

SOUTHWEST TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY
DECREASING PRESIDENTIAL COATTAILS AND
DECLINING PARTY INFLUENCE

A Look at the 1972, 1976,
and 1980 Presidential Elections

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER

I. INTRODUCTION..... 1

II. THE 1972 ELECTIONS: A NEW EXERCISE OF
INDEPENDENCE..... 9

 Organizational Changes
 Issues
 Labor
 Election Results
 Statistical Analysis
 Conclusion

III. THE 1976 ELECTION: A RETURN TO COATTAILS?..... 36

 Issues
 The 1974 Congressional Elections
 The Debates
 1976 Election Results
 Statistical Analysis
 Conclusion

IV. THE 1980 ELECTION..... 61

 Organizational Changes
 The News Media
 Political Action Committees
 Issues
 John Anderson
 1980 Election Results
 Statistical Analysis
 Conclusion

V. CONCLUSION..... 99

APPENDIX.....106

BIBLIOGRAPHY.....109

LIST OF TABLES

1.	Table 2-A, 1972 Presidential Election, Republican Congressional Win Margins.....	28
2.	Table 2-B, 1972 Presidential Election, Total Percentage of Republican Congressional Win Margins by Presidential Win Margins.....	29
3.	Table 2-C, 1972 Presidential Election, Margins of Victory of Republican House of Representatives Members by Electoral Margins for Richard Nixon.....	30
4.	Table 3-A, 1976 Presidential Election, Democratic Congressional Win Margins.....	52
5.	Table 3-B, 1976 Presidential Election, Total Percentage of Democratic Congressional Win Margins by Presidential Win Margins.....	53
6.	Table 3-C, 1976 Presidential Election, Martins of Victory of Democratic House of Representatives Members by Electoral Margins for Jimmy Carter.....	54
7.	Table 4-A, 1980 Presidential Election, Republican Congressional Win Margins.....	93
8.	Table 4-B, 1980 Presidential Election, Total Percentage of Republican Congressional Win Margins by Presidential Win Margins.....	94
9.	Table 4-C, 1980 Presidential Election, Margins of Victory of Republican House of Representatives Members by Electoral Martins for Ronald Reagan.....	95
10.	Table 5 , Party Status, United States House of Representatives.....	102

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The American electorate, once very influenced by party affiliation in presidential elections, has been subjected to a variety of social and political stimuli over the decade of the 1970's and into the 1980's. These stimuli have created political results in presidential elections which are very different from the effects seen during the days of Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal Coalition, when his election drew large numbers of Democrats into Congress.

This research examines the presidential elections of 1972, 1976, and 1980 in terms of issue perspectives and electoral results. These three elections were chosen for several reasons. In addition to being current, they represent from election to election a period of profound change in American culture and lifestyles, a wide range of issue positions, and an extensive variation in presidential win margins. By virtue of their contemporaneousness, they formulate the best gauge of future elections in a modern society. With the exception of the Civil War period, possibly the greatest amount of social change the United States has ever witnessed took place in the years immediately proceeding the 1972 election. Because of the multifaceted array of issues represented in each of the elections,

they encompassed a wide variety of developments in American politics, from alternative lifestyles to escalating interest rates. In addition, these three elections are ideal for analyzing the coattail effect, which occurs when voters vote for candidates on the same party ticket as a popular presidential candidate, because they collectively represent both landslide and close elections. For all of the above reasons, the 1972, 1976, and the 1980 elections are certainly among the best indicators of the coattail effect and party influence in presidential elections for this century.

The first part of each Chapter, the issue analysis, focuses on the organizational, economic, sociological and historical factors that contributed to uniqueness of each election. Events such as the Vietnam War and the Iranian hostage crisis lent a special sense of urgency to each respective election, an urgency that was extrapolated upon the voting public. When observed in a total perspective, it appears that political issues multiply and become more complex in every election; possibly the best explanation for it is that political issues are merely a reflection of the society they exist in.

In addition to delineating the major issues of each of the above mentioned presidential elections, this research also will explore the electoral results of the elections. The results are examined in terms of presidential coattail effect on lesser officeholders of the same political party. The coattail effect on United States Senate and gubernatorial candidates competing for offices in the respective elections receives brief treatment.

However, the coattail effect as related to members of the House of Representatives is examined in depth. The House is used because it is the only one of the aforementioned legislative bodies that comes up for election in its entirety along with the office of the presidency. This gives it a continuity not found in the other legislative bodies as a measure of the effect of presidential coattails.

This research also attempts to use the issue perspectives and measures of coattail effect as indicators of party strength and voter independence. If the coattail effect is consistently high, it should reflect increased party strength and decreased voter independence. If the coattail effect is consistently low, it should indicate decreased party influence and increased voter independence. Although each of the elections is unique, this research hopes to establish a definite trend.

It is hypothesized that although the contemporary events associated with each election have a discernable and certainly important influence, recurrent themes will be present in each. The theme of deterioration of party influence should be pervasive throughout each election. Because of changes in communications, technology, and laws regarding presidential politics, this trend should be more apparent in 1980 than in 1972. Another expected result is a widening gap between victory margins of congressional and presidential candidates of the same party. In other words, even given the historical precedent for a strong Republican party at the presidential level and a strong Democratic

party at the congressional level, the party affiliation of the presidential candidates will have little effect on the same party candidates in House elections. It is hypothesized that the term "coattails" as a political phenomenon has little merit in modern political discourse.

Each Chapter begins with a discussion of the most important issues that characterized the campaigns under examination.

Scholarly journals, periodicals, newspapers, and books served as major sources of information. In particular, the Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report functioned as a most invaluable reference. The Washington Post proved to be especially helpful.

Measurement of the presidential coattail effect was accomplished by a statistical comparison between the margins of victory for the elected members of the House of Representatives who ran on the same party ticket as the victorious President and the margins of victory for that President. Each election is analyzed and discussed as a separate entity.

Data was collected from three sources; The Almanac of American Politics 1974, The Almanac of American Politics 1978, and The Almanac of American Politics 1982. The Almanacs are excellent sources, providing well documented data which is comprehensively broken down by state, district, individual representative, party, percentage of the representatives, victory and percentage of votes in that district for each of the presidential candidates. In gathering the statistical data necessary for this research, results from each of the 435

congressional districts were assembled. The data tables presented throughout the research utilize the individual congressional district as the unit of analysis.

Nominal variables for each year include the margin of the individual Representative's congressional victory, the party of the victorious President, and the margin of presidential victory. For each respective election, the percentage of victory for the individual House member was entered, along with the percentage of victory in that district for the winning presidential candidate. The congressional victory margins were classified into categories of 50-52, 53-55, 56-58, and 62 or more percent. The vote margins of the victorious President were classified into groups of 1-49, 50-52, 53-55, 56-58, 59-61, and 62 or more percent of the vote.

It is apparent that the first presidential category, 1-49 percent, is not indicative of a winning margin. However, in this comparison, the party membership of the House member, along with his margin of victory, sets up the independent variable. Certainly there are instances where a congressman ran as a member of the victorious presidential party and won while the President was severely beaten in his individual district. This will be discussed in greater depth at another point.

Using the data according to the above mentioned classification, a comparison was constructed. From that comparison, three respective tables were developed. The structure of the comparison and the tables are identical for each election.

In each Chapter, the first table depicts the frequency and percentage of the congressional win margins for the party of the victorious presidential candidate. It is useful for observing the distribution of congressional win margins alone. The second table compares the total percentage of congressional win margins of the victorious presidential party to the presidential win margins. It is important because relationships between variables and distribution patterns are revealed. Strengths and weaknesses based on the total sample size may be easily evaluated.

The third table in each Chapter compares the margins of victory for the President against margins of victory for House members of the same party. This table is the most important in determining coattail effect. It demonstrates the direct relationship between the victory margins for the presidential and congressional candidates of the same party.

Used together, these tables form an introspective base from which to observe the coattail effect. It must be remembered that what is being examined here is not a specific geographic area or division but rather a general trend. Coupled with referenced information as the the Senate and gubernatorial candidates, the statistical crosstabulation should indicate the strength of the coattail effect, if indeed one exists.

"Presidential coattails" as a term has become common jargon among the discourse of political scholars, journalists, and practitioners. This research is significant because it attempts to measure the coattail phenomenon through direct

comparison of victory margins. It is also important because it seeks to present the electoral studies in the light of the contemporary issues. Elections never occur in ideological vacuums; to undertake a quantitative analysis without such consideration is to ignore a fundamental aspect of the political system. In addition, this research takes account of the three most recent presidential elections rather than a single election. Although the elections are analyzed individually, the results obtained from the analysis of each are studied comparatively in order to establish emerging trends.

Because this research looks at the coattail effect, which is a function of party identification, it also has import as a commentary on the relative strength of the two major political parties in the United States today. The study analyzes the strengths and weaknesses of the parties in relation to contemporary issues, electoral outcomes, and level of office.

This research contributes to the study of political science in several ways. It demonstrates the rapidity of change in issue orientation in the modern political world. It also establishes the electoral volatility of presidential elections. For example, landslide victories in one year do not guarantee the same results in another year. The relative strength of both the Democratic and Republican parties in terms of coattail effect is also portrayed. At the same time, this research illustrates the gap in electoral results that occurs between the Democratic and Republican parties at the presidential and congressional levels. It has been said that "electorally,

American parties represent outcomes in general..." and indeed, this study's most important contribution to political science is the interpretation of the quantitative data which illustrates the coattail effect through a general study of electoral criterion.¹ It is important to note that this research will focus more on the results themselves than on the psychology of the individual voter.

¹Theodore Lowi, "Party, Policy and Constitution," in The American Party Systems, eds. William N. Chambers and Walter Dean Burnham (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967), pp. 240.

CHAPTER II
THE 1972 ELECTIONS
A NEW EXERCISE OF INDEPENDENCE

The 1972 presidential election proved to be a harbinger of change and an indicator of the growing independence of the American voter. Republicans, who at first heralded the news of Richard Nixon's landslide victory as the beginning of a new Republican era similar to the Democratic New Deal Coalition of Franklin Roosevelt's Presidency were quickly disappointed when election returns revealed that despite Mr. Nixon's mammoth win, the GOP suffered a net loss of two seats in the Senate and a net gain of only twelve seats in the House.¹ Although the 1972 election surely did not have the ramifications of the 1932 election, it was indeed the start of a new mood of independence in American presidential politics, a breaking apart of the traditional coattails effect that had previously brought in scores of congressmen of the President's party.

In an attempt to analyze the 1972 election, this Chapter first discusses the party organizational changes that influenced the election, both economic and social. Following that, a statistical examination of the relationship between margins of

¹John Crittendon, Parties and Elections in the United States (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1982), p. 63.

victory for the President and margins of victory for members of Congress will ensue. It is hypothesized that although Richard Nixon did not pull a Republican majority into the House, those Republicans who were elected won by substantial margins, thereby demonstrating an emerging hard core of Republican strength.

Organizational Changes

It is not within the scope of this research to discuss in great detail the Republican and Democratic party reforms that influenced the 1972 presidential election. It is, however, important to briefly mention them, for they were of some consequence to the election.

The changes in the methods for selecting Republican delegates were not as well publicized as those of the Democrats. With Richard Nixon running as an incumbent President, there was little strife or dissension within the party itself. Most of the recommendations put forth by the Delegates and Organizations Committee were described as "comprehensive and workable."²

The reforms in the Democratic party were far more radical, spawned in part by the chaotic 1968 Democratic convention. The most comprehensive changes in party structure were made through the Commission on Party Structure and Delegate Selection, headed first by Senator George McGovern (Democrat - South Dakota) and later by Representative James G. O'Hara (Democrat - Michigan).³

²"Convention Reforms: Big Changes for Both Parties," Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, April 29, 1972, p. 943.

³Ibid

The basic thrust of these reforms was to shift control of the delegate selection process from the "inside" party leaders to a populist "grass-roots" level. These changes manifested themselves in the makeup of the delegates to the convention. Nine out of ten of the new delegates had never attended a national convention before, and most of them were chosen by open elections and caucuses.⁴ This resulted in a greater representation of women and minorities than ever before, but it also caused a weakening of traditional party strength. The resulting implications will be discussed later in this Chapter and throughout this research.

Issues

Economy

Inflation was the greatest economic problem of 1972. In a departure from traditional Republican laissez-faire economics, the Nixon administration applied wage-price controls in an effort to curb it. Richard Nixon claimed that his ultimate objective was lasting price stability without controls.⁵ He also advocated a spending ceiling on governmental expenditures in order to avoid future inflation.

⁴"Democratic Convention: New Faces and New Rules," Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, July 8, 1972, p. 1635.

⁵"Campaign Issues: Statements by Nixon, McGovern," Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, September 2, 1972, p. 2211.

Democrat George McGovern, on the other hand, criticized the Nixon administration's policies for cooling off the economy while allowing inflation to continue.⁶ His positions on the economy usually focused on military spending as the culprit. He blamed the Vietnam War for creating the inflationary deficits that overstimulated the economy. If elected, Senator McGovern promised to transfer funds from war to peace priorities.

The problem of military spending was a particularly volatile economic issue in 1972, tied as it was to emotional conflicting opinions on the Vietnam War. George McGovern offered a proposal to cut defense spending by reducing total U.S. troop strength from 2.4 million to 1.7 million.⁷ He contended that military spending was wasted on ineffective equipment and top-heavy administration. The President countered that maintenance of the present levels of military spending was necessary for the United States to retain its position of military supremacy in the world. President Nixon bolstered his position with statements such as:

I have never gambled-and I never will gamble-with the safety of the American people under the false banner of economy,⁸

Deep philosophical differences were also reflected in the two candidates approaches to the questions of economic growth and unemployment. Regarding economic expansion, President Nixon urged a pragmatic policy of spending "enough and on time" in

⁶Ibid.

⁷Ibid.

⁸Ibid.

order to keep the economy on a stable and upward peacetime course while still meeting the needs of the American public.⁹ Senator McGovern criticized President Nixon's tax policies for failing to expand factory production and promised to invest the funds the Nixon Administration spent on the military on housing, environmental programs, and the construction of transit facilities. He contended that these types of programs would create jobs and an expansionary economy.

Unemployment stood at approximately six percent in the fall of 1972, and the specter of a peacetime influx of military personnel into the private sector created a definite possibility that that figure could rapidly escalate.¹⁰ In his State of the Union message on January 20, 1972, President Nixon stated that "our goal is full employment in peacetime-and we intend to meet that goal."¹¹ Yet unlike his positions on other specific economic problems, he did not offer a definite program as a solution. The response of George McGovern to unemployment was much like his answers to other economic issues: the United States must break its dependence on arms spending in order to achieve full employment. He also re-advocated his assertion that the government should spend more on domestic programs in order to create jobs.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

The positions of President Nixon and Senator McGovern on the economic issue remained within the philosophical boundaries of the Republican and Democratic parties. Even though George McGovern represented the more liberal side of Democratic fiscal thinking, the party cleavages were standard. However, those conventional party cleavages did not remain as rigid on the bitterly divisive social issues of the day.

Social Issues

In many respects, the 1972 election represents the fountainhead of political and social unrest that occurred in the decade before it. View in the light of fractured societal norms, the split nature of the election is perhaps not so unusual. According to James L. Sundquist,

the rise in independent attitudes coincided with the rise to a dominant position of the three powerful and related issues mentioned earlier: race, Vietnam, and the social issues.¹²

All three of these issues tended to blur the stance of the major parties, creating polarized political extremes whose proponents found no outlets in the major parties.

Civil Rights and Civil Liberties

Given the tumultuous nature of race relations in the 1960's, as evidenced by the black ghetto riots of 1965, 1968, and the explosive nature of the busing controversy, race had the potential

¹²James L. Sundquist, "Whither the American Party System?" Political Science Quarterly⁸⁸ (December 1973): 578.

of becoming an issue around which both political parties, and their respective candidates, could polarize. However, this did not occur with any degree of intensity.

