Robert P. Hay

The Swiss-born Albert Gallatin had a long and distinguished career in the crucial early years of his adopted homeland's national history. Before he was twenty years old and quite against the wishes of his family, he had given up social position to come to America. At considerable personal sacrifice, he had literally grown old in the nation's service. In the words of his son James, the elder Gallatin had "given the best part of his life and all his energies to his adopted country." As a Pennsylvania congressman and leading figure in the Republican party, as a brilliant Jeffersonian financier and secretary of the treasury, and as a diplomat during and after the War of 1812, he had performed his many tasks in a way that most modern historians would consider as truly exemplary. His reputation was...
even international. "He was," Frederick Merk reminds us, "one of the few American diplomats of his day who was respected on both sides of the Atlantic." True, in his own bitterly partisan era, he had not been universally acclaimed by his contemporaries in the United States. On more than one occasion, he had felt the slings and arrows of outrageous political fortune. Indeed, he was a favorite target of the Federalists, many of whom saw the French-accented Gallatin as a perfect symbol of the perfidious Gallic influence in the hated Jeffersonian party. In 1793 the Pennsylvania legislature had elected Gallatin to the United States Senate, but within months the Federalist-controlled Senate had expelled him on the grounds that he had not technically met the constitutional requirement for American citizenship. Jefferson believed that the politically-motivated Naturalization Act of 1798 was directed at his friend Gallatin; and, a little more than a decade later, James Madison found that he would be unable to have Gallatin as his secretary of state as he had planned because of the opposition of a cabal in the Senate.

Few of the reverses of his political career could have been as personally humiliating, however, as the one he was to receive in 1824. Now sixty-three years old — and, in the language of the day, "full of years and honors" — he was to encounter nationwide opposition, resentment, and even ridicule in his role as candidate for vice-president of the United States on the ticket headed by his personal friend William H. Crawford. After an unrelenting eight-month barrage of accusations, all of which demeaned him and some of which questioned his very honesty and integrity. Gallatin finally withdrew from the

Gallatin's life echoes the same sentiment: "So passed a noble adopted son whom the American people have thus far failed to recognize duly for his great and unselfish service." John Austin Stevens, Albert Gallatin (Boston, 1883), I; and Raymond Walters, Jr., Albert Gallatin: Jeffersonian Financier and Diplomat (New York, 1957), 380. Gallatin the financier, though not so much the man, comes in for criticism in Alexander Balinky, Albert Gallatin: Fiscal Theories and Policies (New Brunswick, N. J., 1958). Even the briefest allusion to the Gallatin literature would be incomplete without mentioning two works of Henry Adams: Writings of Albert Gallatin, 3 vols. (Philadelphia, 1879) and Life of Albert Gallatin (Philadelphia, 1879). Stevens's biography was largely a rewrite of Adams's in shorter form. Adams's works, Walters wrote in 1957, "remain to this day the chief source of information about Albert Gallatin." Walters, Gallatin, vii.

4 E. James Ferguson, ed., Selected Writings of Albert Gallatin (Indianapolis, 1967), xxiv.
5 Dumas Malone, Jefferson and the Ordeal of Liberty (Boston, 1962), 385, note 17.
Crawford ticket, virtually admitting in his terse letter of withdrawal that the sole cause of his action was a hostile public reaction that had been unexpected in degree if not in kind. It was all the more vexatious inasmuch as Gallatin had apparently been talked into joining the ticket against his own personal preferences to begin with.  

Ironically, what was to have been a great honor bestowed for great services rendered became instead a most embarrassing popular repudiation at the hands of the nation for which he had labored so long. Although historians have virtually ignored this great popular outpouring, it could be, and deserves to be, more fully treated. The documentation for it, in the form of newspaper accounts, is voluminous. Moreover, it constituted an important episode in the life of Gallatin, and it serves as well as an excellent indicator of the public mood of America in the 1820s.

There was little hint of what lay ahead when Gallatin returned to this country in 1823 following his seven-year stint as American minister to France. Many of the political storms that he had weathered

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7 On January 5, 1824, James Gallatin had written in his diary: “Father was forced by his party, but much against his will, to accept the candidacy for the Vice-Presidency. . . . All this is most annoying. Father does not wish to enter into public life again. . . . but . . . they still want to pick his brains and make use of him.” Gallatin, ed., Diary of James Gallatin, 249. Crawford’s biographer also makes it clear that Gallatin had to be talked into the candidacy. Chase C. Mooney, William H. Crawford, 1772-1834 (Lexington, Ky., 1974), 256-57, 275. (Just as an aside, it is interesting to note that Senator Thomas Eagleton of Missouri, who withdrew from the Democratic ticket headed by Senator George McGovern in 1972, was not, as the political commentators of the time often said, the first vice-presidential nominee to step down.)

8 Stevens recounts only the barest facts of Gallatin’s nomination in a brief chapter of six pages. Walters also devotes only six pages to the candidacy, and Ferguson dismisses it after giving it only two sentences of his twenty-two page introduction to Gallatin’s life and work. Stevens, Gallatin, 368-73; Walters, Gallatin, 320-25; Ferguson, ed., Writings of Gallatin, xxxiii. And none of these scholars deals with the popular reaction against Gallatin’s nomination in any detailed way. The present article, which attempts to correct this oversight, is based primarily upon public opinion as it was reflected in the newspaper, the medium of the day. The author has used the extensive newspaper collection of the Library of Congress. However desirable theoretically, it is impossible to pinpoint the political and ideological commitments of each of the newspapers consulted. This is true for several reasons, among them the following: there exist only broken files for many nineteenth-century newspapers; editors sometimes changed allegiances during this long presidential campaign of 1824; and the campaign took place in between party systems — that is, after the first American party system had disintegrated and before the second American party system had been formed. Given all this, the attempt here has been to cast a wide net and to investigate as many newspapers as possible from the various geographical regions of the country. What emerges clearly from this wide sampling is that the very candidacy of Albert Gallatin became a major concern with the electorate in 1824 and was both a great liability to the Crawfordite camp and an issue eagerly seized upon by the numerous opponents of that faction.
in his earlier years were over now, and the diplomat seemed to enjoy a generally favorable reputation with most of the people in the early 1820s. Given his stature, he was often spoken of as a suitable candidate for one prominent post or another. In 1822, for instance, it had been rumored that he might become the new president of the Bank of the United States, but Washington's National Intelligencer reported that it was "authorized to state, from an unquestionable source" that Gallatin did not want the appointment and would not accept it even if selected.\(^9\) In the year of his return from abroad, there was speculation that Gallatin was in line to become secretary of the navy, and a Philadelphia newspaper that was strongly anti-Crawford declared that it would give great satisfaction to the people to see Gallatin in that post. "His talents, and republican principles are too well known to doubt the popularity of such a distinguished appointment."\(^10\) Coming, as it did, so soon after these glowing testimonials to Gallatin's worth as a Republican elder statesman, the widespread public outcry against him must have seemed all the more unexpected, unwelcome — and undeserved.

