's own party to replace him with a candidate of what were regarded to be more acceptable views. In the most cursory review of this disaffection within the ranks of the Republican or Union party one cannot help noting that many Ohioans were actively working to foster the movement. Senators John Sherman and Benjamin Franklin Wade were in the forefront, and they were ably assisted by James Abram Garfield, James M. Ashley, Rufus P. Spalding, Robert C. Schenck, John A. Bingham, and Whitelaw Reid, plus many others whose names will be made known during the course of the narrative. The man whom these leaders desired to substitute in Lincoln's place was another Ohioan, Secretary of the Treasury Salmon Portland Chase. The history of the movement to replace Lincoln as a candidate in 1864, therefore, reveals that it was directed to a large extent by Ohioans for the purpose of placing another resident of that state in the White House. It is the intent of this paper to describe the role played by Buckeye Republican leaders in the opposition to the renomination of Abraham Lincoln.

To understand why there was such opposition to the President's claims for renomination one must examine before-
hand the background of the Republican party. Republicanism was at its inception a sectional, almost entirely northern movement, and it was composed of many diverse groups. Lincoln's election in 1860 was due to the support given him by anti-slavery Whigs and Abolitionists, ranging in shade from those who wanted to end slavery to those who wished merely to check its expansion, naturalized German-Americans, Know-Nothings, disgruntled Democrats in opposition to their own party for reasons varying from personal to fanatical, protectionists, free-traders, machine politicians with their eyes on the main chance, plus many others so numerous they defy classification.

These heterogeneous elements presented an equally kaleidoscopic variety of issues. In 1860 the issue in the far West was the railroad and the overland mail. In Pennsylvania and New Jersey the tariff was the issue, and in New York and New England it was Rum-Romanism, and Americanism, with opposition to slavery extension also included. In the Old Northwest it was the homestead issue and opposition to slavery extension which provided the grist for the political mill. The paramount issue was, of course, if one takes a bird's eye view of the whole scene, opposition to the extension of slavery; not so much because it was ethically wrong, but because as an issue it was psychologically good.

The party was held together by a common desire to get into office, the anti-slavery issue, and a third nexus was found in the fact that most of the elements of the party believed to some degree in the social ideology of free capitalism, which was seeking at that time to control the nation politically.

Such a conglomerate party might have remained united during a peaceful period, but the war and its problems proved to be the catalyst necessary to drive the component elements asunder. The gradually widening rifts were recognizable as early as 1860, and the party began to split into a right and left wing.¹

The President represented the moderate wing of the party whose aim was to fight the war for the sole purpose of saving the Union. Regarding the institution of slavery Lincoln and his friends preferred gradual, compensated emanci-

pation followed by possible colonization. In their opinion slavery was morally wrong and would probably die as a result of the war, but they refused to tamper with it unless its abolition would directly influence the salvation of the Union. They did not feel that victory should be followed by the subjection of the South. The radicals in the party believed that the South should be made to suffer as a just retribution for its sins, but the moderates were willing to deal fairly with the vanquished.

In opposition to the moderates stood a powerful faction which lost no time in applying the thumb screws to the hapless President. These were the men whom John Hay, a dilettante student of the French Revolution, called "Jacobins," a name which was used interchangeably with "Radicals." This was, however, a complete misnomer, for if one judges them on the basis of their program, a better sobriquet might have been Reactionaries or Bourbons. James G. Randall calls them "Vindictives," a term which in this particular case is quite descriptive. ²

These Vindictives were led by club footed, acidulous Thaddeus Stevens, congressional representative from the Keystone state whose rancor helped launch the nation on the unfortunate marathon of reconstruction. Another leader in this group was pompous, prolix orator Senator Charles Sumner of Massachusetts a vigorous castigator of the slave owning oligarchs. The vulgar Senator Zachariah Chandler of Michigan added his querulous disposition to the group. The last member of this quadrumvirate was Ohio's Senator Benjamin F. Wade, who was blessed with the name of a man known for his moderation but unfortunately lacking that quality himself; known as "Bluff Ben" he was an inveterate foe of Lincoln from his inauguration till the assassin's bullet struck. These four leaders were ably assisted by a coterie of lesser luminaries, and together they sought to carry out their program through the Committee on the Conduct of the War, which T. Harry Williams described as "the spearhead of the radical drive against the administration."³

The harassed President, encumbered with the multifarious

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³ T. Harry Williams, *op. cit.*, p. 64.
problems of conducting the war, sought to restrain the radicals within the bounds of what seemed to him to be sound policy. His wisdom, statesmanship, and patriotism were instantly questioned and the extremists organized numerous movements against him to prevent his renomination.

What policies did these Vindictives represent which led them to feel such hostility toward Lincoln? In the first place, they distrusted Lincoln's slowness, his tolerance, and suspected his loyalty to the party especially when it became known that he once offered to step aside and make way for the Democrat leader Horatio Seymour in 1864. Secondly, there was a point of variance over the Negro. In the radicals' opinion slavery was at the root of the conflict and its abolition was a vital necessity. Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation in 1862 was regarded by them as a half-way measure at best, and their opposition to him increased as they sought to override what they felt was his inertia or stupidity. Nothing short of immediate emancipation would satisfy them (They never seemed to realize that this was impossible as long as the southern armies stood intact). They also wanted the confiscation of so-called "rebel" property and the employment of Negro troops. As part of their long range program they favored the enfranchisement of the Negro in the hope that by this means Republican political and economic control could be saddled upon the South after the war. Few humanitarian impulses animated these men; rather their main inspirations came from a blind partisanship and a preference for repression which blighted even their salutary opposition to slavery. Their unenlightened policies were to bear fruit in the tragic years of reconstruction.

In finding a man with the necessary qualifications to replace Lincoln the majority of the radicals turned to Salmon Portland Chase. Chase was born in 1808 in New Hampshire and throughout his life he was destined to serve his country in many important positions and perform many noteworthy services. He filled in succession the posts of senator, governor, cabinet member, and finally chief justice, but his heart and soul were bent upon achieving the presidency. He remained until his death a man of unbounded ambitions, supremely confident in his transcendent ability to solve any problem and handle any emergency. Chase was always the quintessence of cold dignity and reservation; the type of man who was admired and respected but never loved as was Lincoln.
He was vain, pompous, conceited, but on several occasions he also proved that he was a man of fortitude, such as the time he stood alone and defied a howling mob which was bent on lynching James G. Birney, and again as chief justice when in his superb dignity he faced Thad Stevens and the radicals who were after Johnson's scalp.

Shortly after his graduation from Dartmouth he moved in 1830 to Cincinnati where he imbibed deeply in the anti-slavery spirit of the Old Northwest. In 1841 he joined forces with Birney's new Liberty Party, and in 1852 went to Washington as a senator. Three years later he began the first of two terms as governor of the Buckeye state, the first Republican to hold this seat of honor. As the election of 1860 drew near it was generally felt that either Seward or Chase would be nominated by the Republicans, and Chase entered the convention endorsed by the Ohio State Republican Convention, but there was a growing feeling among the delegates at Chicago that he could not carry his own state. Also Chase like Seward was marked as a radical anti-slavery man and so the convention turned to the lesser known Lincoln. With the Railsplitter safely ensconced in the White House, Chase had to be content with the secretoryship of the treasury, but his dreams were always centered upon the fulfillment of his great ambition.

Chase had hardly taken up the duties of his department when he became thoroughly convinced that Lincoln was unfit for the position in which fortune had apparently accidently placed him. Almost at once there began to appear in Chase's voluminous correspondence some snide, supercilious remarks against the efficiency of the administration and the ability of the chief executive. The freshet of benevolent contempt which flowed steadily through his letters increased as the election year approached. "The administration cannot continue as it is..." was the considered opinion which he repeated on several occasions. The executive branch, he constantly averred, was merely a collection of uncoordinated departments.

Since he was entirely convinced that the administration under Lincoln was merely a collection of departments, he

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began to look about for someone who could provide the necessary leadership and cohesion. His quest did not carry him very far afield; modesty did not constrain him from naming himself as the man. "I could administer the government of this country..." he candidly admitted, "so as to secure and imperdibilize our institutions and create a party... which would guarantee a succession of successful administrations."5

With complete guilelessness Chase often wrote that he was not anxious to be regarded as the man destined to be Lincoln's successor but was "quite willing to leave that question to the decision of those who agree in thinking that some such man should be chosen."6 Again he said, "As far as the Presidency is concerned, I must leave that wholly to the people..."7 For anyone who might raise the otherwise embarrassing question as to how he as a member of Lincoln's cabinet could work against the President, Chase had a ready answer to rationalize his position. "If I were controlled by mere personal sentiments I should prefer the re-election of Mr. Lincoln to any other man," he once admitted magnanimously, and then he went on to show that his opposition to Lincoln was prompted by the fact that he doubted the "expediency of re-electing anybody" and that "a man of different qualities from those of the President will be needed for the next four years..."8 Since January 1862, Chase had been working to convince important political leaders that he was the man. Chase's clandestine machinations for the presidency did not escape the discerning eye of Secretary of the Navy Gideon Welles who took the secretary's measure as a man of "... craving aspiration... inordinate ambition... intense selfishness... and considerable vanity." Welles noted that "Chase tries to have it thought that he is indifferent and scarcely cognizant of what is doing in his behalf,

5 Salmon Chase to Joshua Leavitt, October 7, 1863, Chase MSS (Pennsylvania Historical Society).
7 Salmon Chase to Thomas Heaton, January 28, 1864, quoted in Robert Warden, op. cit., p. 565.
8 Salmon Chase to William Sprague, November 26, 1863, quoted in J. W. Schuckers, op. cit., p. 494.
but no one of his partisans is so well posted as Chase himself."

In all fairness to Chase it must be noted that his interest in the presidency did not interfere with the working efficiency of his department for as secretary of the treasury Chase did a splendid job and won the approbation of the American people.

Chase’s position in the treasury does not fall within the scope of this present writing except as it was used to further his interests in obtaining the presidential nomination. For anyone seeking to win this prize the control of the treasury department would naturally prove to be of considerable value. The department had in the last year of the war a patronage of nearly 15,000 places, and James G. Blaine later noted that this was the magnet which drew most of Lincoln’s opponents to Chase.

Chase, therefore, became the rallying point for the majority of the Vindictives. It must not be concluded, however, that this was due solely to the fact that he could gratify their insatiable appetite for patronage. Salmon Chase’s greatest asset was the fact that he agreed completely with the policies which the radical clique was attempting to force Lincoln to adopt. In Chase’s opinion it was utterly foolish to think of winning the war while permitting slavery to continue. “The government,” he asserted, would fail “in the attempt to put down the rebellion with the left hand while supporting slavery with the right hand.” This view was expressed several months before Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation was issued. The following year, when the problem of reconstruction appeared for consideration, Chase proved once again that his opinions were in tune with the radicals’. The work of emancipation must not be undone, Chase maintained, and to make certain of this “each rebel state as it comes back may be received whenever by a fundamental provision incorporated in its constitution it shall have recognized the ac-

12 Cyrus Grosvenor (quoting Chase) to Salmon Chase, July 28, 1862, Chase MSS (Library of Congress).
tual freedom established by the Proclamation..." On a second occasion in 1863 he informed his friend Daniel S. Dickinson and son-in-law William Sprague that he believed democracy was based on the equal rights of all men; and that consequently the southern states would have to admit the absolute freedom of the Negroes. His attitude on reconstruction, he further told them, was that participation in the new governments was to be limited to only those who were willing to recognize emancipation as an accomplished fact and give reasonable guarantees against future secession. The radicals desired Lincoln to reorganize his cabinet and remove all blundering, conservative, Democratic advisors and generals. Chase also agreed with them on this point, for he once wrote that the President's gravest error was "... that he has made excuses for blunders... instead of dismissing the officers who made them...".

Thus, the Vindictives who refused to make any concessions to the South as a basis for peace and demanded that slavery must be abolished without condition, the Negro accorded his full share of social and political rights, and that the terms for readmission into the Union should be dictated by Congress, found a perfect man in Salmon Portland Chase. He agreed wholeheartedly with their program, he had extensive patronage, popular support, the friendship of many important radical leaders, and he needed no encouragement to induce him to run.

In considering Chase's quest for the presidency the first question to be considered is whether or not he used his position in the treasury to further his ambitions. It may be noted in passing that Chase's portrait on the reverse side of the Greenbacks gave him a great deal of publicity without cost, but one cannot blame Chase entirely for this situation. The main problem is whether he used his patronage to erect a machine for himself. On this important matter we have his own testimony that such was not the case. When some-

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13 Salmon Chase to James A. Stevens, July 23, 1863, Chase MSS (Library of Congress).

14 Salmon Chase to Daniel S. Dickinson, November 18, 1863; to William Sprague, November 18, 1863, Chase MSS (Pennsylvania Historical Society).