Early in 1972, the President released a seven-page catalogue pointing to the Nixon record of progress in civil rights and related social programs. The catalogue held that the percentage of black students in all-black schools dropped from 40 percent in 1968 to an estimated 12 percent in the fall of 1972, and that government aid for minority businesses rose from \$200 million in 1969 to \$360.3 million in 1971, with future increases for 1972 anticipated.¹³ Statements such as these appeared to convince voters that President Nixon was making a legitimate attempt to promote efforts to integrate black citizens into the mainstream of American society.

The only issue in the realm of race relations on which the candidates appeared clearly divided along party lines was the busing controversy. In March, 1972 the President submitted two bills to Congress aimed at stopping excessive busing. He said he proposed those bills because "education, not transportation, is the name of the game."¹⁴ Senator McGovern made his position clear in his statement that

With the exception of his failure to end the war, there is no darker chapter in the presidency of Richard Nixon than his exploitation of the emotion surrounding busing.¹⁵

¹³"Administration Catalogues its Civil Rights Achievements," The Washington Post, 16 February 1972, sec. A, p. 26.

¹⁴"Nixon, McGovern Differ Sharply on Top Campaign Issues," The Washington Post, 2 November 1972, sec. E, p. 6.

¹⁵Ibid.

Senator McGovern and the Democratic party clearly represented a pro-civil rights stand. Although the Republican party did not have significant black voting strength and President Nixon's busing stance could possibly be interpreted as a position that appealed to white resistance, the Republican party could hardly be said to be anti-civil rights, and had in fact supported many of the demands of black activists.¹⁶ The net result was that both Republicans and Democrats were divided on the race issue, leaving both of the parties unrepresentative of a definitive choice.

Senator McGovern also tried to make the civil liberties issue one of clear-cut party distinctions by lambasting the Nixon administration's record on it. In one particularly harsh campaign white paper, Senator McGovern criticized President Nixon's Supreme Court nominations and attempted Supreme Court nominations, accusing him of trying to place on the high court "lawyers who were incompetent, who had demonstrated an intolerable bias or who had been insensitive to conflicts of interest."¹⁷ In the same paper, the Senator also accused the Justice Department of deliberately and systematically undermining the Voting Rights Act of 1965.¹⁸

¹⁶James L. Sundquist, "Whither the American Party System," Political Science Quarterly⁸⁸ (December 1973), 578.

¹⁷"McGovern says Nixon Endangers Civil Rights," The Washington Post, 3 September 1972, sec. A, p. 2.

¹⁸Ibid.

Vietnam

Like the racial controversy, the war in Vietnam was an issue that cut across both parties. By the time of the 1972 election, most Americans believed the war in Vietnam should be terminated. It also seemed to be that both President Nixon and George McGovern wanted to end the war as well. However, there were marked differences in their respective approaches.

George McGovern was adamant and direct about how he wanted to end the war. His call for an immediate end to the Vietnam conflict was consistent with the position he had initially taken in September, 1963 when he made his first Senate speech opposing the Kennedy administration's involvement in the conflict.¹⁹ The Senator's position was unchanged seven years later, when he said that

every Senator in this chamber is partly responsible for sending 50,000 young Americans to an early grave. This chamber reeks of blood.²⁰

These and similar speeches had even caused George McGovern to be labeled a one-issue candidate. Thus, it came as no surprise when on July 14, 1972, in his acceptance speech at the Democratic National Convention in Miami, Florida, Senator McGovern stated that "I will halt the senseless bombing on Indochina on Inauguration Day." and that

Within 90 days of my inauguration, every American soldier and every American prisoner will be out of the jungle and out of their cells and back home in America where they belong.²¹

¹⁹"McGovern Showing Up as Final War Victim," The Washington Post, 27 October 1972, sec. A., p. 14.

²⁰Ibid.

²¹George McGovern, "The Democratic Candidate for President," Vital Speeches of the Day 38 (August 1, 1972): 611.

Later, in a U.S. News and World Report interview, Senator McGovern reiterated his position and vowed that he would

stake my whole political career on being able to withdraw our forces and get our prisoners out within 90 days after the inauguration.²²

He did not waver on this point and in mid-October was still advocating an immediate halt to all bombing in Indochina, termination of shipments of military supplies to South Vietnam, and withdrawal of American forces from South Vietnam as well as from Laos and Cambodia.²³

President Nixon, in contrast, presented a more subdued and less dramatic peace proposal. In a nationwide address on April 26, 1972, President Nixon proposed to end the war

in such a way that the younger brothers and some of the brave men who have fought in Vietnam will not have to fight again in some other Vietnam... in the future.²⁴

His specifications called for return of American prisoners of war and an internationally supervised cease fire throughout Indochina. Once those conditions were met, the United States would cease acts of force.²⁵ President Nixon described the

²²"How McGovern Sees the Issues," U.S. News and World Report, October 23, 1972, p. 451.

²³Ibid.

²⁴"The Situation in Vietnam," Vital Speeches of the Day, May 15, 1972, p. 451

²⁵"Terms for Ending the War, What the Candidates Say," U.S. News and World Report, October 23, 1972, p. 28.

general peace effort as a generous plan for peace with honor. As the election neared, the pace of secret negotiations between Washington and Hanoi was increased. Henry Kissinger had remarked the "peace is at hand."²⁶

During the latter days of the campaign, George McGovern discounted the Administration's peace negotiations as a "cynical effort" to win the election and stated that peace was "not even in sight."²⁷ President Nixon countered that a vote for him was a message of support of the President of the United States, a President who would insist on peace with honor and never peace with surrender.²⁸

Lifestyle Issues

The "lifestyle issues" also represented a great degree of polarization between President Nixon and Senator McGovern. These issues covered a broad range of phenomena, including the so-called youth movement and the student activism it produced, the growing influence and emergence of the drug culture into the middle class, and the increasing acceptance of sexual permissiveness.

Although these new trends in American lifestyles received much media attention, many Americans were disturbed by those developments, which in turn seemed to create a schism between

²⁶"Peace is at Hand," Newsweek, November 27, 1972, p. 23.

²⁷"Presidency: Nixon Landslide of Historic Proportions," Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, November 11, 1972, p. 2949.

²⁸Ibid.

the old and the new, a division which came to be called the generation gap.

The youth movement was, to say the least, disturbing to a large number of middle class parents. Much of the student activism it fostered was directed against the war, and a large number of Americans in that age group vehemently opposed the war. It only seemed natural that they would ally themselves with McGovern, using his name as a banner for all the changes they desired in society.

Drugs were a new toy to many of these middle class baby boomers, and while their use may not have been as pervasive as the older members of the Establishment thought, many of those who did partake in drugs were quite vocal about it. Somehow, Senator McGovern was perceived as an advocate of such frivolity, although he made repeated pleas for stricter sanctions against those trafficking in hard narcotics. Perhaps this was caused by his soft stand on the marijuana issue. While never openly advocating the legalization of marijuana, in a speech to the United States Senate in 1972 he said that the prison terms often imposed upon youthful experimentators were many times more disruptive than the substance itself, and implied that if resources spent on marijuana control had been channeled into efforts to control hard drugs, society would have benefited more.²⁹ In 1972 this was quite an emotional issue.

²⁹George McGovern, "Toward an End to Drug Abuse," Vital Speeches of the Day 38 (February 15, 1972): 326.

Many of the concerns of the youth movement were directed at the capitalist, secretive, and what would appear from the radical literature of the time, almost Orwellian Nixon administration. Because George McGovern in his campaign openly accused the Republican administration of being both secretive and disproportionately inclined to favor big business, he was once again easily portrayed as very "anti-Establishment."

Senator McGovern's zeal in attempting to recruit the newly enfranchised eighteen to twenty-one year old voters also contributed to this image. His campaign was characterized by massive registration drives and campaign staffers who were quite young and inexperienced.

George McGovern, in an attempt to ride the crest of this new wave of American thought, tried to exploit the votes of those who would advocate or embrace the new lifestyles. However, he was perceived as too far to the left even by some who considered themselves liberals, and thus many Americans abandoned their party affiliations and voted for a man whom they considered to embody more traditional American values, Richard Nixon. As a matter of fact, forty-two percent of self identified Democrats defected from their partisan leanings to vote for President Nixon. In addition, many of those defectors were from traditional areas of Democratic support; manual workers, labor union families, and Catholics.³⁰

³⁰"Presidency: Nixon Landslide of Historic Proportions," Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, November 11, 1972, p. 2949.

MEDIA

The media also contributed to the portrayal of George McGovern as the vanguard of the "New Politics." On October 2, 1972, Time magazine featured a cover story entitled "The Confrontation of Two Americans," which contained a classic description of the whole McGovern crusade. It described the campaign as marching

to the rhythms of the long, Wagnerian '60's: the blacks upheaval, the war and the defense machine, a generations uprising (or dropping out), the battle for privacy, the feminist movement, the sexual revolution.³¹

In contrast, the President Nixon camp made no effort to overtly advocate any lifestyle, except perhaps the one of ordered traditionalism that it sought to perpetuate. Richard Nixon's subtle way of promoting his programs as evolutionary rather than revolutionary apparently caught on with the millions of his "silent majority" who, in a rational manner, reasoned that adaptation was a better form of change than reorganization.

Labor

The labor vote has always played an important role in American politics, and has traditionally been a prize possession of the Democratic party. The influence of a powerful and charismatic leader like George Meany on the voting patterns of labor union members could not be overestimated. The election of 1972 however, left the labor vote without the traditional direction

³¹"Confrontation of Two Americans," Time, October 2, 1972, p. 15.

it had become so accustomed to. George Meany and the Executive Council of the AFL-CIO, a locus of power for 117 unions representing 14 million American Workers and their families, opted to remain neutral in the election.³²

The impact of the AFL-CIO's neutrality was heightened by George Meany's vocalism about it. In an appearance on the television show "Face the Nation," Mr. Meany criticized Senator McGovern's labor voting record and emphatically described the Senator as "an apologist for the Communist world."³³ Although the labor leader also refused to endorse Richard Nixon, he took labor another step from its customary association with the Democratic party by asserting that he would not help rebuild it if George McGovern lost.

The effect of this decision was certainly devastating to George McGovern's campaign. However, in terms of voter independence, its effect was perhaps more significant. For, once again, the American voter was left without one of the guideposts that had previously led him to the straight ticket lever.

Election Results

Just hours after the final votes were cast in the 1972 election, media commentators were proclaiming it a landslide short on coattails. Even Senator Robert Dole, National Chairman of the Republican party, remarked that the election was

³²Arthur Miller, "The Majority Party Reunited? A Comparison of the 1972 and 1976 Elections," in Politics and Elections in an Anti-Party Age, ed. Jeff Fishel with an Introduction by Jeff Fishel (Bloomington & London: Indiana University Press, 1978), p. 127.

³³"McGovern Assailed by Meany," The Washington Post, 4 September 1972, sec. a, p. 1.

"a personal triumph for Mr. Nixon but not a party triumph."³⁴ Before Richard Nixon's electoral triumph, in the history of the United States only three presidential candidates had garnered 60 percent or more of the presidential vote. However, President Nixon was the only President from this group to fail to add seats from his party in the House and Senate.³⁵ Although some cited this as evidence that the New Deal Coalition and Democratic strength in Congress was intact, there were indications that Republican strength at the congressional level, though not dominant, was increasing.

Senate and Gubernatorial Races

The United States Senate elections were a perfect example of how short the Republican coattails in the 1972 election actually were. The Democrats scored a net gain of two seats in the U.S. Senate, thereby achieving a majority of fifty-seven to forty-three. They also wrested Senate seats away from four seemingly secure Republican incumbents: Gordon Allot of Colorado, J. Caleb Boggs of Delaware, Jack Miller of Iowa, and Margaret Chase Smith of Maine.³⁶ The defeat of these incumbents evidences Democratic strength at the congressional level. However, the impact is somewhat mitigated by the fact that the Republicans were victorious in the Senate races of four southern states.³⁷

³⁴"Presidency: Nixon Landslide of Historic Proportions," Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, November 11, 1972, p. 2949.

³⁵Ibid.

³⁶"Senate: Increases of Two Seats in Democratic Majority," Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, November 11, 1972, p. 2951.

³⁷Ibid.

Also, Richard Nixon had higher victory margins than the majority of the Republican Senate candidates.

Democratic strength in other offices in 1972 was also apparent in the gubernatorial races. Overall, the Democrats held 31 governorships to the Republicans nineteen. Of the 18 governor's seats up in the 1972 election, the Democrats won eleven and the Republicans seven.³⁸ However, there was a minimal change in party power as several upsets caused the Democrats to post a net gain of one seat. President Nixon had higher margins than all the Republican gubernatorial candidates, winners or losers, except one.³⁹

The results of the Senate and gubernatorial races indicate a strong preference for the Republican party at the presidential level, but a lack of Republican potency elsewhere. President Nixon ran far ahead of most of his GOP ticket mates, yet failed to bring in a majority of them at legislative and gubernatorial levels. Perhaps a look at some previous elections can explain why.

Like President Nixon, the winning presidential candidates of the 1920, 1936, and 1964 elections all captured the presidency by a sixty percent or better margin. However, their respective political parties had a far better starting point than did Richard Nixon.⁴⁰ Presidents Harding, Roosevelt, and Johnson, unlike Richard Nixon in 1972, faced their elections with their party

³⁸"Governors: Gain of One for Democrats, Now 31-19,"
Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, November 11, 1972, p. 2985.

³⁹Ibid.

⁴⁰Herbert Asher, Presidential Elections and American Politics
(Homewood, Illinois: The Dorsey Press, 1980) p. 197.

occupying a majority in the House. President Nixon had no such majority, and considering this, in addition to the fact that he ran his campaign largely outside the party, the significance is magnified.

Another important aspect of the 1972 election was the sudden emergence of Republican strength in the South, where tradition had mandated Democratic control over all aspects of politics since Reconstruction. Many political analysts believed that this was the only region of the United States where coattail effects occurred in 1972.⁴¹ In the South, the Republicans took seven House seats out of Democratic hands, signalling a drastic break with tradition. The importance of this phenomenon cannot be overstated. If a region so steeped in tradition would be willing to break that pattern, even though the voters followed the party of the President, it would follow that even the most staid of American voters were ready to exercise independent thought in regard to their congressional electoral choices. The future impact of this phenomenon is dependent on both the industrial and demographic growth of the South.

Statistical Analysis

One way of testing the strength of coattail effects on the 1972 election is by comparing the margin of victory of the congressional vote among members of the same party, as discussed

⁴¹"An Apparent Record Landslide-With Qualifications." Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, November 11, 1972, p. 2947.

in Chapter One. Such an analysis can give indications of whether electoral strength lies with the House or with the presidency.

Data Analysis

Tables 2-A, 2-B, and 2-C represent the results of the comparison. Table 2-A, illustrates the number and percentage of Republican members of Congress elected from the five congressional win margin categories. Table 2-B depicts what percentage of the total number of Republican congressmen fell in the same categories. Table 2-C indicates the percentage of Republican congressmen elected from the presidential electoral margin categories.

A total of 194 Republicans were elected to the House of Representatives in 1972.⁴² As has been previously discussed, that number is not high considering the 1972 victory was a landslide one for Richard Nixon. However, the crosstabulation reveals that the percentage of victory for the Republicans elected to the House with him was remarkably high. Table 2-A demonstrates that 58.8 percent of all the Republican congressmen elected in 1972 won by a margin of 62 percent or more. Certainly a part of this high percentage can be attributed to incumbency on the part of some of the Republican candidates. A study by David Mayhew was the first to point out the high frequency margins for congressional incumbents, or what he termed the

⁴²Michael Barone, Grant Ujifusa, and Douglas Mathews, The Almanac of American Politics 1974 (Boston: Gambit, 1973).