In fact, it was this seeming popularity which had made Gallatin's name seem to Crawfordites an obvious one for vice-presidential contention. Considering the desire to portray Crawford as the legitimate heir of Jefferson, Madison, and the other patriarchs of the Republican party, Gallatin's credentials as a founder of that party were thought to be all the more serviceable now. Consequently, several weeks before Gallatin received the "official" nomination of some of the Republican members of Congress, his name was being put forward by Crawford supporters, especially in the key state of Pennsylvania. This state, where Gallatin had long resided, where he was best known, and where he was presumed to have the most political clout, was deemed a crucial one to any presidential candidate's fortunes. Writing for John Binns's ardently Crawfordite Philadelphia Democratic Press, "A REPUBLICAN" reviewed Gallatin's many achievements and alluded to his future role. "The eminent services that he has rendered are well known, and are justly appreciated by his fellow citizens. America will not be ungrateful." To make sure that there would be no republican ingratitude, the letter writer urged editors favorable to Gallatin's election as vice-president to republish the article whenever possible.\(^11\)

Before his "official" nomination in Congress, other reports came in

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10 *Philadelphia Aurora & General Advertiser*, Aug. 1, 1823.
that Gallatin had been "nominated" by this person or that group as a suitable candidate for the vice-presidency.12

Then on February 14, 1824, came the nominations of Crawford and Gallatin by a caucus attended by 66 of the 261 members of Congress. Despite the poor attendance at the gathering, the Crawford faction, citing precedents going back as far as Jefferson's nomination by Republicans in Congress, insisted that this was the time-honored and hence "official" form of selecting Republican candidates for the two highest offices in the land; and all factions were now urged to rally around these "regular" candidates of the party. "Whatever may be the predilections [sic] of Individuals, of Districts, or of States, the above gentlemen must be regarded as the regular Candidates of the Democracy OF THE UNION."11

Instead, there was an endless howl of protest. Almost all of the congressional supporters of the other prominent presidential hopefuls — Secretary of State John Quincy Adams, General Andrew Jackson, House Speaker Henry Clay, and Secretary of War John C. Calhoun — had deliberately boycotted the caucus in order to discredit it as an extraconstitutional and unrepresentative body. They had done so for two reasons: first, given Crawford's considerable support in Congress, no one of the other candidates had much chance of controlling the caucus; and, second, the popular objection to this allegedly elitist form of presidential nomination was becoming increasingly strong. How, in this age of more and more strident demands for popular participation in the political process, the Crawfordites could seriously believe that a caucus nomination would do as much good as harm has never been satisfactorily answered. To some extent, they simply miscalculated public opinion,14 as many politicians, even bright ones, have done so often before and since. Then too, fearing that Crawford's candidacy lacked the strong popular base of, say, a Jackson's, they clung tenaciously to the caucus nomination, despite its potential problems, as their best chance of success. For his part, Crawford had had his mind fixed upon such a nomination for years, and it was hard for him to think in other terms now. He had been a strong contender for the caucus nomination back in 1816, and he had impatiently waited out the eight long years of the Monroe administration certain that he would be the caucus's next nominee, as he thought he surely

12 York (Pa.) Recorder, Feb. 3, 1824.
14 Gallatin once referred to his own candidacy as a "miscalculation." Walters, Gallatin, 325. See also Mooney, Crawford, 259.
deserved to be. Long before the actual caucus nomination of 1824 took place, the public sensed that Crawford and the caucus were inextricably wed. "The friends of Mr. Crawford, it will be observed, are consistent only in their clamors for a congressional nomination; all their hopes hang upon it, and if they fail in this, the jig's up with them." 15

Whatever the answer to the question of why the Crawford faction decided to go ahead with the caucus despite the threatened boycott of congressmen and the strong popular disapproval of the institution, from the moment they met, Gallatin's reputation, now so fused with Crawford's political fortunes, steadily declined. "From our youth upwards, we have always been taught to respect the name of Albert Gallatin," a North Carolinian declared upon hearing the news from Washington. But things had changed and the respect was gone, for Gallatin "has now lent his name to, and identified his political fortunes with, a party composed in a good degree of meritless aspirants and heartless demagogues." 16 A Rhode Island man agreed: "The nomination of Albert Gallatin to the Vice-Presidency, by the radical caucus, has justly roused the indignation of the great body of the people." 17

Over the course of the next several months, this general and unmistakable indignation took many forms. Of course, the opposition factions, through their political operatives and friendly newspaper editors, calculatingly encouraged the clamor. But even editors who had formerly had only good things to say about Gallatin now penned the most caustic appraisals of him. Ordinary citizens, assuming pen names, sent letters to newspapers describing their rage. Mass meetings were held, speeches made, and resolutions adopted. Out of all this there emerged at least six major themes. Carefully developed by those who opposed Gallatin's nomination, these themes revealed at least as much about the popular mind of America in 1824 as about Albert Gallatin and his "objective" qualifications.

