



# Chapter Ten

Elections and Campaigns

# Chapter Objectives

- Demonstrate the differences between the party-oriented campaigns of the nineteenth century and the candidate-oriented ones of today, contrasting the major elements of successful campaigns.
- Discuss how important campaign funding is to election outcomes, what the major sources of such funding are under current laws and how successful reform legislation has been in removing improper monetary influences from United States elections.
- Outline the processes for electing presidents and for electing members of Congress, and discuss how the major differences between the two types of contests shape who runs and how it affects their campaign strategy.
- Describe what the Democrats and Republicans each must do to put together a successful national coalition to win an election.
- Outline the major arguments on either side of the question of whether elections do or do not result in major changes in public policy in the United States.

(THEME A: HOW CAMPAIGNS ARE CONDUCTED)

# Presidential v. Congressional Campaigns

- There is more voter participation in presidential campaigns
- Presidential races are more competitive than House races

# Presidential v. Congressional Campaigns

- Lower turnout in off years means that candidates must appeal to more motivated and partisan voters
- Members of Congress can do things for their constituents that the president cannot
- Members of Congress can distance themselves from the “mess in Washington”

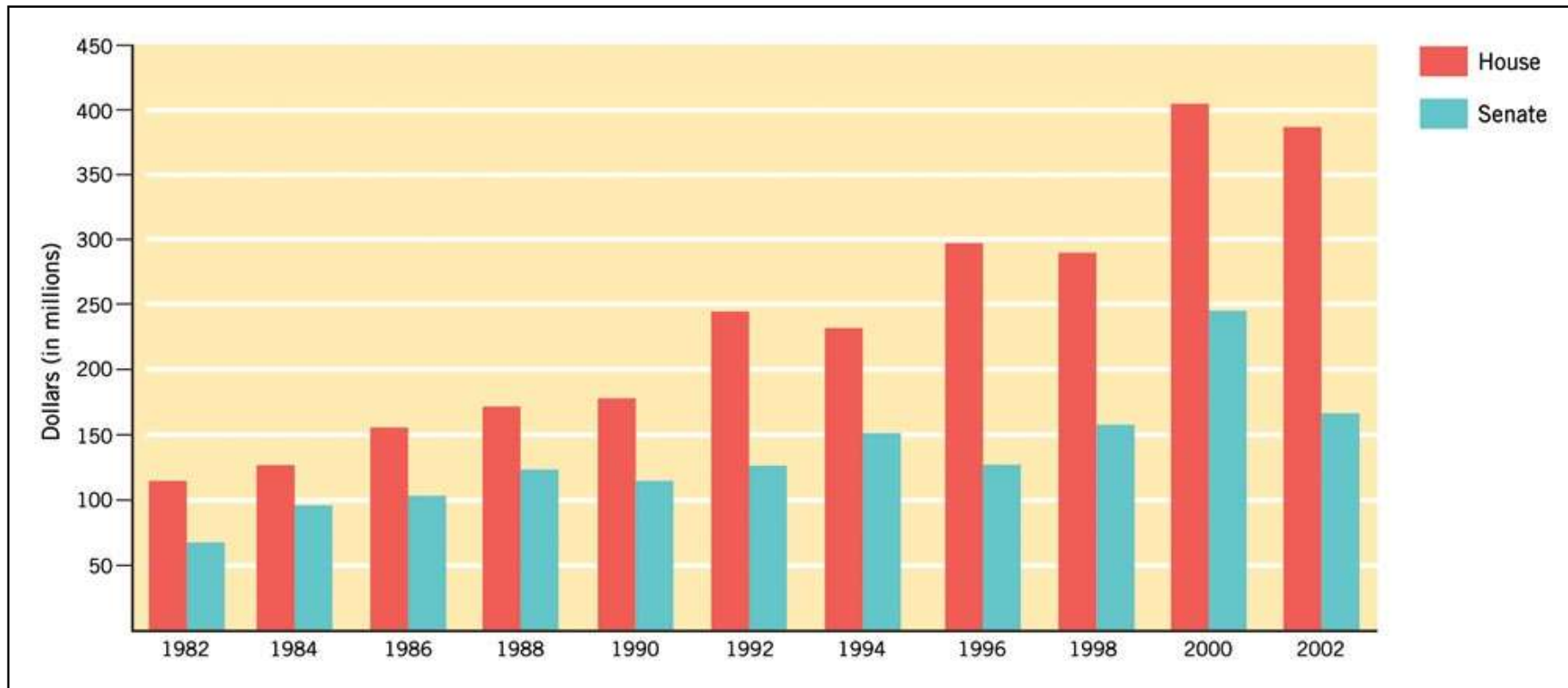
# Theme A Discussion Questions

- 1. In the 1960 presidential debate between Kennedy and Nixon, television viewers overwhelmingly considered Kennedy the victor while radio listeners considered Nixon a narrow victor. What does this evidence suggest about the impact of issues on elections? Are today's voters more critical consumers of the media? How should a candidate devise an electoral strategy to balance personality and issues?
- 2. Why would a candidate rarely wish to run a campaign focused solely on issues with his or her stands on those issues clearly explained? Be careful to distinguish between primary and general elections.
- 3. Should voters be prevented from splitting their ticket? This could be accomplished by issuing a party-specific ballot, as is done in open and closed primaries. Are there any benefits to split-ticket voting, for the voter or for the officeholders? Would one party's control of both the Congress and the presidency necessarily yield strong, coherent policy? Why or why not? Be careful to draw examples from the early years of the Clinton presidency—and the early months of the George W. Bush presidency.

