

# VOTING BARRIERS: STRATEGIES FOR REMOVING OBSTACLES TO THE BLACK BALLOT

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*"To the extent that a citizen's right to vote is debased, he is that much less a citizen."*  
*Reynolds v. Sims*, 377 U.S. 533, 567 (1964).

WITHIN THE PAST two years there has been a tremendous amount of litigation and legislation resulting in a substantial expansion of the American electorate. The lowering of the voting age and the elimination of durational residency requirements have created almost 25 million new potential voters.<sup>1</sup> In light of many candidates' narrow victory margins during the past few elections, one would expect this voter increase to have a profound effect on the outcome of subsequent elections. This, however, has not yet been realized. The early returns from the primaries and the election results from the Fall of last year indicate that many citizens, though now eligible, remain outside of electoral politics. Many "experts" attribute this lack of participation to apathy and a lack of faith in the political process. Unfortunately, such a myopic analysis is akin to chastising the patient for contracting the disease. First, it fails to take into account the outside factors beyond the patient's control and, second, it only detracts from the real goal of curing the patient.

Until recently, little effort has been made to examine the administrative practices of those public and party officials who operate the election machinery. A recent study conducted by the League of Women Voters Education Fund documented the obstacles standing between many citizens and the ballot.<sup>2</sup> One of the study's major conclusions is that many procedures employed by voting administrators disenfranchise millions of Ameri-

cans.<sup>3</sup> The procedural inadequacies are both glaring and inexcusable; their presence in any other administrative agency would immediately bring charges of gross incompetence.

The survey's statistics help us understand why forty percent of the voting age population did not cast ballots in the 1968 Presidential election;<sup>4</sup> they also help us realize that, unless changes are effected immediately, many of these citizens will be denied the right of voting in this year's local, state and federal elections.

One of the major underlying problems is that election officials have never been required to take affirmative actions encouraging people to vote; nor have they been required to adopt practices increasing voting convenience.<sup>5</sup> In fact, some of them candidly express the belief that inconvenience and hardship make a better voter because only the "informed" and "conscientious" citizen will surmount the various hurdles placed on the path to the voting booth. A close examination of this philosophy's effects reveals that those suffering most from these inconveniences

\*See Appendices for relevant tables from Report, *infra* note 2.

1. Voting Rights Act Amendments of 1970, Pub.Law 91-285, 84 Stat. 314; *Oregon v. Mitchell*, 400 U.S. 112, 144, 91 S.Ct. 260, 274 (1970); *Dunn v. Blumstein*, 92 S.Ct. 995 (1972).

2. K. Eckhardt and J. Frantz, A Preliminary Report on Election Systems: Registration and Voting Practices To League of Women Voters Education Fund, Battelle Memorial Institute, Columbus Laboratories, 505 King Ave. Columbus, Ohio 3201, March 2, 1972 (hereinafter cited as *Report*).

3. Administrative Obstacles to Voting: A Report of the Election Systems Project, the League of Women Voters.

4. *Id.* at 6.  
5. *Id.* at 12.

and hardships are racial minorities, the poor, the aging, the uneducated and the young.<sup>6</sup> As in other American institutions, racism is also rampant in the practices of election officials. In their day-to-day practices, they have either ignored, excluded, or inconvenienced Blacks and other minorities.<sup>7</sup> The registration practices encountered, the conduct of the staff who operate the system, and the type and condition of machinery used contribute to the disenfranchisement of Black citizens.

The report revealed the following shocking statistics which would either suggest that election officials are incompetent administrators, or that they do not see their job as one of operating a system encouraging large numbers of voters.

Twenty-eight percent of communities surveyed gave poll workers no training, and in an additional sixty percent the training was six hours or less; thirty-eight percent of all polling places observed were not clearly marked as places to vote; eighty-nine percent of local officials do not publish a voter information guide; fifty-eight percent of polling places lacked convenient public transportation; seven percent of the polling places opened late; in twenty-four percent of the polling precincts voting machines were out of order for periods ranging from thirty minutes to two hours.<sup>8</sup>

These statistics clearly indicate that all aspects of the election process can and should be improved. In particular, if Black people are to ever overcome these incidents of de facto disenfranchisement, we must begin to work toward two main goals. First, we must begin to assume decision and policy making roles within those agencies administering elections. Blacks have been systematically excluded from the administrative machinery governing the election process; consequently, we have depended upon the benevolence and good will of those persons in control. This uncertainty about the integrity of one of this nation's fundamental birthrights is intolerable. Second, Black people must gain a greater understanding of the many subtle ways in which the machinery

is administered to control and manipulate both the size and the wishes of the electorate. Information is one of the most effective weapons which can be used and it must be employed to the fullest.

In order to plan effective strategy to change the current system, we must look at each of its components and derive a plan which will improve its functioning. There are four distinct parts of the election administrative machinery and each one must be attacked individually: (1) Election and/or appointment of administrators, (2) selection and training of staff, (3) registration requirements and procedures, (4) election day machinery and procedures. What follows is an analysis of the problems found in each component, and suggestions for corrective actions.

### I. *Election and/or Appointment of Administrators*

SINCE ADMINISTRATIVE decisions and acts can increase or decrease registration and voting opportunities, the persons in charge of administering election machinery should be closely scrutinized. It is the day-to-day operations of the office that strongly influence the experiences the voter will have in seeking to register and vote. If these experiences are positive, the citizen will be encouraged to register and vote. If negative, the citizen may not complete the registration process.

