

Republican partisan from North Carolina. At the hearing, Keeney argued that the Voting Rights Act should be declared unconstitutional, instead of being applied to the Democratic Party. Keeney cited as authorities, racist U.S. Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia and his sidekicks Justice Clarence Thomas and Chief Justice William Rehnquist. All three have advocated the abolition of the Voting Rights Act.

Subsequently, Sentelle handed down an opinion that adopted Keeney's arguments completely, holding that the Democratic Party was a private association that was above the Voting Rights Act. Sentelle's ruling was allowed to stand by the U.S. Supreme Court, effectively nullifying the Voting Rights Act.

The DNC's actions infuriated large numbers of Democrats, who over the years held the passage of the Voting Rights Act to be a major accomplishment of the Democratic Party. Over 1,000 Democratic elected officials, party leaders, and activists signed a public call denouncing the DNC's position.

Nevertheless, DNC chairman Andrew used his newly sanctioned "Jim Crow" powers to disregard votes cast for LaRouche in state-run primary elections. Most outrageous was the case of Arkansas, where LaRouche received 53,000 votes against Gore—23% of the total. These votes entitled LaRouche to eight delegates to the Democratic National Convention. In a move which shocked both Democrats and Republicans when it was exposed in the *Arkansas Gazette*, Gore and Andrew ordered Arkansas Democratic officials to deny LaRouche the delegates, and give them to Gore!

Disenfranchisement Charged in Florida

by Michele Steinberg

When Democratic Party Presidential pre-candidate Lyndon LaRouche battled the racist tactics of the Democratic National Committee (DNC) used to disenfranchise his voters in the 1996 and 2000 campaigns, he established himself as the leader of the effort to defend the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Supported by civil rights leaders such as Amelia Boynton Robinson, one of the heroines of the Voting Rights Act battle, LaRouche was deadly accurate in warning black and minority voters that the Gore campaign and its DNC allies were *disenfranchising* the very base of the Democratic Party that represented the "forgotten man," the lower 80% of family-income brackets, that was the base of the Franklin Delano Roosevelt tradition in the Democratic Party.

Gore and the DNC's campaign against LaRouche (see accompanying article) were a part of the corrupt deal with Wall Street to "anoint" nominees Bush and Gore, not elect

them. Now, complaints are mounting in Florida that show that LaRouche's warning about the Gore/Bush corrupt deal was right.

As of Nov. 22, black and other minority voters are fighting for their political lives, and accusations are mounting that the election was as corrupt as Southern elections prior to passage of the Voting Rights Act.

It is ironic that Gore, who ripped up the Voting Rights Act in the LaRouche case, now finds himself in trouble because, as is likely, the Republicans ripped it up in Florida. But at the same time, the Republican Party is reaping what it has sown in Florida, as thousands of overseas military and other voters have had their absentee ballots disqualified, on technicalities, by high-priced Democratic Party lawyers. Gore is ready to disenfranchise those voters, because they are presumed to be Republican in the majority. In fact, the revelations of voting irregularities, and actual fraud, which are coming out of both the Republican and Democratic sides in Florida, are just the tip of an iceberg of fraud.

Voting Rights Act Complaints

On Nov. 16, U.S. Rep. Corrine Brown (D-Fla.), a member of the Congressional Black Caucus, sent a strongly worded letter to U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno, making a formal request for an investigation of violations of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. "I believe that there is substantial evidence that many African-Americans were denied their fundamental right as citizens of the United States," Brown wrote. Her description fits a pattern that has emerged in five counties so far in the state: Duval, Palm Beach, Glades, Broward, and Dade.

On November 11 and 12, in Miami, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and other minority organizations held public hearings where dozens of voters came forward to attest to the fact that they had been prevented from voting by election staff, questioned by police, or subjected to other civil rights violations. On November 17, this testimony was made part of a complaint filed by the NAACP with the Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Department of Justice. The complaint included the transcript of public hearings held in Miami, where a panel of lawyers and two court reporters took testimony from voters and election volunteers.

In her November 16 letter, Rep. Brown further elaborated the discrimination. She stated that in Duval County (in her district, which stretches from Orlando to Jacksonville), 27,000 ballots were discarded for various technical reasons, and of those, 42% came from four City Council districts that are "predominantly black areas." While Brown had joined with the Congressional Black Caucus in an earlier complaint about widespread voter discrimination based on race in Florida and other states, she is now calling for a specific probe in Duval County.