TABLE 2-A
 1972 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION
 REPUBLICAN CONGRESSIONAL WIN MARGINS

REPUBLICAN CONGRESSIONAL WIN MARGINS	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
50-52%	23	11.9
53-55%	23	11.9
56-58%	21	10.8
59-61%	13	6.7
62+%	114	58.8
TOTAL	194	100.0

Source: The Almanac of American Politics 1974.

TABLE 2-B
 1972 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION
 TOTAL PERCENTAGE OF REPUBLICAN CONGRESSIONAL
 WIN MARGINS BY PRESIDENTIAL WIN MARGINS

REPUBLICAN CONGRESSIONAL WIN MARGINS	NIXON MARGINS						TOTAL
	1-49 %	50-52 %	53-55 %	56-58 %	59-61 %	62± %	
50-52%	0.0	0.5	0.5	0.5	1.5	8.8	11.9
53-55%	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.5	2.1	7.7	11.9
56-58%	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.5	2.1	7.7	10.8
59-61%	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.5	0.5	5.7	6.7
62±%	1.0	0.5	0.5	3.6	4.1	49.0	58.0
TOTAL	2.1	1.0	1.0	7.2	9.8	78.9	100.0

Based on a sample size of 194

Source: The Almanac of American Politics 1974.

TABLE 2-C
 1972 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION
 MARGINS OF VICTORY OF REPUBLICAN HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES MEMBERS
 BY ELECTORAL MARGINS FOR RICHARD NIXON

REPUBLICAN CONGRESSIONAL WIN MARGINS	NIXON MARGINS						TOTAL
	1-49 %	50-52 %	53-55 %	56-68 %	59-61 %	62 ⁺ %	
50-52%	25.0	0.0	50.0	7.1	15.8	11.0	11.9
53-55%	0.0	50.0	0.0	28.6	15.8	9.8	11.9
56-58%	25.0	0.0	0.0	7.1	21.1	9.8	10.8
59-61%	0.0	0.0	0.0	7.1	5.3	7.2	6.7
62 ⁺ %	50.0	50.0	50.0	50.0	42.1	62.1	58.8
TOTAL (Number)	100.0 (4)	100.0 (2)	100.0 (2)	100.0 (14)	100.0 (19)	100.0 (153)	100.0 (194)

Based on a sample size of 194

Source: The Almanac of American Politics 1974.

"vanishing marginals" phenomenon.⁴³ His observations demonstrated that from the mid-1960's on, fewer congressional seats contested by incumbents were falling in the competitive zone of near fifty-fifty margins, while open seats retained a more competitive structure. Mayhew's study offered some explanations that are applicable to the 1972 elections as well as the following two elections analyzed in this research. He postulated that incumbents have gained political support by becoming more adept at advertising, credit-taking, and position forming, as well as have benefited fortuitously from the erosion of party loyalties.⁴⁴

Table 2-B, which illustrates patterns of total distribution, yields some important results. Even a cursory glance reveals that the skew toward high victory margins for both the President and the House candidates is startlingly apparent. Of those congressmen who won, ticket splitting represented only 2.1 percent of the total. This may suggest that Richard Nixon was a strong candidate. However, almost 90 percent of the congressmen won their districts by margins of 59 percent or more. This implies that they won on their own electoral strengths.

This trend was apparent in the 1972 election. In 1972, the overall proportion of incumbents running for reelection who were defeated in the general election was only 3.4 percent of

⁴³Thomas E. Mann, Unsafe at any Margin (Washington: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1978), p. 2.

⁴⁴Ibid.

all incumbents and 3.0 percent of the whole House.⁴⁵ Candidates who ran against no opposition naturally were elected by a high margin. When one takes these factors into consideration, the electoral strength of the elected Republicans is evident.

There is additional evidence in Table 2-B to support the claim of strength at the congressional level and relative weakness at the presidential one. In only 8.2 of the cases were Richard Nixon's victory margins higher than that of reelected Republican House of Representatives members. This is strong evidence for the claims that only minimal coattails existed in 1972.

The results depicted in Table 2-C serve to confirm the hypothesis that those Republicans who were elected to the House in the election of 1972 were elected by substantial margins. Table 2-C examines the relationship between the victory margins for Richard Nixon against margins of victory for House members of the same party. As also seen in Table 2-A, 58.8 percent of the Republican House members elected in 1972 were elected by a 62 percent or more margin. When studied according to the Presidential win categories, the strength of the Republican congressional victors becomes even more clear. In each of the six Nixon margin categories, except for the 59-61 percent group, 50 percent or more of the House members elected from these categories won by 62 percent or more. In the 59-61 percent category, the figure is 42.1 percent, not far from half.

⁴⁵Walter Dean Burnham, "American Politics in the 1970's: Beyond Party?," in Parties and Elections in an Anti-Party Age, ed. Jeff Fishel (Bloomington & London: Indiana University Press), p. 338.

If one observes Table 2-C as a whole, it is not difficult to determine that no matter what percentage of the vote Richard Nixon received, a significant number of Republican House members won by an impressive margin, thereby indicating a notable amount of Republican congressional strength.

Though the impact of the coattail effect may have been weak overall, the fact that it did occur geographically may be of greater importance to presidential politics over time than if it had occurred minimally across the nation. The seven House seats that the Republican party won as a result of the Nixon landslide represented the first Republican sweep of the once solid Democratic South since Reconstruction. Although a small part of this might be attributed to the reaction of a traditionally conservative region to a candidate its population viewed as ideologically extreme, a greater portion must be regarded as a coattail effect.

However, all factors considered, especially the figures in Table 2-B, this research indicates that the coattail effect for the 1972 election was indeed minimal. The anomie created by the turbulent social issues of the day and the widespread ideological disaffection with George McGovern as a candidate forced the voter to analyze the presidential and congressional candidates as separate entities. In doing this the voter demonstrated a heretofore unexercised independence.

As a result of that independence, a theory of a certain core of Republican congressional strength is applicable to the 1972 election. It is obvious that due to social issues,

perceived Democratic candidate extremism, and increased awareness, the American voter exercised an independence in selecting House members unrelated to presidential candidate party affiliation. The net result of this was a new awareness of the Republican party as a center of political strength, especially in the South. Such strength is not to be overestimated, however, in the light of ticket-splitting and large Democratic majorities.

Conclusion

The 1972 election was one that was characterized by bitter divisions in both society as a whole and the political parties. Out of this strife emerged new moral questions, questions that were not the traditional fare of American presidential campaigns. The answers to many of these social questions were not to be found in the traditional structure of American political parties but cut across both of them instead to rest squarely on the individual conscience.

This focus of individualism had a profound effect upon the electoral results. The Democrats proved able to maintain their strong majority at the Senate and gubernatorial level in spite of the strong Republican showing at the presidential level. The statistics used in this research demonstrated virtually the same results at the House of Representatives level, and indicated some Republican strength in the cases where they actually won a seat.

There exist in these results broad implications for increased electoral activity by the Republican party at the congressional level. However, one must keep in mind the fact that the very forces that caused such rampant ticket-splitting also tend to erode the power of party influence upon the individual voter. The emergence of this trend will be seen in the 1976 election, which is discussed in the next Chapter.

CHAPTER III

THE 1976 ELECTION
A RETURN TO COATTAILS?

The 1976 election was an election unique to American political experience. The American governmental system had recently faced, and survived, the greatest test of its viability next to the Civil War. The populace, inspired by bitterness and disillusion, went to the polls to choose between a political outsider and an unelected incumbent. Jimmy Carter captured the presidency with a two hundred ninety-seven to two hundred forty-one electoral vote margin, the closest margin in sixty years. His popular vote margin was fifty-one percent.¹ The Democratic party prevailed in the House elections as well, retaining the two to one majority they had previously enjoyed.² The resulting one-party dominance of the government would on its face suggest a return to Democratic party influence, the weakening of the Republican party, and the re-emergence of the coattail effect. However, a deeper look at the results reveals less of a coattail effect than expected and given the circumstances, a surprising

¹"Story of the 1976 Election," U.S. News and World Report, November 15, 1976, p. 18.

²"Democrats Keep Large Majority in House," Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, November 6, 1976, p. 3119.

level of Republican strength.

This research focuses first on the social and economic issues that influenced the election, including a brief discussion of the impact of the 1974 congressional elections on the 1976 results. The coattail effect is examined through a comparison of presidential and congressional margins of victory. It is hypothesized that as in the election of 1972, there will be little coattail effect and increased ticket-splitting.

Issues

In many respects the issues facing both candidates in 1976 represented traditional electoral conflicts. The issue positions of both major parties represented a return to normality.³ The lifestyle issues that so aroused the political passions of Americans in 1972 seemed to have faded into oblivion. The war in Vietnam, hair length, the right to dissent, marijuana, and the counterculture were no longer salient voter issues. Instead, the American voter was more concerned with the reality of diminishing expectations and deepening recession. The 1976 presidential campaign revolved around three issues: trust in government, the energy crisis, and the economy.

³Plotkin, Henry A., "Issues in the 1976 Presidential Campaign," in The Election of 1976, ed. Marlene M. Pomper (New York: Longman 1977), p. 35.

Trust in Government

Trust in government was the most abstract of the issues in the 1976 campaign and possibly represented the greatest division along party lines. It cannot be denied that the country had suffered a serious moral setback as a result of the Watergate scandal. The average American's level of trust in government was seemingly at an all-time low. Like George McGovern, Jimmy Carter sensed the flow of the American spirit, but unlike George McGovern, he rode its crest to victory.

Jimmy Carter made no secret of the fact that he sincerely believed the central issue in the 1976 campaign was not jobs or detente, but the feeling in the hearts of many Americans that the country had lost its moral and spiritual underpinnings along with its sense of direction.⁴ As a matter of fact, Mr. Carter's basic campaign speech during the primaries dealt almost exclusively with the spiritual issue.⁵ It was his hope that such a position would appeal to the American weariness of political wrongdoing.

There was little that Gerald Ford could do to counter Mr. Carter's position in that direction. Although he tried to disassociate himself with the Nixon administration by reiterating the theme "our long national nightmare is over," his efforts to remove the taint of Watergate from his candidacy appeared to be an exercise in futility. The best he could do to counter Carter's image as the outsider-as-moral-crusader was to make statements like

⁴"Carter Faces the Fuzziness Issue," Time, May 31, 1976, p. 76.

⁵Ibid.

Many, many Americans were turned off by the revelations of Watergate...thousands...were turned off because of our involvement in Vietnam. But on the other hand, I found on July 4 of this year a new spirit born in America...⁶

Although such rhetoric was stirring and was in fact near to the truth, President Ford suffered throughout the campaign from the guilt of association.

Energy

There can be no doubt that procurement of affordable energy was a critical issue to the American population. The Arab oil embargo of 1974 taught the United States a quick lesson in vulnerability, both militarily and economically. Accordingly, the voters looked to the presidential candidates to provide clear cut answers to the newfound dilemma of diminishing resources. Both candidates believed that the United States needed to move into a more secure energy position by becoming less reliant on foreign sources of supply. They disagreed, however, on the best means of achieving that goal.

Jimmy Carter, who had studied nuclear physics and engineering at Union College in Schenectady, New York, made an impressive plea for development of coal and solar power, and called the United States' emphasis on atomic power "excessive."⁷ According to Mr. Carter this excessiveness was evidenced by the fact that two-thirds of federal research and development funds

⁶"Ford on the Issues," U.S. News and World Report, November 1, 1978, p. 18.

⁷"Where Carter Stands on the Issues," Newsweek, July 19, 1976, p. 23.

that had gone to atomic power, primarily for the breeder reactor.⁸ He favored a shift away from emphasis on atomic power and toward conservation and development of alternative energy sources such as solar power.

Jimmy Carter took the position that the United States was in dire need of a comprehensive energy policy. Early in the campaign, he proposed that federal government agencies and bodies involved in making policy about energy, regulating the energy industries, and fostering research in the field be combined into a new "cabinet level" government department.⁹ The proposal stated that he intended to abolish the Federal Energy Administration, the Federal Power Commission, the Energy Research and Development Administration, and the Energy Resources Council and create an integrated cabinet level department on energy.¹⁰

Conservation was also one of Jimmy Carter's major energy themes. He believed that if the need arose, federal restraints should be enacted to evoke strict fuel efficiency standards for automobiles, rigid enforcement of speed limits, mandatory building insulation and integrated mass transit systems.¹¹ He also favored federal restrictions on the major oil companies if

⁸"Two Candidates Give Views to Scientists," The New York Times 5 October 1972, sec. 1, p. 31.

⁹"Carter Proposes a Unified Agency in the Cabinet for Energy Policy." The New York Times, 22 September 1976, sec. 1. p. 1.

¹⁰Ibid

¹¹"Two Candidates Give Views to Scientists," The New York Times 5 October 1976, sec. 1. p. 31.

such a need arose. Implicit in his stance and the stance of the Democratic party was the perception of the energy industry as a profit minded antagonist.

In contrast, President Ford tended to view the energy industry as a colleague, eager to work toward energy independence once it was freed of excessive governmental regulation and given sufficient incentives by government policy.¹² Although Jimmy Carter repeatedly accused him of having no energy policy at all, President Ford maintained that we would adhere to his past course in energy policy if he were elected. This course would rely primarily on the private sector and market forces as the most efficient means to achieve the goal of energy independence.¹³

Unlike Jimmy Carter, President Ford favored continued development of nuclear power. Although the President favored tighter safety standards for nuclear power plants, both existing and planned, he did not indicate that he believed they were unsafe. His approval of nuclear power development was coupled with his positions in favor of increased offshore oil development and a strategic petroleum storage program.

About the only issues the two candidates agreed on was the need for a more streamlined federal administration of energy policy and the need for increased mass transportation programs.

¹²"Thorny Energy Issues Await New Congress," Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, October 16, 1976, p. 3140.

¹³"Two Candidates Give Views to Scientists," New York Times 5 October 1976, sec. 1. p. 31.

They differed on most other aspects of the multifaceted energy problem. These differences, like their differences on many other issues in 1976, were aligned along the conventional positions taken by American political parties.

Economy

The economy in 1976 was in a recession, putting the Republican party in the unenviable position of having to defend the President's economic policies. Although the inflation rate for 1976 was only approximately 5.8 percent, it had run as high as 11 percent in 1974.¹⁴ The devastating impact such double digit inflation had on family finances was greatly feared and not quickly forgotten. Unemployment had also reached high levels during the Ford administration. Like inflation, it had abated somewhat during 1976, standing at approximately 7.7 percent. However, the national average had climbed as high as 8.5 percent in 1974.¹⁵ The economic picture was further clouded by the volatile world oil situation, which threatened to disrupt any semblance of stability a conscientious administration might produce. Economics has traditionally been an issue to which both parties take clear and opposing positions and 1976 was no exception; both candidates offered solutions.

The thrust of the Republican argument to end "stagflation" was reduction of the federal budget and debt. The GOP blamed the spendthrift Democratic congress for the negative effects

¹⁴U.S. Bureau of the Census, Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1982-1983, 103d ed., pp. 392, 463.

¹⁵Ibid.

of increased federal spending on the economy. At the same time the Republican platform stated that

We believe it is of paramount importance that the number one destroyer of jobs is inflation. We wish to stress that the number one cause of inflation is the government's expansion of the nation's supply of money and credit needed to pay for deficit spending. It is above all else deficit spending by the federal government which erodes the purchasing power of the dollar.¹⁶

Gerald Ford, as President, was put in the position of defending his economic policies during the recession. Examples of this are seen in his response to questions during the presidential debates, where he appeared to be grasping at straws in order to present some positive information about the economy under the Ford administration.

Jimmy Carter, on the other hand, continually asserted that providing jobs for Americans who wanted to work was one of his top economic priorities. This position was directly in line with the Democratic party platform which stated that

the Democratic party is committed to the right of all adult Americans willing, able, and seeking work to have opportunities for useful jobs, at living wages. To make that commitment meaningful we pledge ourselves to the support of legislation that will make every responsible effort to reduce adult unemployment to 3 percent within 4 years.¹⁷

This stance was based on the Keynesian economic postulation that increased employment along with federal spending will increase demand, which will lead to corporate expansion. Jimmy Carter, holding firm to the Democratic party platform, continually stressed full employment as a major goal of the federal government.

¹⁶"Text of the Republican Party's 1976 Platform," Facts on File (21 August 1976): 602.

¹⁷"Text of the Democratic Party Platform," Facts on File 9 (3 July 1976): 470.

The economy was to both parties, and the general American public, a very salient and tangible issue. The economic outlook was crucial to all Americans from every socio-economic level, and this caused it to be an essential issue of the 1976 campaign,

The issues in the presidential campaign, unlike those of the 1972 campaign, tended to follow rather than cut across party lines. Perhaps it could even be said that some of the party in 1976 was more influential in determining voter choice, if for no other reason than the fact that with the exception of the trust in government issue, the candidates offered clear-cut differences on solutions to energy and economic problems that followed their party's platform.

The 1974 Congressional Elections

Any analysis of the coattail effect and party influence in the 1976 presidential election would be incomplete without a brief discussion of the role that the 1974 congressional elections played in it.

According to the widely accepted political theory of surge and decline, the party holding the White House generally experiences a loss in congressional strength during the midterm elections. The congressional elections of 1974 were an exception to this rule only in intensity. The Republican party lost heavily in an election that gave the Democrats forty-three seats in the House, creating a ratio of two hundred ninety-one Democrats to one hundred forty-four Republicans.¹⁸

¹⁸"The House: More than Two-Thirds Democratic," Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, November 9, 1974, p. 3065.

The loss to the Republican party was further exacerbated by the fact that thirty-six of the Republicans defeated in the November fifth election were incumbents.¹⁹ Most of the Republican losers, incumbents and non-incumbents alike, were conservatives, and many were from critical sources of Republican strength, such as the Midwest and suburbs.

The major significance of the 1974 mid-term election lies in the creation of a Democratic power of incumbency, although the psychological and organizational blow to the Republican party also held some importance. Incumbency is a powerful tool to House members who desire to retain their positions. The powers of office include frequent free trips home, franking privileges, and name recognition.

The significance of the 1974 House elections to the 1976 House elections was the fact that the Democratic party emerged the victor by an enormous landslide. Once elected these members used their incumbent status to help retain their seats. The mid-term elections symbolized the public resentment against Watergate and the Republican party, and, most importantly, altered the prospect for Republican coattails in 1976.

The Debates

For the first time since the Kennedy-Nixon campaign in 1960, presidential rivals engaged in forensics before television cameras. The 1976 debates also represented the first time an

¹⁹Ibid.

incumbent President debated his challenger on television. The League of Women Voters sponsored each of the three contests.

The first debate was held at the Walnut Street Theater in Philadelphia and covered domestic issue. For the most part, the candidates appeared stiff and formal. Ironically enough, the first in the series of 1976 debates is remembered more for what was not said than what was said, although many substantive national issues were addressed. A technical failure caused an embarrassing twenty-seven minute silence, which broke the delicate rhythm of the encounter and immeasurably affected the perceptions of the viewers.

Like the first debate, the second one, held in the Palace of Fine Arts in San Francisco, was best remembered for its foibles rather than its substantive content. Jimmy Carter addressed foreign policy issues with a newfound aggressiveness that surprised if not disturbed some viewers. The debate is perhaps best remembered for President Ford's misstatement, made in the tense highly charged atmosphere of television lights, that there was "no Soviet domination of Eastern Europe."²⁰ This gaffe was a setback to President Ford in his attempt to rectify his image as a blunderer.

Only the last debate, held in Williamsburg, Virginia, produced a strong impression of substance over style. Both candidates practiced the timeworn last-week strategies of muted criticism and movement toward the middle. Although the President made some mistakes, such as referring to the Vietnam War as the

²⁰"Round Two," The Washington Post, 10 October 1976, sec. A, p. 24.

"war of the 1950's," on the whole, both candidates left the voters with a soft and friendly television image.²¹

The debates were important to the 1976 election not only for the precedent they set but for the stamp of importance they placed on television as a medium. The fact that the same television debate between incumbent and challenger occurred with much less fanfare in 1980 is prime evidence that live TV debates will become integral, accepted parts of future campaigns. What impact that will have on the power of the respective political parties remains to be seen. Although the debates were criticized by some commentators as an imperfect method of allowing citizens to measure the candidates full qualities, they were just as carefully evaluated by the same commentators as extremely powerful psychological, emotional and political influences upon the American voter.

1976 Election Results

On November 2, 1976, the American voting public elected the first President from the Deep South since the Civil War by both a narrow popular vote margin and a narrow electoral college victory. Along with twenty-three states and the District of Columbia, he took a total of 297 electoral votes compared to Gerald Ford's 241 electoral votes.²² President Carter's Democratic party kept a large majority in the House, causing some media analysts to coin it a veto-proof Congress.

²¹Ibid.

²²"Story of the '76 Election," U.S. News and World Report, November 15, 1976, p. 18.

Although it would appear that a coattail effect was very much in force, the preponderance of the evidence suggests that even though the election fed on issues that delineated along the major party platforms, and resulted in a Democratic majority, more ticket-splitting, and independent voter decision-making occurred than a brief glance would indicate. In fact, in many instances, especially for the Democrats, a reverse coattail effect was evident. This research will first discuss the general aspects of the 1976 election and then uses the statistical crosstabulation to analyze the coattail effects of Jimmy Carter's candidacy upon Democrats elected to the House.

An overall view of the election would find the congressional decision an overwhelmingly Democratic one. They managed a two to one advantage in the House and a sixty-two to thirty-eight margin in the Senate. In addition, the Solid South, which includes for these purposes the thirteen states of Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, Oklahoma, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and Kentucky, reemerged Democratic for the first time since Roosevelt carried all thirteen southern states in 1944. The two exceptions to this were Oklahoma and Virginia.²³ This was significant since the Republicans had placed much emphasis on their "Southern Strategy" in previous years. However, much of the Democratic triumph can be attributed to pride in a native son rather than party loyalty.

²³"Carter and the Democrats Move into Control," Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, November 9, 1976, p. 3115-3116.

Senate and Gubernatorial Races

Although the Democratic party came out of the election as the clear congressional victor, ticket-splitting occurred in a majority of states, indicating a continuation of the independent voting trends established in 1972. President Ford and Jimmy Carter almost split evenly the thirty-seven states that had Senate or gubernatorial contests, with Ford winning nineteen. Although there were many newcomers elected to the U.S. Senate, it changed little in ideology, and the party membership ratios remained the same. The situation at the gubernatorial level was practically identical, with the Democrats adding one governorship. Of the eighteen states that Carter took, he ran ahead of the candidates for the Senate and governorships in only five, and substantially benefitted the ticket in only two of them, Tennessee and Missouri.²⁴

In thirteen other states, the existence of Carter coattails was a moot question because he actually ran behind Senate or gubernatorial nominees of the Democratic party. Nowhere was this more pronounced than in Ohio, where Democratic Senate nominee Howard M. Metzenbaum hoped to defeat his opposition on the strength of Carter coattails and then was elected by a plurality more than ten times as great as Jimmy Carter's.²⁵

Five of the states in which Jimmy Carter ran behind the local candidates were located in the South. They included

²⁴"Presidential Coattails of Little Benefit," Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, November 9, 1976, p. 3115-3116.

²⁵Ibid.

Arkansas, Florida, Mississippi, North Carolina, and Texas.

In most of the states where Jimmy Carter ran behind the state-wide candidates, he lagged by more than 150,000 votes.²⁶

In statewide Senate and gubernatorial races, the diminished coattail effect was also evidenced by extensive ticket-splitting. Although Virginia was the only state in the South that demonstrated an appreciable amount of ticket-splitting, substantial split voting occurred in five eastern states, four midwestern states, and five far western states.²⁷

Such weak coattails and widespread ticket-splitting in the face of an apparent solid Democratic victory is certainly a puzzling transpiration. It naturally brings up the question of whether or not there is a new independence among American voters. Inherent in this is also the question of the viability of the Republican party. These questions cannot be adequately addressed on the data from Senate and gubernatorial candidates alone. Because the House of Representatives represents such a large number of contestants in the presidential contest, its results are of utmost importance in assessing the coattail effect.

Statistical Analysis

The purpose of this analysis is to determine the extent of the relationship between the presidential candidate and the members of the House of Representatives elected from the same party. The relationship of these margins should indicate the strength of the coattail effect, if indeed one exists. Data

²⁶Ibid.

²⁷Ibid.

sources are discussed in the introduction.

Data Analysis

The 1976 election brought a total of 278 Democrats to the House of Representatives.²⁸ As previously discussed, the significance of this is substantiated by the fact that this was a very close election. Table 3-A depicts only the frequency and percent of the various categories of Democratic congressional win margins. It is obvious from this table that the Democratic party has a considerable amount of strength at the congressional level. The majority of Democratic congressmen elected in 1976, 63.3 to be exact, were brought into office by a 62 percent or more victory margin. The only other substantial percentage, 16.2, occurred in the 50-52 percentage range, indicating that most of the races that were not an overwhelming victory were close contests.

Table 3-B, which demonstrates the total percentage of Democratic congressional win margins by presidential win margins, depicts some interesting voter margin distributions. As previously mentioned, a majority of House members were elected from districts that gave Jimmy Carter 62 percent or more of the vote. However, there is not such an uneven pattern when one observes the figures across the Carter margins range. Out of the congressional win margins in the 62 percent or more range, the greatest number, 18.7 percent, came from districts that also gave Jimmy Carter 62 or more percent of the vote. This

²⁸Michael Barone, Grant Ujifusa, and Douglas Mathews, The Almanac of American Politics 1978 (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1977)

TABLE 3-A
 1976 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION
 DEMOCRATIC CONGRESSIONAL WIN MARGINS

DEMOCRATIC CONGRESSIONAL WIN MARGINS	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
50-52%	45	16.2
53-55%	20	7.2
56-58%	19	6.8
59-61%	18	6.5
62+%	176	63.3
TOTAL	278	100.0

Source: The Almanac of American Politics 1978.

TABLE 3-B
 1976 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION
 TOTAL PERCENTAGE OF DEMOCRATIC CONGRESSIONAL
 WIN MARGINS BY PRESIDENTIAL WIN MARGINS

DEMOCRATIC CONGRESSIONAL WIN MARGINS	CARTER MARGINS						TOTAL
	1-49 %	50-52 %	53-55 %	56-58 %	59-61 %	62 ⁺ %	
50-52%	6.1	1.8	1.8	1.4	1.1	4.0	16.2
53-55%	5.0	1.1	0.4	0.0	0.4	0.4	7.2
56-58%	2.5	1.1	1.1	1.4	0.4	0.4	6.8
59-61%	4.0	0.0	0.7	0.7	0.4	0.7	6.5
62 ⁺ %	11.9	7.6	9.7	7.6	7.9	18.7	63.3
TOTAL	29.5	11.5	13.7	11.2	10.1	24.1	100.0

Based on a sample size of 278

Source: The Almanac of American Politics 1978.

TABLE 3-C
1976 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION
MARGINS OF VICTORY OF DEMOCRATIC HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES MEMBERS
BY ELECTORAL MARGINS FOR JIMMY CARTER

DEMOCRATIC CONGRESSIONAL WIN MARGINS	CARTER MARGINS						TOTAL
	1-49 %	50-52 %	53-55 %	56-58 %	59-61 %	62 ⁺ %	
50-52%	20.7	15.6	13.2	12.9	10.7	16.4	16.2
• 53-55%	19.1	9.4	2.6	0.0	3.6	1.5	7.2
56-58%	8.5	9.4	7.9	12.9	3.6	1.5	6.8
59-61%	13.4	0.0	5.3	6.5	3.6	3.0	6.5
62 ⁺ %	40.2	65.6	71.1	67.7	78.6	77.6	63.3
TOTAL (Number)	100.0 (82)	100.0 (32)	100.0 (38)	100.0 (31)	100.0 (28)	100.0 (67)	100.0 (278)

Based on a sample size of 278

Source: The Almanac of American Politics 1978.

figure is not outstanding in its significance because in the same category, a close figure, 11.9 percent, represents districts that only gave Jimmy Carter 1-49 percent of the vote, less than a majority. This, like the hypothesis states, the votes given to the President appear to have little influence toward drawing in congressional votes.

The 1-49 percent category for President Carter in Table 3-B is also an important indicator of Jimmy Carter's coattail strength. If his coattail pull was strong, logically there would be few members elected in districts that did not give him a majority of the vote. That, however, did not occur. Instead, almost 30 percent of all Democratic members of Congress were elected from districts where Jimmy Carter lost the district. The percentage of members elected from districts giving President Carter 62 percent or more of the vote, 24.1, is significantly lower than the 29.5 percent that were elected from districts that Jimmy Carter could not carry.

Although an overwhelming majority of Democrats were elected to the House of Representatives, the actual instances of Jimmy Carter receiving greater victory margins than the Democratic congressional candidates in the same election were few. According to Table 3-B, only 5.2 percent of the total percentage of Democratic congressional win margins were actually higher than Jimmy Carter's victory margins. This indicates that Jimmy Carter did not have strong coattails.

The lack of Presidential coattails is further evidenced by Table 3-C, representative of margins of victory of Democratic House of Representatives members by electoral margins for Jimmy Carter. If one observes the Democratic congressional win margins in the table, it is clear that the highest percentages fall in the 62 or more percent range and the 50-52 percent range. When the two rows are compared, it is immediately obvious that the last row, the 62 or more percent category, contains the highest percentages. In addition, a closer look at Table 3-C reveals that 77.6 percent of House members elected in the 62 percent or more percent of the vote for Jimmy Carter category and 78.6 percent of the House members elected from the 59-61 percent of the vote category emerged from districts which gave the representatives 62 percent or more of the votes.

The large number of representatives elected from districts that gave President Carter less than a majority would appear to indicate that the Democratic party is quite strong at the congressional level. This argument is strengthened by the figures in Table 3-A, which as previously mentioned, show a full 63.3 percent of the Democrats elected to the House were elected from districts that gave them 62 percent or more of the vote. Although this strength surely benefits the party, the figures from Tables 3-B and 3-C demonstrate little if any coattail help from the Democrat's presidential candidate.

In addition to there being little Democratic coattail effect in the 1976 election, the 1-49% category for Carter margins

demonstrates that in almost a third of congressional districts that went Democratic, voters split their tickets and cast their votes for Gerald Ford. In an election where the issues fell for the most part along party lines, the impact of this must not be underestimated. The disparity has additional ramifications when one considers the impotence of the Republican party after Watergate, the 1974 elections, and a divisive national convention.

The Republican party was placed in the unique position of running an unelected incumbent President. To make matters worse, the GOP had seen the core of strength it developed in 1972 virtually eliminated by the results of the 1974 congressional elections. In fact, according to the Washington Post, what the 1976 election did most in terms of party strength was to confirm the congressional gains which the Democrats had made in the Watergate-influenced election of 1974.²⁹

As if that were not enough, President Ford almost lost the reelection nomination at the Republican national convention to Ronald Reagan. Still, he managed to garner 48 percent of the popular vote and accomplished a very narrow electoral defeat. Like Jimmy Carter, Gerald Ford showed precious little coattail pull, carrying only 19 of the thirty-seven states that hold Senate or gubernatorial elections.³⁰ All factors considered, the GOP did fairly well in 1976.