The first, both in chronology and in continuing importance, was the anticaucus argument, in all its many guises and with all its many emphases. Some talked about what an unrepresentative procedure it had been that nominated the so-called National Candidates, since only sixty-six members of Congress, less than one-fourth the total, had bothered to attend. Moreover, it was alleged that seven of the eleven principals who called the meeting "stand directly opposed to the

15 Annapolis Maryland Gazette and Political Intelligencer, July 31, 1823.
16 Salisbury (N.C.) Western Carolinian, Mar. 9, 1824.
17 Providence Gazette, Mar. 3, 1824.
sentiments of the States they represent.” From ten of the twenty-four states, Crawford and Gallatin had received not a single caucus vote, and they had received a majority of only three states’ congressional delegations.\textsuperscript{18}

But the obviously unrepresentative character of the caucus was hardly the main point, others thought, for even a caucus more numerousely attended would still pose a great threat to popular liberty. Nominations by congressional caucus, so the argument went, amounted to nothing less than callous attempts to prescribe candidates for the people no matter what the people’s own preferences, thus divesting “them of one of the most important rights they have retained.” To acquiesce in the caucus nominations of Crawford and Gallatin, declared an angry gathering at Winchester, Virginia, would be to add the popular sanction to this wrongful arrogation of authority, making political despotism “inevitable.”\textsuperscript{19} There would be no such acquiescence, one Pennsylvanian opined. “The machinations of the caucus . . . to overthrow the constitution of our country, by creating a ‘central power’ subversive of the rights and votes of the people, have fortunately proved abortive.”\textsuperscript{20}

Abortive or not, the caucus and its nominees were held up to endless vituperation. “Two men less liked cannot be found in the country. Such is the wretched character of the Caucus Ticket.”\textsuperscript{21} In an Ohio paper there appeared an “OBITUARY NOTICE” for Old King Caucus. He had died, it seems, leaving a nuncupative will in favor of “his son William H. the chief scribe of the strong box, he being the only obedient child,” and the deceased monarch had “requested his son William H. to let a Swiss from Pennsylvania set [sic] in the chair on the right hand in his kingdom.”\textsuperscript{22} The author of an address directed to the people of Virginia preferred to make clear the perfidy involved in the caucus’s attempted usurpation with the use of Biblical instead of antimonarchical imagery. “The first regular caucus on record, since the beginning of the Christian era, is that described by St. Matthew, chap. xxvi. ver. 3 and 4.” That first “caucus,” it was recalled, had brought together the chief priests, scribes, and elders of the people, who plotted to take Jesus by subtlety and kill him. “The words of the Evangelist, have been adopted by the

\textsuperscript{18} Philadelphia National Gazette and Literary Register, July 30, 1824.
\textsuperscript{19} Philadelphia Columbian Observer, May 21, 1824.
\textsuperscript{20} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{21} “Christian German,” ibid., Oct. 23, 1824.
\textsuperscript{22} Wilmington (Ohio) Spectator, Apr. 10, 1824.
papers that support Mr. Crawford — they call the members of the last caucus ‘the elders of the people.’” 23

Friends of Crawford and Gallatin, obviously worried about the intensity and pervasiveness of the anticaucus reaction, tried to quiet the furor with counterarguments explaining and justifying the nominating procedure. “Its first result was the triumphant election of the man of the people, Thomas Jefferson. From that day to the present, no better expedient has been adopted.” 24 Jefferson, Madison, and Monroe — all were “caucus Presidents.” 25 Were men worried that so few members of Congress had attended the most recent caucus? Well, at no time in history had all Republicans in Congress attended such a gathering. “Let us not forget that all previous caucuses have been partially attended.” 26 Furthermore, in a five-man race, like the present one, no one could really expect a single candidate to get a majority of the members of Congress to support him. 27 And what was the alternative to the caucus? Wise men could surely see that the most likely result of not supporting the “regular” Republican nominees Crawford and Gallatin was a badly fragmented electoral tally that would send the contest to the House of Representatives for resolution. There the “dreadful scenes” of 1801 would be reenacted — “or worse.” 28 Was it not a fact that state legislatures, looking ahead to this election, had caucused and nominated, “yet they have not been denounced.” Why, then, was the older institution of congressional caucus exciting such wrath? Simply because of the pique of artful and designing candidates who would have believed in this mode of nomination with all their hearts had they been able to control it. 29

Who could condone “this lawless ambition” that put itself ahead of the welfare of the united Republican party? 30 “And this being proved, nothing more is wanting to convince the great body of Republicans, of the necessity of uniting in support of the regular nominations of CRAWFORD and GALLATIN, in order to insure an election by the People.” 31

But much was wanting indeed, for the overwhelming majority of

23 Philadelphia Columbian Observer, Aug. 23, 1824.
25 Kaskaskia (Ill.) Republican, May 11, 1824.
26 Philadelphia Democratic Press, Feb. 27, 1824.
27 Raleigh Register and North-Carolina State Gazette, Mar. 2, 1824.
30 Savannah Georgian, Feb. 26, 1824.
31 Raleigh Register and North-Carolina State Gazette, Mar. 2, 1824.
the people were never convinced. Hence the anticaucus clamor never ceased. The caucus, it was argued, had always been extraconstitutional and potentially dangerous, and the people had only allowed it to operate for as long as it selected the popular favorites as nominees—for as long, that is, as its nominations were actually just the ratifications of the people's own. This year, however, it had not worked out this way, and potential problems had thus become real ones. For many, as for the editor of a Winchester, Virginia, paper, the caucus objection was the objection to Crawford and Gallatin, transcending entirely the matter of how one might otherwise regard Crawford's running mate: "the question had settled down into caucus or no caucus. So that, let who will be associated with Mr. Crawford, this is the point which the people will be called on to determine." Any person, it seemed, even remotely connected with the caucus in this election year was in for nothing but trouble at the hands of an irate sovereign people. "The truth is that the Caucus, by nominating Mr. Gallatin, have reduced him to an awkward and painful situation."

As awkward and painful as it was for Gallatin to be pilloried in the press week after week as the illegitimate son of a tyrannical King Caucus, this was only the first of a whole series of strong objections raised to his candidacy. A second had to do with the Constitution's requirement that the president be a natural-born citizen of the United States. Could the Genevan be elected vice-president if he were ineligible to be elected president? Could he be constitutionally elected when, if fate called upon him to succeed, he might be barred from doing so? Most thought not. "How the caucussers [sic] should have happened to nominate Mr. Gallatin for Vice President, we are at a loss to discover," declared an Ohio man who viewed Gallatin's possible succession as clearly unconstitutional. An Alabama editor, unlike the Ohioan, was at absolutely no loss to see why Gallatin had been given the nod — it was to improve Crawford's sagging prospects in Pennsylvania. But what the scheming caucus faction had failed to discern was that "the people were not disposed to hazard one of the fundamental rules of the constitution."

Some not disposed to quibble over the constitutional question of Gallatin's eligibility per se still found him highly objectionable precisely because he was a foreigner. One patriot, using "VIRGINIUS" as

32 Knoxville Register, July 2, 1824.
33 Winchester (Va.) Republican, Oct. 29, 1824.
34 Philadelphia National Gazette and Literary Register, Oct. 22, 1824.
35 Chillicothe (Ohio) Friend of Freedom, Feb. 25, 1824.
36 Mobile Mercantile Advertiser, Nov. 17, 1824.
his pseudonym, thought "Mr. Gallatin may or may not be eligible; my preference would fall on many others as Vice President." Admittedly, Gallatin was able and patriotic, "but we have many native citizens in every way his equal and with me nativity turns the scale." 37 What "VIRGINIUS" said alone others said in mass meetings. At Bowling Greene, Georgia, in Crawford's own Oglethorpe County, over two hundred ardent Jackson partisans damned Crawford and his foreign running mate. Even "if Mr. Gallatin were in every way qualified, and his elevation to office would not be violating what we conceive to be the tenor and spirit of our constitution, yet, we object to it because it would be setting up a dangerous precedent, and one that might one day or other subject us to the controil [sic] of foreign influence." 38

Jackson men were not alone in raising the specter of foreign influence. Adams's friends found the theme very useful in combating the regional prejudice that existed in some parts of the country against their favorite. When southerners and westerners made unkind remarks regarding the possibility of having a president who was a "New England man" or a "Yankee," they were reminded by a pro-Adams gathering at Westmoreland Court House, Virginia, that there was actually a foreigner on one of the tickets. "Nor can we understand why Americans should be willing to take a President from Geneva, and yet object to one for being born in sight of Bunker's Hill!" 39

The hostility to Gallatin's nomination on account of his being a foreigner was a persistent theme with all the factions that opposed Crawford, and even some of Crawford's own supporters partially shared the view. Thus when the strongly pro-Crawford Virginia legislature met to confirm the caucus nominations of Crawford and Gallatin, there was a considerable debate regarding the latter candidate. While the Gallatin nomination was in fact confirmed by an overwhelming margin, some legislators had reportedly had to swallow their national pride in order to go along with the blatantly pragmatic plan of trying, through the use of Gallatin, to improve Crawford's prospects in Pennsylvania. Even so, one of the members who opposed Gallatin could not help saying that "he was sorry he had lived long

37 "VIRGINIUS," Clarksburg (Va.) Intelligencer, Mar. 20, 1824. See also "GHENT," Huntsville Alabama Republican, Oct. 8, 1824.
38 Milledgeville Georgia Journal, Oct. 5, 1824.
39 This rally and this eminently quotable remark were widely reported. See Philadelphia National Gazette and Literary Register, Aug. 2, 1824; Cumberland Maryland Advocate, Aug. 30, 1824; and Boston Degrand's Feuilleton, Sept. 18, 1824.
enough to see a foreigner nominated for so important an office.” 40 In other parts of the country as well, this Virginian’s qualms were shared by some of Crawford’s own followers. “Mr. Gallatin, though accomplished in all the qualifications of a statesman, is nevertheless a foreigner, and as such cannot receive the cordial and united support of all the friends of Mr. Crawford.” 41

However they might personally feel about the matter, Crawfordites finally had to face up to the fact that a man who could be dismissed as “a foreigner” was a serious liability in this age of patriotic politics. The Gallatin-as-foreigner theme had struck a most responsive chord. “This soil can raise Presidents and vice Presidents of itself. We have no occasion to resort to Geneva for our first officers, as the English have been obliged to go to Germany for kings.” 42 No, American patriots preferred “the vigorous offspring of our own dear soil.” 43 And even if Americans were unable to have presidents and vice-presidents of the home-grown variety, even if they were forced to resort to foreign climes — which was manifestly not the case — still Albert Gallatin ought to know that he would not be the man selected. In that hypothetical case, “let us take the Hero and the Patriot who, in the trying days of the Revolution, was found fighting by the side of Washington — who shed his blood, and spent his treasure, in the cause of American freedom — the brave and virtuous La Fayette!” 44

Gallatin was a caucus candidate. Most probably Gallatin was constitutionally ineligible for the office he sought. Gallatin was a foreigner. All this was heard again and again, but these three charges did not exhaust the strong indictment made of the candidate. A fourth theme had to do with Gallatin’s character and was, for one bitter critic, summed up in the uncomplimentary phrase, “the wily Genevan.” 45 According to this view, Gallatin was not a talented statesman who had served his country well throughout his life but who had now in his old age, perhaps somewhat innocently, allowed his name to be

40 Providence Gazette, Mar. 6, 1824.
41 Ibid., Oct. 16, 1824.
42 Harrisburg Chronicle, July 19, 1824. See also Petersburg (Va.) Republican, July 30, 1824.
43 Philadelphia Columbian Observer, Aug. 23, 1824.
used by the more designing men of the caucus faction. Instead, Gallatin himself now became an ambitious and unprincipled fellow, one who had cynically and consistently used for his own selfish ends the hospitality and good will of the America that had taken him in when he was an immigrant. An indignant North Carolina editor argued that since the Genevan had dared to put himself before the people "the whole character of the man should be developed." To this end, the editor promised to publish from time to time "such articles as may tend to exhibit, in its true colors, the political conduct of this aspiring foreigner, who covets the second office in the gift of the American people." This true Gallatin was concerned not about the country but about Gallatin. This Gallatin was not the once much-lauded, disinterested republican statesman: he "is just statesman enough to know, how to pick the 'Public Goose' to 'feather his own nest.'" In short, the foreign-born vice-presidential candidate may have had to his credit a long and fruitful public career in his adopted homeland, but in 1824 he was mimicked unmercifully as a "MONSIEUR GALLATIN" who could hardly speak English, and the phrase "MONSIEUR GALLATIN" became a term of derision from one end of the country to the other.

Gallatin's motivation for coming to America to begin with was now questioned. "He came to this country, a fortune hunter," declared the New-London Gazette. His European background was made to seem unsavory and his diplomatic talents were belittled. "Monsieur Gallatin . . . is notoriously the greatest intriguer in the United States." But, then, why should he not be? After all, he had been "educated in the school of Talleyrand." Gallatin's distinguished record of service was demeaned by innuendoes suggesting selfishness, impropriety, and even corruption in office. "He acquired riches in offices from which every one that has filled them before or since has retired poor; and this is a fact that will be noted by the people at the election." For going to Europe in 1813 on a peace-seeking mission without first formally stepping down from the secretaryship of the treasury, he was maligned. At a time when the warring American Republic faced great fiscal problems, one irate letter writer alleged,

46 Salisbury (N.C.) Western Carolinian, Mar. 9, 1824.
48 For examples, see Providence Gazette, Mar. 3, 6, 1824; Harrisburg Chronicle, July 19, 1824; Petersburg (Va.) Republican, July 30, 1824; and Salisbury (N.C.) Western Carolinian, Nov. 2, 1824.
49 Providence Gazette, Mar. 3, 1824.
50 Ibid.
51 Harrisburg Chronicle, July 19, 1824.
"the clamor ran, why is the former secretary, of whose talents we have heard so much, not at his post; but it was a question none could answer; all that any knew was, that having grown rich, the lord knows how, he had departed with the storm, and gone, the lord knew where." 52 For staying so long in Europe on peace missions and as minister to France, Gallatin was ridiculed. Everybody knew he had "retired with appointments of dignity to his native continent, and passed in the most luxurious capitals of Europe, and in the society of Kings and Nobles, the entire seasons of our national danger, our military struggles, and financial distress." 53 And why had Gallatin, obviously so enamored of Europe, bothered to come back to America in 1823 — or at all, for that matter? Always hungry for office, he had wanted something else for himself. "It is asserted, and with great shew [sic] of probability, that his return from France was occasioned by the belief that this country was in great need of his services, and could not do without them, and that he would at once be seated in the Governor's chair in Pennsylvania, or exalted of any office in the general government, short of the Presidency." 54 Note, cried one Virginian, that the covetous "Monsieur Gallatin" had not returned during the Panic of 1819 or the economic depression that followed it. "Embued [sic] with the spirit of modern philosophy, he is fond of ease and not averse to office, and the return of prosperity, brought this summer patriot back to our land." 55 Did this Albert Gallatin, now returned and now seeking the vice-presidency of the country he had abandoned, really believe his name would carry much weight with the American people? Why, such obvious vanity was laughable. "We humbly think Mr. Gallatin attaches more importance to his name than it is entitled to." 56

The American people, it was said, had a slightly different reception in mind for this vain, ungrateful, and perennially ambitious foreigner. "Hie back to your mountains at Geneva, and remember that though we have treated you, being a stranger, with all kindness and

52 "Wyoming," Philadelphia Columbian Observer, Sept. 6, 1824. "Wyoming" was one of the most famous political propagandists of the 1824 campaign. His original series of pro-Jackson letters had appeared in the Columbian Observer in 1823 and had been reprinted in pamphlet form and widely distributed in 1824. "Wyoming" was John Henry Eaton, Jackson's devoted friend, biographer, promoter, and fellow senator from Tennessee. See Robert P. Hay, "The Case for Andrew Jackson in 1824: Eaton's Wyoming Letters," Tennessee Historical Quarterly 29 (Summer 1970): 139-51.

53 Philadelphia Columbian Observer, Aug. 23, 1824.

54 York (Pa.) Recorder, Mar. 9, 1824.

55 Philadelphia Columbian Observer, Aug. 23, 1824.

56 Winchester (Va.) Republican, Oct. 29, 1824.
attention, we are not yet prepared to summon you to the second, perhaps in the course of nature's frailty to the first office in the government." 57 Clearly, for patriotic partisans in 1824, it was a case of Albert Gallatin's needing America a great deal more than it was a case of America's needing him. "The wily Genevan" had been roundly denounced.

Of the commonly heard objections to the Gallatin nomination, the fifth one concerned his allegedly nefarious role in the so-called Whiskey Rebellion of 1794. That "Rebellion" had been an episode in which aggrieved Pennsylvania farmers west of the mountains had refused to pay an excise tax that was a part of the hated Hamiltonian financial program. President Washington, insisting that federal law must be and would be enforced, had personally led a force into Pennsylvania as a show of his own determination and of the new federal government's power. Only then had the insurgents, to whom Gallatin was sympathetic, peaceably backed down. During the 1824 campaign, opponents recalled and embellished the incident, which now proved to be yet another liability to Gallatin's candidacy. Ignored was the fact that Gallatin's role in the Whiskey Rebellion was essentially that of a mediator. "Is this the same Albert Gallatin that acted Secretary to a meeting of disaffected distillers in Connellsville, Fayette co., Pa. in the fall of 1792 — and penned certain inflammatory resolutions denouncing the administration of Washington? and who was afterwards furnished with a military escort by the Father of our Liberties, to bring said Albert to Head Quarters at Carlisle?" 58 Sarcastically, critics referred to "Albert Gallatin . . . of whiskey insurrection memory" 59 and rhetorically asked "to be informed if the part he took in that western conspiracy against the laws of our country is his chief recommendation" for the second highest office in the land. 60 Nor, insisted Gallatin's seemingly indefatigable detractors, were they about to be silenced by suggestions that this had been a rather trivial incident and was, in any case, something that had happened more than thirty years before. No, Gallatin had committed treason or something close to it and had opposed the godlike Washington in the process. The American people must never forget! Base to an "unholy and unprecedented" degree were these efforts to elevate to the vice-presidency "such a man as Albert Gallatin, who is attainted of the foulest political crime

58 Washington Republican, Feb. 17, 1824.
59 Easton (Md.) Gazette, July 17, 1824.
60 Providence Gazette, Mar. 3, 1824.
known to the laws of any country" and who had acted "at the expense of the fair fame of our revered WASHINGTON."  

