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FOCUS



HELP WANTED: MINORITIES IN THE 1980 CENSUS

Joint Center for Political Studies

Perspective

In a few days we will begin the decade of the Eighties. What fate or fortune lies ahead for black Americans?

Looking back, for a moment, we see considerable controversy over the extent to which blacks have made tangible progress. No one seriously disputes the significant gains made in acquiring basic civil and political rights. However, the picture is very different in the economic arena. Despite pockets of obvious success, on the whole black America appears to have made little economic progress, a fact reflected in numerous socio-economic indices and in our everyday lives.

Clearly, the challenge of the next decade for our society, and especially for black people, is to achieve economic equality.

Therefore, in the decade of the Eighties, I foresee another great American Dilemma. It will test both the fabric of this nation's democratic ideals and the determination of black people. The testing ground will be the economic arena. The new freedom fighters will be those who have mastered the tools of economics, business and finance and the tools of politics.

If one views the 1960's as the decade of civil rights protests and the 1970's as the period when that protest moved from the streets into the halls of government, then the 1980's surely ought to be the time for us to parlay our political toehold into greater economic advances. This progression—from powerlessness to protest, to politics to economic empowerment—has been cited by political scientists and others as the way minorities traditionally move into the American mainstream.

On the other hand, the decade of the Eighties looms in the eyes of some as a decade of limits, of slow growth, fiscal restraint, energy conservation, rising inflation and high unemployment.

Herein lies the horns of the great American Dilemma of the 1980's. On one hand, we have blacks pushing for a greater share of the economic pie. On the other, we are told the pie is shrinking. Under such circumstances, how can blacks protect their past gains, let alone make further progress?

The answer lies neither in the stars nor in the generosity of our white brothers and sisters. The answer lies in us. We must make far greater use of our political strength as a weapon and as a demand. Power, said Frederick Douglass, yields nothing without a demand, neither in bad times nor in good. When we fail to use the full array of our own political power, we fail to demand our just due.

The problems ahead are formidable. Yet all too often these problems are used as a smoke screen by those who oppose affirmative action and by timid public officials who refuse to make hard but fair choices in allocating resources.

It is a fact that the federal budget is larger this year than ever before. It will be larger still next year. There are more jobs, more opportunities. Where, then, is our fair share?

Surely there is no immutable law that says budget expenditures—whatever their level—should not be used to benefit those in greatest need. Nor is it written that budget cuts—whatever their reason—should automatically be made in programs that serve the needy—minorities and the poor.

The only law that exists is the law of politics which sets forth the process and the procedures for influencing who gets what, when, and how.

It is time we stop shucking and jiving, bragging and backsliding and do something about our political future. It is time for us to stop flirting with power. Use it or lose it.

That is why "Operation Big Vote: Crusade '80" must become an overwhelming success.

While the law and the courts resolved the American Dilemma that Gunnar Myrdal wrote about in the Forties, our political power and our economic skills must be used to resolve the dilemma of the Eighties.

Eddie N. Williams
President

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Reapportionment and Minorities

As mandated by the Reapportionment Act of 1929, the seats in the U.S. House of Representatives will be reapportioned on the basis of the 1980 census. The data will be released by the President in 1981. Reapportionment will mean a redistribution of seats among states in response to shifts in population since the 1970 Census. State legislative districts will also be adjusted as required.

The purpose of this reapportionment and redistricting is to ensure that districts are, as nearly as possible, equal in population. This "one person, one vote" principle for state as well as federal elections was mandated by the U.S. Supreme Court's 1964 decision in *Wesberry v. Sanders* and by several subsequent decisions.

In most states the redistricting authority is the state legislature. Redistricting decisions are critical to many interests and individuals and often such decisions are intensely political. For political parties, redistricting might mean the opportunity to retain or to gain a majority within a state legislature with all of the benefits that control brings with it. For individual legislators redistricting can mean a difficult reelection campaign or even loss of a seat.

Legislators have, for decades, attempted to redistrict in such a way as to protect the seats of incumbents, secure partisan advantage, and often to dilute minority representation. The process by which districts are drawn so as to accomplish one or more of these objectives is commonly known as "gerrymandering." Although its undesirable effects have been apparent and efforts have been made to eradicate gerrymandering, the practice persists.

In anticipation of the 1980 census, several attempts are being made to reform and improve the reapportionment and redistricting process. Among these efforts are four bills affecting congressional redistricting presently being considered by Congress. These are: H.R. 1516, H.R. 2653, S. 596, and S. Amendment 237. Following is a summary of the major features of these bills:

- One of the difficult problems in establishing an equitable anti-gerrymandering standard is to strike a balance between the need to ensure equality in population and the need for flexibility to take other factors into consideration, such as ensuring adequate opportunity for minority representation. Supreme Court decisions have stressed strict population equality, but that requirement does not by itself prevent gerrymandering that could dilute minority representation. Justice Byron R. White has noted, that while upholding the "one person, one vote" principle, the Court "downgrades a restraint on a far greater threat to equality in representation, the gerrymander." To accommodate this need for flexibility, a two percent population deviation among districts is allowed in all four bills.

- All four bills also prohibit the drawing of district boundaries "for the purpose of" diluting or minimizing the voting strength of minorities.

- In most states the initial responsibility for preparing an apportionment plan now rests with the state legislature. Two of the bills now before Congress (H.R. 2653 and S. 596) provide for independent reapportionment commissions in each state.

- All of the bills except S. 596 allow states to set their own criteria for the kind of information to be used in drawing district boundaries. S. 596, however, prohibits the use of "demographic information other than population headcounts."

- The bills all set forth general criteria for establishing district boundaries, specifying that they must encompass contiguous territory and coincide as nearly as possible with local political subdivisions.

- Though all four bills establish standards and procedures for court challenges to alleged unfair redistricting plans, the bills vary in the amount of time they allow for challenges after redistricting plans are enacted. H.R. 2653 permits only 45 days. S. 596 allows 60 days. Both H.R. 1516 and S. Amendment 237 allow nine months.

- Three of the bills (S. 596, S. Amendment 237 and H.R. 1516) allow for payment of court costs to plaintiffs who successfully challenge redistricting decisions, but such payment is specified to be only at the discretion of the court. H.R. 2653 makes no provision for recovery of court costs.

Effect on Minorities

During recent months the Joint Center for Political Studies has analyzed all four of these bills from the viewpoint of their potential impact on minorities. That analysis indicates that minorities can be adversely affected by some of the proposed measures, but with some modifications, these measures might be helpful in ensuring equitable representation.

For instance, the language in all four bills which prohibits the drawing of district boundaries "for the purpose of" diluting minority voting strength does represent an attempt to prevent racial gerrymandering. However, it might not achieve that end. Proving the purpose of such redistricting is extremely difficult. On this subject former U.S. Supreme Court Justice Arthur Goldberg noted in a 1964 redistricting decision that "to require a showing of racial motivation in the legislature would place an impossible burden on plaintiffs."

Far more effective would be language requiring that the drawing of boundaries "not have the effect of" diluting minority voting strength.

Proposals to establish reapportionment commissioners specify the appointment of five members, two each to be appointed by majority and minority leaders in state legislatures, with the fifth to be appointed by the commissioners themselves. The bills specify that none of the commissioners may be officers of federal, state or local government or officers of any political party.

This approach would reduce dominance by any political party in the reapportionment process. However, it would also tend to exclude minorities from direct involvement in the process unless appointing authorities were particularly sensitive to minority

(Continued on page 8)

Conducting the 1980 Census

The U. S. Census Bureau will hire more than 270,000 temporary employees to help conduct the decennial census which begins on April 1, 1980. Minority applications are being sought to help the Census Bureau meet its affirmative action goals and also to meet the requirement laid down by President Carter that ". . . we draw as many qualified census employees as possible from the neighborhoods in which the census is being done."

An extensive nationwide process has been developed to recruit, test, interview, and hire these temporary workers. It combines elements of both a competitive selection system and a patronage system.

Candidates for supervisory positions, most of which have already been filled, must not only pass a written examination but must also have solid Democratic Party credentials or references. To fill the 4,000 supervisory positions, ranging from operations assistants to census district office managers, the Census Bureau asked for and got referrals from Democratic members of congress, Democratic mayors and governors, and leaders of state Democratic parties. Census officials say that they will hire a large number of minorities in these top jobs which pay between $5.00 and about $10.00 per hour. Their goal is "to equal or exceed the proportion of minorities and women in the labor force, by community, with proportionate representation through all levels of positions."

Competitive written examinations also will be used to select the 266,000 clerks and enumerators, beginning in January 1980. Applications for these positions will be obtained from a wide variety of sources, including elected and appointed officials, community-based organizations, colleges and universities, individual referrals, and walk-ins. All candidates will be tested. However, it is reasonable to expect that those with Democratic Party credentials or references, who pass the examination, will be given preference over persons who do not have such connections. Thus, the standard federal recruitment and selection procedures do not apply. In his memorandum to the Secretary of Commerce and the Director of the Office of Personnel Management, dated March 26, 1979, President Carter said:

"Since the first census was taken in 1790, special provision has been made for the recruitment of temporary census employees outside the normal government hiring procedures."

Both the Census process and the Census count will be on trial in 1980 because the nation as a whole, and especially minority groups, will be waiting to see whether the Census Bureau can solve its undercount problem. In 1970 the Census Bureau underenumerated 2.9 per cent of the population, almost six million persons. Considering that over 200 million persons were counted, this underenumeration may seem miniscule. However, 7.7 percent of the black population was not counted as compared to only 1.9 per cent of the white population. Disproportionately high undercounts also occurred in the Hispanic, Native American, and Asian American populations. Thus, the minority undercount has significant implications in every area in which census data are used—program planning, allocation of federal, state and local funds, and reapportionment, to name a few. To the extent minorities are not counted correctly, both the minorities and the communities in which they reside are shortchanged. This means that whites also are discriminated against because of the undercount.

The massive, multi-billion dollar 1980 Census program is designed to employ a significant number of minority temporary workers with the hope of achieving a complete count. Thus, minority leaders and organizations are being urged to submit to the Census Bureau the names of candidates for Census positions. The bigger the pool of candidates, the greater the chances that a representative number of minority Census workers will be employed, and the greater the probability that these workers will help to reduce the undercount.

For the benefit of those who wish to apply for temporary employment or to refer the names of others, here is how the Census recruitment and selection process will work between January and June 1980, to fill the following positions in 409 local census districts in the U. S.:

Clerks—50,000 positions ($3.55 to $4.00 per hour)

Crew Leaders—17,000 positions ($4.50 per hour)

Enumerators—199,000 positions ($4.00 to $4.20 per hour).

The Census Bureau is an agency of the U. S. Department of Commerce and is located in Suitland, Maryland, just outside Washington, D.C. The Bureau has 12 regional offices (See next page). In conducting the 1980 census, the Bureau will establish 409 "local district offices."

Beginning in January, the 409 Census Bureau local district offices will handle screening, testing, interviewing and hiring of all census workers in their respective jurisdictions. For more information on the opening of these 409 offices or for submitting candidates and applications, interested persons should contact the Regional Recruiting Coordinators shown on the opposite page.

Each regional office of the Bureau of the Census will hire a recruiting coordinator who will recruit candidates for the district managers or assistant district managers in each of the 409 census district offices. After these district personnel are hired by the regional office, they will recruit candidates for other positions within each district office.

The recruiting coordinators' and district managers' recruiting authority and responsibilities will be limited specifically to those matters dealing directly with identifying adequate numbers of candidates for temporary Census jobs. In this area, they take direction from the Director of Recruiting, Washington, D.C. The recruiting coordinators and district managers will report to, and take direction from, the regional director (or regional census manager, if so delegated) in all areas peripheral to the recruiting effort, e.g., scheduling priorities, personnel

selection and in any matter relating to the administration or operation of the census.

Recruiting, testing, and hiring of all personnel will follow schedules established by the Bureau.

In addition to this elaborate network, students and instructors at more than 40 colleges and universities will be invited to assist the Census Bureau.

The students will be paid to serve as census takers, especially in areas that are difficult to enumerate. About 40 to 50 jobs will be filled by students from each of the educational institutions participating in the program, known as the Experimental Student Intern Program (ESIP).

In addition, they will get academic credit not only for working as census takers, but for instruction they will receive from university personnel concerning the kinds of data collected, census procedures, and uses of census data in the public and private sectors. Census Bureau Director Vincent P. Barabba said the experience will give students a knowledge of popu'ation and housing statistics that will deepen their understanding of today's urban issues. They will earn $4.00 or more per hour to serve as census takers, and there is a distinct possibility of additional summer work for those who complete the internship successfully, Barabba said.

The instructional part of the program is being developed by college and university faculties in cooperation with the Bureau. The Bureau's role has been to provide curriculum materials and to conduct seminars for the instructors.

ESIP represents the first time that the Bureau has designed a formal program to test the value of encouraging universities to provide credit to college students who serve as enumerators. The program was launched after close consultation with many professional associations and officials of academic institutions.

On page six is a list of participating universities and colleges, plus the instructors in charge of ESIP at each institution.

If one finds that this extensive network is not working or if problems develop, an appeal can be made to the Director of Census Recruiting in Washington, D.C., Mikel Miller, who is white, or to his two top assistants, Shirley Robinson Hall, who is black,

(Continued on page 6)

U.S. CENSUS REGIONAL RECRUITING COORDINATORS

Regional Recruiting Coordinator	Region	Office Phone	Office Address
BENEZE, Lee	Kansas City	816-374-4601	One Gateway Center 4th and State Streets Kansas City, Kansas 66101
DONAHUE, Robert	Boston	617-223-2328	441 Stuart Street, 10th Floor Boston, Massachusetts 02116
GRIFFIN, Sybil	Detroit	313-226-3821	144 W. Lafayette, Room 1026 Detroit, Michigan 48226
HAYNES, Jorge SAKODA, Lani	Los Angeles	213-824-7548	V. A. Wadsworth Center Building 218, 3rd Floor Wilshire and Sawtelle Boulevards Los Angeles, California 90073
HUMLICEK, James	Denver	303-234-3924	Regional Census Center Post Office Box 15900 Lakewood, Colorado 80215
PEPPEL, Harriet	Atlanta	404-881-4451	1365 Peachtree Street, N.E., Room 625 Atlanta, Georgia 30309
RAMIREZ, Jesse	Dallas	214-767-2882	Corrigan Tower Building 212 N. St. Paul Street, Suite 1120 Dallas, Texas 75201
ROBINSON, James	New York	212-264-4685	Federal Office Building 26 Federal Plaza, Room 37-130 New York, New York 10007
SULLIVAN, Mickey	Philadelphia	215-597-4920	600 Arch Street Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19106
WOLFF, Charles	Chicago	312-353-6251	55 East Jackson Boulevard, Suite 1304 Chicago, Illinois 60604
RASMUSSEN, Linda	Seattle	206-442-7800	1700 Westlake Avenue, North Seattle, Washington 78109
MOTLEY, Roe	Charlotte	704-371-6163	230 South Tryon Street, Suite 915 Charlotte, North Carolina 28202

Conducting the 1980 Census

(Continued from page 5)

and Louis Delgado, who is Hispanic. Hall is responsible for all census recruitment in the East and Midwest, and Delgado is responsible for the South and West.

Miller, Hall and Delgado can be contacted at Room 7224, New Executive Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20503 (202/395-3195).

Minority participation in the 1980 census is crucial for three reasons:

1. To provide temporary employment for needy and deserving persons;
2. To enlist minorities in the process of ensuring a complete count; and
3. To expand the patronage network of minority leaders and organizations.

If all of these systems, channels and networks fails, contact the Joint Center for Political Studies, Suite 539, 1426 H Street, N.W., Washington, D. C. (202) 638-4477.

1980 should trigger two related thoughts in the minds of minority Americans:

1. Get counted in the Census!
2. Register and vote!

ESIP PARTICIPATING INSTITUTIONS

University	Location	Principal Instructor
Alabama State University	Montgomery, Alabama	Dr. Norman Walton
California State at Dominguez Hill	Carson, California	Dr. Dave Reese
California State at Long Beach	Long Beach, California	Dr. Gary Peters
California State at Los Angeles	Los Angeles, California	Dr. Sin-Fong Han
Chicago State	Chicago, Illinois	Dr. Luis Ygleslas
CUNY—City College	New York, New York	Dr. R. Lilienfield
CUNY—Hunter College	New York, New York	Dr. Jody Carlson
CUNY—Medgar Evers College	New York, New York	Dr. Rose Ross
Cleveland State	Cleveland, Ohio	Dr. John Blank
De Paul University	Chicago, Illinois	Dr. Don Dewey
Fisk	Nashville, Tennessee	Dr. Kirk Johnson
Florida International	Miami, Florida	Dr. Ralph Clem
Georgia State	Atlanta, Georgia	Dr. Bordon Dent
Howard	Washington, D.C.	Dr. Maurice Woodward
Indiana—Northwest	Gary, Indiana	Dr. William Lowe
Jackson State	Jackson, Mississippi	Dr. V. V. Prakasa Rao
Jersey City State	Jersey City, New Jersey	Dr. Ishmael Igbani
Metropolitan State	Denver, Colorado	Dr. Robert Czerniak
Miles College	Birmingham, Alabama	Dr. John J. Spurling
Morehouse	Atlanta, Georgia	Dr. John Handy
Morgan State	Baltimore, Maryland	Dr. Fredric Ritter
Norfolk State	Norfolk, Virginia	Dr. Jesse Pendleton
Northeastern	Boston, Massachusetts	Dr. Ronald McAllister
Northeastern	Chicago, Illinois	Dr. Robert Stark
Pan American	Edinburg, Texas	Dr. David Alvirez
Rutgers—Newark	Newark, New Jersey	Dr. William Brown
San Francisco State	San Francisco, California	Dr. Franklin Sheehan
Shaw University	Raleigh, North Carolina	Dr. Liali Russell
Southern	New Orleans, Louisiana	Dr. Walter Austin
St. Augustine's	Raleigh, North Carolina	Dr. Furney E. Brown, Jr.
St. Louis	St. Louis, Missouri	Dr. Frank B. Avesing
Temple	Philadelphia, Pa.	Dr. Eugene Ericksen
Tennessee State	Nashville, Tennessee	Dr. Juanita Gaston
Texas Southern	Houston, Texas	Dr. Robert Ballard
Trinity	San Antonio, Texas	Dr. Bob Brischetta
Universidad Catolica de Puerto Rico	Ponce, Puerto Rico	Dr. Margarita Rosa
University of Alabama	Birmingham, Alabama	Dr. Joseph Van Matre
University of California—L.A.	Los Angeles, California	Dr. George Sabagh
University of Cincinnati	Cincinnati, Ohio	Dr. Art Hinman
University of Houston	Houston, Texas	Dr. Rodger Nett
University of New Mexico	Albuquerque, New Mexico	Dr. Lee Brown
University of Puerto Rico	Bayamon, Puerto Rico	Dr. William Riefkhol
University of Texas at Arlington	Arlington, Texas	Dr. Joel Goldsteen
University of Texas at El Paso	El Paso, Texas	Dr. John Hedderson
University of Texas at San Antonio	San Antonio, Texas	Dr. Richard Harris
University of Washington	Seattle, Washingon	Dr. Thomas Pullum
Wayne State	Detroit, Michigan	Dr. Rondal Downing

