

F A C T S ON THE SOUTHERN NEGRO VOTE

This material is taken from:

- (a) Margaret Price's The Negro Voter in the South, Published by the Southern Regional Council, 1957.

(These facts are based on the 1956 general election and the 1950 population census)

1. There are estimated to be 4,980,000 Negroes of voting age in the South
2. 25% of eligible Negroes vote at present in the South against 60% registration among eligible white southerners.
3. 54% of the potential Negro voters are in 11 southern states
4. In 1947 there were 595,000 Negroes registered in the South
5. In 1952 there were 1,008,614 Negroes registered in the South
6. In 1956 there were 1,238,000 Negroes registered in the South
7. Based on best estimates available, the following is the number of Negroes registered in the various southern states:

Texas.....	214,000
Georgia.....	163,389
Louisiana.....	161,410
Florida.....	148,703
North Carolina.....	135,000
South Carolina.....	99,890
Tennessee.....	90,000
Virginia.....	82,603
Arkansas.....	96,677
Alabama.....	53,366
Mississippi.....	20,000

8. The highest percentage of Negro Registration (18%) is in Louisiana. The lowest is in Mississippi (less than 2%).

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HOW MANY VOTES

DOES IT TAKE!

More than twice as many votes were required to elect a congressman from the North than from the South in 1952.

- ** The South cast less than seven million votes to elect 92 representatives.
- ** The North East and Middle Atlantic States cast more than eighteen million to elect 113 representatives.
- ** Only 72,900 votes were needed to elect a congressman from the South.-----
- ** While 160,861 votes were cast to elect one from the North East.

DISPROPORTIONATE VOTING POWER OF THE SOUTH -----CONGRESSIONAL ELECTION 1952-----

Section	Votes Cast	Representatives Elected	Votes Per Representative
South.....	6,706,798	92	72,900
Border States.....	5,845,342	53	110,289
Far West.....	8,389,773	57	147,189
Middle West.....	18,451,470	117	157,705
North East and Middle Atlantic.....	18,177,000	113	160,861

Curtailment of the Negro vote is a big factor in the one-party system of the South.

Southern representatives exercise national legislative powers far out of proportion to the number of voters they represent. Year end and year out, the same Southern congressmen are elected, and thereby gain the seniority needed to serve as chairmen of standing congressional committees.

Committee chairmen wield great power. They can stall, or even block legislation. As chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, Senator Eastland of Mississippi boasted that he kept a civil rights bill in his pocket to prevent it from being acted upon.

THE ENTIRE SOUTH AFFECTED

The percentage of Southerners who vote is well below the national average.

V.O. Key in Southern Politics in State and Nation studied primary and general elections from 1920-47. He found that "by any standard, precious few Southerners exercise the rights of citizens in a democracy."

He discovered that , in the period surveyed, "Usually less than 30 per cent of all citizens 21 years of age and over vote for governor in Democratic primaries in most Southern states. In four states----Virginia, Georgia, Tennessee and Alabama----the rate of participation averages less than 20 per cent."

The Key study showed that about five times as large a proportion of the electorate voted for governor in the general elections of Ohio and New York as in gubernatorial primaries in Virginia. The New York rate was about twice that of Texas. Key found that even fewer Southerners vote for U.S. Senator. For example, Vermont, virtually a one-party state, had nearly 65 per cent turnout of eligible voters in the election of a Senator in 1944, while Alabama had slightly less than 20 per cent. Research showed that "Northern one-party states exceed the South in electoral interest only in lesser degree than do two-party states."

For years the absence of a contest for the South's electoral votes resulted in an exceptionally low turnout for presidential elections. However, in 1956, when there was a far more spirited battle, the region still did not respond to the same degree as the rest of the United States. The Associated Press reported that the total vote in the nation consisted of 77.4 per cent of those registered and represented 60.4 per cent of the estimated civilian population of voting age. In the 11 Southern states, approximately 70 per cent of those registered voted, representing only 39 per cent of the eligible population.

THE SOUTH MUST BE SAVED FROM THE DAMAGES OF THE ONE-PARTY SYSTEM.

REGISTER VOTE!

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