The discretion which the voting administrator possesses enables him to manipulate both the size and the composition of the electorate. This manipulation occurs in many ways. The simplest and most effective is for the administrator to fail to use all of those tools available to him. He may fail to employ a sufficient number of deputy registrars, avoid using decentralized registration sites, or not implement various public information techniques. These acts can substantially effect the rate of registration. They are

6. *Id.* at 5.

7. *Report*, Table 32 at 53, Table 14 at 25, Table 4 at 10.

8. *Id.* at 37, 40, 52, 53, 54.

well within the discretion of the voting administrator.

The voting administrator may subvert registration by failing to cooperate with citizens groups such as the NAACP, the League of Women Voters, the Urban League, various youth groups, and many others attempting to promote and encourage widespread use of the ballot. These groups often find that they cannot get accurate and up-to-date information about procedures, the use of forms and supplies are often limited, and, all too frequently, they must use back-door techniques to extract information which is supposed to be public knowledge.<sup>9</sup> In Gary, Indiana, the chief elections official is also the Democratic Party Chief who opposed the nomination and election of Richard Hatcher for mayor. During the past election, he limited the number of forms available to those people who were registering voters in Gary's Black districts. He also purged voters from the rolls before the May primary, when the state election laws do not require such action until June. When asked to supply information about registration rates in order for a registration group to determine where its efforts could best be used, another election official reportedly stated that he did not believe in "promiscuous registration."<sup>10</sup>

The voting administrator may also fail to allocate his resources in a manner congruent with particular communities' resources, life styles, and culture. The power of this discretion becomes apparent when one considers the probable results of a pair of deputy registrars working a white middle class community as compared to a Black community. The former will inevitably have a higher rate of registration with considerably less effort. Black communities require a larger number of registrars, more informational techniques, and more registration sites located in the community. The voting administrator who fails to recognize this is, in effect, supporting de facto discrimination. Unfortunately, many cities still have only one central registration

site, and then even fail to aggressively inform the public about it. Many polling and registration units are located in buildings which are inconvenient and inaccessible. Many are poorly marked, or not marked at all.<sup>11</sup> Decisions regarding the location of polling and registration units incorporate a determination of who will make use of them. Community groups should encourage more registration units in shopping centers and other high traffic areas; students should push for both registration and polling sites at central campus locations. In general, election officials should be required to come to the people, not the people to the officials.

Finally, election administrators wield substantial power in the hiring of staff personnel. All too often, the basis of such hiring is totally partisan and involves little or no formal training.<sup>12</sup> Deputy registrars are often told to encourage only those persons who they think will support their particular party or candidate. They are frequently unable to provide the citizen with answers to simple procedural questions. And, of course, the relative effect of placing a white worker in a Black community requires little documentation.

**A**DDITIONALLY, THERE are very few Blacks making decisions about the election machinery. Nearly all of the staff persons observed in the League study, especially Central Office staff, were white. There were some Blacks in the Black precincts, but their behavior toward the voter was not appreciably different, as their source of appointment and lack of training was the same as the whites. The study also indicated that seventy-two percent of the city and fifty-one percent of the county election board officials were appointed to their positions.<sup>13</sup> This appointive process usually

9. Unpublished raw data upon which *Report* is based.

10. A personal statement to the author made by an Indianapolis, Indiana election official.

11. *Report*, Table 11 at 22.

12. *Id.*, Table 25 at 40.

13. *Id.*, Table 16 at 16.

involves seeking the approval of the Party hierarchy in the community, and party loyalty is the most important criterion for selection. Several of the persons interviewed were very candid about their administrative efforts to help the Party by allocating resources, extending registration and purging practices.<sup>14</sup> Many appeared to see their deputy as reflecting the Party's will with regard to the hiring of staff and generally determined administrative regulations about operating the election machinery in their community.

One of the most important statistics in the study is the one showing the election officials' perception of communities' problems with election machinery.<sup>15</sup> Election officials, as a group, are least likely to support basic reform that might increase the size of the electorate or lessen the hardship and inconvenience of the voter. On the other hand, there is often widespread support of many of these same reform measures by citizen groups actively working to encourage citizens to become a part of the electorate. Also, there is a wide disparity in the opinions of citizen group representatives and election officials as to what practices constitute registration and voting problems.

## II. Selection and Training of Staff

**T**HE CITIZEN, as voter, is at the mercy of the staff person he faces when he attempts to register and vote. This staff person, hired by the administrators, is usually not trained adequately and is often not helpful or courteous.<sup>16</sup> When the staff faces Black citizens, they are less helpful and more discourteous than usual. One does not need a great deal of education to understand why many Blacks might avoid but another degrading experience.

Twenty-eight percent of the communities studied provided no training to persons who worked at the polls.<sup>17</sup> In eighty-six percent of the communities, political parties exercise influence in the selection of poll workers.<sup>18</sup> This does not suggest that the poll workers are illiterate,

but it does suggest that they only see themselves as party functionaries rather than persons in charge of delivering a public service to citizens who have a right to it. The complex set of requirements, and the absence of clear-cut regulations often mean that each person is using his own judgment based upon his understanding of the rules; consequently, one receives different answers to the same question on the same day, if one asks different staff people. The staffs who man our registration and polling places are making decisions determining who can and who cannot register and vote. Methods must be adopted which will educate or replace those current staff workers incapable of carrying out their duties in a manner serving the greatest number of voters.

**A** GOOD STAFF can work to encourage citizens to register and vote in many different ways. They should interpret the voting regulations in an inclusive rather than an exclusive manner. For instance, they can accept, and not reject, those forms which have minor omissions, and they can avoid such omissions by aiding the citizen in filling in the forms properly. A greater effort can be made to answer questions, regardless of the method of inquiry. A citizen should not be told that he must come in person to the office when information can easily be transmitted over the phone. Above all else, a generally positive attitude should be adopted. The staff should assume that every citizen is eligible to vote *somewhere* and they should give him assistance in finding that place rather than just deciding that he cannot vote at the particular location he has inquired about. Taken alone, such efforts as these may seem to be relatively unimportant; but given the fact that in one off-year election where

14. *Id.*, Table 26 at 41.

15. *Id.*, Table 3 at 9.

16. *Id.*, Table 14 at 25.

17. *Id.*, Table 25 at 40.

18. *Id.*

5,700 people sought to register and five percent of them were unsuccessful (for one reason or another), we can see that in a close election, those rejected voters could very well have been the determining factor.

Literacy tests have officially been declared illegal, but in ninety-two percent of the communities studied, registrants were required to fill in a form. These forms varied in complexity, but were all similar in that mistakes or omissions would warrant their rejection. If the staff is not allowed to, or is unwilling to assist the registrant in completing the form, then we still have a practice which amounts to a literacy test. Very few forms are free from ambiguous questions; it should be a requirement that all staff workers take affirmative action to aid the citizen in completing this phase of the process.

Black organizations should begin to mobilize their membership to become official election workers and should engage in litigation, where necessary, to achieve this goal. The apparent discriminatory selection of staff and the absence of adequate training programs works an undue hardship on the Black voter and might be construed as a denial of equal access to voting and employment opportunities. Above all else, it should be remembered that many Black citizens are totally disenchanted with political parties and "politicking" in general. When party politics is substantially visible at the level of voting registration, many Blacks are discouraged from even entering the electoral process because of its negative associations. Registration and voting should be politically neutral activities, free from all pressures usually associated with party politics.

### III. *Registration Requirements and Procedures*

**T**HERE IS A requirement that citizens register in all but one of the fifty states (North Dakota is the exception). Some experts blame the low voter turnout on the complex state registration require-

ments.<sup>19</sup> Citizens are often required to travel to distant and inconvenient locations, wrestle with complex forms and applications, and produce "sufficient" identification. The implications of all this becomes apparent when one considers that many Blacks do not have convenient access to transportation, are unfamiliar with techniques for filling out forms, and often do not possess "acceptable" identification cards (i.e., driver's license, work ID, etc.). The problem is often aggravated more in the situation of the Black woman. Such factors as these can only discourage people from participating in the electoral process. Current laws clearly give local officials the power to use these types of registration procedures. Their exercise of this power affects the law's administration. The law does not say how the public is to be informed of registration and voting procedures, nor does it specify the number of types of questions which a citizen may be required to answer; it does not even require the election official to use all those resources available to him. Thus, the administrative agency (primarily at the local level, but sometimes at the state level) usually will conduct registrations in a manner reflecting partisan and racial interests rather than unbiased administrative competency.

At several of the registration sites, citizens were required to answer questions regarding education, marital status, arrest records, and religious or moral philosophies. Such inquiries have little or nothing to do with one's eligibility to vote. Increasing the availability of registration opportunities and simplifying the process could add thousands of Blacks to the registration lists very quickly, particularly in large urban areas where the Black vote is the balance of power in determining where the electoral votes will go. In Indianapolis in one day, over a five hour period, over 500 people were registered as they went into or left a su-

<sup>19</sup> Mathew Reese, former chairman of Voter Registration Committee of the National Democratic Party, is one such expert.

permarket. This effort, when concentrated in the public schools, in the same neighborhood, registered less than 50 people.<sup>20</sup> This great discrepancy becomes logical once you understand the psychology of the Black mind with regard to voting. For centuries, Blacks were legally denied the right to vote, then after being technically enfranchised, were barred by such procedural requirements as the grandfather clause, residency requirements and literacy tests. The past decade has witnessed a removal of most of these impediments, but the citizen is still required to take the initiative in exercising his voting rights. After centuries of being denied the right to vote, many Black citizens do not have the mental predisposition to do this. For us, voting is not a habit; it is not a part of our cultural orientation to aggressively assert this right; it is not regarded as one of the "duties" of citizenship. As a result, the average Black citizen will usually not go out of his way to become a registered voter; he will, however, register when personally encouraged and aided. This means that in Black communities, it is essential that the voting officials take the initiative and affirmatively promote voter registration.

It is interesting to note that over one-fourth of the 584 organizational representatives who were interviewed reported that they were refused authorizations when their members requested to be deputized in the community. And in the twenty-nine percent of the communities where deputy registrars were used, the election official refused to use this method to increase his ability to reach potential voters.<sup>21</sup>

Registration practices such as these become particularly important when one realizes that eighty-nine percent of those citizens who are registered will vote though only sixty percent of the voting age population is registered. If all eligible citizens were registered, the number of ballots cast in a national election could increase by twenty-five percent. It doesn't take a mathematical genius to understand the implications of these figures. The ef-

forts of the Voter Education Project in the South have produced a sizeable Black electorate and undisputable proof that a concentrated effort can have results. However, we must focus our attention on overcoming, as well as changing, the machinery. New rules are constantly being written to direct and control registration opportunities, and Blacks must begin to influence these rules and direct the machinery themselves if the full Black voting potential is ever to be realized.

**B**LACK organizations must once again become active in the area of voting rights. The laws may be on the books, but they are not fully implemented. We should insist on public hearings for the adoption of open, inclusive registration procedures and should demand that those adopted procedures are not in conflict with the intent and scope of state and federal laws. We must insist that procedures having the practical effect of interfering with the right to register or vote be abandoned, and that certain classes of the population not be subjected to any undue hardships. It is imperative that registration staffs be directed to assist all registrants in the process of filling out forms and that the forms be checked for mistakes or omissions which could warrant their rejection. This is essential if we are to avoid de facto literacy tests. All forms should be carefully scrutinized and changes should be suggested when the information requested is irrelevant to voter eligibility. It should also be required that mechanisms be developed to get information to the public in a manner that is both useful and comprehensible. For example, registration sites should be clearly listed by address and building name rather than by census tract and precinct; public notices should be carried in news stories or ads rather than merely listed in the

20. The data for this assertion is contained within an internal staff memo of the Indianapolis Non-Partisan Black Coalition, a voter registration and citizen organization comprised of nineteen Black civic organizations.

21. Report, Table 28 at 11.

legal notices sections. The underlying objective of these changes is to convey public information to the public in a manner which does not require the citizen to possess special knowledge or exert unnecessary energy. Voting is the birthright of every American citizen; no one should be required to prove that he is worthy of this right by successfully passing invidious hurdles.

#### IV. *Election Day Machinery and Procedures*

**I**n the recent California primary, the entire nation waited through an unprecedented array of administrative mix-ups to receive the election returns. In Cleveland, a month earlier, the election had to be rescheduled in certain precincts because the polls never opened. In Indianapolis, Indiana, certain precincts ran out of paper ballots in a hotly contested school board election. These mistakes were all headline maker, but this same type of confusion occurs on a smaller scale in nearly every community in every election. The machinery on election day is geared to a by-gone era where the society was not very mobile and only the elite were expected to vote. Inevitably, the greatest hardships from these administrative snafus are borne by Black and other minority communities. The failure to provide adequate election machinery to handle the expanded electorate will be even more catastrophic unless some very specific corrective steps are taken prior to this election.

The use of voting machines to facilitate computerized counting processes has created a special type of problem. People do not know how to use the machines correctly; in some instances, the ballots are so long that two machines are required for every ballot (this is especially true now that more citizen groups are using voter initiatives); and of course, the machines break down. All of these problems complicate the voting process and increase the possibil-

ities of defective ballots. Steps must be taken to minimize these complications. All voting machines should be inspected and faulty ones replaced or repaired so as to avoid the high incidence of machine breakdowns. The large number of reported breakdowns leads many to believe that the present lever-type machines need to be greatly improved. In case of a machinery breakdown, alternative voting methods should be readily available. Paper ballots, with the proper security, should be available so as not to inconvenience the voter. Quick and efficient repair services should also be available. Whenever possible, the staff should be taught how to make minor repairs. One very interesting fact revealed by the study is that machine breakdowns in the poor and Black communities were not repaired as rapidly as breakdowns in other communities.<sup>22</sup>

Procedures regarding the people who staff the polling places should also be adopted. The staff should be selected from within the precinct and should be trained to know the rights of the voter, pursuant to state laws and recent court decisions. They should be trained to resolve disputes immediately either on the spot or through a telephone call so that no eligible voter will be barred from voting. Again, it should be noted that disputes which arise at polls in Black communities are resolved less frequently than those which arise at polls in communities. Voters should be assisted when they need help, but should not be unduly influenced. If necessary, practice should be permitted on sample ballots or on machines at the polling places. The staff must make every effort to avoid faulty ballots which must be excluded.

Polling places should be well marked and lighted. The location in each precinct should be determined by convenience and accessibility to the voters, not as a political favor to someone with a building to rent for that date. Polls should be open on time, with adequate

<sup>22</sup> *Id.*, Table 33 at 54.

staffs and supplies. The laws and procedures regarding electioneering and poll watching should be taught to all staff members and enforcement must be vigorously pursued, either by court injunctions or administrative initiatives. Every effort must be made to reduce all forms of intimidation or harrassment at the polls, whether by polling staffs or outside agitators.

Many of these suggestions are relatively simple, but the failure to adopt basic common sense measures has greatly interfered with many citizens' right to vote. The machinery in each community should be monitored in advance of the election to insure that adequate preparations are being made. This is the only way to assure that election day activities will proceed smoothly and that the greatest number of voters will be able to cast their ballots with ease, convenience, and without intimidation.

#### V. Relief Through the Courts from Administrative Obstacles to Voting

**M**OST OF THE DISCUSSION has centered on non-legal actions which can be taken to improve the registration and voting processes. We should not forget that litigation may also still provide an important avenue for relief. In the past, there has been very little litigation on the basis of administrative practices; nearly all of the challenges have been to statutory requirements, or for alleged mistakes in the counting of the ballots. There is, however, a strong basis for initiating suits to correct administrative defects. In several cases brought under the 1871 Civil Rights Act, the court has held that Section 1983 was passed to afford a federal right to federal courts "because of reason of prejudice, passion, *neglect*, intolerance, or *otherwise*, state laws might not be enforced, and the claims of citizens to the enjoyment of rights, privileges and immunities guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment might be denied by state agencies" (emphasis by the Court of Appeals).<sup>23</sup> It would therefore appear that

1983 can be used to afford a remedy to those who are victims of inadvertent violations of constitutionally protected rights as well as malicious violations. Injunctive and declaratory relief can be sought for the many acts of omission and commission interfering with the citizen's right to vote.

The whole body of administrative law should also be investigated as a possible avenue of remedies for those who are disenfranchised by administrative practices and regulations. An effort should be made to bring the rulemaking authority and standards of election agencies under the administrative law umbrella. The performance standards of the administrator regarding the hiring of staff, resolving disputes, servicing the voter, and selecting and repairing machinery should be governed by administrative standards the same as other administrative agencies. The accountability of election officials to the total public will have to be shaped by litigation in order to encourage them to distinguish between their public duties and their party functions.

**T**HE AREA OF ELECTIONS REFORM, much like the area of school integration, will not be achieved by litigation alone. Active citizen groups engaging in public pressures, confrontations, and education must accompany the litigation effort. Too many court decisions are not implemented because there is no follow-up effort to monitor the day-to-day administrative operations. Blacks currently comprise no less than twelve percent of the total population, but only three-tenths of one percent of all elected offices. These facts leave no doubt as to the urgency of addressing ourselves to achieving the necessary reforms in the election process.

23. 42 U.S.C.A. § 1983; *Monroe v. Pape*, 365 U.S. 167 (1960); *Joseph v. Rowlen*, 402 F.2d 367 (1968); *Whirls v. Kerns*, 407 F.2d 781 (1969), *cert. denied*, 396 U.S. 901 (1969).

APPENDIX A

**Table 3.** NUMBER AND PERCENT OF ORGANIZATIONAL REPRESENTATIVES BY POSITION WHO BELIEVE THAT SELECTED INDIVIDUALS AND GROUPS SHOULD BE ELIGIBLE TO VOTE.

Statement	Party Positions			Election Boards			Executive/Administrative			Voluntary Organization						Range			
	DP	RP	TP	COBE	CIBE	%	M	CM	PCC	BCC	LWV	NAACP	LCP	YG	PCC	CAL	MG	Low	High
	N <sup>a</sup> = 203																		
A. Persons who have been convicted of a felony but who have been released from prison.	80	65	66	68	83	%	75	76	79	74	93	92	88	97	81	68	95	65	97
B. Persons who have been in a mental institution but are not currently under treatment.	91	86	81	87	91	%	90	89	90	88	96	87	92	95	94	85	92	81	96
C. Persons who are on welfare.	96	85	68	94	97	%	95	95	95	89	99	95	98	100	93	94	100	68	100
D. Persons who have been previously convicted of an election offense.	67	46	51	49	50	%	53	60	44	51	63	57	53	66	49	38	45	38	67
E. Persons who are continuously in minor trouble with the law.	91	85	83	83	90	%	90	94	85	78	92	84	88	95	86	76	94	76	95
F. College students who are from another city even if they are (a) old enough to vote and (b) have attended the college in the community for more than 1 year.	76	37	51	46	33	%	48	50	39	45	79	81	73	92	49	49	91	33	92
G. Persons who have been dishonorably discharged from the armed forces.	71	55	68	59	66	%	59	73	64	57	90	81	64	98	61	30	86	30	98
H. Persons who have refused to serve in the military services.	70	50	51	50	57	%	57	76	54	47	93	78	53	93	59	25	82	25	93
I. American Indians living on Federal reservations.	95	93	88	96	93	%	93	93	96	93	99	97	98	98	98	96	100	88	100
J. Persons who identify themselves as communists.	68	61	56	39	44	%	54	70	50	42	86	58	44	92	51	21	66	21	92
K. Persons 18-21 years of age.	95	81	78	90	90	%	90	78	83	87	97	93	95	100	84	81	94	78	100
L. In school levy elections, persons not paying property taxes.	74	62	59	58	67	%	75	84	64	66	86	85	76	88	72	48	87	48	88
M. Persons who cannot read or write English.	87	67	66	77	67	%	81	88	81	76	88	91	85	95	73	64	95	64	95
N. Persons serving in the military but overseas.	97	99	95	98	97	%	98	96	97	97	97	92	97	100	96	97	98	92	100
O. Civilians living overseas for periods longer than 6 months.	90	87	88	86	86	%	80	78	76	82	83	82	81	76	76	77	79	76	90
P. Persons who are retired.	97	99	98	98	98	%	97	96	98	97	99	96	99	100	98	98	100	96	100

<sup>a</sup> N refers to the number of respondents for the first statement. All percents computed on actual N's but sample sizes not reported in this table.

<sup>b</sup> Positions are identified as follows:

- DP = Democratic Party Chairman
- RP = Republican Party Chairman
- TP = Third Party Chairman
- COBE = County Board of Elections Chairman
- CIBE = City Board of Elections Chairman
- M = Mayor
- CM = City Manager
- PCC = City Council President
- BCC = Board of County Commissioners Chairman
- LWV = League of Women Voters
- NAACP = National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
- LCP = Labor Council President
- YG = Youth Groups
- PCC = Chamber of Commerce President
- CAL = American Legion Commander
- MG = Non-Black Minority Groups

APPENDIX B

TABLE 4. NUMBER AND PERCENT OF ORGANIZATIONAL REPRESENTATIVES BY POSITION WHO AGREE THAT SELECTED REGISTRATION AND ELECTION PRACTICES ARE BASICALLY GOOD IDEAS.

Statement	Party Positions				Election Boards				Executive/Administrative				Voluntary Organization				Range		
	DP	RP	TP	CP	COBE	CIBE	M	CH	POC	BOC	LHV	NAACP	LCP	YC	POC	CAL	MG	Low	High
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	%
A. Door-to-door registration should be carried out by local government officials in order to get all eligible citizens on the voter registration lists.	203	41	158	86	193	111	99	175	220	120	166	62	206	150	62			23	82
B. Voter registration should not be closed sooner than 30 days before any election.	70	42	31	23	42	23	42	30	50	69	58	82	25	47	60			73	92
C. Residency requirements for voting in local elections should not exceed 60 days.	78	58	59	61	49	61	42	62	74	81	77	84	65	53	73			41	84
D. A voter's name should be removed from the registration list if he fails to vote during a 2-year period.	37	58	32	52	52	52	47	51	46	46	35	29	37	48	30			29	58
E. Voter registration lists should be updated for public review at the end of each month.	46	43	59	35	26	33	29	29	44	49	48	73	22	31	50			22	73
F. Each county should require at least 16 hours of special instruction for all election officials.	58	57	68	46	47	60	59	52	63	64	83	72	85	48	70	85		46	85
G. On election day, polling places should open no later than 7:00 a.m. and remain open until at least 9:00 p.m.	64	43	78	25	34	48	62	53	45	77	73	69	92	63	60	94		25	94
H. Absentee registration by mail should be available for all elections.	90	75	95	74	80	83	89	82	82	91	94	90	98	92	83	94		74	98
I. All elections should be held on a non-work day, for instance, on a Saturday, a Sunday, or a holiday.	34	16	29	29	20	23	19	22	23	35	41	33	46	18	18	47		47	
J. Voting and registration laws in all states should be uniform.	81	61	59	80	83	78	74	83	82	91	91	91	86	70	77	86		59	91
K. Thirty days before each election, the election officials should send out registration cards, a booklet containing information about the candidates and public issues that are to appear on a forthcoming ballot.	44	24	59	23	24	36	34	44	27	62	66	46	65	32	44	75		23	75
L. In areas with high concentrations of people who speak a language other than English (e.g., Spanish, Vietnamese, and Chinese), ballots should be available in that language as well as in English.	87	61	66	56	51	74	81	75	64	96	94	80	97	71	67	100		51	100
M. Voter registration lists should be available to governmental agencies for their use.	65	59	44	65	66	66	69	63	72	46	55	56	58	46	40	72		40	72
N. Local election officials should be under state civil service and there should be a job classification scale and qualifying tests.	38	31	34	38	36	30	28	37	25	57	47	44	77	23	37	43		23	77
O. Absentee voting for all state and local election should be available to all persons who find it difficult to get to the polls. For example, invalids, persons in retirement villages, and so on.	95	90	93	94	85	91	94	91	94	99	97	93	100	92	87	98		85	100

\* N refers to the number of respondents for the first statement. All percents computed on actual N's but sample sizes not reported in this table.

b Positions are identified as follows:  
 DP = Democratic Party Chairman  
 RP = Republican Party Chairman  
 TP = Third Party Chairman  
 CP = Chair of Citizens' Party  
 COBE = Board of Commissioners Chairman  
 CIBE = City Board of Elections Chairman  
 M = Mayor  
 CH = City Manager  
 POC = City Council President  
 BOC = Board of County Commissioners Chairman  
 LHV = Laborers' Union Chairman  
 NAACP = National Association for the Advancement of Colored People  
 LCP = Labor Council President  
 YC = Youth Council  
 POC = Chamber of Commerce President  
 CAL = Chamber of Commerce  
 MG = Non-Black Minority Groups

APPENDIX C

TABLE 5. NUMBER AND PERCENT OF ORGANIZATIONAL REPRESENTATIVES BY POSITION WHO BELIEVE THAT SELECTED REGISTRATION AND ELECTION CONDITIONS EXIST IN THEIR COMMUNITY.

Statement	Party Positions				Election Boards				Executive/Administrative				Voluntary Organization				Range			
	DF	RP	TP	TP	COBE	CIBE	M	CM	PCC	PCC	BCC	LWV	NAACP	LCP	YC	PCC	CAL	HG	Low	High
	N <sup>a</sup> = 203																			
	58	77	51	77	85	75	68	73	81	69	69	57	80	31	22	72	22	85		
A. Many potential voters don't get interested in candidates and issues until 2 or 3 weeks before the elections, and by then the registration period is closed.	48	24	49	22	21	30	35	24	20	67	62	52	74	28	23	71	20	74		
B. Many people want to vote but are ineligible because of the length of residency required.	47	14	49	11	9	24	20	22	16	60	57	42	74	22	13	69	9	74		
C. Many nonvoters would vote if registration procedures were less complex.	49	22	54	20	16	30	32	27	20	69	61	41	76	27	16	67	16	76		
D. Many potential voters become "nonvoters" because absentee voting procedures are too complex.	45	17	54	9	8	21	23	23	11	59	51	46	64	20	14	70	8	70		
E. The hours of registration set by the election officials are inconvenient, and many potential voters find it difficult or impossible to register.	32	10	42	8	6	19	17	16	8	39	47	31	54	20	11	64	6	64		
F. The polls close so early in the day that many potential voters find it difficult or impossible to get to the polls on time.	47	25	54	25	20	31	32	30	16	65	71	47	74	31	19	77	16	77		
G. The political parties just haven't made a real "grass roots" effort to get everyone to register and vote.	46	16	54	9	7	23	27	22	16	60	53	43	73	22	15	64	7	73		
H. Places of registration are inconveniently located, and many potential voters find it difficult or impossible to register.	45	20	42	20	12	29	29	25	17	67	65	48	68	25	17	75	12	75		
I. Many nonvoters are simply frightened by the complicated procedures of voting, such as cumbersome identification procedures, using voting machines, or filling out ballots, and therefore don't vote.	27	7	27	12	6	17	14	14	11	36	42	27	39	13	7	59	6	59		
J. Polling places are inconveniently located and many potential voters find it difficult or impossible to vote.	31	13	37	14	12	21	17	15	13	37	47	38	56	16	16	67	12	67		
K. Many people are afraid to have their name on a registration list because it may be used for other purposes and therefore don't register.	a N refers to the number of respondents for the first statement. All percents computed on actual N's but sample sizes not reported in this table.																			

b Positions are identified as follows:  
 DP = Democratic Party Chairman  
 RP = Republican Party Chairman  
 TP = Third Party Chairman  
 COBE = County Board of Elections Chairman  
 CIBE = City Board of Elections Chairman  
 M = Mayor  
 CM = City Manager  
 PCC = City Council President  
 BCC = Board of County Commissioners Chairman  
 LWV = League of Women Voters  
 NAACP = National Association for the Advancement of Colored People  
 LCP = Labor Council President  
 YC = Youth Groups  
 PCC = Chamber of Commerce President  
 CAL = American Legion Commander  
 HG = Non-Black Minority Groups

APPENDIX D

TABLE 6. NUMBER AND PERCENT OF ORGANIZATIONAL REPRESENTATIVES BY POSITION WHO STATE THAT SELECTED REGISTRATION AND ELECTION PROBLEMS ARE A PROBLEM IN THEIR COMMUNITY.

Statement	Party Positions			Election Boards			Executive/Administrative			Voluntary Organization						Range		
	DP <sup>b</sup>	RP	TP	COBE	CIBE	M	CM	PCC	BCC	LWV	NAACP	LCP	YG	PCC	CAL	MG	Low	High
	N <sup>a</sup> = 203																	
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
A. Phrasing legally complicated referendum questions in a way that the average citizen can understand them.	78	83	98	77	70	75	78	79	82	92	88	92	94	86	85	95	70	98
B. Insuring that all voting machines are in good working condition by election day.	26	30	49	15	12	21	21	20	16	39	49	36	47	22	30	52	12	52
C. Preventing instances of voter intimidation.	25	31	42	15	7	12	12	21	14	30	36	22	56	17	13	57	7	57
D. Locating qualified citizens to serve as election officials.	57	57	68	65	55	46	47	35	47	52	34	39	38	34	28	62	28	68
E. Preventing mix-ups in the printing of ballots or preparation of machines (e.g., names left off the ballot).	20	15	37	13	4	14	13	10	15	19	22	14	29	15	12	34	4	37
F. Removing names of voters who are no longer eligible from the registration lists.	53	56	54	37	40	43	38	40	38	54	48	41	64	39	30	60	30	64
G. Receiving a large enough appropriation from the local government to expand services to the voters (e.g., extend registration hours, provide mobile registration places).	57	26	46	32	20	26	32	29	20	66	64	60	75	29	29	86	20	86
H. Protecting the secrecy of the ballot.	9	11	32	8	4	8	6	10	2	16	21	12	23	9	9	23	2	32
I. Positioning of candidate names on the voting machines or ballot.	29	26	44	25	11	18	24	26	20	20	33	24	40	23	13	22	11	44

<sup>a</sup> N refers to the number of respondents for the first statement. All percents computed on actual N's but sample sizes not reported in this table.

<sup>b</sup> Positions are identified as follows:

- DP = Democratic Party Chairman
- RP = Republican Party Chairman
- TP = Third Party Chairman
- COBE = County Board of Elections Chairman
- CIBE = City Board of Elections Chairman
- M = Mayor
- CM = City Manager
- PCC = City Council President
- BCC = Board of County Commissioners Chairman
- LWV = League of Women Voters
- NAACP = National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
- LCP = Labor Council President
- YG = Youth Groups
- PCC = Chamber of Commerce President
- CAL = American Legion Commander
- MG = Non-Black Minority Groups

APPENDIX E

TABLE 14. DISTRIBUTION OF REGISTRANTS DURING WORKING HOURS ACCORDING TO SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS AND EXPERIENCES AT REGISTRATION OFFICE

Variables	Total Samples Observed	Identification Required			Time Required to Register in Minute			Time Required to Complete a Form			Registration Staff Behavior					
		None	One	Two or More	1 to 5	5 to 10	10 to 20	Less Than 10 Minutes	10 to 20 Minutes	Helpful	Not Helpful					
<u>Social Class</u> <sup>a</sup>	N = 209	100%	73	22	6	100%	45	40	15	100%	95	5	100%	48	52	
Middle	125	60	100%	72	22	6	100%	41	43	14	100%	96	4	100%	54	46
Working	53	25	100%	77	19	4	100%	55	34	11	100%	95	5	100%	42	58
Composite	31	15	100%	68	26	6	100%	41	38	21	100%	91	9	100%	33	67
<u>Race</u> <sup>a</sup>	N = 213	100%	74	20	6	100%	45	39	15	100%	95	5	100%	49	51	
White	147	69	100%	76	18	6	100%	45	41	13	100%	96	4	100%	52	48
Primarily White	46	22	100%	65	28	7	100%	49	34	15	100%	97	3	100%	52	48
Composite	13	6	100%	85	15	-	100%	46	38	15	100%	88	12	100%	17	83
Primarily Nonwhite	7	3	100%	(6)	(1)	(-)	100%	(2)	(2)	(2)	100%	(5)	(1)	100%	(1)	(6)

<sup>a</sup> These classifications are based upon the judgement of registration observers.

<sup>b</sup> Refers to actual number rather than percentages.