"Victims of and witnesses to Election Day irregularities and discriminatory practices at voting precincts have come

forward in unprecedented numbers,” Brown said in her letter.

An investigation by reporters for the *Palm Beach Post*, shows a similar pattern in Palm Beach County, where the now infamous “butterfly ballot” was used. In a Nov. 18 article entitled “Glades Blacks’ Ballots Tossed More Than Average,” authors William Cooper, Jr. and Alexandra Clifton said that up to 23% of the ballots in black precincts in the county were tossed out, because the voter either did not vote for President or punched more than one hole in the Presidential race.

This extraordinarily high percentage of rejected ballots occurred in 11 predominantly black precincts in Belle Glade, Pahokee, and South Bay, which are the poorer areas of a county known more generally as a resort and retirement area. Belle Glade became infamous in the 1980s, when it was found to have a high rate of AIDS and tuberculosis, because of its Africa-style poverty and lack of sanitation and other economic infrastructure.

Cooper and Clifton reported that because of language problems, lack of familiarity with voting, and “fear of asking for another ballot,” 639 voters had their ballots eliminated out of 2,819 votes cast in the Glades area. This level, 23%, was extremely high; but the overall rate for all the black precincts in Palm Beach County was 16%—more than double the county-wide rate of 7%. There were 462,657 ballots cast in the county—so more than 30,000 ballots may have been eliminated there.

One of the problems cited was that Haitian voters who speak Creole, had no language assistance; one poll worker, Shirley Morris, reported that the poll workers tried to reach the Supervisor of Elections about the language problem, but were unable to get through because the lines were busy.

A lawsuit has already been filed about these types of irregularities in Palm Beach. An *amicus curiae* (friend of the court) brief filed by the American Civil Liberties Union includes reports that Palm Beach poll workers “said they were under strict instructions to turn away people asking for voting assistance,” and that a poll worker in Boynton Beach admitted turning people away, saying, “People were coming up to me . . . and I had to follow the directive—‘Don’t help anyone. Don’t talk to anyone.’” The brief also “suggests” that “a substantial number of voters in Palm Beach County who discovered their error before actually casting their vote, were refused replacement ballots.”

GOP Claims Against the Dems

The corruption of the vote clearly tainted both parties. Besides the wholesale disqualification of overseas absentee ballots in Florida, the most specific allegations made so far by the Republican Party involve Wisconsin. According to the Associated Press, the Wisconsin GOP has filed hundreds of vote fraud complaints with the Milwaukee County District Attorney’s office, which is now investigating the allegations. The Republicans are charging, reports AP, that “dozens of

students voted more than once, and Democrats offered cigarettes to homeless people to vote.” Wisconsin has same-day registration right at the polls, and the voting was delayed for hours as poll workers scrambled to register the many students voting for the first time.

In the face of widespread fraud in the recent election, the American people have the opportunity, and the obligation, to use the means which the U.S. Constitution provides, to examine the causes for this disaster, and to fashion an appropriate remedy.

Corruption Wins in Eighteen States

by Anita Gallagher

Various “convenience” voting procedures adopted in recent years in the United States, including liberalized use of absentee ballots, registration at state motor vehicle departments, and early voting—not to mention bad ballot design, punch-cards, and media “early winner” projections—have opened the way for interested parties to corrupt and manipulate elections, amidst procedures sloppy and inconsistent enough to embarrass any banana republic.

“Convenience” measures have been adopted in the last eight years across the United States, supposedly to remedy declining voter turnout at all levels of U.S. elections. Yet, the turnout of age-eligible voters in U.S. Presidential elections has continued to decline since 1960, and has remained at about 50% in the 1996 and 2000 elections. While it is true that virtually everyone older than 18 in the United States works long hours, and faces poor transit, crowded roads, and other impediments to getting to the polling place, the fact is that the whole gamut of convenience measures, to put them in the best possible light, have only served to slow the drop in voter turnout.

Why? Convenience measures cannot remedy the fact that voting is a cognitive act based on ideas; specifically, the idea of the common good, which must be communicated by the candidate to the population to energize a vote. Absent that factor, such measures as mass mail-in “absentee” balloting become like the creations of a sorcerer’s apprentice. They are out-of-control capabilities ripe for manipulation by interested parties in a climate of general disgust and public contempt for candidates.

Absentee Ballots

If you have a picture of Americans marching out to make a national decision on Election Day to choose who will govern, that is about as outdated as the horse and buggy. Consider: