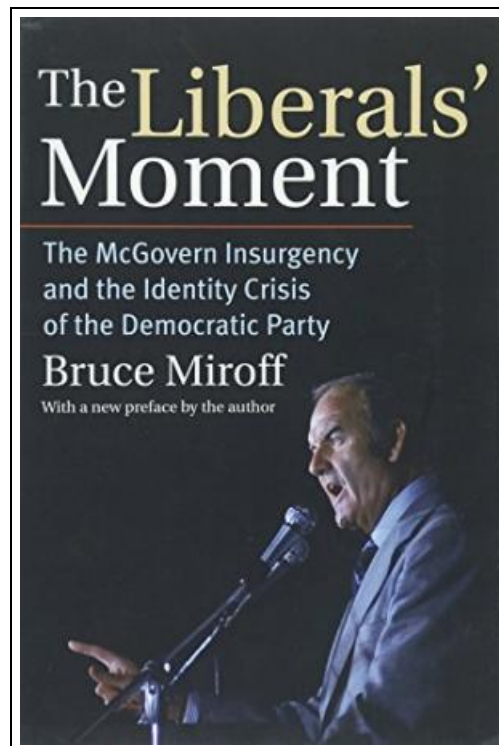


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(Sonny Bergstrom)

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University Press of Kansas, United States, 2009. Paperback. Condition: New. Language: English . Brand New Book. When George McGovern lost the 1972 presidential election, Richard Nixon's landslide victory buried more than an insurgent campaign. In resurrecting the largely forgotten story of McGovern's remarkable presidential bid, Bruce Miroff reveals how his crushing defeat produced an identity crisis for liberals torn between their convictions and the political calculations required to win elections—a dilemma for Democrats that has never gone away. Miroff follows the campaign from its surprising rise to its catastrophic fall to remind us how a dark-horse candidate captured the nomination—and then disastrously chose a running mate with a hidden past. Drawing on interviews with dozens of participants—including McGovern himself—who share a wealth of anecdotes and insights, Miroff traces the insurgency to the political struggles of the sixties, explores McGovern's ideology, and assesses the Republican attack politics that linked McGovern to acid, amnesty, and abortion. Miroff shows how the transformative election of 1972 signaled a major shift in the Democratic base—from urban blue-collar New Dealers to suburban, issue-oriented activists (feminists and gay rights advocates among them)—as the party shed its Cold War past and embraced an antiwar orientation. He also illuminates how the McGovern campaign mastered the new game of presidential primaries and explores the formative experiences of a generation of talented young political actors, including campaign manager Gary Hart, political newcomer Bill Clinton, and future party strategists Bob Shrum and John Podesta. In excavating the 1972 landslide, he follows the subsequent careers of the young McGovernites and describes the loss's effects on later Democratic presidential campaigns. By tracing the transformation of American liberalism and sixties idealism from their political crash in 1972 to the muddled centrism of the twenty-first century, *The Liberals Moment* shows what the...

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