Telescope

NBC/LEO and NBCSL Hold Annual Meetings

November was a busy month for the nation's black elected officials. The National Black Caucus of Local Elected Officials (NBC/LEO) met in Las Vegas, Nev., November 24-28 for its ninth annual conference. Between November 30 and December 2 the National Black Caucus of State Legislators (NBCSL) held its third annual meeting in St. Louis, Missouri.

Speakers at the NBC/LEO meeting included Gary, Ind. Mayor Richard Hatcher, and Atlanta Mayor Maynard Jackson.

Conference workshops dealt with three major topics—the 1980 census, youth unemployment and community development for small cities. Among panelists participating in the program were: Larry Lucas, representing the Minority Statistics Program of the U.S. Bureau of the Census; Richmond, Va., Mayor Henry Marsh; Stephen Juntila, legislative associate to the U.S. House of Representatives Subcommittee on Employment Opportunities; James M. McConnell, U.S. Department of Labor; Ann Travino, associate director, Vice President's Task Force on Youth Employment; and Eddie N. Williams, President of the Joint Center for Political Studies.

NBC/LEO members endorsed resolutions calling for: release of the American hostages in Iran; support of "Operation Big Vote: Crusade '80"; passage of legislation to make Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday a national holiday; support for TransAfrica in its efforts to establish a domestic network to assist in formulation of international policy; and a commitment by black elected officials to help offset energy costs for disadvantaged minorities.

As in previous years, the NBC/LEO meeting was scheduled to coincide with the annual meeting of the National League of Cities.

At that meeting, Ms. Jessie Rattley, a former president of NBC/LEO and presently a member of the Newport News, Va. city council, was elected President of the National League of Cities. She is the first black woman to hold that office.

The meeting of the National Black Caucus of State Legislators featured workshops on the 1980 census and reapportionment which will follow that census. Panelists also examined state employment strategies and national energy policy.

Program participants included Mississippi State Sen. Henry Kirksey, Alabama State Rep. Antonio Harris, Tennessee State Rep. Lois Deberry, Illinois State Rep. Larry Bullock; Illinois State Sen. Earleen Collins, Colorado State Sen. Ralph Jordan, Ohio State Rep. C. J. McLin, Maryland State Rep. Larry Young, Ralph Jordan, Deputy Director of the Massachusetts State Manpower Office, and Eddie N. Williams, President of the Joint Center for Political Studies.

NBCSL approved a number of resolutions. These called for: support of "Operation Big Vote: Crusade '80"; endorsement of efforts to make the birthday of Martin Luther King Jr., a national holiday; support of efforts by states to train high school principals as deputy voter registrars; support of President Carter's actions to bring about the release of American hostages in Iran; and support of ratification of the D.C. Voting Rights Amendment. NBCSL also urged that action be taken by the U.S. Bureau of the Census to reduce the 1980 census undercount.

In addition, NBCSL elected new officers for the coming year. Maryland State Sen. Clarence Mitchell was elected president and Oklahoma State Rep. Hannah Atkins was elected vice president. Other new officers include: Georgia State Rep. Calvin Smyre, secretary; and Missouri State Rep. Alan Wheat, treasurer.

JCPS Announces Plans for Annual Dinner

The Joint Center for Political Studies will hold its third annual dinner Tuesday, March 18, 1980 at the Washington Hilton Hotel. As in previous years, this date was chosen to facilitate participation by the many elected officials who will be attending the National League of Cities' Congressional Cities Conference March 16-18.

In addition to highlighting the importance and impact of black political participation, the third annual dinner will mark the Joint Center's 10th anniversary. The theme of the 1980 meeting will be "Economic Progress: Political Challenges for the 80's."

Tickets for the dinner are $125 per person; and $1,250 for a table of 10. For tickets or further information, please contact Sandra Matthews at JCPS, 202—638-4477, or write: Dinner Committee, P. O. Box 28332, Washington, D.C. 20005.

Census Bureau Estimates 14-16 Million Hispanics in U.S.

The U.S. Bureau of the Census last month estimated that the nation's Hispanic population now stands at between 14 and 16 million. The number of Hispanics in the United States has been in dispute for several years. A year ago various estimates in the nation's media put the number of Hispanics at approximately 19 million. Based on such figures, many observers estimated that the number of Hispanics would soon surpass the number of blacks to become the country's largest minority group.

According to Vincent Barabba, director of the U.S. Bureau of the Census, however, this is not likely within the near future. There are presently 25 million blacks in the United States. Barabba said last month that it would take 78 years at current birth rates for the Hispanic population to outnumber blacks.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Bill Receives Setback by the House

A bill that would make January 15, the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., a national holiday, received a setback from the House early in December.

The bill was withdrawn from the House floor, at the request of the Congressional Black Caucus, after an amendment was passed that shifted the observance date to a Sunday.

Reapportionment and Minorities

(Continued from page 3)

needs. There are presently 307 black state legislators but none serve as majority or minority party leaders. Blacks would thus have no direct voice in naming commissioners. A partial remedy might be to increase the number of commissioners from five to seven, with appointment of the additional numbers to be made by governors who, as statewide elected officials, might be presumed to be more responsive to all of the people of their states.

Although S. 596 states that none of its provisions supersedes the requirements of the Voting Rights Act, it would appear that this bill does conflict with the Act. The conflict arises from the fact that states covered by the Act are required to submit proposed changes in voting procedures and legislative district boundaries to the Justice Department for determination as to whether such changes are racially discriminatory. They must also submit racial data when new districts are drawn.

In addition to the concern that reapportionment legislation might conflict with the Voting Rights Act, there are other aspects of the proposed legislation which must be carefully examined in terms of their implications for minorities. For example, the public needs an adequate amount of time, after enactment of redistricting plans, to analyze such plans and to challenge the plans if inequities are alleged. A period of at least six months should be allowed for this purpose.

Another area of concern is the high cost of court challenges, which often deters citizens from taking legal action to protect their rights. Thus, successful plaintiffs in redistricting cases should be guaranteed payment of court costs.

There is ample evidence that of all the ways in which the democratic process over the years has been thwarted (and there have been many such methods, including the white primary, poll taxes, literacy tests and prerequisites for voter registration), gerrymandering has been the most difficult to erase.

Common Cause in a 1977 report on state and congressional reapportionment put the matter this way: "The method by which state legislative and congressional lines are drawn is fundamental to our system of representative democracy. The Supreme Court decisions of the mid-1960's requiring periodic reapportionment on the basis of 'one person. one vote' eliminated the gross population inequalities among legislative districts that existed in the 1950's and 1960's. These decisions took us a large step toward the goal of achieving 'fair and effective representation for all citizens' articulated by the Court . . . Unfortunately, we have not completed the journey toward that worthy goal because the Court has not dealt with the equally debilitating problems of racial and political gerrymandering. The reapportionment revolution remains unfinished."

The reapportionment legislation now pending in Congress is designed to remedy problems which courts have not yet adequately addressed. It deserves careful analysis by minority officeholders—and individual citizens as well. Neither legislation nor judicial decisions will automatically guarantee fair treatment in the redistricting process. Vigilance by minorities whose interests are at stake is essential.

—JCPS Staff

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