15 Salmon Chase to E. D. Keyes, August 1, 1862; to (?), August 5, 1862, Chase MSS. (Pennsylvania Historical Society).
one implored him once for an appointment on the ground that it would help his campaign for the presidency, Chase wrote with much repugnance, "I should despise myself if I felt capable of appointing or removing a man for the sake of the Presidency." During August 1863, when Chase was very interested in winning support among leading politicians for his presidential ambitions, John Covode, one of his friends in Pennsylvania, suggested to him that he might gain Governor Curtin's favor with a few treasury appointments. At that moment Curtin was seeking re-election, and Covode pointed out that he could scarcely refuse such an offer. It would have been politically unwise for Chase to have aligned himself so closely with Curtin who represented a faction which many felt would go down to defeat in the canvass, so he made no offer of patronage, but he did urge Covode to support the governor for the sake of the party. Later he wrote in his diary, "These votes must be entirely of a public nature, for I certainly would never consent to make pledges as to appointment to office." Whether he refused Covode's suggestion because using patronage for his own selfish ends was repugnant to him, or whether he refused because of the uncertainty of Curtin's re-election must be left to conjecture.

On another occasion Chase received a letter from Jacob Freese, editor of the State Gazette and Republican of Trenton, New Jersey, in which he suggested that Chase should make him collector of revenue in that state. Freese promised that if the secretary gratified his wish he would make it his business to force all the treasury officials to support his presidential aspirations. Chase never gave him an office, but whether this was due to his reluctance to use his patronage for partisan purposes or to the fact that Freese's paper was known to be hostile would be a debatable point.

To Attorney General Edward Bates there was never the slightest doubt that Chase used his position as dispenser of treasury patronage to benefit his own cause. Bates noted in his diary, "I'm afraid Mr. Chase's head is turned by his

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17 Ibid., pp. 254-255; Donnal V. Smith, Chase and Civil War Politics (Columbus, Ohio, 1931), pp. 76-77.
18 Jacob Freese to Salmon Chase, December 18, 1863; January 23, 1864, Chase MSS. (Library of Congress).
eagerness in pursuit of the presidency. For a long time back he has been filling all the offices in his own vast patronage with extreme partisans and contrives also to fill many vacancies properly belonging to other departments.”

Chase’s protestations of innocence in the matter of using his patronage power to help his own cause seem somewhat hollow. No politician in Washington was ever more concerned over the matter of the disposal of offices. Almost the first thing he did after taking office was to tell William Seward that in view of the fact Ohio had one eighth of the population of the nation it should have a like percentage of the total offices. He had computed Ohio’s fair share of the state department spoils at 269 places. In filling his own department he carefully provided for his friends, and to those who accused him of favoritism he replied, “in making appointments my rule always has been to give preference to political friends, except in cases where peculiar fitness and talents made the preference of a political opponent a public duty.”

In checking over his lists of appointments it is difficult to discover a political opponent. If Chase was willing to take care of his friends, it does not seem illogical that he made his appointments with the idea that they might help him gain the presidency. Chase, however, always protested innocence. He had a remarkable faculty for making his actions seem irreproachable; at least in his own mind he seemed never to entertain a doubt of the purity of his motives. He was the victim of a kind of self delusion; all his aspersions against Lincoln, his clandestine preparations for becoming a rival presidential candidate were in his mind actions entirely above condemnation. He could not understand anyone who questioned the purity of his actions. It was with an air of pitiable hurt pride that he wrote in May, 1864, when his presidential hopes were finally laid bare and dilacerated by Lincoln’s friends, “Why I should thus be incessantly pursued with calumny I do not understand. I am in nobody’s way.

20 Salmon Chase to William Seward, March 20, 1861, Chase MSS (Pennsylvania Historical Society).
21 Salmon Chase to John Roberts, May 31, 1861, Chase MSS (Pennsylvania Historical Society).
Unless, perhaps, in the way of some who would like to make money out of the distresses of the country."  

Whether Chase made his appointments to foster his presidential hopes can be considered a moot question, but one fact is irrefutable: it was the treasury appointees who did most to keep his chances alive. Of Chase's most active managers the following were only a few who held appointments from his department: Thomas Heaton, Mark Howard, William Mellen, George Denison, Richard C. Parsons, Joseph Geiger, and James A. Briggs. Gideon Welles attested to the powerful support given Chase by the treasury agents when he wrote in his diary that the secretary intended to press "his pretensions as a candidate, and much of the Treasury machinery and the special agencies have that end in view." Bluff Ben Wade heard from a friend in Ohio that "a great effort is now being made in this state in the interests of Mr. Chase for the next Presidency. Those holding positions under him are doing their very best." Throughout the entire North, into the far West, down the Mississippi into conquered Louisiana, into the custom houses of the nation spread a host of his genuflecting agents surreptitiously working to advance Salmon Chase's ambitions for the presidency. Yet Chase asked posterity to believe, in spite of all this, that he never appointed or removed a man for the sake of the presidency.

Chase was popular among the radicals because he was one of them on the matter of policies and also possessed an extensive patronage. These two qualifications, however, were not enough to assure him support unless he could prove to them that his vote getting appeal equalled Lincoln's. Chase's hope of receiving more than a token support was futile until he could do this. His attraction to the radical clique was directly proportional to the popular support given him, and since his following among the voters was only moderate his support from the radicals was actually rather illusory. He received the proffered affections and hollow pledges of many

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22 Salmon Chase to Aaron Herrick, May (?), 1864, Chase MSS (Library of Congress).
23 Gideon Welles, Diary, I, 525.
24 S. S. Osborn to Benjamin Wade, February 8, 1864, Wade MSS (Library of Congress).
minor political bosses, editors, and radical spokesmen, but the political dry flies Chase cast upon the waters failed to lure up from the depths the biggest prizes: Thad Stevens, Benjamin Wade, and the rest. This game was too wary to commit itself without first ascertaining Chase's real position among the voters.

Chase actually overrated his support. This is apparent from a letter he wrote to one of his Ohio well-wishers early in 1864 in which he said he was gratified by the preference many showed for his candidature "for those who express it are generally men of great weight, and high character, and independent judgment." Chase committed two basic errors in estimating his position: first, he assumed that these expressions of preference in his favor were shared by the American voters; and second, he erred in assuming that his support came from "men of great weight." Actually as James K. Hosmer wrote, "He had no strength with the people, nor was there a single public man of prominence who actively favored his candidacy." Chase received many letters of encouragement and hollow platitudes from some of the national leaders, but none of these men were willing to go to the point of offering him public support. Their language remained equivocal; and well it should have been, for these men were intent upon learning the popular reaction to Chase's boom before committing themselves. As long as Lincoln remained the obvious popular choice there was little likelihood that Chase's candidacy would receive the wholehearted support of the party leaders.

Chase, however, remained a threat to Lincoln until March, 1864. The presidential boom which he had planned so assiduously since 1862 assumed rather formidable proportions during and shortly after the state elections of 1863, and it is necessary to dwell for a while on Chase's activities during that canvass.

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26 Salmon Chase to Flamen Ball, February 2, 1864, Chase MSS (Pennsylvania Historical Society).