Inevitably, given the circumstances of the case, Gallatin the insurrectionist became Gallatin the antagonist of Washington, and at that point one of the most fundamental themes of early American nationalism — the goodness and the greatness of the Father of his Country — could be invoked and used for partisan purposes, and it was. The Whiskey Rebellion trivial? The matchless Washington had not thought the incident trivial. Hence his message to Congress at the time. Hence his personally leading the force of several thousand men. Hence the million dollars and more of expense connected with the expedition. On the other hand, let no one suggest that the federal government headed by Washington had overreacted or used too much force. Beware these attempts "to transfer the odium of the Pennsylvania insurrection from Albert Gallatin to Gen. WASHINGTON."  

Alas, the sacred name had been blasphemed. "Yes, fellow-citizens, the name and motives of our beloved Washington must be tarnished, in order to smooth over the character and conduct of Albert Gallatin!!"  

Was there no limit to the means that these covetous caucites would employ in trying to attain their ends? "This question has in part, been answered. — When thought necessary for their purposes, the minions of King Caucus, unblushingly disturb the ashes of Washington, and with unholy hands insult the 'mighty dead.'"  

Though not the most frequently stated indictment, in some ways the Gallatin-as-enemy-of-Washington theme was the most emotionally charged one of all. For here Americans were being told that opposition to Albert Gallatin was one of the best ways of demonstrating in 1824 that they were still capable of being the faithful guardians of Washington's reputation. To most American patriots, who saw themselves morally and politically as the sons of Washington, discharging that obligation seemed a sacred thing, bound up, as it was, so inextricably with the whole conception of American national destiny and purpose. With this emotion-laden charge, the indictment of Albert Gallatin was complete.

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62 "AMERICA," ibid.
63 "TRUE AMERICAN," ibid., Sept. 21, 1824.
64 "BRUSHY MOUNTAINS," ibid., Oct. 26, 1824. In a sense, it is not hyperbolical to say that George Washington long ruled the American people from the grave. References to Washington during the 1824 campaign were multitudinous, with every faction seeking to demonstrate that it was the true heir of the Father of his Country. See Robert P. Hay, "The Presidential Question": Letters to Southern Editors, 1823-24," Tennessee Historical Quarterly 31 (Summer 1972): 170-86.
The case against Gallatin was a mixture of fact, self-serving political rhetoric, innuendo, gross distortion, and outright falsehood. But the combination, however curious from a logical point of view and however unfair to Gallatin personally, was a powerful one. It was an indictment that at once reflected and influenced American public opinion in 1824. At the hands of image-makers from many diverse and often warring political factions, Gallatin, indeed, had become a kind of negative symbol for the American people, the embodiment of much of what they most feared and most opposed: a caucus system or any political institution that threatened to frustrate the people's will or to violate the hallowed principle of popular sovereignty; violations of a Constitution thought to represent the epitome of human political sagacity and deemed to be the model for all the world; the curse of foreign influence; a politics of intrigue that put the candidate's ambitions ahead of the country's welfare; and any course of action at variance with the laws of the nation or with the principles of the Father of his Country.

Along the way, as this anti-Gallatin monolith was being formed, some, pleading elementary fairness, had gone on record as objecting to this theme or that. The numbers of Gallatin's defenders were relatively few, however, probably amounting to no more than 10 to 20 percent of those who wrote editorials, attended mass meetings, sent letters to newspaper editors, or otherwise expressed themselves publicly on the matter. Even before Gallatin was formally nominated, a writer in the pro-Crawford Richmond Enquirer, anticipating American chauvinism, had tried to defuse the Gallatin-as-foreigner charge. An alien? "Domiciliated" in America before the nation's independence was recognized, Gallatin was no alien. Besides, of "the plea of alienage" it could properly be said that all Americans born before the Revolution had been born subjects of a "foreign" power.65 Over in Missouri one letter writer wanted to know just how Gallatin "had fattened almost to surfeiting on our treasury," as the Jacksonians of that state had charged;66 and another Missourian wondered how anyone could be so unfair as to accuse the faithful Gallatin of leaving his station and abandoning his country during the hour of danger.67 Did people forget that Albert Gallatin had been there in 1798 and 1799, those times that truly tried men's Republican souls, "opposing the mad career of John Adams' administration" and its would-be Federal-

66 "NO BODY'S MAN," St. Louis Missouri Republican, May 24, 1824.
67 "A FARMER," ibid.
ist tyranny. Had men forgotten what Patrick Henry, noted for "his quick and true discernment of characters, and his prescience of political events." had said about Gallatin many years ago? Henry had declared him to be the best informed and most sensible person he had ever met, altogether "a most astonishing man!" And surely in 1824 he was preferable to the younger, less experienced John C. Calhoun, the only other major contender for the vice-presidency. "Is it too much to reward this distinguished man, with the Vice Presidency of the United States?" asked Virginia supporters, after they had recounted once more Gallatin's many services to the Republic. But those who asked such questions were few, and those who answered them were many. Yes, it was too much, came back the thunderous reply. Gallatin simply had no further claim upon the gratitude and affections of the American people. "Already has the American government, done a hundred-fold more for him than he ever did for the country."