²⁹"GOP Assesses Election Results," Washington Post, 4 November 1976, sec. A, p. 131.

³⁰"Presidential Coattails of Little Benefit," Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, November 6, 1976, p. 3135.

The 1976 presidential election, although it appears on its face to suggest a return to normality and party-delineated issues, had overtones of voter independence. The first instance of this was the presidential vote in the South. The simple fact that the Democratic vote in the South was attributed to the fact that the presidential candidate was a native son supports a theory of increasing voter independence. It begs the question of whether or not the same results would have occurred had the Democratic candidate been from another geographic area. Although the Republican party in 1976 was in a weak state, its success in the South in 1972 would presumably have carried over to 1976 if the Democrats had nominated a non-Southerner.

The second overtone of voter independence is demonstrated in Table 3-B by the approximate one-third of Democratic congressional districts that did not give Jimmy Carter a majority of the vote. Reasons for this could range from candidate personality traits to local versus national issues, to the power of incumbency. Each reason represents a decrease in party influence and an increase in rational decision making. In the case of a choice made based on candidate personality appeal, while not particularly an intellectual rationalization, party influence is lessened simply by its individualistic nature. Where local issues are of such importance as to cause the voter to see a clear difference between the House candidate and the presidential candidate, the voter is often better informed.

Due to the rising influence of media, the growing use of individual political consultants, and the continuing decline of party appointive power, the trend of decreasing coattail effects and increasing voter independence will likely continue.

Conclusion

Although the 1976 presidential election represented a return to normality in many respects, it was unique in equally as many aspects. The issues returned to bread and butter concerns, but the circumstances were anything but traditional. The Democrats offered a candidate who was an outsider to the national party structure. The Republicans, after suffering from their worst electoral defeat in years, presented the voters with an unelected incumbent President who had barely won his own party's nomination. The country as a whole was reeling from the aftershocks of a corrupt presidency and a final defeat in Vietnam. The weakness of the political parties was evidenced by negligible coattails on either side. Party identification as a whole was down, and ticket-splitting was common. The future implications, in terms of party strength and voter independence, are muddled. The showing of the Republican party in the face of adversity indicates a surprising amount of party loyalty and strength, while the sheer size of the Democratic majority would suggest the same for them. However, the pervasiveness of ticket-splitting and the weakness of Jimmy Carter's coattails would seem to indicate that the American voter, in

continuance with the trend of 1972, was weighing his candidate by individual merit rather than party affiliation. Barring some catastrophic event, research in this Chapter indicates that this trend should continue through the 1980 election and beyond.

CHAPTER IV

THE 1980 ELECTION

Unlike the two previous elections, the 1980 presidential election proved to be a shocker to pollsters, pundits, and everyday citizens alike, catapulting Republican Ronald Reagan into the White House with 51 percent of the popular vote in a three man race and a 489 to 49 electoral vote victory over incumbent Jimmy Carter. Adding fuel to the flames was the fact that several very senior Democratic Senators were thrown out of office as well. In the House, Republicans retrieved their 1974 losses largely at the expense of incumbent Democrats. Such a decisive swing to the right naturally raises the question of whether party influence was resurging after declining in the two previous elections. In addition, the election on its face requires the political scientist to ask whether Ronald Reagan lifted Republican House and Senate contenders into their berths or whether President Carter dragged them out of them.

This research attempts to answer these questions by a thorough examination of the election and its issues, and a statistical analysis of the coattail effect of the candidacy of Ronald Reagan on members of Congress elected from the Republican party. The analysis will first explore some of the organizational

changes that made the 1980 election unique, then proceed to a discussion of the campaign issues. The statistical analysis will follow. It is hypothesized that although the Republican party experienced a resurgence of strength at the congressional level, party strength as a whole declined for both parties and ticket-splitting was still evident. It is also hypothesized that the coattail effect will increase somewhat but will not radically differ from the diminutive trends established in the previous two elections.

Organizational Changes

Any analysis of party strength in the 1980 presidential election would be incomplete without mention of the many structural changes that inexorably changed the intraworkings of both parties. These changes were both internal and external, and all represented for the most part a culmination in long developing trends. Some of the most important internal changes wrought upon the 1980 election were the rise of primaries, changes in delegate selection methods, and decline in party leader influence. Externally, media influence and the rise of political action committees worked to drain the parties of their former power.

The Rise in Primaries and Change in Delegate Selection Methods

In recent presidential elections, party convention nominations had been made by party leaders. These leaders carefully weighed all factors before making such a decision. This

tradition was non-existent in 1980, for thirty-seven states and territories used popular primaries as the way to select delegates to the national conventions.¹ Three-fourths of the delegates at the convention were selected this way.²

Naturally this process weakened the influence of party leaders and put increased emphasis on individual candidates. Instead of courting the favor of the party hierarchy, the candidates sought to individually influence the polls, media, and primaries. Thus the convention became a ritual and the party label barely more than a coat of arms.

Rules changes also contributed to party fragmentation in another way. This was particularly evident in the Democratic party, where the new rules required division of the delegates in proportion to the support each candidate demonstrated in the state primary or local caucuses. Local caucuses were selection meetings open to all members of the party.³ The basic import of this was to give advantage to the candidates who had diffuse support all across the nation, who had begun to campaign early enough in the race, and who had ample resources.⁴

In 1980, as never before, it was up to the individual candidates to sink or swim. Gone were the days when the candidates courted the favor of party leaders and party influence

¹Gerald Pomper et al., The Election of 1980 (Chatham, N.J.: Chatham House Publishers, Inc. 1981), p. 2.

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

⁴Ibid.

to secure a nomination. Instead, their individual efforts to appeal directly to voters nationally rather than regionally determined their success in securing their party's nomination.

Both the increase in the number of primaries and rules changes in delegate selection methods structurally weakened the Democratic and the Republican parties. This, in turn, created a vacuum which increased the importance of external influences such as the news media and political action committees upon the electoral process.

The News Media

The importance of the news media in a presidential election year cannot be underestimated. It has become an integral and perhaps obtrusive part of national political campaigns. Some critics hold that a campaign, especially a presidential campaign, is today little more than a series of orchestrated performances calculated to attract the attention of television news cameras and their audiences.⁵ Others would maintain that the media allows rank and file voters to be more directly involved in the choice. Whatever the praises or criticisms of the media may be, the fact remains that it is the primary method by which the actors in the dispersed and prolonged political drama communicate with one another.

In the age of television, appearance is everything, especially during the primary campaigns. Most of the early

⁵ Donald R. Mathews, "Winnowing: The News Media and the 1976 Presidential Nominations," in Race for the Presidency: The Media and the Nominating Process, ed. James David Barber (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1978), p. 55.

candidates in 1980 formulated their political strategies upon the demonstration effect of winning important primaries. This was very apparent during the 1980 campaign. Ted Kennedy slimmed down for the primaries, Jimmy Carter strove to be presidential, and Ronald Reagan used his experience as an actor to his utmost advantage. Television, as an individualistic medium, caters to an individual-emphasis rather than a party-emphasis campaign.

Inherent in this system is a tendency for the candidate to bypass party strategy in favor of media strategy. Indeed, according to F. Christopher Arterton,

much of what a presidential candidate organization actually does is related to its relations with the press, particularly those journalists⁶ who are assigned to travel with the candidate.

He adds that

the influence of campaign journalism is felt on its most profound level, however, in the formation of political strategies around media considerations. To the extent that they have control over the activities of their organizations, campaign managers plan with a view toward media interpretations as one facet of practically everything undertaken by the campaign.⁷

As the campaign progressed, both Ronald Reagan's and President Carter's efforts to please the media audience became more apparent. The President used pancake makeup to cover the red blotches on his face, and Ronald Reagan used the same to try to create a younger appearance.

⁶F. Christopher Arterton, "Campaign Confronts the Media-Political Environment," in Race for the Presidency: The Media and the Nominating Process, ed. James David Barber (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc. 1978), pp. 12-13.

⁷Ibid.

Like the direct primary, media influence brings the candidate into direct contact with the voters rather than with the party. The influence of the "Great Debate" of 1980 is evidence of this. The very nature of media influence fosters the growth of political campaigns which neither receive nor particularly want guidance from the party. This trend was pronounced in 1980 and will likely continue with the increasing popularity of special interest cable television channels.

Political Action Committees

The sudden rise in the number of Political Action Committees (PACs), was one of the major causes of the decline in party influence in the 1980 presidential election. They were created by the reform legislation of the 1971 Federal Election Campaign Act.⁸ Amendments to the Act in 1974 and a 1975 FEC decision helped make the formation of PACs easier.⁹ Because they concentrated only on special interest issues, party affiliation was of little concern to them.

Money was a major reason for the dramatic rise in the number of PACs. Because of reform legislation, the federal government placed itself in the ambiguous role of limiting candidates spending as well as directly subsidizing them.¹⁰ A

⁸Dan Glickman, "PAC's: Too Much Special Interest Influence," in Perspectives, ed. Patricia Bandy (Washington: The Close Up Foundation, 1983), p. 167.

⁹Congressional Quarterly, Inc., Elections 80 (Washington: Congressional Quarterly Inc. 1980), p. 138.

¹⁰Ibid.

court ruling that "independent" political action is a form of free speech that cannot be limited as long as it is not associated with a candidate, allowed PACs to spend freely against their opposition as long as they were not associated with a specific candidate.¹¹ Conservative PACs used this to their utmost advantage in targeting liberal senators such as Frank Church (Democrat-Idaho), Birch Bayh (Democrat-Indiana), Warren Magnuson (Democrat-Washington), and John Culver (Democrat-Iowa), all of whom were defeated in 1980.

Describing the increasing influence of PACs as dramatic is almost an understatement. In 1980, approximately 2770 PACs were in operation, not counting political party affiliates.¹² The impact of this figure is augmented by the fact that only approximately 1,938 such PACs were in operation two years earlier.¹³ It stands to reason that contributions from these groups would be up as well, as indeed the \$55.2 million they contributed in 1980 was up one-third from the \$35.1 million contributed in 1978

The upswing in Political Action Committee activity worked mainly as an advantage to the Republicans, partly due to the sharp increase in the number of corporate PACs, whose business's stood to gain tax cuts if Ronald Reagan was elected.¹⁴ In fact

¹¹Rex Hardesty, "The '80 Elections, A Distorted Pattern," AFL-CIO American Federationist, March 1980, p. 11.

¹²Larry Light, "The Game of PAC Targeting: Friends, Foes, & Guesswork," Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, November 21, 1981, p. 2267.

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Ibid.

these independent corporate PACs were expected, for the first time ever, to outspend their traditionally party-affiliated labor union counterparts.¹⁵

Here again is an example of an external factor in the 1980 presidential election which served to weaken party influence in campaigning through information access as well as financial force. Along with direct primaries and media influence, PACs proved to be a determinative force in the 1980 election.

Issues

The issues in the 1980 presidential campaign were multifaceted and complex, however, they may be broadly classified under the umbrella categories of social issues, national defense and foreign policy questions, and the economy. The 1980 campaign issues were more intricate than ever before, perhaps reflecting a more sophisticated and rapidly changing American society. Because of this complexity, there are many sub-issues within each of the three main issues.

Social Issues

Although economic concerns generally dominated the 1980 election, the social issues that were raised valid concerns. Questions about abortion, prayer in schools, and the general state of the nation's morality were important factors in the

¹⁵ Alan Ware, "The 1980 U.S. Elections: Party Revival or Continuing Decline," Parliamentary Affairs 34 (Winter 1981): 185.

presidential race. The phenomena that held the most notability and affected all of the above issues, however, was the rise of evangelical religious groups. Their emergence or reemergence as a political force had a pervasive influence on most of the more traditional social issues. Even with the injection of the evangelical factor into the fray, the candidates rarely strayed from their party lines on these issues, giving voters a clear picture of Democrat and Republican.

Welfare

If any social issue accurately reflected the fundamental philosophical differences between the candidates, it was the welfare problem. What began in the mid 1960s as a small scale enterprise had become a sprawling national establishment in 1980. The candidates agreed that the system should be reformed, but they disagreed on how to do it.

President Carter wanted to increase benefits and give the federal government more responsibility over the system, and as President, twice introduced legislation to that effect.¹⁶ His first plan, conceived in 1977, proved to be so complex that it never got beyond a House subcommittee.¹⁷ The second, introduced in 1979, passed the House but died in the Senate.¹⁸ As a candidate, he remained firm to his commitment of increased federal participation in human services.

¹⁶Harrison Donnelly and Elizabeth Wehr, "Candidates Differ on Federal Role in Setting Social Policies," Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, October 25, 1980, p. 3197.

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Ibid.

Ronald Reagan wanted to return much of the federal welfare jurisdiction to the states. Working with a Democratic-controlled legislature, he as Governor of California, he implemented a welfare reform plan that increased penalties for welfare fraud, limited eligibility for benefits and required able-bodied recipients to participate in a "community work experience program."¹⁹ As a candidate for President, he backed federal legislation that would give states increased authority over their own welfare systems. The basic format for that plan called for elimination of the marching grant system in favor of a block grant system with controls on federal spending.²⁰

The candidates views followed similar lines of thinking on food stamps, social security, and education. Although Mr. Reagan did not favor total elimination of any of the above programs, he enthusiastically advocated increased state's responsibility for and a "tightening up" of all three. President Carter wanted the programs to continue to be backed with full federal funding, and generally believed that the federal government has an essential role in meeting vital national goals in education.²¹ He was against tuition tax credits for private schools while Ronald Reagan supported such a proposal.

Evangelicals

By far the most impressive aspect of the social issues of the campaign was the sharp rise in political power and influence

¹⁹Ibid., p. 3198.

²⁰Ibid.

²¹Ibid.

of evangelical Christian groups. This was a social force that blossomed independently of party politics, although its influence was strongest on the Republican party. There is also a casual link between the fruition of evangelical groups and the sharp increase in the number of Political Action Committees.

Ironically enough, it was Jimmy Carter who in 1976 convinced the public that it was all right for a born-again Christian to be in politics.²² A strange twist of fate and perhaps philosophy brought hundreds of thousands of born-again Christians into the campaign on the side of Ronald Reagan, a Presbyterian. The movement began in late 1978 when Rev. R.J. Billings bought the mailing list of Jerry Falwell's television show The Old Time Gospel Hour and created from it an "education" group called the Moral Majority.²³ From these beginnings, the Moral Majority swelled into an organization with semi-autonomous chapters in all fifty states, a mailing list of 400,000, a first-year budget of \$1.2 million, and a Washington office staffed by eight full-time workers.²⁴

These groups were drawn to candidate Ronald Reagan because of his conservative views on abortion, school prayer, marijuana, and traditional family values. It was political

²²James Mann and Sarah Peterson, "Preachers in Politics: Decisive Force in '80?," U.S. News and World Report, September 15, 1980, p. 25.

²³Bill Keller, "Who's Who in the Christian Right," Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, September 6, 1980, p. 2628.

²⁴Ibid.

action, however, not mere allegiance, that made the evangelicals a potent force in the election.²⁵ The most striking example is the one in which the Moral Majority organized efficiently enough to send an entire delegation from the state of Alaska to the Republican National Convention.²⁶

Although the evangelical movement was a very powerful force in the campaign, the presidential candidates made little overt effort to encourage or discourage its momentum. Some born-again Christians accused President Carter of betraying his beliefs by supporting the ERA and opposing a constitutional amendment to ban abortion.²⁷ It appeared that those who supported Ronald Reagan were attracted to the views he had held for some time. It was not a case of the candidates shifting positions to accommodate the emerging bloc. Ronald Reagan's most overt act regarding the evangelicals was to give a speech to Religious Roundtable, in which he said that "the federal government seems to have forgotten both 'that old-time religion' and that old-time Constitution."²⁸

The influence of evangelicals was a phenomenon unique to the 1980 presidential election. Whether their influence will wither with time or grow, as Republican pollster Richard Ryan

²⁵ James Wall, "A Changing Political Climate," Christian Century, September 24, 1980, p. 867.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ "The Evangelical Fuss," The Washington Post, 2 October 1980, sec. a, p. 19.

says, into "a conservative voting coalition that could change the face of political strategy in the U.S. for the next twenty-five years" remains to be seen.²⁹ For 1980, their impact leaves unanswered questions of how important they actually are to presidential elections, and more importantly, how relevant should the church-state issue be to choosing a President.

Defense and Foreign Policy

The Iranian hostage crisis and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan brought a renewed interest on the part of the American People in foreign affairs. Not since the Vietnam War had America's role in the world been such an important issue in a presidential campaign.³⁰ Although both candidates favored a strong American, once again the American voter was faced with a choice in regard to means used to accomplish such status.

Washington Post writer Robert Kaiser may have best pinpointed the differences when he said that

Reagan is a believer in simple truths--most basically that, to achieve the protection of its international interests, the United States must pursue them forcefully and without equivocation.³¹

Mr. Kaiser also said that Jimmy Carter

draws on another strain of the national character.

²⁹"Transcript of the Presidential Debate," New York Times, 29 October 1980, sec. 1, p. 29.

³⁰"Carter's Campaign Stalls," The Washington Post, 8 October 1980, sec. A, p. 1.

³¹Ibid.

In his vision of the world, America is first of all a moral beacon, a nation whose power comes from the force of its example as much as the power of its Army or its economic strength.³²

These divergent views were extrapolated vividly onto one of the most important aspects of the defense issue, nuclear disarmament. Central to the argument was the question of whether or not the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT II) should be ratified. Although the treaty had stalled in committee in the Senate, President Carter remained firm in his commitment toward ratification. Ronald Reagan, on the other hand, staunchly opposed ratification on the grounds that it was an unequal and thus an illegal treaty. He favored dispensing with the treaty and re-initiating the negotiations, in essence creating a SALT III.

These positions set the tone for the campaign rhetoric surrounding the whole issue of U.S. Soviet relations. There were many other facets of this question besides SALT II. Among them were questions of whether the U.S. should scrap the B-1 bomber, continue with the cruise and Minuteman missiles, and delay the Trident submarine. As part of his campaign strategy, President Carter tried to depict Ronald Reagan as a political monster, in an attempt to exploit public doubts about whether Ronald Reagan was an aggressive political extremist.³³

However, in light of his own vacillations from an almost dovish stance in 1976 to a more bellicose one in 1980, President Carter had a difficult time accomplishing this. It is true that

³²Ibid.

³³"Hostages," The New Republic, November 1, 1980, p. 7.

Mr. Reagan had made some serious political gaffes early in the campaign, such as referring to the Vietnam War as a "noble cause" and indicating that he favored an official relationship with Taiwan as well as Peking. Still, President Carter's efforts to paint Ronald Reagan as a button-pusher failed for two reasons. The first is that the strategy conflicted with the "nice guy" image Jimmy Carter attempted to project. The second reason is the fact that Ronald Reagan managed to appear to the general public as anything but a warmonger, especially in the October 29 debate.

Clearly, the increasing proliferation of nuclear weapons and intensified Soviet military activity around the world created concern among American voters. Although the lines of distinction between the presidential candidates were blurred at some points, they delineated enough in their military posture to present the electorate with a clear, if not expressly definitive choice.

Any discussion of America's defense posture during the 1980 campaign would be incomplete without mention of the Iranian hostage crisis. Although it was not often expressly discussed or debated as a campaign issue, it set an underlying tone in the race and permeated every other issue. After the election, there were many analysts who believed that President Carter's loss was directly caused by his inability to resolve the dilemma.

The implications of the hostage seizure were symbolic as well as tangible. The inability of the United States to affect

their release symbolized America's declining world strength and impotence in dealing with crisis situations. It created in many Americans a sense of indignation as well as helplessness, It also pointed out the danger of terrorist actions and the necessity of developing an effective means of coping with it.

For President Carter, the crisis was a nightmare come true in an election year. According to the New Republic, the captured hostages represented the

most sustained international humiliation this nation has ever undergone, one made much worse by Carter's original huffing and puffing and probably lengthened by his later attempt to put the whole issue aside.³⁴

As an issue, it was a two-edged sword. If he could achieve the safe release of the hostages without excessive concessions, he would come out a hero. If however, as indeed was the case, he failed to accomplish their release, the President might be perceived as weak and ineffective.

The hostage crisis was a peculiar problem in that it was the President's alone. Members of the House and Senate could do little about it and in fact individually tried to disassociate themselves from the President in regards to it. Neither was it a party issue. Unlike the defense positions, the hostage crisis had no mention in or relation to the party platform.

The crisis, laced as it was with tension, did not lend itself as a topic to be lightly bandied around as campaign

³⁴T. Mathews, "October Surprise?," Newsweek, November 3, 1980, p. 25.

rhetoric. Comments of a political nature by either candidate were few and far between, although it was general knowledge in both camps that either a successful release or an unspeakable tragedy would have a tremendous influence on the election. For example, it was widely perceived by the Reagan camp that the Carter people would stage an "October Surprise," which would feature a dramatically successful release negotiation.³⁵ It is to Ronald Reagan's credit that he made very few comments about President Carter's handling of the situation. In one of the few statements he remarked:

What you say in a situation of that kind-
and you don't say it in the newspapers-
you say it directly to them; 'We want our
people back and we want them back today
or the results are going to be very unpleasant.'³⁶

This statement reflected Ronald Reagan's overall stance on most every type of foreign policy situation.

In summary, the issue of defense and foreign policy was as complex as the newly computerized society of 1980. Although both candidates advocated peace and military strength, and both wanted to escalate military spending, Ronald Reagan clearly emerged as the more hawkish candidate. Each candidate tended to follow his respective party platform along the traditional military questions, thus making differentiation a possible if not very easy task for the American voter. The

³⁵"Hostages and Candidates," America, October 4, 1980, p. 180.

³⁶U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Employment and Earnings September 1980, vol. 27, p. 4; U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Employment and Earnings November 1980, vol. 27, p. 4

Iranian hostage crisis, however, muddied the electoral waters by presenting an untried situation in which the voter had no party position for guidance. The only real choice given the voter was one between an unsuccessful incumbent and an untried hopeful.

The Economy

The economy can easily be said to be the most crucial issue of the 1980 campaign. Americans were hard hit by the dual evils of recession and inflation. There were three aspects of the economy that were extremely important to most Americans: unemployment, interest rates, and inflation. Connected to these was the ever present energy policy problem and the burgeoning federal deficit. The 1980 presidential candidate positions on the economy were more closely tied to their party platforms than their positions on any other issue.

Unemployment

Throughout the course of the campaign, unemployment remained relatively high. In August unemployment statistics showed an unemployment rate of 7.6 percent and posted the same figure for October.³⁷ Summary figures for 1980 show a 7.9 percent average for the entire year.³⁸

³⁷U.S. Bureau of the Census, Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1982-83, 103d ed., p. 392.

³⁸"Excerpts from Democratic Party Platform," Facts on File 40 (15 August 1980): 614.

The impact of this was made more severe by the fact that many of the unemployed were not the chronically unemployed but highly skilled steel and auto workers thrown onto the streets by floundering industry and Japanese competition. These were blue collar workers who were accustomed to a fairly comfortable lifestyle and had financial obligations such as families and mortgages. The problem was real and severe, and the potential for anger was immense.

Although the Democratic party stood to catch the blame for unemployment woes as the party of both Congress and the White House, it did not waver from its traditional philosophy. The 1980 Democratic party platform made a commitment not to increase unemployment in its statement that

The Democratic party will take no action whose effect will be a significant increase in unemployment, no fiscal action, no monetary action, no budgetary action, if it is the assessment of either the Council of Economic Advisors or the Congressional Budget Office that such action will cause significantly greater unemployment.³⁹

This posture, while certainly sincere in its intent, is somewhat deceptive. While the Democratic party would have liked to exert an influence on monetary policy, it must be remembered that the Federal Reserve Board, which functions independently, often has much more influence on monetary policies than partisan politics. This influence is especially strong in the areas of interest rates and economic expansion. It should be mentioned that the platform also stated that "the need to guarantee a job for every American who is able

³⁹ Ibid.

to work" was the highest single domestic priority.⁴⁰

President Carter generally espoused rhetoric that ran along the platform's lines. Noticeably absent from his statements was any of his former strong support of direct government job-providing programs. Perhaps this was a reaction on President Carter's part to the bleak results of the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA), one of his early key public service jobs programs. Whatever his rationale, President Carter's failure to initiate such a direct federal job relief program as part of his campaign spurred Edward Kennedy to challenge him for the Democratic nomination.⁴¹

According to Henry Plotkin, President Carter was economically trapped by

a need to limit spending while reconciling
the values of traditional welfare-state
Democrats.⁴²

This dilemma was evident in both his campaign rhetoric and his legislative proposals. President Carter even abrogated unemployment to inflation when he told the Democratic national convention that in order "to achieve full employment, we must

⁴⁰Harrison Donelly, "Unemployment: A Potent Factor in 1980 Election," Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, September 27, 1980, p. 2839.

⁴¹Henry Plotkin, "Issues in the Presidential Campaign," in The Election of 1980, Gerald Pomper et. al. (Chatham, New Jersey: Chatham House Publishers, Inc. 1981), p. 48.

⁴²Harrison Donelly, "Unemployemnt: A Potent Factor in 1980 Election," Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, September 27, 1980, p. 2839.

be successful in our fight against inflation."⁴³ His August 28 economic revitalization program tended to swing away from make-work jobs programs and instead concentrated heavily on business tax and investment incentives.⁴⁴

Ronald Reagan and the Republicans were definitely against make-work jobs programs but were less explicit in addressing the unemployment issue than the Democrats. Mr. Reagan focused instead on tax reductions to stimulate economic growth, growth that in his and his fellow Republican's minds was the only real solution to unemployment.⁴⁵ This, of course, was the traditional Republican position of semi-laissez-faire economics, or supply-side economics, where theoretically jobs would be created by reinvestment of new profit margins generated by tax cuts.

The Republican party cast hungry eyes on the hundreds of thousands of idle auto and other such industrial workers, however, neither the party nor Ronald Reagan moved leftward to accomodate them. The extent of promises given to the unemployed was, as Ronald Reagan told urban workers at a Labor Day rally, "action in the form of jobs, lower taxes and an expanded economy..."⁴⁶

Interest Rates

Another aspect of the economic issue that directly affected the voters was interest rates. On election day 1980, the prime

⁴³Ibid.

⁴⁴Ibid.

⁴⁵Ibid.

⁴⁶"Unemployemtn: A Potent Factor in '80," Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, September 27, 1980, p. 2839.

interest rate stood at 15.5 percent.⁴⁷ This astronomical figure crippled the initiative of individuals and businesses alike, making it nearly impossible for them to initiate new ventures or invest in major purchases.

Because the Federal Reserve Board sets the discount rate and functions independently of the President and Congress, the control of interest rates was technically out of the hands of the candidates, and there was little either could specifically offer the voter. What made it a crucial issue was the fact that it affected the daily lives of each and every voter by directly influencing his economic flexibility. Most importantly, the fact that these astronomical interest rates forced individuals to stave off major purchases while inflation crumbled away their savings caused a deep sense of helplessness and frustration.

Inflation

The problems of unemployment and high interest rates paled in the light of the seemingly insurmountable problem of inflation. The inflation problem was so immense that President Carter placed it before the struggle against unemployment, breaking decades of traditional Democratic policies.⁴⁸ Throughout the campaign, when talking to pollsters, voters listed inflation as their prime concern more frequently than

⁴⁷Harrison Donnelly, "Unemployment: A Potent Factor in 1980 Election," Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, September 27, 1980, p. 2839.

⁴⁸"Anatomy of a Landslide," Time, November 17, 1980, p. 31.

any other issue.⁴⁹

The voters concern was well-founded, as the rate of inflation for 1980 stood in excess of 12 percent.⁵⁰ The spiraling inflation rate made it impossible for the average American to meet his economic obligations, and wage increases and cost of living adjustments simply fueled the inflationary fire. There was a consensus between the candidates that inflation was the number one economic problem facing most Americans. However, as on so many other issues, they differed in their approaches to solving the dilemma.

Throughout the campaign, Ronald Reagan stuck to his argument that lower taxes would stimulate economic growth. When asked about inflation, he was usually not very explicit, but most often said that he would reduce it by reducing federal spending.⁵¹ The Republican platform, however, was more specific. It stated that

lower tax rates, less spending, and a balanced budget are the keys to maintaining real growth and full employment as we end inflation by putting our monetary policy back on track. Monetary and fiscal policy must each play its part if we are to achieve our joint goals of full employment and price stability.⁵²

According to Ronald Reagan, if the sound fiscal policies put forth in the Republican platform were enacted, the budget could

⁴⁹"Debate Hurt But Wasn't Only Cause," New York Times 9 November 1980, sec. A, p. 3.

⁵⁰"The Economy and the Choices," The Washington Post, 7 October 1980, sec. A, p. 20.

⁵¹"Excerpts from Republican Party Platform," Facts on File 40 (18 July 1980): 536.

⁵²Dale Tate, "Candidates Edge Toward Common Economic Ground," Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, September 20, 1980, p. 2767.

be balanced and inflation would become a bad memory.

Now, in the heart of an election year, is not the time to seek votes with ill-considered tax cuts that would simply steal back inflation in the future the few dollars that the average American taxpayer might get.⁵³

Although he regarded Ronald Reagan's tax cut plan as "ill-considered," President Carter presented one of his own, which was included in his August 28 proposal. Although it contained some of the traditional Democratic economic medicines such as an additional 13-week extension of unemployment benefits, added funds for research and development, and the creation of an Economic Revitalization Board, it also, like the Kemp-Roth plan, proposed tax cuts for individuals and substantial tax cuts for individuals and substantial tax cuts for businesses.

Inflation was certainly a most persistent thorn in the side of President Carter. Earlier in his presidency, he had supported a high interest rate policy as a means of tightening the money supply and reducing the inflation rate.⁵⁴ However, as election day neared, he became more and more critical of the Federal Reserve Board's implementation of that philosophy.⁵⁵ In addition, many critics believed that the high unemployment rates were a result of an attempt by Jimmy Carter to fight inflation through the use of unemployment.

⁵³ Christopher Byron, "The Great 1980 Non-Debate," Time, October 20, 1980, p. 71.

⁵⁴ Harrison Donnelly, "Unemployment: A Potent Factor in the 1980 Election," Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, September 27, 1980, p. 2840.

⁵⁵ Dale Tate, "Candidates Edge Toward Common Economic Ground," Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, September 27, 1980, p. 2840.

In 1980, the voters were presented with a more complicated and critical economic picture than had ever existed before. The 1980 presidential candidates agreed with them that the economy was the primary issue. However, their respective means of solving the dilemmas were complicated and differentiated along party lines. At the same time, some of their economic proposals were so similar that the only discernable difference could be found in nuance or tone. On the economic issue, the voter was presented with candidates whose positions continued subtly to reflect the philosophical divisions between the two parties, contrasting Democratic faith in government action to shape the economy with the laissez-faire, hands-off tenets of traditional Republicanism.⁵⁶

John Anderson

The focus of this research is primarily concerned with the candidacies of Ronald Reagan and Jimmy Carter, however, it would be shortsighted to totally exclude the Independent candidacy of John Anderson in this discourse. His candidacy was more a symbol of party decline than a major influence on the election.

