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*Legislative Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 17, No. 3. (Aug., 1992), pp. 365-379.

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*Legislative Studies Quarterly* is currently published by Comparative Legislative Research Center.

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## ***The Effect of Black Population On Electing Democrats and Liberals To the House of Representatives***

We examine the relationships between black population and congressional liberalism over three decades, disaggregated by region (South, non-South). We show that different types of constituency effects have applied in different periods and in different regions of the country. Our work is unique in looking at the potential political implications of districting schemes that either concentrate or disperse black population across congressional districts. We show how such redistricting choices might be expected to affect mean congressional liberalism and to affect the likelihood that Democrats will be elected to the House of Representatives in the 1990s. We also explore the claim that creating majority black districts reduces the mean policy liberalism of Congress by leading to Republican and conservative gains in districts that have been stripped of black voters.

The question of how black population affects congressional liberalism is of considerable practical importance as we enter the 1990s round of redistricting. As a result of litigation under the 14th Amendment and under the Voting Rights Act of 1965 as amended in 1982 and as a result of actions by the Justice Department under the preclearance provisions of the Voting Rights Act, there has been considerable pressure to create majority black congressional districts where possible and in general to avoid fragmenting black population concentrations (Davidson 1984; Parker 1990; Grofman and Handley 1992). But the claim has been made that concentrating blacks will reduce the expected number of Democrats elected to Congress (cf. Brace, Grofman, and Handley 1987) and reduce the average liberalism of House members (Thernstrom 1987; William Keech, personal communication, May 1990; cf. *Seaman v. Upham* 563 F. Supp. 396 [1983]). If concentrating black population would lead to the defeat of

(white) liberals in adjacent districts, then the price of electing black members to the House could be reduced support for a liberal social agenda of concern to black voters.

Many authors have examined the effect of constituency characteristics on the roll-call voting of House or Senate members.<sup>1</sup> The issue of how the percentage of the district population that is black affects congressional liberalism and support for civil rights goes back to Key (1949).<sup>2</sup> Previous literature makes four predictions about the relationship between black population in a congressional district and election results.

First, the Downsian model predicts that an increase in the black voting population makes the representative from that district more liberal. This prediction follows from the assumption that blacks are liberal and the theorem that representatives track the preferences of the median voter in their districts (Downs 1957). Second, following Key (1949, 380), the argument is made that a large black population can fuel racial fears in the white electorate. Because of this backlash from racist whites, black population should have a negative effect on liberalism. Heavily black districts will elect conservative representatives, as white voters band together to stop the candidate supported by blacks. The third claim follows Keech's (1968) modification of Key's analysis. He uses data following the rise in black registration in the South in the 1960s and finds a curvilinear pattern. Heavily black districts elect conservative legislators, until the black population grows sufficiently large that the black electorate determines the winner, but districts with few blacks will be more liberal than other southern districts. Recent work (e.g., Bullock 1985) supports this curvilinear model. Finally, the racial makeup of a district may have less effect on legislative voting than party, region, or other variables, such as urbanism. Swain (1989, 190), using data for the 98th through 100th Congresses, finds that "party and region are the most important variables," while the "race of the member and the district's percentage black are the least important." Indeed, in Swain's multivariate analyses the coefficient of black population is positive but statistically insignificant in each of these congresses.

This note examines the partisan and ideological effects that might be expected in the 1990s round of congressional redistricting if districts were created with majority black or near-majority black populations. First, however, we examine the changing relationships between black population and congressional liberalism over the course of three decades, controlling for party and region. Our aim here is to reconcile conflicting findings in the literature by showing that each of the four

hypotheses identified above has been true for particular regions, particular parties, or particular periods.<sup>3</sup>

### Data

We use data from the 1960, 1970, and 1980 censuses and House roll-call data from 1961, 1971, 1981, and 1989; the data span four periods of congressional redistricting.<sup>4</sup> Our first dependent variable is the party of the winning representative, and the second is a roll-call measure of generalized congressional liberalism. To get comparable roll-call data over the four decades, we rely primarily on ADA scores, a series that began in 1947.<sup>5</sup> Table 1 shows the percentage of the House districts in each black population category that elected a Democratic representative in 1960, 1970, 1980 and 1988, broken down by region. It also shows the correlation between black population and Democratic success for each subset of districts. Table 2 shows the mean ADA scores in the House districts grouped according to the black population in the district, broken down by region and by party. It also shows the correlation between black population and ADA score for each subset of districts.