Woven together, the various strands of the anti-Gallatin case amounted to an almost irresistible political force. Things were going so badly for Gallatin's nomination by the summer that there were rumors that he would be dropped from the Crawford ticket, perhaps to be replaced by Henry Clay. By the early fall, Gallatin's formal withdrawal from the ticket seemed the only viable course left open to him. Consequently, on October 2, he wrote this one-sentence letter to the management of the Richmond Enquirer: "Understanding that the withdrawal of my name may have a favorable effect on the result of the approaching election of president and vice-president of the United States, I request that I may no longer be considered as a candidate for the office of vice-president. A. GALLATIN." The letter was not published until mid-October, however, and it circulated from newspaper to newspaper at a snail's pace. Some Americans,

68 "AMERICANUS," Tuscaloosa (Ala.) American Mirror, June 26, 1824.
69 Kaskaskia (Ill.) Republican, May 11, 1824.
70 Carlisle (Pa.) Gazette, Mar. 2, 1824.
71 Charles-Town (Va) Farmers' Repository, Sept. 1, 1824.
73 Boston Columbian Centinel, July 31, 1824.
74 Richmond Enquirer, Oct. 19, 1824. Gallatin was apparently relieved that the long ordeal was finally over. True, he had confided to his wife in January 1824 that, while he did not want the office, still he would dislike being proposed but not elected. Mooney, Crawford, 275, note 18. But the candidacy had proved to be more than he bargained for, a great strain on the whole family. James Gallatin wrote in his diary on October 15, 1824: "Greatly to the relief of us all, greatly to the relief of father himself, he has been able to withdraw from the candidature of Vice-President." Gallatin, ed., Diary of James Gallatin, 251.
therefore, went to the polls not knowing that the much-maligned Gallatin was in fact no longer a candidate.\textsuperscript{75}

Many Americans, though, had learned about Gallatin's decision by the eve of the election, and they were nothing short of elated. "KING CAUCUS BLOWN UP!" blared out the headline in one New York paper.\textsuperscript{76} But not even a formal withdrawal could incline Gallatin's many enemies to forgive and forget. Instead, newspaper editors, in announcing the good news, used the occasion to speculate about why "Monsieur" had withdrawn and to attack him once again. A Philadelphia paper scoffed at the suggestions of Crawfordites that Gallatin had voluntarily withdrawn because of ill health and the infirmities of old age. "What is called a \textit{spontaneous}, voluntary resignation will better bear any other epithets." \textsuperscript{77} The truth, according to a Marylander, was that Gallatin, put on the ticket to be a "make-weight," had in fact become such a "dead-weight" that the Crawford crowd simply had to do something with him, "so they got him to think himself old and decrepit, and to resign." \textsuperscript{78} The caucus managers had simply found that "Monsieur's" name did not produce the magic effect intended. "It was a bribe held out to Pennsylvania; but that truly republican state would not be caught with the bait." These caucus managers had then struck the Genevan's name from the vice-presidential list, it was charged, "and now hold that office in market, for the man who will give the most for it." \textsuperscript{79} Some rumors still pointed to Henry Clay as the caucus faction's new vice-presidential nominee. "But as the bait would not take in Pennsylvania, so we imagine it will not be swallowed in Kentucky." \textsuperscript{80} Whatever came next, Gallatin's caucus friends would continue to bear watching, since their political chicanery seemed unceasing. In Philadelphia it was even alleged that "the wily Genevan" had only withdrawn his name, but with the clear understanding that he would still receive the ballots of any caucus men who won a place in the Electoral College. "This is really a pretty finesse." \textsuperscript{81}

\textit{There} was no such elaborate ploy as all that, a New Yorker

\textsuperscript{75} A Tuscaloosa paper, for instance, did not carry the letter until November 13, several days after Alabamans had voted. \textit{Tuscaloosa} (Ala.) \textit{American Mirror}, Nov. 13, 1824.

\textsuperscript{76} \textit{Watertown} (N.Y.) \textit{Freeman's Advocate}, Oct. 29, 1824.

\textsuperscript{77} \textit{Philadelphia National Gazette and Literary Register}, Oct. 22, 1824.

\textsuperscript{78} \textit{Easton} (Md.) \textit{Gazette}, Oct. 30, 1824.

\textsuperscript{79} \textit{Salisbury} (N.C.) \textit{Western Carolinian}, Nov. 2, 1824. See also \textit{New Bern} (N.C.) \textit{Carolina Sentinel}, Oct. 23, 1824; and \textit{Mobile} (Ala.) \textit{Mercantile Advertiser}, Nov. 17, 1824.

\textsuperscript{80} \textit{Winchester} (Va.) \textit{Republican}, Oct. 29, 1824.

\textsuperscript{81} \textit{Philadelphia Columbian Observer}, Oct. 23, 1824.
decided. The real truth was that Gallatin had not been "dropped" but in fact had himself "bolted." Sensing the popular indignation against the caucus faction, "he has given up in despair, and has abandoned the sinking ship of the Crawfordites. This is ominous of the downfall of King Caucus and his whole tribe, in state and nation. . . . Let the people then rise in their might, and crush the caucus monster forever." 82 Perhaps the old axiom of better late than never could be applied to Gallatin's facing up to the truth; but, on the other hand, if "Monsieur Gallatin" had been as intelligent as his friends contended, then it would not have taken him so many months to see what any man except "a blind supporter of the Caucus usurpation" could have seen last February 14: "that he hung as a millstone about the neck of his friend Mr. Crawford." 83

Whatever they might think about Gallatin's precise motivation in withdrawing, whatever their version of the true story of the "dumping" or the "bolt," the American people were inclined to shout one last, loud, and long "good riddance" at Gallatin as he quit the ticket. "Mr. Gallatin pleads his own bodily decrepitude, to which we all add his mental, moral and political decrepitude, and as he asks for dismissal [sic], the whole nation respond, Go." 84 The words of the American adieu were blunt, but they conveyed their message effectively, and they well symbolized the tone of the whole campaign. All in all, it had been a thunderous and humiliating rejection for Gallatin. Before the election officially took place, the American people had voted — not with ballots but with words. And they had voted no.

Despite the contentions of October's gleeful victors, it would have been hard for anyone back in February to imagine the breadth and depth of the opposition that would develop to Gallatin's nomination. Certainly Gallatin himself, along with the other Crawfordites, had badly miscalculated public opinion, for no man would have been inclined knowingly to subject himself to the sort of verbal drubbing that was to be Gallatin's fate. The Crawfordites had expected to encounter some popular opposition no matter who their choice of a vice-presidential running mate, for Crawford admittedly lacked as strong a base as a Jackson or even an Adams, despite the Georgian's standing with many members of Congress, with ambitious politicos like Martin Van Buren, and with respected Republican patriarchs like Jefferson and Madison. But there was little if anything in the past

82 Watertown (N.Y.) Freeman's Advocate, Oct. 29, 1824.
84 Easton (Md.) Gazette, Oct. 30, 1824.
quarter century of American politics to prepare one for this.