27 James K. Hosmer, Outcome of the Civil War (New York, 1907), p. 147.

28 Letters to Salmon Chase from Joshua Giddings, January 13, 1864; L. B. Clark, November 5, 1863, Chase MSS (Pennsylvania Historical Society). Letters to Salmon Chase from Cassius M. Clay, March 23, 1863; George Opdyke, August 26, 1863; James Briggs, November 2, 1863; Senator John Conness, October 24, 1863, Chase MSS (Library of Congress).
During the canvass Chase personally visited Ohio, Indiana, and Maryland, and permitted his subordinates, Joseph Geiger and James Briggs, and Congressman John Covode to represent his interests in Pennsylvania and New York. Our interest naturally centers on Chase's activities in Ohio, the state on which he lavished his fondest attentions. Chase realized that if he could go into the national convention of '64 as Ohio's favorite son he could seriously challenge Lincoln's claim for re-nomination, therefore, he sought in every way possible to gain the support of the Buckeye State. The canvass of '63 in Ohio was centered around the gubernatorial election, and Chase was informed early in the year that his endorsement was necessary if the nominee hoped to carry the election. This looked to Chase like an excellent opportunity for some mutual political backscratching and he looked about diligently for a man who would be grateful enough for his endorsement to retaliate by sending a pro-Chase delegation to the convention in 1864. In Chase's opinion Stanley Matthews seemed to be just such a man, but unfortunately he declined to run for he preferred at the moment to seek glory in the army. The Ohio State Convention meeting at Cleveland on June 17 nominated John Brough, President of the Bellefontaine Railroad Company, a man acknowledged by many leaders as the only one who would save the state from the Democratic leader, Clement L. Vallandigham. Through his Ohio wheelhorse, Joseph Geiger, Chase learned that Brough was friendly toward the secretary's ambitions, but he would make no pledge of any sort. Chase, however, was satisfied.

Shortly before the bitterly contested canvass closed in Ohio, Chase returned home to speak and to vote. This was not done without appropriate fanfare, for Chase had no intention of passing through his own state without giving the voters an ample opportunity to see his handsome face in actuality rather than on the Greenbacks. Joseph Geiger and M. D. Potter of the Cincinnati Commercial served their friend well by arranging a reception for him in his home city on October 12. The secretary's train was inadvertently delayed

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29 Joseph Geiger to Salmon Chase, April 10, 1863, Chase MSS (Library of Congress).

30 Salmon Chase to Stanley Matthews, April 16, 1863; Joseph Geiger to Salmon Chase, June 18, 1863, Chase MSS (Library of Congress).
and did not arrive until two in the morning; nevertheless, when he finally arrived Chase found that "the depot was crowded with a large concourse of citizens . . ." The crowd followed him to the hotel where he rewarded their long vigil with a brief address in which he eulogized his work in the treasury department. In the course of the talk he paid Lincoln a left-handed compliment by saying, "The President, you may rely on it, is not unmindful of his responsibility, but is honestly and earnestly doing his best." 31 This was the only time during the canvass in which Chase mentioned his superior. Gideon Welles duly noted Chase's departure for the hustings in his diary and opined that the secretary was firing the opening gun of his presidential campaign. 32

After speaking in Ohio at Cincinnati, Columbus, Xenia, Morrow, and Camp Dennison, Chase accepted Governor Oliver P. Morton's invitation to spend a few days in Indiana where he continued his speaking tour and mended his fences for the coming presidential race. Chase returned to the capital with a radiant confidence that he had served himself well by his peregrinations through Ohio and the Hoosier state. When his friend John Brough carried the gubernatorial election against the elusive Vallandigham, many of his advisors and workers assured the secretary it was conclusive proof of his powers in that state. Others pointed to the heartfelt reception accorded him in Indiana as additional evidence. 33 While Chase, who needed only a modicum of persuasion, fell in with their line of reasoning and admitted candidly that he was highly pleased and impressed at the spontaneity of the demonstrations which were accorded him wherever he went. It seemed a propitious omen for the future. 34

With all his corresponding and proselyting during 1863 to win the favor of prominent editors, business and political leaders, Chase made no effort to coordinate these activities

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31 Speeches of S. P. Chase, Secretary of the Treasury, During His Visit to Ohio, with His Speech at Indianapolis, and at the Mass Meeting in Baltimore (Washington, 1863), p. 1.

32 Gideon Welles, Diary, I, 469.

33 Letters to Salmon Chase from R. S. Hart, October 16, 1863; Richard Parsons, October 17, 1863; James Briggs, October 17, 22, 1863; Flamen Ball, October 21, 1863, Chase MSS (Library of Congress).

34 Salmon Chase to E. D. Mansfield, October 18, 1863; to John Conness, October 18, 1863, Chase MSS (Pennsylvania Historical Society).
into a well planned and orderly system. Unless he succeeded in creating an organization, both state and national, there was little hope that his accession to the White House could be realized. Joseph Geiger, who served him quite faithfully during the fall canvass of '63, understood the situation clearly and characterized Chase's higgledy piggledy activities as "blind striking." He implored his chief to start building an organization or all would be lost. Chase, however, made no move in this direction, and it remained for his friends to set up an "Organization to make S. P. Chase President" on December 9, 1863.

On the basis of the evidence available it may be concluded that the Chase boom was launched by a committee which consisted of either three or four congressmen, two of them from Ohio and four other gentlemen, of whom two were also from Chase's state. State committees were also selected but as Charles Wilson correctly observed, it is difficult to know how many of the men whose names appear on the list were actually supporters of Chase, or whether they even knew their names were being used. The Ohio state committee contained John A. Bingham, William Dennison, Judge William Lawrence of Bellefontaine, William P. Mellen, a treasury agent, and R. G. Corwin. It is known that these men were all active Chase supporters.

The first Chase national committee and its subordinate state organization were a nebulous affair, but within a few weeks the former group assumed more definite shape and the membership became more permanent. It was also increasingly apparent that most of the support for Chase's candidacy came from his own state for Senator John Sherman, James Garfield, and James Ashley were added to the list of his ardent supporters. The Chase advisory committee of December 9 in its expanded form became known as the Republican

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35 Letters to Salmon Chase from Joseph Geiger, November 10, 1863; James Briggs, November 2, 1863; H. C. Bowen, November 16, 1863, Chase MSS (Library of Congress).

36 Charles R. Wilson, "The Original Chase Organization Meeting and The Next Presidential Election," The Mississippi Valley Historical Review, XXIII (June, 1936), pp. 61-79.

37 The four Ohio members of the central committee were Robert C. Schenck, Rufus P. Spalding, Whitelaw Reid, and Major D. Taylor, army paymaster.
National Executive Committee with Senator Samuel Pomeroy of Kansas as chairman, and James M. Winchell, the New York agent of the Pacific railroad, as secretary. The secretary of the treasury was aware fully of what was going on for he wrote to a friend in Ohio on January 18 that a committee composed of "prominent Senators and Representatives and citizens" had been formed for the purpose of making him president. He also added, "This Committee, through a subcommittee, has conferred with me . . . and I have consented to their wishes." 38

The boom which this committee launched for Chase foundered on the rock of Lincoln's popularity with the American voters. As early as January, 1864, Judge Dickinson informed Chase that the growing sentiment in Ohio was distinctly favorable to Lincoln's re-election; this so unnerved Chase that he wrote to tell the judge that his appraisal was "erroneous." 39 Within a few weeks, however, Chase learned that this was not the case.

In spite of growing evidence that Lincoln was the popular choice of the American voters, Pomeroy's committee continued its work on behalf of Chase. Early in February they had ready for distribution a document entitled The Next Presidential Election, which was a scurrilous, underhanded attack on the ability and character of the chief executive. This malicious pamphlet was distributed throughout the Old Northwest under the frank of Senator John Sherman, Representative Ashley, and also Representative Henry T. Blow of Missouri. 40 Ward Hill Lamon reported to Lincoln that he had recently received news from Ohio that "a most scurrilous and abusive" pamphlet was being distributed. Leonard Swett procured a copy and forwarded it to the President. 41

The President and his friends did not have to take any action on the matter, however, for the power of public opinion rose to sustain them against the attack. Sherman was bom-

38 Salmon Chase to James C. Hall, January 18, 1864, quoted in J. W. Schuckers, op. cit., p. 497.
39 Salmon Chase to Daniel Dickinson, January 16, 27, 1864, Chase MSS (Pennsylvania Historical Society).
40 Philip Speed to Abraham Lincoln, February 22, 1864; J. Gibson to Abraham Lincoln., February 22, 1864; Robert Todd Lincoln MSS (Library of Congress).
41 Ward Lamon to Abraham Lincoln, February 6, 1864, Robert T. Lincoln MSS.
barded with letters from constituents throughout Ohio. A few of them concurred in the views set forth, but most were indignant at this shabby attempt to defame the President. After perusing the pamphlet E. B. Cassily wrote to Sherman, "It looks like a fraud and as if it was gotten up by some Copperhead." Still another said, "It is so mean and dastardly in its character that it will brand with infamy your character as a statesman and your honor as a gentleman." A third opined, "There is no use . . . for a few politicians at Washington to think they can influence the people against 'Old Honest Abe.'" Many others felt that some scoundrel must be using Sherman's frank without authorization, for they could not believe that the senator would knowingly be a party to such a scheme. This letter is typical of many.\footnote{Letters to John Sherman from E. B. Cassily, February 15, 1864; Samuel Price, February 20, 1864; C. Waggoner, February 18, 1864; E. Winchester, February 19, 1864; Isaac Welsh, February 25, 1864; F. J. Phillips, February 20, 1864; R. W. Clark, February 20, 1864; J. Howell, February 22, 1864; George Crawford, February 20, 1864; L. J. Spengler, February 22, 1864; E. Ingmund, February 24, 1864; D. M. Fleming, February 15, 1864, John Sherman MSS (Library of Congress).}  

I cannot conceive it possible you are aware of its true character, or have been knowingly instrumental in its circulation . . . If Mr. Lincoln is unfit for the office, or unworthy of the confidence of the people, it is due the nation that it be \textit{publicly} made known, and not in assassin style stab him in the dark . . . Disregarding the ominous reaction to its first pamphlet, the committee prepared a second even more damning, The Pomeroy Circular, for distribution. This circular failed too to have its hoped for effect. The intemperance of the attack on Lincoln embodied in the pamphlets aroused public opinion first against Sherman, then against the committee, and finally against Chase himself. John Sherman found the political ground slipping from beneath his feet. "If you were to resign tomorrow," wrote one of his friends, "you could not get ten votes in the legislature provided it could be shown that you have been circulating such stuff as this."\footnote{C. W. Gordon to John Sherman, February 26, 1864, Sherman MSS.} This apparently was no exaggeration for the rising storm of public opinion forced Sherman
to take steps early in March to protect his political future. An open letter appeared in the Cincinnati Daily Gazette in which Sherman explained his role in the affair as follows: "A number of copies of this pamphlet were sent to my room either by mistake or with the fraudulent design of securing my frank in ignorance of its contents. They came folded and sealed in the usual way of speeches and other documents and were distributed by a clerk on the supposition that they were quite a different document." Whether Sherman knew that the document was being franked out in his name would be a moot point, but there is no doubt that he knew of the existence of the pamphlet. This is clear from a letter written to him by James White of New York who told the senator, "I will be in Washington on Tuesday and will be very happy to receive from you then the letter on the next Presidency which you promised..." This undoubtedly referred to the document in question.

The appearance of the Pomeroy Circular proved to be embarrassing for Chase and he hastened to dispatch a letter to the chief executive explaining his connection with the document and offering to resign. He gave a brief account of the solicitations of his friends in compliance with which he had consented to become a candidate for the presidency. He assured Lincoln, "If there is anything in my action or position which in your judgment will prejudice the public interest under my charge, I beg you to say so, I do not wish to administer the Treasury Department one day without your entire confidence... I had no knowledge of the existence of this letter before I saw it in the [Washington Constitution] Union." Lincoln did not reply to the secretary's letter at once, but merely dashed off a brief note acknowledging having received it and promising him a fuller reply at a more propitious moment.

The Pomeroy Circular also brought the political caul-

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44 March 3, 1864.
45 James W. White to John Sherman, February 7, 1864, John Sherman MSS. White was a member of the executive committee of the Unconditional Union Central Committee of New York which was a pro-Chase club.
46 Salmon Chase to Abraham Lincoln, February 22, 1864, Chase MSS (Pennsylvania Historical Society).
47 Abraham Lincoln to Salmon Chase, February 23, 1864 (Copy), Robert T. Lincoln MSS.
The indignation caused by the pamphlet and the circular led directly to the Ohio state legislature declaring in favor of President Lincoln's re-election, and this was to be the final blow which suffocated Chase's hopes. For months the secretary had paid the closest possible attention to developments in the Buckeye State for he well knew that if he were rejected here his chances in the other states would be correspondingly diminished. In the Chicago convention of 1860 he had been passed over by the party managers primarily because they felt his position in Ohio was very weak. Realizing, therefore, that his future as a presidential candidate depended largely on the action taken in Ohio, Chase had already stated that if this action was hostile toward him, he would instantly withdraw from the running. Early in January he had written to James Hall that "if... it should be the pleasure of the majority of our friends in Ohio to indicate a preference for another, I should accept their action with that acquiescence which is due from me to the friends who have trusted and honored me..."48 The following month he wrote another letter expressing his willingness to accept with "perfect respect and acquiescence" if the legislature declared for another person.49

