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w o r k s a m p l e s


Timeline

1933




President Franklin D. Roosevelt appoints Tennessean Cordell Hull as Secretary of State. Hull had previously served as a Tennessee judge, followed by terms in the U.S. House and Senate. For his role in creating the United Nations, Hull won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1945.

1938




Howard H. Baker, Sr., runs for governor as a Republican. Although he lost, he campaigned throughout the state, helping garner future support for Republican candidates.

1948



The candidates supported by Ed Crump's Memphis-based political machine lose in statewide primaries, signaling the end of his dominance. Estes Kefauver, who helped lead reformers who opposed Crump, is one of the victors, for U.S. Senate.

1952



Tennessee votes for Republican Dwight Eisenhower for president. He was the first Republican presidential candidate to campaign seriously throughout the South.

Tennessee Politics: 1928 to 1952

Like most of the South, Tennessee was a one-party state during the early and mid-1900s. The Democratic Party won all statewide elections. But between 1928 and 1952, some cracks emerged in that system.

A Democratic Stronghold

President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal brought major political change throughout the United States, including in the Volunteer State. New federal programs like the Tennessee Valley Authority and Oak Ridge National Laboratory had a special impact on East Tennessee.

State Democratic parties in the South supported segregation. But the national party's economic policies helped attract many African Americans away from Lincoln's Republican Party. Tennessee lacked some of the discriminatory measures that kept African Americans from voting. Greater African American participation, especially in Memphis, helped solidify Democratic control of statewide elections.

But some Republicans made inroads outside of their traditional stronghold of East Tennessee.

TVA AND EAST TENNESSEE
The Tennessee Valley Authority's projects helped lift some rural areas out of poverty, provided inexpensive electricity, and controlled flooding. But they also forced many people from their family homes to make way for new dams and reservoirs.

1938 Gubernatorial Race: Baker, Sr.-Cooper

Unit 1976. Democrats won the governor's mansion in almost every election. In 1938, like in most years, East Tennessee voted Republican, differently from the rest of the state.

Issues of the Day

- 1933: Should the federal government intervene in the economy to help the country recover from the Great Depression?
- 1939: World War II began when Nazi Germany invaded Poland. But unless the United States were directly attacked, should it enter the war?
- 1948: President Harry Truman ordered desegregation of the Armed Forces. Could segregation continue at home after African American and white soldiers served in a war for freedom?

THE BOSS
Like much of the country in the early 1900s, Tennessee had political machines whose candidates dominated. In Tennessee's case, Ed Crump's (left) candidates controlled the state until 1948.

TENNESSEE POLITICS 1928 TO 1952

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