### Hypotheses and Results

Inspired in part by Williams (1989), we posit that the racial composition of a district has both a direct and an indirect effect on congressional liberalism. The direct effect is on whether a Democrat or a Republican represents the district. The party affiliation of the representative can have a large influence, since, contrary to the simple Downsian model, Democrats are much more liberal than Republicans from the same geographic constituency.<sup>6</sup> The indirect effect is on the liberalism of the person elected, controlling for party.

First, let us look at the direct effect of black population on congressional liberalism. Would increasing the proportion black in the district increase the likelihood that a Democrat will be elected? Here we anticipate both regional variation and variation over time. Outside the South we anticipate a straightforward positive relationship. In the South, we expect to see such a positive pattern in 1961, but not necessarily thereafter. By 1971 the Democratic near-lock on southern congressional seats has ended. In 1971 and after, we should expect the effects of white defections from the Democratic party to be most heavily felt in districts with few blacks. In such districts the increasing white support for Republicans could not be offset by black registration

TABLE 1  
 Percentage of Congressional Districts Electing Democrats, by the  
 Proportion of the District Population That Is Black  
 (numbers of districts in parentheses)

Districts	Proportion of District Population That Is Black						Mean Percentage Democratic	B
	0-10%	10-20%	20-30%	30-40%	40-50%	>50%		
<b>All</b>								
1960	45 (292)	80 (51)	96 (47)	100 (26)	100 (14)	100 (6)	60	.43
1970	47 (277)	64 (56)	90 (49)	79 (34)	100 (9)	100 (10)	59	.34
1980	44 (274)	68 (69)	76 (34)	71 (31)	90 (10)	100 (16)	56	.32
1988	50 (288)	71 (72)	73 (33)	88 (17)	100 (5)	100 (15)	59	.21
<b>Non-South</b>								
1960	40 (261)	72 (25)	87 (15)	100 (7)	100 (5)	100 (4)	48	.33
1970	44 (243)	66 (32)	89 (18)	100 (9)	100 (4)	100 (10)	53	.32
1980	42 (237)	70 (37)	82 (11)	100 (9)	100 (5)	100 (14)	52	.35
1988	50 (242)	81 (36)	100 (6)	100 (3)	100 (5)	100 (11)	57	.34
<b>South</b>								
1960	84 (31)	88 (26)	100 (32)	100 (19)	100 (9)	100 (2)	93	.26
1970	65 (34)	63 (24)	90 (31)	72 (25)	100 (5)		74	.21
1980	59 (37)	66 (32)	74 (23)	59 (22)	80 (5)	100 (2)	65	.12 <sup>a</sup>
1988	54 (46)	61 (36)	67 (27)	86 (14)		100 (4)	64	.19

<sup>a</sup> Not significant at the .05 level.

gains that increase support for Democrats. On the other hand, districts that are 30 to 40% black may be more likely to fall into Republican hands than districts that have either a slightly smaller proportion of blacks (but where whites maintain clear control of the Democratic party and nominate conservative candidates) or a larger proportion (where black votes alone, with only token white crossover, will be sufficient to elect Democrats). This discussion leads us to the following hypotheses.

TABLE 2  
Average ADA Score of Members of Congress, by the Proportion of  
the District Population That Is Black  
(numbers of districts in parentheses)

Members	Proportion of District Population That Is Black						Mean Score	B
	0-10%	10-20%	20-30%	30-40%	40-50%	>50%		
<b>All</b>								
1961	46 (292)	56 (50)	43 (47)	51 (26)	45 (14)	77 (6)	48	.07 <sup>a</sup>
1971	39 (277)	41 (56)	39 (49)	31 (34)	32 (9)	78 (10)	40	.07 <sup>a</sup>
1981	38 (273)	41 (69)	41 (34)	30 (31)	59 (10)	86 (16)	40	.22
1989	47 (287)	52 (72)	46 (33)	46 (17)	87 (5)	88 (15)	50	.21
<b>Non-Southern</b>								
1961	46 (261)	71 (25)	86 (15)	97 (7)	92 (5)	100 (4)	53	.33
1971	42 (243)	61 (32)	69 (18)	85 (9)	69 (4)	78 (10)	48	.32
1981	40 (236)	60 (37)	68 (11)	71 (9)	82 (5)	86 (14)	47	.38
1989	50 (241)	74 (36)	95 (6)	85 (3)	87 (5)	90 (11)	56	.34
<b>Southern</b>								
1961	45 (31)	41 (25)	23 (32)	34 (19)	19 (9)	30 (2)	34	-.27
1971	22 (34)	14 (24)	22 (31)	12 (25)	3 (5)		18	-.16 <sup>a</sup>
1981	23 (37)	18 (32)	28 (23)	13 (22)	36 (5)	83 (2)	22	.15 <sup>a</sup>
1989	34 (46)	30 (36)	35 (27)	38 (14)		84 (4)	35	.19
<b>Democrats</b>								
1961	85 (131)	68 (40)	44 (45)	51 (26)	45 (14)	77 (6)	69	-.36
1971	60 (129)	52 (36)	43 (44)	38 (27)	32 (9)	78 (10)	53	-.12 <sup>a</sup>
1981	63 (120)	51 (47)	49 (26)	39 (22)	66 (9)	86 (16)	59	.05 <sup>a</sup>
1989	77 (144)	69 (51)	61 (24)	51 (15)	87 (5)	88 (15)	73	-.03 <sup>a</sup>

TABLE 2 (cont.)  
 Average ADA Score of Members of Congress, by the Proportion of  
 the District Population That Is Black  
 (numbers of districts in parentheses)

Members	Proportion of District Population That Is Black						Mean Score	B
	0-10%	10-20%	20-30%	30-40%	40-50%	>50%		
<b>Republicans</b>								
1961	15 (161)	9 (10)	20 (2)				15	.01 <sup>a</sup>
1971	21 (148)	21 (20)	7 (5)	6 (7)			20	-.16
1981	17 (153)	18 (22)	13 (8)	8 (9)	0 (1)		17	-.12 <sup>a</sup>
1989	17 (143)	12 (21)	6 (9)	13 (2)			16	-.11 <sup>a</sup>
<b>Non-Southern Democrats</b>								
1961	93 (105)	93 (18)	96 (13)	97 (7)	92 (5)	100 (4)	93	.15 <sup>a</sup>
1971	66 (107)	76 (21)	76 (16)	85 (9)	69 (4)	78 (10)	70	.18
1981	70 (98)	73 (26)	78 (9)	71 (9)	82 (5)	86 (14)	73	.21
1989	81 (119)	86 (29)	95 (6)	85 (3)	87 (5)	90 (11)	83	.17
<b>Non-Southern Republicans</b>								
1961	15 (156)	13 (7)	20 (2)				15	.05 <sup>a</sup>
1971	23 (136)	32 (11)	9 (2)				23	.06 <sup>a</sup>
1981	18 (138)	28 (11)	23 (2)				19	.14 <sup>a</sup>
1989	19 (122)	25 (7)					19	.26 <sup>a</sup>
<b>Southern Democrats</b>								
1961	53 (26)	47 (22)	23 (32)	34 (19)	19 (9)	30 (2)	36	-.37
1971	29 (22)	19 (15)	24 (28)	14 (18)	3 (5)		21	-.25
1981	33 (22)	24 (21)	34 (17)	17 (13)	45 (4)	83 (2)	30	.13 <sup>a</sup>
1989	58 (25)	46 (22)	49 (18)	42 (12)		84 (4)	52	.05 <sup>a</sup>

TABLE 2 (cont.)  
Average ADA Score of Members of Congress, by the Proportion of  
the District Population That Is Black  
(numbers of districts in parentheses)

Members	Proportion of District Population That Is Black						Mean Score	B
	0-10%	10-20%	20-30%	30-40%	40-50%	>50%		
Southern Republicans								
1961	8 (5)	0 (3)					5	-.44 <sup>a</sup>
1971	9 (12)	7 (9)	6 (3)	6 (7)			8	-.25 <sup>a</sup>
1981	8 (15)	7 (11)	9 (6)	8 (9)	0 (1)		8	.00 <sup>a</sup>
1989	7 (21)	6 (14)	6 (9)	13 (2)			7	.05 <sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Not significant at the .05 level.

*Hypothesis 1:* Outside the South, the greater the proportion black in a district, the more likely it is that a Democrat will be elected from that district.

*Hypothesis 2:* In the South, the greater the proportion black in a district, the more likely it is that a Democrat will be elected from that district, except that, in 1971 and thereafter, there may be curvilinearity such that districts that are either 20 to 30% black or more than 40% black are more likely to elect Democrats than are districts that are 30 to 40% black.

Turning to the data shown in Table 1, we find that, in the House as a whole for all four periods, the higher the proportion of blacks in the district, the greater the likelihood of electing a Democrat. However, the national pattern conceals some variation by region and period, with the expectations of hypotheses 1 and 2 largely confirmed. Outside the South over all four reapportionment periods and in the South in 1960 and 1988 the national pattern is replicated—that is, the probability that a Democrat wins increases as the black population increases. However, in the South, in 1970 and 1980, we find a curvilinear pattern, with Republicans more likely to win in districts 30 to 40% black than in districts 20 to 30% black.

Now we turn to the indirect effect of black population on congressional liberalism, the effect that remains even after we control for the party affiliation of the representative. Like Shapiro et al. (1990) and some other authors (e.g., Bullock and Brady 1983), we believe that

the electoral constituency (including, most importantly, the party constituency) will be more important than the geographic constituency in shaping the voting behavior of congressional representatives, even though the former will also have some impact. Because, in the time period under consideration, blacks were a regular part of Democratic electoral coalitions but almost never part of Republican coalitions, we expect that the racial composition of a district will significantly affect the liberalism of Democrats but not of Republicans.

*Hypothesis 3:* For Republican members of Congress, there will be no strong relationship between the district's percentage of blacks and liberalism either in the South or outside the South at any time.

When we confine ourselves to Democratic members of Congress, however, we anticipate strong regional differences as well as changes over time in the link between liberalism and black population. We expect differences between the South and the rest of the nation because of the special history of race relations in the South in general and more specifically because southern areas with a large percentage of blacks are often part of the Old South, where race relations left a deep legacy of conservatism. Northern districts with a large percentage of blacks are in urban areas with a more liberal white population. We anticipate changes over time, at least in the South, because there has been dramatic change over the past four decades in the proportion of southern blacks who register and vote; thus the actual electoral constituency of southern Democrats has changed considerably.

*Hypothesis 4:* For Democratic members of Congress elected outside the South, there will be a slight but consistent increase in liberalism as the black population increases, and this will be true in all time periods.

*Hypothesis 5:* For Democratic members of Congress in the South, there will initially be a negative relationship between liberalism and black population proportion (as posited by V. O. Key), but this will subsequently be replaced by a curvilinear pattern (as posited by William Keech), which may in turn be replaced by a positive relationship.

Turning to the data in Table 2, we find that, in the House of Representatives as a whole there is no statistically significant relationship between the district's percentage of blacks and the member's ADA score in either 1961 or 1971, whereas there is a positive pattern in 1981 and 1989. However, the national pattern conceals dramatic differences across region. Outside the South, there is a consistent positive relationship in all four periods. In the South, in contrast, there is a negative relationship in 1961 (as posited by V. O. Key), no statistically

significant pattern in 1971 or 1981, but some evidence of curvilinearity in 1981, and a slight positive relationship in 1989. However, even the regional breakdown conceals important differences by party.

When we turn to the three region-specific, party-specific, and time-specific hypotheses about the link between black population and congressional liberalism (hypotheses 3 through 5 above), we find that each is strongly confirmed.<sup>7</sup>

With respect to hypothesis 3 we see from Table 1 that, when we confine ourselves to Republican members of the House, neither in the South nor outside the South has there ever been a statistically significant relationship between liberalism and the proportion of the population that is black.

With respect to hypothesis 4, when we confine ourselves to Democratic members of the House, we see the posited slightly positive relationship between black population and liberalism outside the South in all four decades, although it is not statistically significant in 1961.

With respect to hypothesis 5, again confining ourselves to Democratic members of the House, but now looking at the South, we see the posited negative relationship in 1961 and 1971 being replaced by no linear pattern in either direction in 1981 and 1989. However, if we look more closely at the decile breakdown in Table 1, it becomes apparent that there is evidence of curvilinearity in 1981 and 1989 exactly in the districts (30 to 40% black) where Keech's work would lead us to expect it. This curvilinearity does appear to be decreasing as we move from 1981 to 1989, but clearly regional differences still help us understand the effects of the racial composition of the electorate on congressional voting behavior.<sup>8</sup>

### **The Implications of Redistricting**

#### *Electing Democrats*

In this section of the paper we will deal only with the most recent data, that from 1988 or 1989, since our focus is on redistricting implications for the 1990s. Consider two congressional districts with equal population in the South, one with a population 55% black and one with a population 15% black. Now consider redistributing the black population between the two districts so that each district is 35% black. (The white population is correspondingly moved in the opposite direction to maintain population equality.) Will equalizing the black populations increase or decrease, *ceteris paribus*, the expected number

of Democratic members of the House? Table 1 shows that, in 1989, two districts in the South that are each 35% black generate an expectation of electing 1.7 Democrats (i.e.,  $2 \times 0.86$ ). In contrast, a district that is 55% black and one that is 15% black generate expectation of only 1.6 Democrats. Here dispersal of southern blacks appears to give the Democrats a marginally greater chance of electoral success. But this is not true in general.

For another example, consider one district with a population 35% black and another with a population 15% black. Then consider another pair of districts, each with a population 25% black. In the South, in 1989, the first pair produces an expected 1.5 Democrats; the second produces only an expected 1.3 Democrats. Here concentration rather than dispersal aids Democrats. Moreover, at 5% black and 25% black the districts combine to give an expected number of Democrats almost identical to that expected from two districts each 15% black.

More generally, Table 1 shows that in the South, in 1989, the greatest marginal gain in the likelihood of Democratic success appears to come in moving from districts that are 20 to 30% black to those that are 30 to 40% black. Thus districts with populations 30 to 40% black are optimal for electing Democrats.<sup>9</sup> Outside the South, however, by similar reasoning, Democrats gain the most by creating districts with a black population of 20 to 30%. Thus, it would appear that if we wish to maximize the election of Democrats we would not create black majority districts anywhere in the country.

### *Maximizing Mean Congressional Liberalism*

Outside the South in 1989, we appear to maximize mean aggregate liberalism by maximizing the number of representatives selected from districts with a population at least 20 to 30% black. In the South, ADA-type liberalism appears to be optimized by creating as many districts as possible with a majority black population (see Table 1), because only with majority black districts do we obtain high ADA scores. However, no 1989 data for districts with populations 40 to 50% black are available.<sup>10</sup>

## **Conclusions**

As we hypothesized, the proportion of the district that is black has both a direct and an indirect effect on congressional liberalism, with important variations both across region and over time. In the South, for example, in all four time periods, the black population pro-

portion affects whether a Republican will be elected but does not greatly affect how liberal that Republican will be; by the late 1980s, all majority black districts were electing very liberal Democratic representatives, all of whom were themselves black.<sup>11</sup>

Our results suggest that to the extent there is a conflict between the desire to elect liberals and the desire to elect Democrats to Congress, it will really be found only in southern jurisdictions. There, maximizing the election of Democrats means eschewing black majority seats, while maximizing liberalism seems to call for creating such seats.<sup>12</sup> Moreover, the data in Grofman and Handley (1989b) indicate that to maximize the number of black House members from the South one would create as many majority black districts as possible.<sup>13</sup>

However, the conflict between the interests of Democrats and the interests of liberals (or of blacks seeking descriptive representation) is of less practical consequence for redistricting than it might first appear, since the creation of black majority districts at the congressional level is severely constrained by the dispersion of the black population and by the size of the black population needed to form a majority black House district. Regardless of what one might like to do, it is simply impossible to create more than a handful of new black majority House seats in the South—or elsewhere, for that matter (Swain 1989; Grofman and Handley 1989a). Nonetheless, for the reasons suggested above, in the 1990s round of districting we can expect to see conflicts in at least a few southern states between white Democrats and black Democrats on whether to create new congressional districts with black majorities in the population.<sup>14</sup>

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## NOTES

An earlier version of this paper was presented at the conference "Modeling Race and Electoral Politics," University of California, Irvine, May 1990. This research was partially supported by NSF Grant SES #88-09392 to Chandler Davidson and Bernard Grofman and by the Interdisciplinary Focused Research Program in Public Choice at University of California, Irvine. We are indebted to Ziggy Bates and Cheryl Larsson of the Word Processing Center, School of Social Sciences, University of California, Irvine, for manuscript typing and table preparation and to Dorothy Gormick for bibliographic assistance. We are indebted to James Glaser, John Sprague, Gerald Wright,

David Brady, Robert Erikson, and William Keech for useful comments on earlier drafts of this paper and on closely related work and to two anonymous referees. The authors are solely responsible for remaining errors.

The ADA scores were provided by the Americans for Democratic Action and by the International Consortium for Political and Social Research, University of Michigan. LCCR scores for 1981, 1985, and 1989 were provided by the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights. AFL-CIO scores for 1981, 1985, and 1989 were taken from *Congressional Quarterly*.

1. Among the early contributions are Miller and Stokes 1963, Froman 1963, and Fiorina 1974. Recently economists such as Peltzman (1965) and Kau and Rubin (1982) have written on this topic.

2. An early important article was Van der Slik 1969. Recent work includes Black 1978; Bullock 1981, 1985; Combs, Hibbing, and Welch 1984; Feagan 1972; Stern 1982; Swain 1989; Whitby 1985, 1987. Similar research involving Latino populations is reported in Welch and Hibbing 1984. Related work on roll-call votes in legislatures in the deep South is found in Brooks and Claggett 1980, Bullock and Henry 1981, Bullock and MacManus 1987, and Shaffer 1987.

3. Even with black population held constant, region, party, and period are not the only variables that affect the ideology of House members as expressed in ADA scores or the likelihood that Democrats will be elected. We have done extensive multivariate analyses involving a large number of demographic variables (data omitted from this article) because they add little to the simple crosstabular relationships that illustrate the key findings. Urbanism, however, is a factor that previous research (e.g., Whitby 1985) has found to be especially important. Later in the paper we do make some comments about what happens when we introduce a control for urbanism (see notes 9, 10).