The declaration in favor of Lincoln did not come as a total surprise, for it was prefaced by several months of mounting popular endorsement of the President. As early as December, 1863, Representative Samuel S. Cox of Ohio told John Hay that if the President's friends expended even a little effort in Ohio they would beat Chase, for he had "little strength in his own State."50 Senator Benjamin Wade learned from an Ohioan early in February that among the Union members of the legislature a "decided majority prefer [ed] Mr. Lincoln" but "those favoring Mr. Chase [were] using unwearied effort to suppress... any expression favorable to Mr. Lincoln."51 Even Chase seemed to suspect that Lincoln's power was too great to resist, for early the same month he

48 Salmon Chase to James Hall, January 18, 1864, reprinted in the Daily Ohio State Journal, March 11, 1864.
49 Salmon Chase to W. D. Lindsley, February 1, 1864, quoted in Robert Warden, op. cit., p. 568.
51 S. S. Osborn to Benjamin Wade, February 8, 1864, Wade MSS.
wrote to his friend Flamen Ball in Cincinnati, “You ask for the signs of the times. At present they seem to indicate the renomination of Mr. Lincoln.” The letter concluded with Chase once again repeating that he would withdraw if Ohio declared for another.\footnote{Salmon Chase to Flamen Ball, February 2, 1864, quoted in J. W. Schuckers, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 498.}

The principal task of Chase’s friends was to prevent the legislature from adopting a resolution favoring the President. The ease with which they were able to do this seemed to belie Osborn’s comment that Lincoln was favored by a majority of the members. On January 8, they defeated one resolution which was introduced in the House of Representatives, and another introduced on January 27 died in the pigeon hole of some committeeman’s desk. Lincoln’s friends, however, continued their efforts, and W. H. P. Denny, editor of the Circleville \textit{Union} and beneficiary of treasury patronage, wrote that it was growing more difficult to stem the Lincoln tide in Ohio.\footnote{Donnal V. Smith, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 110; W. H. Denny to Salmon Chase, January 29, 1864; Richard Parsons to Salmon Chase, February 4, 1864, Chase MSS (Library of Congress).} On February 5, a caucus of Union members was held, but Lincoln’s friends withheld their resolution when they perceived that the secretary’s men were in the majority.\footnote{Alfred Stone to Salmon Chase, February 4, 5, 1864, Chase MSS (Library of Congress).}

It was at this point that Alfred Stone, one of Chase’s most active men in Columbus, and Richard Parsons, United States Tax Collector from Cleveland, made a deal with one of Lincoln’s friends, Columbus Delano. Delano agreed to refrain from helping introduce any more resolutions, and Parsons promised to use his influence to help Delano obtain a promotion to a vacancy which existed on the Ohio Supreme Court.\footnote{George H. Porter, \textit{Ohio Politics during the Civil War Period} (New York, 1911), p. 123.} Chase’s friends advised him that a few more weeks would see the danger safely passed. No more resolutions were introduced in the legislature.

The bombshell which wrecked the well laid plans of Stone and Parsons was the Pomeroy Circular. “You have no idea of the effects produced by that Circular,” Parsons hastily wrote to Chase, “it . . . produced a perfect convulsion
in the party." The circular ruined the cozy arrangement between Delano and Parsons, and paved the way for the legislature’s endorsement of Lincoln.

On February 25, a caucus of Union members of the legislature was called, and the following day the fateful news appeared in print, “Resolved, That in the opinion of this convention the people of Ohio and her soldiers in the army demand the renomination of Abraham Lincoln to the Presidency of the United States.”

There was much more to the incident than this, however, for the whole story was deliberately withheld from the press at the request of some of Lincoln’s friends. Chase learned precisely what had happened from his friend James Hall, who wrote that the secretary’s friends learned of the proposed caucus quite by accident for no general invitation had been extended. Hall and a few of them hurried to the place of meeting where they found Speaker James R. Hubbell and Columbus Delano busily engaged in presenting a pro-Lincoln resolution to the gathering. Actually there were only about sixty-five of the 109 Union members present at the meeting. When Chase’s friends realized that no amount of parliamentary tricks could delay the adoption of the resolution further, they withdrew from the meeting, and thereby, reduced the number of those present to less than a majority. The pro-Lincoln remnant then proceeded to enact the resolution, which was handed to the press for publication. The public, however, was not informed that only a Rump session had enacted the resolution. In reporting the incident to the President one of the members of the legislature presented an entirely different version from that of Chase’s men. His version in part reads:

56 Richard Parsons to Salmon Chase, March 2, 1864, Chase MSS (Library of Congress).
57 Appleton’s Annual Cyclopedia for 1864 (New York, 1865), p. 783.
58 James Hall to Salmon Chase, Richard Parsons to Salmon Chase, March 2, 1864, Chase MSS (Library of Congress); Isaac Gass to John Sherman, February 29, 1864, John Sherman MSS; Elizabeth F. Yager, “The Presidential Campaign of 1864 in Ohio,” The Ohio State Archaeological and Historical Quarterly, XXXIV (July, 1925), p. 553; The Cincinnati Gazette wrote on February 27, “It is but just to say that few of Mr. Chase’s friends were present.”
59 W. H. West to Abraham Lincoln, February 29, 1864, Robert Todd Lincoln MSS.
It was proposed in convention to defer action for ten days. This gave rise to much discussion. But every gentleman who took part in the discussion distinctly announced himself favorable to the resolution, except one—but for prudential reasons asked delay. The discussion being protracted to a late hour some became weary & retired. But that the opponents of the resolution retired in greater numbers than its friends is wholly incorrect. Of those absent when the resolution was adopted, five out of six concur in its sentiment which fact will be clearly shown in a few days . . .

There was great consternation among Chase's friends after this, but it was too late to undo the fateful stroke. One of Senator Sherman's correspondents told him that the only way the adoption of this resolution could have been prevented would have been for Chase to have publicly stated that he had nothing to do with the Pomeroy Circular. Chase had told this to Lincoln, but he did not say so publicly because "he could not publicly disavow the action of his own friends, however ill-advised and inopportune that action was." Lincoln may have deliberately refrained from answering Chase's letter of February 22 because he wanted to keep the whole affair out of the press until after the Ohio legislature had spoken. A public disavowal by Chase after this would not benefit him in any way.

The unfortunate secretary's troubles were not ended yet, for while he was impatiently waiting for Lincoln's final reply he had to bear the ignominy of an attack from the President's hatchet men, the Blair brothers. Representative Frank Blair of Missouri introduced a resolution in the House on February 27 demanding a congressional investigation of the fraud and peculation in Chase's department. Two days later he reintroduced his resolution and it was only pigeon holed after a great deal of parliamentary manipulation by Thad Stevens and James Garfield. The matter did not close so easily, however, for shortly afterward the Postmaster General Montgomery Blair began sending copies of his brother's

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60 Lewis Gunckel to John Sherman, February 29, 1864, John Sherman MSS.

speech to various newspapers throughout the country for publication. Dipping his own pen in his literary arsenic, Monty Blair produced a statement of his own in which he accused Chase of having written the Pomeroy Circular himself. Some of the papers in Ohio were on Blair's mailing list. The Blairs irritated the feathers of peacock Chase so badly, that he wrote to Greeley threatening to resign if they were allowed to continue their belittling.

While Frank Blair was salting Chase's wounds on February 29, Lincoln presented the secretary with his final reply to the offer of resignation. After telling Chase that he had not seen or cared to see the document in question, Lincoln assured him that "whether you shall remain at the head of the Treasury Department is a question which I will not allow myself to consider from any standpoint other than my judgment of the public service; and, in that view, I do not perceive occasion for a change."

The President's reply did little to soothe Chase's distress for he was further piqued over Lincoln's seeming indifference at having him as a presidential rival, and at the President's failure to reciprocate his declarations of devotion and affection. Lincoln's patronizing attitude grated Chase's sensibilities; and for the remaining months that the Ohioan served in the cabinet there was little cordiality between the two men.

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62 Richard C. Parsons to Salmon Chase, March 7, 1864, Chase MSS (Library of Congress). Blair sent a copy of the speech to Edwin Cowles of the Cleveland Leader.

63 Salmon Chase to Horace Greeley, February 29, 1864, Chase MSS

64 Abraham Lincoln to Salmon Chase, February 29, 1864, Robert T. Lincoln MSS. Lincoln received several copies of the Pomeroy Circular from his friends. See: M. M. Brien to Abraham Lincoln, February 23, 1864; Jessie Dubois to Abraham Lincoln, February 25, 1864; DeWitt Chipman to Abraham Lincoln, February 29, 1864, Robert T. Lincoln MSS. Lincoln told his son Robert "that a good many people had tried to tell him something he did not wish to hear and that his answer to Chase was literally true." Helen Nicolay, Lincoln's Secretary (New York, 1949), pp. 188-189.

65 Alonzo Rothschild, Lincoln: Master of Men (Boston, 1906), p. 207. Lincoln was suspicious of Pomeroy too after the circular episode. Tyler Dennett, op. cit., p. 181. Entry of May 14, 1864. "Pomeroy has recently asked an audience of the President for the purpose of getting some offices. He is getting starved out during the last few months of dignified hostility and evidently wants to come down. He did not get any."
If Chase was annoyed by Lincoln's indifference, he squared his accounts by publishing the two letters in the press. Lincoln had previously indicated that he did not wish this done, but since his refusal was not categorical Chase turned the letters over to the papers.\footnote{Cincinnati \textit{Commercial}, March 3, 1864.} Lincoln was greatly vexed by the secretary's disregard for his wish.

By the first week in March, Chase's candidacy was a dying cause. The evidence of Lincoln's popularity was too great to be denied. There was nothing for Chase to do but to carry out his earlier offer to withdraw from the race whenever it became apparent that he was not wanted. The Ohio declaration convinced him of this, and on March 7 he wrote to Ohio Congressman Albert G. Riddle, "our Ohio folks don't want me enough, if they want me at all, to make it proper for me to allow my name to be used."\footnote{Salmon Chase to Albert G. Riddle, March 7, 1864, quoted in Robert Warden, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 576.} Forty-eight hours before this, after much thought, Chase had written to James Hall asking that no further consideration be given his name. The Chase boom was deflated, although he did not realize it fully at the moment.

After the action taken by the Ohio legislature several of Chase's friends in that state had written to him urging his withdrawal. "It seems clear to me," counselled James A. Garfield, "that the people desire the re-election of Mr. Lincoln and I believe any movement in any other direction will not only be a failure but will tend to disturb and embarrass the unity of the friends of the Union." This was an interesting admission from the man who had recently deplored the possibility of having to "push" Lincoln for another term. He advised Chase to withdraw and reduce the danger of splitting the party for "it would be a national calamity to alienate the radical element from Mr. Lincoln and leave him to the support of the Blair and Thurlow Weed school of politicians."\footnote{James Garfield to Salmon Chase, February 25, 1864, quoted in Theodore C. Smith, \textit{The Life and Letters to James Abram Garfield} (New Haven, 1925), I, 375-376.} On March 3, Senator Sherman had written in the papers that he was not guilty of franking \textit{The Next Presidential Election}; he also took the opportunity to state that he believed Lincoln would receive the nomination and al-
though he felt the President lacked the executive ability of Chase, he would support him if he were nominated.⁶⁹ A similar sentiment appeared in his correspondence.⁷⁰ William Mellen and Richard Parsons also wrote urging the secretary to withdraw in view of the action taken by the Ohio legislature.⁷¹ Rufus T. Spalding published an open letter in the Cleveland Daily Herald, which subsequently was copied by other journals, in which he stated that he was “satisfied that a great majority of the people are at this time demanding the re-nomination of Mr. Lincoln . . .”; he had, therefore, “counselled the friends of Mr. Chase to abstain from further active efforts in his behalf.”⁷²

Acting on the advice of his friends, Chase dispatched a letter to James C. Hall on March 5 in which he said that “the recent action of the Union members of our Legislature indicates” that they preferred Lincoln. He was, therefore, dutifully bound to “ask that no further consideration be given [his] name.”⁷³ The following day he addressed a second note to Hall advising him to publish the first letter in the papers.⁷⁴ At the same time he took the opportunity to inform other select friends that his withdrawal was about to be announced, and that it was a purely voluntary action for the sake of the country. He left no doubt that he would respond to a draft at the convention if the delegates wanted him.

Hall handed Chase’s letter to the editors of the Columbus and Cincinnati papers with instructions that it was to appear March 11 concomitantly with the secretary’s earlier letter of

⁷⁰ Joseph Casey to John Sherman, March 23, 1864, John Sherman MSS. Casey referred to a letter from Sherman on March 14 in which the Senator urged him to support Lincoln. Casey said he still preferred Chase. Sherman also had a talk with John Forney who wrote to Lincoln that the senator was “evidently desirous of being put in kind relations with you. He would like to have a confidential interview . . .” John Forney to Abraham Lincoln, March 5, 1864, Robert Todd Lincoln MSS.
⁷¹ William Mellen to Salmon Chase, March 2, 1864; Richard Parsons to Salmon Chase, March 2, 1864; W. P. Gadis to Salmon Chase, March 5, 1864, Chase MSS (Library of Congress).
⁷² Cleveland Daily Herald, March 4, 1864.
⁷³ Salmon Chase to James C. Hall, March 5, 1864, quoted in J. W. Schuckers, op. cit., p. 502.
⁷⁴ Salmon Chase to James C. Hall, March 6, 1864, Chase MSS (Pennsylvania Historical Society).
January 18 in which he intimated that he would withdraw if Ohio endorsed another candidate. The two letters appeared on the appointed day, but Chase was greatly annoyed by Hall's publication of the January letter as well, for this created the impression that the secretary was withdrawing in acknowledgement of defeat rather than that it was solely motivated by intense patriotism. 75