APPENDIX F

TABLE 15. DISTRIBUTION OF RESTRAINTS OBSERVED (DURING WORKING HOURS) ACCORDING TO SOCIAL CHARACTERIZATION: PLACE, PUBLIC VISIBILITY, CONVENIENCE

Variables	Total Sample		Type of Place						Public Visibility						Convenient Parking		Convenient Public Transportation		Bilingual Characteristics			
	N	100%	Permanent		Temporary		Mobile		Other		Identified as:						Yes	No	Yes	No	Present	Not Present
			67	19	2	12	40	8	22	30	Registration Place	Elections Place	Official Place	Other								
<b>Social Class<sup>a</sup></b>	N = 208	100%	100%	67	19	2	12	100%	40	8	22	30	100%	76	24	100%	49	51	100%	70	30	
Middle	125	60	100%	69	23	1	7	100%	45	9	23	23	100%	81	19	100%	48	52	100%	(11)	(5)	
Working	53	25	100%	72	13	2	13	100%	36	5	22	36	100%	70	30	100%	49	51	100%	(10)	(5)	
Composite	31	15	100%	53	16	6	25	100%	25	9	19	47	100%	65	35	100%	52	48	100%	(2)	(1)	
<b>Race<sup>a</sup></b>	N = 213	100%	100%	67	19	2	11	100%	41	8	22	29	100%	75	25	100%	50	50	100%	68	32	
White	147	69	100%	71	18	1	10	100%	43	9	24	24	100%	80	20	100%	41	59	100%	(12)	(6)	
Predominantly White	46	22	100%	53	27	4	16	100%	46	7	15	33	100%	65	35	100%	71	29	100%	(7)	(4)	
Balanced	13	6	100%	84	8	-	8	100%	17	-	33	50	100%	77	23	100%	67	33	100%	(2)	(1)	
Nonwhite	7	3	100%	(4) <sup>b</sup>	(2)	(-)	(1)	100%	(1)	(-)	(-)	(6)	100%	(2)	(5)	100%	(4)	(3)	100%	(2)	(1)	

<sup>a</sup> Refers to actual number rather than percentages.

<sup>b</sup> These classifications are based upon the judgement of registration observers.

## APPENDIX G

TABLE 32. DISTRIBUTION OF POLLING PLACES OBSERVED ACCORDING TO TYPE BY OPENING AND CLOSING TIMES

Variable	Total Communities	Polls Opened on time		Polls Closed on time		Persons Waiting in Line at Closing Time				
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Allowed to Vote	Not Allowed to Vote			
		100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%			
Type of Polling Place	N = 484	100%	93	7	100%	98	2	100%	4	96
Ethnic White-Under \$5,000	37	100%	81	19	100%	100	-	100%	-	100
Ethnic White-\$5,000-\$10,000	60	100%	97	3	100%	100	-	100%	2	98
Ethnic White-Over \$10,000	47	100%	94	6	100%	100	-	100%	-	100
Nonethnic White-Under \$5,000	57	100%	86	14	100%	100	-	100%	-	100
Nonethnic White-\$5,000-\$10,000	67	100%	94	6	100%	96	4	100%	2	98
Nonethnic White-Over \$10,000	70	100%	93	7	100%	97	3	100%	3	97
Spanish-Speaking-Under \$5,000	22	100%	91	9	100%	100	-	100%	-	100
Spanish-Speaking-\$5,000-\$10,000	15	100%	100	-	100%	93	7	100%	-	100
Spanish-Speaking-Over \$10,000	3	100%	(3) <sup>a</sup>	(-)	100%	(3)	(-)	100%	(-)	(3)
Black-Under \$5,000	51	100%	98	2	100%	98	2	100%	5	95
Black-\$5,000-\$10,000	43	100%	95	5	100%	100	-	100%	11	89
Black-Over \$10,000	13	100%	92	8	100%	92	8	100%	8	92

<sup>a</sup> Refers to actual number rather than percentages.

APPENDIX H

TABLE 33. DISTRIBUTION OF POLLING PLACES OBSERVED ACCORDING TO TYPE BY USE OF VOTING MACHINES, FREQUENCY OF MACHINE BREAKDOWNS AND DURATION OF BREAKDOWNS.

Variable	Total Communities		Voting Medium Used				Voting Machine Breakdowns			Minutes Out of Order			
	N	%	Paper Ballots	Voting Machines	Other	Combination	At Least One Reported	None Reported	100%	Less Than 30 Min.	30 Min. to 2 Hrs.	More Than 2 Hrs.	
Type of Polling Place	484	100%	100%	68	3	3	100%	12	88	100%	71	24	5
Ethnic White - Under \$5,000	37	8	100%	31	64	-	100%	8	92	100%	67	33	-
Ethnic White - \$5,000 - \$10,000	60	12	100%	29	62	5	100%	5	95	100%	80	-	20
Ethnic White - Over \$10,000	47	10	100%	33	56	6	100%	6	94	100%	100	-	-
Nonethnic White - Under \$5,000	57	12	100%	31	66	2	100%	5	95	100%	83	17	-
Nonethnic White - \$5,000 - \$10,000	67	14	100%	26	68	4	100%	16	84	100%	85	15	-
Nonethnic White - Over \$10,000	70	14	100%	25	68	4	100%	20	80	100%	46	15	8
Spanish Speaking - Under \$5,000	22	5	100%	30	65	4	100%	18	82	100%	100	-	-
Spanish Speaking - \$5,000 - \$10,000	15	3	100%	21	79	-	100%	13	87	100%	50	50	-
Spanish Speaking - Over \$10,000	3	1	100%	(-) <sup>a</sup>	(3)	(-)	100%	(3)	(-)	100%	(3)	(-)	(-)
Black - Under \$5,000	51	11	100%	16	76	2	100%	14	86	100%	20	60	20
Black - \$5,000 - \$10,000	43	9	100%	11	82	2	100%	12	88	100%	33	67	-
Black - Over \$10,000	13	3	100%	50	50	-	100%	23	77	100%	100	-	-

<sup>a</sup> Refers to actual number rather than percentages.

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