4. Following *Congressional Quarterly*, we define the South as comprising 13 states: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia. Like previous authors, we use data for the district's black population as a whole, since data on the proportion of blacks who are of voting age or who are registered in a district are not available for the entire period we cover. For 1989, we use data from the 1980 census, as reported in the *Almanac of American Politics* for 1990, which has a few minor differences from other sources in the data reported.

5. ADA ratings are reliable and consistent measures of congressional liberalism (Smith, Herrera, and Herrera 1990). Typically the score is based on a set of 20 roll calls on controversial issues involving social programs, military programs, and foreign policy. We are aware, however, that the scores are based on a definition of liberalism created by well-educated, politically active, middle-class whites. We therefore replicated the analysis using scores prepared by the AFL-CIO and the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights (LCCR) to make use of measures that may be expected to be more directly related to black interests. The AFL-CIO has rated members of Congress since 1955 on the basis of members' "votes for or against the interests of workers." The organization focuses on domestic and trade issues, rather than on foreign policy issues in general. Therefore, it appears to measure well a representative's responsiveness to the interests of an urban, working-class constituency. Failure to vote does not lower a score. The LCCR publishes its ratings every two years, with the ratings based on about 15 issues in the areas of civil rights and government aid to children, the poor, minorities, and the handicapped. The ratings tend to focus on a few issues, largely of interest to blacks and other minorities.

The two ratings are highly correlated with each other and with the ADA score.

In 1981, ADA scores had a correlation of 0.84 with AFL-CIO scores and a correlation of 0.91 with LCCR scores. In 1985, the correlation with AFL-CIO scores was 0.93, and the correlation with LCCR scores was 0.87. Because there were minimal differences between analyses based on the various scores, we have omitted tabular presentation and confined our discussion of differences to the notes.

6. See, for example, Brady and Lynn 1973; Jackson 1967; Fiorina 1974; Markus 1974; Bullock and Brady 1983; Erickson, Wright, and McIvor 1989; Grofman, Griffin, and Glazer 1990; Shapiro et al. 1990.

7. When we replicate Table 2 for the 1980s using AFL-CIO scores or LCCR scores as our measure of liberalism, we find that both give rise to a pattern very similar to that shown for ADA scores. The LCCR scores are considerably higher on average, however, and there is one outlying southern Republican with a very high LCCR score whose presence confounds some of the results.

8. The curvilinearity is due in large part to the fact that southern districts with populations between 30 and 40% black were more likely to be rural than were southern districts with smaller or larger proportions of blacks. But black turnout was also somewhat lower in these districts and, in electing conservative white Democrats, they continued to resist Republican inroads.

9. If we introduce a further control for urbanism, our results change somewhat, but only in the South and not with respect to the bottom-line conclusion that creating black majority districts would not maximize the election of Democrats. In urban districts in the South, we again find that districts with populations 20 to 30% black are more likely to elect Democrats than are districts with either a larger or a smaller proportion of blacks. In contrast, if we look only at rural districts in the South, districts with populations 30 to 40% black would maximize Democratic election chances. However, even in the South these different strategies would improve Democratic election chances only minimally. Outside the South the proportion of blacks in rural districts does not vary enough to support a firm conclusion as to what strategy would be optimal.

10. These results remain even when we control for urbanism. It might be argued that we should look at the proportion of liberals elected rather than at mean liberalism. We have done so, and our results do not change significantly—whether we define a liberal representative as having an ADA score above 50 or use some higher cutoff score.

11. Cf. Black and Black 1987; Huckfeldt and Kohfeld 1989; Glazer, Grofman, and Owen 1991.

12. The Democratic strategy in the South had been to create districts with a substantial proportion (but not a majority) of blacks, until Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 imposed the requirement that the seven states of the Deep South submit redistricting plans for preclearance by the U.S. Department of Justice (see, e.g., the various essays in Davidson 1984).

13. Cf. Grofman and Handley 1991.

14. Similar disputes at the state legislative level and similar issues involving districts with Hispanic majorities may lead to conflicts between Hispanics and both black and white Democrats.

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