Ironically enough, John Anderson's views, especially his economic theories of "advanced corporate liberalism," did offer an alternative to the other two candidates. But his constituency, especially the white, middle-class Vietnam generation, supportive as it was of dovish foreign policy, a clean

⁵⁶John Judis, "An Anderson Difference?," Progressive, November 1980, p. 50.

environment, and women's rights, lacked a single salient issue to unite them.⁵⁷

His candidacy was important in terms of the fact that it represented the continued decline of party influence in American. The fact that he was able to flee his party and establish an independent candidacy based on media identification rather than party structure demonstrates the awesome power of the media.

The electoral significance of the Anderson campaign was negligible. Many Carter aides had warned that a vote for Mr. Anderson would in effect be a vote for Jimmy Carter, but according to exit polls conducted by ABC News, ballots for Anderson would have been divided almost evenly between President Carter and Ronald Reagan if it had been a two-man race.⁵⁸ Overall, he received 7 percent of the vote, making him eligible for federal funding, but not critically affecting the election.

1980 Election Results

The election that the pollsters predicted would be too close to call resulted instead in a smashing landslide for Ronald Reagan. The astonishing dimensions of the results were apparent early on, and given legitimacy by a 9:45 p.m. concession speech, made one and a quarter hours before the polls closed

⁵⁷ John Mashek, "A Friendlier Congress for Ronald Reagan," U.S. News and World Report, November 17, 1980, p. 31.

⁵⁸ George Church, "Regan Coast to Coast," Time, November 17, 1980, p. 24.

on the West Coast.⁵⁹ Ronald Reagan accumulated 489 electoral college votes compared to 49 for President Carter.⁶⁰ Mr. Reagan's popular vote margin was just as impressive. He gathered 51 percent of the popular vote, compared to 41 percent for President Carter.⁶¹ These statistics become more impressive when one considers that Independent candidate John Anderson pulled in seven percent of the vote.⁶² The results were made all the more significant by the fact that Jimmy Carter was the first Democratic incumbent president denied reelection since 1888.

The impact of the election at the presidential level cannot be underestimated. However, when studied in its totality, the collective results indicate a massive shift in voter preference. The 1980 election did more than return the presidency to the Republican party. In a massive shift to the right, it gave Republicans control of the Senate, eroded the Democratic majority in the House of Representatives, nearly evened the numbers of governships and scored major Republican gains in state legislatures.⁶³

⁵⁹Rhodes Clark, "Reagan Buries Carter in a Landslide," Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, November 8, 1980, p. 3296.

⁶⁰Peter Goldman, "The Republican Landslide," Newsweek, November 17, 1980, p. 27.

⁶¹Ibid.

⁶²John W. Mashek, "Massive Shift to Right," U.S. News and World Report, November 17, 1980, p. 3300.

⁶³Warren F. Moxley, "GOP Wins Senate Control for First Time in 28 Years," Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, November 8, 1980, p. 3300.

The Republican victory at the Senatorial level was a result certain to have lasting impact. For the first time in twenty-eight years, the Republicans took control of the U.S. Senate.⁶⁴ Republicans outnumbered Democrats in that institution 53 to 47. In the process of securing a majority the GOP yanked several seats from powerful Democratic liberals such as George McGovern of South Dakota, Warren G. Magnuson of Washington, and John Culver of Iowa.⁶⁵ Moreover, they held on to the ten Republican seats that were up that year.⁶⁶ The net results of this was to give the Senate a more conservative color and to bring more power to an already victorious GOP through committee chairmanships. The return of the presidency to the Republicans and their simultaneous takeover of the Senate for the first time in a generation certainly brings up questions of whether the phenomenon was a result of presidential coattails or conservative backlash. In six states, Reagan received a larger share of the vote in the contest than the winning Republicans did in the Senate race. But in the other six states, the winning GOP senatorial candidate outpaced Reagan.⁶⁷ Examination of some other electoral aspects of the election may provide some answers.

In addition to scoring victories in the Senate, the Republicans as a party also increased their hold on state

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ "A Sharp Right Turn," The Washington Post, November 6, 1980, sec. A, p. 1.

Governorships. As a result of the 1980 presidential elections, four states moved into the GOP column. They were Arkansas, Missouri, North Dakota, and Washington.⁶⁸ Of the thirteen states with gubernatorial seats at stake in the 1980 election, the Democrats were defending ten seats and the Republicans three, which stayed in the GOP column. President Carter carried only two of the total thirteen states, West Virginia and Rhode Island, both of which easily reelected their incumbent Democratic governors. Although it might appear at first blush that the GOP gubernatorial victories were results of Reagan coattails, the Republican candidates actually ran ahead of Mr. Reagan in Arkansas, Missouri, and Washington.⁶⁹

A look at demographics can bring some insight to the role the party played in the 1980 election. Most important was the shattering of the "Solid South" which had moved so decisively back into the Democratic column in the 1976 election after Republican gains had been made for a number of years. Most importantly, Mr. Reagan won the big electoral states of Texas and Florida. As expected, Georgia belonged to the President.

The 1980 election also brought changes in the traditional ethnic and socio-economic party affiliation. The most outstanding example of this was in the area of the old Democratic coalition of labor and blue-collar voters. Ronald Reagan

⁶⁸Larry Light, "Republicans Pick Up Four of Nation's State-houses," Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, November 8, 1980, p. 3327.

⁶⁹Ibid.

exceeded President Ford's 1976 vote total among union and blue collar workers. Whether or not this was attributable to presidential coattails is debatable. According to David Glancy, the Democratic chairman in Philadelphia, many workers now identify financially and socially with the middle class, as

the blue collar worker has changed. Philosophically, the Republican party is much more in tune with the auto and steelworker than we are.⁷⁰

The Republican party also made significant inroads into the traditionally Democratic coalitions of Catholics and Jews. The only vestige of Carter's 1976 victory coalition that appeared intact was his support among blacks, who gave him an estimated 80 to 90 percent of their vote.⁷¹ Hispanics also gave him substantial support.

National television network exit polls arrived at a consensus that the President's defeat came about largely because of three factors: dissatisfaction with his economic policies, a sense that America's world position was worsening, and a generalized "time for a change sentiment."⁷² These factors are not particularly unusual ones; they could occur in any presidency. However, in most of the presidential elections since 1952, including the two studied in the previous Chapter, dissatisfied voters changed presidents, not parties. The presidential election of 1980 proved to be a different one,

⁷⁰John W. Mashek, "Massive Shift to the Right," U.S. News and World Report, November 17, 1980, p. 28.

⁷¹Ibid.

⁷²"A Sharp Right Turn," The Washington Post, sec. A, p. 25.

altering the makeup of Congress as well as the presidency. According to most commentators, there was considerably less ticket-splitting in 1980 than in 1976.

The apparent renewal of straight-ticket voting and the surge in conservatism as well as the rise in popularity of the Republican party brings up the question of whether the independent voting and ticket-splitting patterns of the previous two elections were simply socio-political phases which were easily eliminated by dedicated organizational efforts of party leaders. On the other hand, the same pattern could exist in the 1980 election but be obscured beneath the shock of the conservative backlash. These questions and more can best be answered upon examination of the statistical analysis below.

Statistical Analysis

By comparing the relationship between the victory margins for the presidential candidate and the victory margins of the House candidates from the same party, the extent of presidential influence upon congressional candidates can be determined.

In 1980 a total of 191 Republicans were elected to the House of Representatives. Although that number proved shy of a majority in the House, it was still a net loss of 33 seats for the Democrats, eight of which belonged to senior Democratic members.⁷³ These numbers are very significant in light of the

⁷³Christopher Buchanan, "Republicans Make Substantial House Gains," Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, November 8, 1980, p. 3317.

fact that while the Republican party has over the last twenty years proved strong at the presidential level, the Democrats have managed to maintain consistently large majorities in the House.

Data Analysis

Table 4-A, which depicts only Republican congressional win margins, demonstrates that a majority of Republicans elected to the House of Representatives were elected with 62 or more percent of the vote. However, the figure, 58.1 percent, is lower than the same figure in identical classifications for the previous two elections. Still, it is remarkably close to the 1972 figure of 58.9 percent and is a significant indicator of incumbent strength at the congressional level. A more introspective interpretation is facilitated by examining Table 4-A along with Tables 4-B and 4-C.

Table 4-B presents an examination of the total percentage of Republican congressional win margins by Ronald Reagan's win margins. It was hypothesized earlier in this research that ticket-splitting would be evident in the 1980 election. Table 4-B confirms this hypothesis. The figures in the first column, where Ronald Reagan received 1-49 percent of the vote, are evidence of this. A startling 19.9 percent of the Republican congressional win margins fell in the 1-49 percent of the vote for Ronald Reagan column. This means that a substantial number of voters were selecting a Republican congressman but did not

TABLE 4-A
 1980 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION
 REPUBLICAN CONGRESSIONAL WIN MARGINS

REPUBLICAN CONGRESSIONAL WIN MARGINS	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
50-52%	30	15.7
53-55%	19	9.9
56-58%	16	8.4
59-61%	15	7.9
62+%	111	58.1
TOTAL	191	100.0

Source: Almanac of American Politics 1982.

TABLE 4-B
 1980 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION
 TOTAL PERCENTAGE OF REPUBLICAN CONGRESSIONAL
 WIN MARGINS BY PRESIDENTIAL WIN MARGINS

REPUBLICAN CONGRESSIONAL WIN MARGINS	REAGAN MARGINS						TOTAL
	1-49 %	50-52 %	53-55 %	56-58 %	59-61 %	62 ⁺ %	
50-52%	3.1	3.7	3.1	3.7	1.0	1.0	15.7
53-55%	1.6	0.5	4.2	2.6	0.5	0.5	9.9
56-58%	3.7	0.5	1.6	1.0	0.5	1.0	8.4
59-61%	2.1	3.1	0.5	1.0	0.5	0.5	7.9
62 ⁺ %	9.4	6.3	7.9	9.9	8.9	15.7	58.1
TOTAL	19.9	14.1	17.3	18.3	11.5	18.8	100.0

Based on a sample size of 191.

Source: The Almanac of American Politics 1982.

TABLE 4-C
1980 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION
MARGINS OF VICTORY OF REPUBLICAN HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES MEMBERS
BY ELECTORAL MARGINS FOR RONALD REAGAN

REPUBLICAN CONGRESSIONAL WIN MARGINS	REAGAN MARGINS						TOTAL
	1-49 %	50-52 %	53-55 %	56-58 %	59-61 %	62 ⁺ %	
50-52%	15.8	25.9	18.2	20.0	9.1	5.6	15.7
53-55%	7.9	3.7	24.2	14.3	4.5	2.8	9.9
56-58%	18.4	3.7	9.1	5.7	4.5	5.6	8.4
59-61%	10.5	22.2	3.0	5.7	4.5	2.8	7.9
62 ⁺ %	47.4	44.4	45.5	54.3	77.3	83.3	58.1
TOTAL (Number)	100.0 (38)	100.0 (27)	100.0 (33)	100.0 (35)	100.0 (22)	100.0 (36)	100.0 (191)

Based on a Sample Size of 191.

Source: The Almanac of American Politics 1982.

give a majority of their support to a Republican President. Since the election of 1984 represented a three man race, Ronald Reagan could have won the district with less than 50 percent of the vote. Unfortunately, the data cannot differentiate between a Reagan win or loss. However, it does show that the strength factor for the Republican congressmen was greater than that of Ronald Reagan. The next column, which represents a 50-52 percent Reagan win margin, indicates that 14.1 of the total percentage of Republican congressional win margins came from districts which only elected Ronald Reagan by a 50-51 percent margin.

The impact of the fairly high percentage of congressional margins of victory that fell into the 1-49 percent of the vote for Ronald Reagan category in Table 4-B is also lessened by the fact that, interestingly enough, the next highest percentage in the Reagan margins column, 18.8, fell in the 62 percent or more of the vote for Ronald Reagan category. From this perspective, Table 4-B confirms the hypothesis that the Republican party would demonstrate strength at the congressional level.

However, a look at the instances in Table 4-B where Ronald Reagan had a higher victory margin than his Republican legislative counterparts reveals that he did exhibit some coattail strengths in fact considerably more than either Richard Nixon or Jimmy Carter did. Ronald Reagan ran ahead of victorious Republican congressional candidates 11.4 percent of the time. Although this figure is not extremely high, it

does mean that the influence of the presidential candidate was felt. Therefore, although Table 4-B confirms Republican strength at the congressional level, it also demonstrates the existence of Ronald Reagan's coattails.

A look across the bottom row of Table 4-C again demonstrates the strength of the Republican party at the congressional level. In each of the categories of electoral margins for Ronald Reagan, the greatest percentage of representatives were elected with 62 or more percent of the vote. Some coattail pull is evidenced in the 62 or more percent electoral margin for Ronald Reagan column by the 83.3 percent of congressional win margins in that column that also exceeded 62 or more percent of the vote. Some of the congressional strength is probably mitigated by the incumbency factor. When the incumbency consideration is combined with the low actual number of Republicans elected to the House of Representatives, the coattail effect proves to be negligible.

Conclusion

Although the 1980 election proved to be a banner year for the Republican party, it can hardly be said that the elections were indicative of a Republican mandate or even of a large increase in party strength. At the House, Senate and gubernatorial level there were modest gains in electoral results for the Republicans. However a large part of this success is attributable to the intense effort the Republican party made

to reform its organizational structure and influence elections at the local level.

In actuality, 1980 was a year which continued to witness the decline of the party as a bond between the elected and the electorate. The influence of primaries, the news media, and Political Action Committees simply exacerbated the trends that existed in the previous two elections. The voter was increasingly exposed to information and influence that was dissociated from party loyalty, thus forcing an independent decision based on various sources of information.

The coattail effect for the 1980 elections was also overrated. As discussed earlier in this research, there was mixed evidence in regards to Ronald Reagan's coattail effects on the Senate races. Add the results of this research to Richard Ware's corollary that both in the Electoral College and in the Senate results there is the appearance of a much stronger reaction than in fact occurred, and the inevitable conclusion is that his assumption was correct.⁷⁴

Ronald Reagan did exhibit some evidence of influence over the House of Representatives race. His coattails were much stronger than either Richard Nixon's or Jimmy Carter's coattails. However, Ronald Reagan's coattails were not strong by any means, and were mitigated by the minority status of the Republican party in the House of Representatives.

⁷⁴ John A. Crittendon, Parties and Elections in the United States, (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1982), p. 79.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

This research has examined in detail the issue perspectives and electoral results of the presidential elections of 1972, 1976, and 1980. It has attempted to examine the coattail effect as testimony to the extent of party strength and voter independence present in each. These presidential elections were chosen because they are representative of the most contemporary and multi-faceted elections in this century. Each election, set as it was in unique social and political circumstances, is characterized by trends that are common to all of them.

The 1972 election marked the beginning of an era in which external influences and individualistic appeal proved stronger persuasive agents than party loyalty and identification. On its face, however, the 1972 election is probably best remembered for President Richard Nixon's landslide victory. As the study in Chapter One revealed, that presidential mandate did not carry over into the congressional realm. Although more than half of the Republican representatives elected to the House in 1972 won by a margin of 62 percent or more, only 194 Republicans were even elected. It was concluded that although

the party of the President in 1972 did not win legislative majorities, and the coattail effect was negligible, there was a certain amount of inherent strength in those places where the GOP won. This, coupled with the public's philosophical disaffection with George McGovern as a presidential contender and the anomie generated by the turbulent social issues of the day, created an independence in voting patterns somewhat divorced from party influence. As a result, there was a slight increase in awareness of strength of the Republican party.

Contrastingly, the 1976 election was characterized by a return to bread and butter issues and a close race between the presidential candidates. Although 278 Democrats were elected to the House of Representatives, research shows that presidential candidate Jimmy Carter did not exhibit the type of coattail strength that such a massive number might suggest. As a matter of fact, one-third of the congressional districts that elected Democratic representatives did not give Jimmy Carter a majority of the vote. Also, it is estimated that of the approximate one-fourth of the Democratic House members elected from districts which elected both the member and the President by a 62 percent or more victory margin, a large number were incumbents running without opposition. The Republican showing was admirable, given the circumstances. Like the election of 1972, the presidential election of 1976 exhibited little substantive coattail relationship between the

President and members of Congress elected on his party ticket. This, combined with the pervasiveness of ticket-splitting, indicated that the general trend in the electorate was to weigh legislative candidates by individual merit rather than party affiliation.

Like the 1976 presidential election, the 1980 contest delineated along traditional issues and gave the appearance of an election with notable coattails, although they were Republican rather than Democratic ones. The results of this research indicate that the presumed coattail effect of 1980 was in actuality overrated. Unlike the statistical results in 1972 and 1976, the relationship between Republican congressional candidate's victory margins and Ronald Reagan's victory margin were not concentrated at the high and low ends of the tables, although a significant number of House members were elected from districts that did not give Ronald Reagan a majority of the vote. Although the impact of this can be mitigated somewhat by the Independent party candidacy of John Anderson, the fact remains that in a fair number of instances, the congressional candidates were, in terms of victory margins, actually a boost to Ronald Reagan. However, Ronald Reagan did exhibit coattails, although they were not excessive. If one considers Ronald Reagan's coattails in the House elections as well as the results of elections for offices other than the House, such as the Senate, where Republicans gained a majority and ousted some liberal Democrats, the conclusion could be drawn that presidential coattails were stronger in 1980 than

in the previous two elections.

If one views the presidential elections of 1972, 1976, and 1980 together, it is obvious that the Democratic party is stronger at the congressional level. However, although

TABLE 5
Party Status
United States House of Representatives

<u>ELECTION</u>	<u>HOUSE</u>	<u>PRESIDENT</u>
1972 Election	194 Republicans	Republican
1976 Election	278 Democrats	Democrat
1980 Election	191 Republicans	Republican

the presidency altered between Democratic and Republican administration, the actual total party ratios in the House varied little. As previously discussed, even though the electoral circumstances were greatly different for each election, the coattail effect was consistently low in each of them. The fact that minimum coattails recurred consistently in each election is a strong indicator of decreased party influence.

Disintegration of party influence in regards to the coattail effect is a pervasive theme of each election studied here. Research indicates that, party deterioration relative to the coattail effect should have been higher in 1980. Because there were historic changes for Republicans in 1980, many commentators claimed the reverse. However, many of the party power changes were the results of factors external to the traditional political functions. Examples of this are the rise in the number of Political Action Committees, the increasing influence of the elec-

tronic news media, the growing power of evangelical groups, the Independent candidacy of John Anderson, and a general dissatisfaction with the status quo. In actuality the Republican party had less influence on its so-called resurgence than it might seem. In addition, the statistical analysis presented here did not demonstrate a strong comparative relationship between victory margins for Ronald Reagan and Republican House members. Therefore, when one takes into account those factors, a decrease in party influence as applied to the coattail effect could indeed be the case.

Another hypothesis generated before the inception of this research was that the term "coattails" as a political reality would or should cease to have credence in contemporary political discussion. The results of this research demonstrate that the concept of presidential coattails is becoming an increasingly archaic one. Despite wide swings in issue orientation and electoral results, the coattail effect has remained consistently negligible as the influence of external electoral factors have become more prominent. There is no indication that such influences will abate. In fact, there are many reasons to believe they will continue to gain influence. It is this researcher's belief that the term "presidential coattails," in the traditional sense of its meaning, has little merit in modern political discourse.

If indeed the concept of presidential coattails is no longer a valid one, one might logically conclude that the traditional political party is not a viable organization and

is approaching extinction. While the party as an influential factor between presidential and congressional candidates has certainly diminished, its disintegration as an organization is not anticipated.

While the coattail effect as it existed in earlier elections may probably no longer occur, the system itself probably will not undergo a critical realignment, nor should the traditional functions of the Republican and Democratic party probably be radically altered. There are two important reasons for this. The first is that, as this research indicates, during the 1970's and into 1980, the entire political system in the United States underwent severe strains. The results of the presidential contests were quite volatile from election to election. However, through the divisive social changes, the Vietnam War, Watergate, and raging inflation, the party system was not radically altered. American political parties still perform many of their customary functions in much the same way they did in the past.

The second reason the conventional functions of the two parties should continue in the same vein is that they remain a guidepost for candidate issue positions, especially to presidential candidates. In 1972, many of the exceedingly controversial social issues cut across party lines, perhaps initiating some of the ticket-splitting that occurred in later elections. However, in 1976 and 1980, most issue positions of the presidential candidates reflected an alignment along traditional Democratic and Republican party positions.

This research does not represent a critical examination or even a profile of the individual voter. That inquiry is left to others. The individual voter does, of course, play an integral role in the selection of presidential and congressional candidates. The general trends demonstrated here indicate that the American voter is making and will continue to make a voting decision on his President and his Representative independent of party affiliation. In other words, this research proves that party identification is no longer a critical factor in the simultaneous choice of congressional and presidential officeholders.

APPENDIX A

SPSS Batch System

7-Feb-84

Page 1

SPSS for PC System-10, Version 4, Release 2.1, May 1, 1982

Order from McGraw Hill: SPSS, 2nd Ed. (Principal text) Order from SPSS Inc.: SPSS Statistical Algorithms
SPSS Primer (Brief Intro to SPSS) KEYWORDS: The SPSS Inc. Newsletter
SPSS Update 7-9 (use w/SPSS, 2nd for Feb, 7, 8, 9)
SPSS Introductory Guide: Basic Statistics and Operations
SPSS Primer (Brief Intro to SPSS)

Default SPACE allocation: allows for: 24 Transformations
WORKSPACE 443 words OR RECODE values + LAG variables
TRANSPACE 640 words 397 IF/COMPUTE operations

1 FUN NAME ELECTION RETURNS 72
2 INPUT MEDIUM ELECTCAT
3 INPUT FORMAT F1.0,F2.0,F3.0,F1.0,F3.0,F2.0,X,F3.0,F1.0,F3.0,F2.0,X,
4 NO. OF CASES 111
5 VARIABLE LIST DIST PER72 PARTY72 PERCON72 PERVNX72 PER76 PARTY76,
6 MISSING VALUES PER72(000) PERVNX72(000)
7 RECODE PER72(LOWEST THRU 52=1)(53 THRU 55=2)(56 THRU 58=3)
8 SELECT IF (PARTY72 EQ 1)
9 CROSSSTABS TABLES=PERCON72 BY PERVNX72
10 STATISTICS ALL

***** Given WORKSPACE allows for 746 cells, 498 tables with 2 dimensions for CROSSSTABS problem *****

ELECTION RETURNS 72

7-Feb-84

Page 2

File NONAME (Creation date = 7-Feb-84)

CROSSSTABULATION OF PERCON72 BY PERVNX72 Page 1 of 1

Table with 6 columns (PERVNX72 categories) and 6 rows (PERCON72 categories). Includes counts, expected frequencies, and row/column totals.

23 out of 30 (76.7%) of the valid cells have expected cell frequency less than 5.0.
Chi Square = 16.57778 with 20 Degrees of freedom Significance = 0.6855
Cramer's V = 0.14614
Contingency coefficient = 0.29055
Lambda (asymmetric) = 0.00000 with PERCON72 dependent. = 0.00000 with PERVNX72 dependent.
Lambda (symmetric) = 0.00000
Uncertainty coefficient (asymmetric) = 0.03071 with PERCON72 dependent. = 0.04889 with PERVNX72 dependent.
Uncertainty coefficient (symmetric) = 0.03772
Kendall's tau b = 0.10354 Significance = 0.0602
Kendall's tau c = 0.05912 Significance = 0.0602
Gamma = 0.19642
Somers's D (asymmetric) = 0.11044 with PERCON72 dependent. = 0.07749 with PERVNX72 dependent.
Somers's I (symmetric) = 0.04972
Eta = 0.14574 with PERCON72 dependent. = 0.17514 with PERVNX72 dependent.
Pearson's R = 0.10240 Significance = 0.0777

ELECTION RETURNS 72

7-Feb-84

Page 3

Transpace required: 72 words
3 transformations
13 RECODE values + LAG variables
3 IF/COMPUTE operations
CPU time required: 1.06 seconds

APPENDIX B

SPSS Patch System

7-Feb-84

Page 1

SPSS for DECsystem-10, Version 4, Release 9.1, May 1, 1982

Order from McGraw Hill: SPSS, 2nd Ed. (principal text) Order from SPSS Inc.: SPSS Statistical Algorithms
SPSS Primer (Brief Intro to SPSS) KEYWORDS: The SPSS Inc. Newsletter
SPSS Update 7-9 (use w/SPSS, 2nd for Pel. 7, 8, 9)
SPSS Introductory Guide: Basic Statistics and Operations
SPSS Primer (Brief Intro to SPSS)

Default SPACE allocation: Allows for: 24 Transformations
WORKSPACE 4430 words 9A RECODE values + LAG variables
TRANSSPACE 640 words 397 IF/COMPUTE operations

1 RUN NAME ELECTION RETURNS 76
2 INPUT MEDIUM ELECTION DAT
3 INPUT FORMAT F3.0,F2.0,F3.0,F1.0,F3.0,F2.0,X,F3.0,F1.0,F3.0,F2.0,X,
4 F3.0,F1.0,F3.0,F2.0,
5 N OF CASES 434
6 VARIABLE LIST STATE DIST REP72 PARTY72 PERCON72 PERVNX72 REP76 PARTY76,
7 PERCON76 PERVCR76 SEP40 PARTY80 PERCON80 PERVCR80
8 MISSING VALUES PERCON76(LOWEST THRU 52=1)(53 THRU 55=2)(56 THRU 58=3)
9 RECODE (59 THRU 61=4)(62 THRU HIGHEST=5)
10 PERVCR76(61 THRU 49=6)(53 THRU 52=1)
11 RECODE (53 THRU 55=2)(56 THRU 58=3)(59 THRU 61=4)
12 (62 THRU HIGHEST=5)
13 SELECT IF (PARTY76 EQ ?)
14 CROSSTABS
15 TABLES=PERCON76 BY PERVCR76
16 STATISTICS ALL

***** Given WORKSPACE allows for 746 cells, 498 tables with 2 dimensions for CROSSTABS problem *****

ELECTION RETURNS 76

7-Feb-84

Page 2

File NAME (Creation date = 7-Feb-84)

CROSSTABULATION OF PERCON76 BY PERVCR76 Page 1 of 1

Contingency table showing counts and expected frequencies for PERCON76 (rows 1-5) and PERVCR76 (columns 1-6). Includes row and column totals.

16 out of 30 (53.3%) of the valid cells have expected cell frequency less than 5.0.
Minimum expected cell frequency = 1.313
Chi square = 46.8544 with 25 degrees of freedom Significance = 0.0007
Cramer's V = 0.28334
Continuity coefficient = 0.37773
Lambda (asymmetric) = 0.00000 with PERCON76 dependent. = 0.09694 with PERVCR76 dependent.
Lambda (symmetric) = 0.6376
Uncertainty coefficient (asymmetric) = 0.37348 with PERCON76 dependent. = 0.35303 with PERVCR76 dependent.
Uncertainty coefficient (symmetric) = 0.36362
Kendall's tau b = -0.15530 Significance = 0.0010
Kendall's tau c = -0.12985 Significance = 0.0010
Gamma = -0.23221
Somers' d (asymmetric) = -0.12073 with PERCON76 dependent. = -0.18594 with PERVCR76 dependent.
Somers' d (symmetric) = -0.18233
Eta = 0.25127 with PERCON76 dependent. = 0.21576 with PERVCR76 dependent.
Pearson's R = -0.12827 Significance = 0.0163

Number of missing observations = 14

ELECTION RETURNS 76

7-Feb-84

Page 3

Transpace required: 32 words
3 transformations
14 RECODE values + LAG variables
3 IF/COMPUTE operations

CPU time required: 1.04 seconds

APPENDIX C

SPSS Patch System

SPSS for PCsystem-10, Version 4, Release 9.1, May 1, 1982

Order from McGraw Hill: SPSS, 2nd Ed. (principal text)
SPSS Primer (Brief Intro to SPSS)
SPSS Update 7-9 (use w/SPSS, 2nd for Rel. 7, 8, 9)
SPSS Introductory Guide: Basic Statistics and Operations
SPSS Primer (Brief Intro to SPSS)

Order from SPSS Inc.: SPSS Statistical Algorithms
KEYWORDS: The SPSS Inc. Newsletter

Default SPACE allocation: Allows for: 24 Transformations
#OFSPACE 4430 words 88 RECODE values + LAG variables
#FANSPACE 640 words 397 IF/COMPUTE operations

1 RUN NAME ELECTION RETURNS 80
2 INPUT MEDIUM
3 INPUT FORMAT F1.0,F2.0,F3.0,F1.0,F3.0,F2.0,X,F3.0,F1.0,F3.0,F2.0,X,
F1.0,F1.0,F3.0,F2.0,
4 # OF CASES STATE, DIST, REP72, PARTY72, PERCON72, PERVX72, REP76, PARTY76,
5 VARIABLE LIST PERCON76, PERVX76, REP80, PARTY80, PERCON80, PERVRN80
6 MISSING VALUES PERCON80, PERVRN80(000)
7 RECODE PERCON80(LA=1 THRU 52=1)(53 THRU 55=2)(56 THRU 58=3)
8 RECODE PERVRN80(C1 THRU 41=4)(42 THRU HIGHEST=5)
9 RECODE PERVRN80(C1 THRU 41=6)(50 THRU 52= 1)
10 RECODE PERVRN80(C1 THRU 55=2)(56 THRU 58=3)(59 THRU 61=4)
11 RECODE PERVRN80(C1 THRU HIGHEST=5)
12 SELECT IF (PARTY80 EQ 1)
13 CROSSTABS TABLES=PERCON80 BY PERVRN80
16 STATISTICS ALL

***** Given WORKSPACE allows for 746 cells, 498 tables with 2 dimensions for CROSSTABS problem *****

ELECTION RETURNS 80

File RENAME (Creation date = 7-Feb-84)

C R O S S T A B U L A T I O N O F
PERCON80 BY PERVRN80
Page 1 of 1

Contingency table showing counts and percentages for PERCON80 (rows 1-5) and PERVRN80 (columns 1-6). Includes row and column totals.

20 out of 30 (66.7%) of the valid cells have expected cell frequency less than 5.0.
Minimum expected cell frequency = 1.728
Chi square = 40.26339 with 20 degrees of freedom Significance = .0039
Cramer's V = 0.23123
Contingency coefficient = 0.11771
Lambda (asymmetric) = 0.20000 with PERCON80 dependent. = 0.13072 with PERVRN80 dependent.
Lambda (symmetric) = 0.24514
Uncertainty coefficient (asymmetric) = 0.07357 with PERCON80 dependent. = 0.05571 with PERVRN80 dependent.
Uncertainty coefficient (symmetric) = 0.26554
Kendall's tau b = 0.11220 Significance = 0.0323
Kendall's tau c = 0.07427 Significance = 0.0323
Gamma = 0.15255
Somers' D (asymmetric) = 0.09242 with PERCON80 dependent. = 0.12793 with PERVRN80 dependent.
Somers' D (symmetric) = 0.10394
Eta = 0.22653 with PERCON80 dependent. = 0.22186 with PERVRN80 dependent.
Pearson's chi square = 0.14677 Significance = 0.0214

ELECTION RETURNS 80

Transpase required: 42 words
3 transformations
13 # of RECODE values + LAG variables
3 IF/COMPUTE operations
CPU time required: 1.07 seconds

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