

for the rights of injured veterans. Both presidential nominees in the elections of 1960, 1964 and 1972 were veterans of both the Senate and World War II. Veterans of the war, though not necessarily of the Senate, were nominees in 12 elections in a row (1952 to 1996), a remarkable record of one generation's political dominance. That dominance can be extended to 13 consecutive elections if Strom Thurmond, an Army veteran who ran on the Dixiecrat ticket in 1948, is included. These men -- there were no women -- were marked by the consequences of appeasement at Munich in 1938, leading many of them to oppose Communist aggression in Vietnam a dozen years later and prompting one of them (Joseph R. McCarthy of Wisconsin) to lend his name to an odious paranoid impulse in American civic life while fighting Communism at home. These men lived in a segregated society, leading some of them (Thurmond and Herman E. Talmadge of Georgia, among others) to fight the expansion of rights for blacks and leading others (Ralph Yarborough of Texas and Jacob K. Javits of New York, for instance) to fight segregation and support voting rights. They came of age in an era when a minority of Americans went to college and came to support a massive expansion of aid to higher education. They left their wives and girlfriends at home during the war (and often during their time in the Senate) and they worked in a Senate that more than four decades ago passed the Equal Rights Amendment by an 84-8 vote. (It fell just short of ratification by the states.) They went to war in an age of conformity but many of them symbolized non-conformity in Washington. Two Republicans