When the Chase-Hall letters appeared in print, many of the secretary's friends wrote to him expressing sorrow at learning such news. Some of his friends understood that the letter did not mean that his name was no longer to be considered, and the undercover work was pushed with a vengeance on all sides. The ever optimistic Parsons wrote on March 11, "I look for a radical change in public sentiment upon Presidential matters before many weeks have elapsed." 76

One of Sherman's acquaintances wrote that since the withdrawal some were still working to counteract the resolution of the Ohio legislature. Many wanted to send delegates to the Baltimore convention pledged to Chase as a tribute to his talent and to rebuke the hasty action of the legislature. They would cast their vote for the secretary on the first ballot and then swing to Lincoln if he seemed to be the popular candidate. He spoke with considerable pride when he concluded, "The voice of Ohio should give no uncertain sound for whoever she may speak." 77

Gideon Welles noted on March 18, that the treasury agents were still at work, "but there was no zeal even among them." 78 Two days later another of Sherman's correspondents expressed the view that Chase's withdrawal did not mean they were "bound to forego all fair and honorable means to nominate him." He proposed that small clubs be formed to continue the work for the Ohioan. 79 There does not seem to be any doubt that Chase was still very much in the race in spite of his letter of with-

75 Donnal C. Smith, op. cit., p. 127; Salmon Chase to James Hall, March 13, 1864, Chase MSS (Pennsylvania Historical Society).
76 Richard Parsons to Salmon Chase, March 11, 1864, Chase MSS (Library of Congress).
77 R. W. Taylor to John Sherman, March 18, 1864, John Sherman MSS.
78 Gideon Welles to Governor Morgan, March 18, 1864, Gideon Welles MSS (Library of Congress).
79 J. Guthrie to John Sherman, March 20, 1864, John Sherman MSS.
drawal, but it was all wasted effort. Lincoln continued to hold the support of the American public, and his opponents found it impossible either to oppose the public will or to unite upon a suitable candidate to run against him.

After having failed to best the President in their numerous encounters from December to March, the Vindictives abandoned their direct approach and sought to find other means of removing him from the race. Chase was for a moment in need of reviviscence, and while his friends worked to repair his battered machine the radicals sought to have the party convention postponed from June seventh to a later date.

The movement to postpone the national Union convention failed dismally. Lincoln’s popularity with the American people continued to be very great, although the politicians worked against his nomination. Out in Ohio Sam Galloway told Lincoln that Chase’s men were working for the secretary, but it was all lost labor. Senator Sherman heard from W. D. Bickman of Dayton, who had been sampling public opinion throughout the northwest, that Lincoln could not be beaten. “I am thoroughly convinced that five out of six people of the West — in Ohio and Indiana especially — where I have been most observant are enthusiastically in favor of the renomination of Mr. Lincoln,” wrote Bickman. “The movement is not managed; it is spontaneous beyond the possibility of a doubt; it is a great ground swell which will assuredly overwhelm everything in its path.” In April Benjamin Wade told one of Chase’s agents that he had no choice but to support Lincoln the popular candidate. From Chase’s hometown Thomas Heaton revealed that he was amazed and discouraged by “the infatuation of the people and the politicians — especially of Ohio — in regard to Lincoln and his policy.”

The Ohio Union state convention met May 25th at

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80 Donnal V. Smith, op. cit., pp. 131-133.
81 Samuel Galloway to Abraham Lincoln, February 25, 1864, Robert T. Lincoln MSS.
82 W. D. Bickman to John Sherman, March 1, 1864, John Sherman MSS.
83 Joseph Geiger to Salmon Chase, April 2, 1864, Chase MSS (Library of Congress).
84 Thomas Heaton to Salmon Chase, May 31, 1864, Chase MSS (Library of Congress).
Columbus. Ex-Governor William Dennison presided, and John A Bingham, who had recently been made a judge advocate in the Department of the Susquehanna, played a most prominent role. The convention chose four delegates-at-large, leaving the regular delegates to be selected by the district conventions. In the committee on resolutions a resolution was presented endorsing Chase's work in the treasury. At once Bingham objected on the grounds that the greenbacks were depreciating and might fall entirely. Some opposition was shown to including any reference to him at all; this was overcome by refraining from mentioning him by name but only to the position. The resolution adopted congratulated the armies and said, "in the cabinet, in the field, and in the councils of the Nation, the ability, fidelity and patriotism of Ohio have been proudly manifest." Thus Chase had to be satisfied with a left-handed compliment. The platform also urged the national convention to renominate Lincoln.85

At the national convention at Baltimore on June 7th, Lincoln received the votes of every state except Missouri, which threw its twenty-two votes to Grant on the first ballot but later switched to Lincoln.

The seeming unanimity for Lincoln at the convention was broken soon when the military situation became precarious. Grant suffered some reverses in Virginia; Sherman seemed to be making only slight progress in Georgia; while Confederate General Jubal Early's cavalry raided Maryland. The people grew weary of the war and blamed the administration for the defeats and the troubles. During the summer a movement was started among the Unconditional radicals to oust Lincoln from the nomination and replace him with a man such as General John C. Fremont, Benjamin F. Butler, or even Chase. This movement failed in September when the military situation improved, and Lincoln was re-elected.

The radical movement against Lincoln drew much of its leadership from Ohio, and during the early months of the election year these men were actively working to replace him with their own candidate, Salmon P. Chase. These men, such as Sherman, Garfield, Chase, and Wade, were never entirely reconciled to Lincoln and exhausted every political

85 George H. Porter, op. cit., pp. 124-125; Cincinnati Daily Gazette, May 26, 1864; W. D. Bickman to Salmon Chase, May 29, 1864, Chase MSS (Library of Congress)
trick to defeat his renomination. Lincoln's popularity, his patronage, and his superior organization proved, however, to be too much, and these Ohioans were forced to accept his renomination. Never did they accord the President their fullest cooperation, and even in August, Senator Wade struck at him through a malicious document known as the Wade-Davis Manifesto.

The Ohio voters, however, were of a different mind. They supported Lincoln with all their power; they forced the radical leaders into line. At the time of the Wade-Davis affair the Senator became so universally disliked that his name was stricken from the role of speakers in his state, while Garfield found it expedient to spike a rumor in his district that he had helped write the document. 86 Editor James G. Bennett of the New York Herald predicted, that before the election Chase, Wade, and the rest would "all make tracks for Old Abe's plantation." 87 Thanks to the pressure of the voters this prediction proved to be correct.

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87 August 24, 1864.