For good reason, presidential races always eclipsed vice-presidential ones. Given the largely ceremonial nature of the vice-presidency, it seemed entirely reasonable for the Crawfordites to do what the Jeffersonians had done before them: to add a "make-weight" to the ticket, a person who, in return for his being honored with the nomination, would help the would-be president carry this crucial state or that important political faction. In this regard, as it turned out, Gallatin was no help at all. It may well be that Crawford enjoyed more support in Pennsylvania before Gallatin was added to the ticket than afterwards. Of the more than 47,000 popular votes cast in Gallatin's home state, Crawford received only slightly more than 4,000. Andrew Jackson waltzed away with the state, taking three-quarters of the votes cast there.85

Aside from their role as "make-weights" in certain localities, vice-presidential contenders were rather shadowy figures. Nationwide they were not supposed to receive much attention, certainly not the kind of adverse publicity that was Gallatin's daily fare for many months. But the vice-presidential nominee was not going to just slip by relatively unnoticed in 1824. There were several reasons for this. There was, to begin with, some sense that the vice-presidency was more important an office than it had commonly been imagined. Here and there, letter writers made this point. After all, there might be a succession. None had done so yet, but a president might one day die in office.86 Or given this year's crowded presidential field, the election might well wind up in the House of Representatives; and should there prove to be a permanent deadlock there, as the election of 1800-1801 with its thirty-six ballots had suggested there might one day be, then the man who was vice-president as of March 4, 1825, would serve as chief magistrate.87 Even if there were no succession, the vice-president might increasingly be called upon to break tie votes in the Senate, given the virulent sectionalism plaguing the land and the even split of United States senators from slaveholding and nonslaveholding states.88

What gave considerable credibility to these pleas that the vice-presidency be taken more seriously in 1824, however, was not some

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85 Philadelphia National Gazette and Literary Register, Nov. 18, 1824.
86 "SEVENTY-SIX," Frederick-Town (Md.) Herald, June 26, 1824.
87 "A NATIVE CITIZEN," Hagers-Town (Md.) Torch Light and Public Advertiser, July 13, 1824. The same letter also appeared in the Frederick-Town (Md.) Herald, July 17, 1824.
sudden shift in the public's conception of the nature of that office but the particular circumstance of Crawford's delicate health. Crawford had suffered a partially debilitating stroke in 1823 and was the object of endless speculation for the whole time Gallatin was in the race. Opponents of the caucus ticket contended that a vote for Crawford was really a vote for Gallatin. Thus this year the vice-presidential candidate could hardly be ignored. "If Mr. Crawford has not been able for the last twelve months to attend to the duties of Secretary of the Treasury, are we not justified in apprehending he will not be able to discharge those of President, and that his election would be actually the election of Mr. Gallatin?" 89 "To support Mr. Crawford, is therefore impossible in fact; the REAL candidate of the caucus is ALBERT GALLATIN." 90

Because of the circumstances of his background, because of the manner of his nomination, because of the condition of Crawford's health, and, most of all, because of the state of the American political climate of the day, candidate Gallatin became, as has been noted, the human representation of much of what Americans of the early 1820s most ardently opposed. In one important sense, the Gallatin that was pilloried so unmercifully in 1824 was not the flesh-and-blood Gallatin so much as he was the Gallatin created by bitterly and even unfairly partisan but still ardently patriotic Americans. For an America in the process of making Andrew Jackson the "symbol for an age," 91 Gallatin, ironically, had emerged as a sort of negative human symbol, if not for an age then at least for an election.

This, of course, is how it may be seen with the perspective of a century and a half and more. But for the real Gallatin in 1824, it must have seemed not symbolic at all but very real and very painful — one of the most humiliating episodes of his long and useful life. There was,

89 Philadelphia National Gazette and Literary Register, Aug. 2, 1824.
90 Philadelphia Columbian Observer, Aug. 7, 1824. The idea that this might be a good way, indeed the only way, for Gallatin to achieve the presidency had, in fact, occurred to the Gallatins and to others in the Crawfordite camp. His most recent biographer speaks of Gallatin's own "frustration in not being able, because of foreign birth, to attain higher office in any other way," Walters, Gallatin, 325. And James Gallatin noted in his diary that his father's vice-presidential bid "really was nothing more than a hope of his party that should Mr. Crawford have been elected President his health would have obliged him to withdraw, and father would have been head of the State. Of course his birth disqualified him for standing for the Presidency, and this was the only means of putting him in that position." Gallatin, ed., Diary of James Gallatin, 251.
91 John William Ward, Andrew Jackson: Symbol for an Age (New York, 1955). What Ward suggests about human symbolism would seem to be applicable both to those cast as heroes and those cast as villains.
in Gallatin's day, much made of the theme of republican ingratitude, some seeming propensity of republican systems not to reward or honor sufficiently those who had labored hardest and longest in the public interest. On more than one occasion, this unhappy vice-presidential campaign of 1824 must have seemed to Albert Gallatin that old principle of republican ingratitude teaching by example — teaching powerfully, even brutally, by example.

To be sure, Gallatin's distinguished and variegated career did not suddenly end in 1824. Fully a quarter-century of life still lay ahead. Gallatin would go on to serve briefly as American minister to England in the John Quincy Adams administration. Ahead, too, lay such things as the presidency of the National Bank of New York and the founding of the American Ethnological Society. But Gallatin's attempts to achieve elective office did come to a close in 1824, and the unexpectedly hostile public response to his vice-presidential nomination had played the major role in his decision never to stand again as a candidate before the sovereign people. As Gallatin's foremost modern biographer puts it, this had been "the sorriest episode in Gallatin's public life," and Gallatin had "learned his lesson; he never again sought elective office." 92

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92 Walters, Gallatin, 251.