## Funding for Congressional Elections

- Most money comes from individual small donors (\$100–\$200 a person)
- \$2,000 maximum for individual donors
- \$5,000 limit for PACs, but most give just a few hundred dollars
- Challengers must supply much of their own money

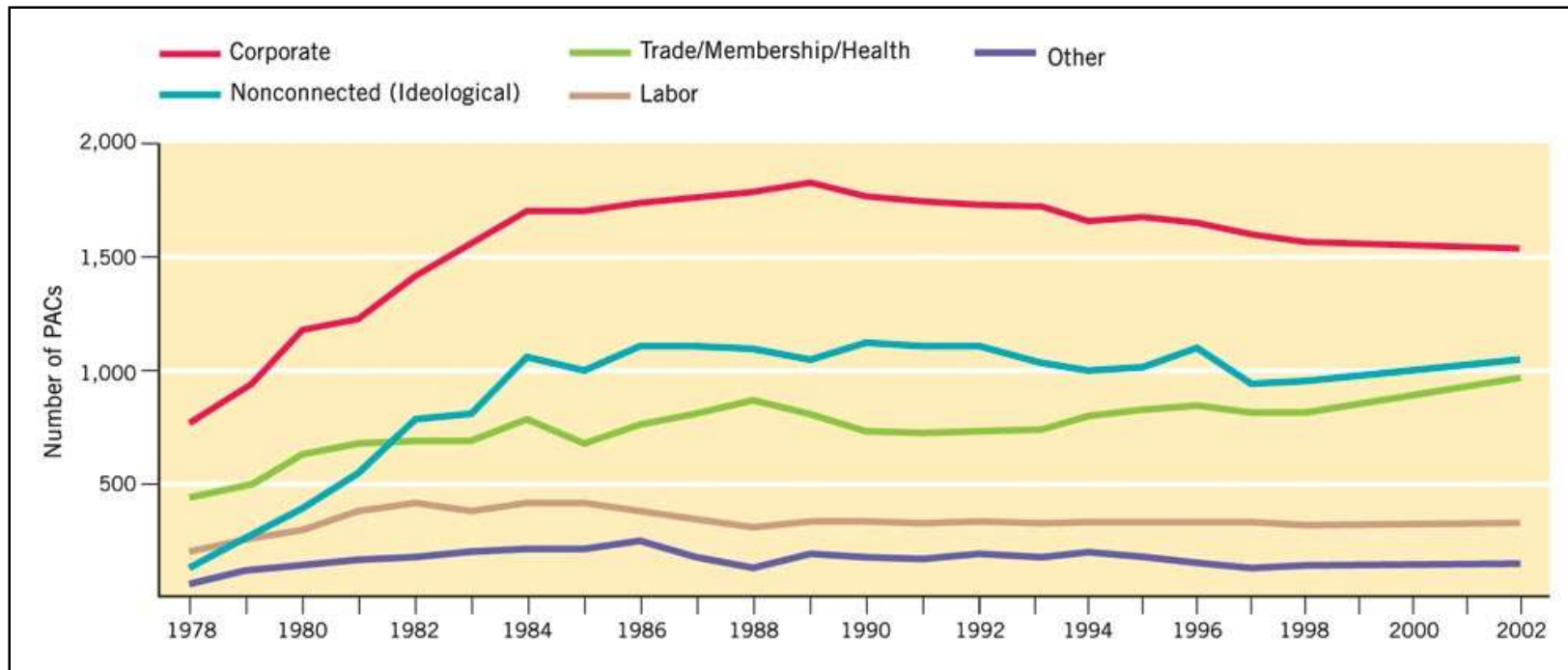
# Figure 10.1: The Cost of Winning



Updated from Federal Election Commission report, May 15, 2001.



# Figure 10.2: Growth of PACs



Federal Election Commission.

# Congressional Elections

- Incumbents have an extraordinary advantage – and no terms limits in Congress
- Each state has two senators; number of House representatives based on state population, as determined by the census
- House members are now elected from single-member districts

## Table 10.2: Sources of Campaign Funds: All House and Senate Candidates in 2001-2002, by Party (in Millions)

**Table 10.2** Sources of Campaign Funds for All House and Senate Candidates in 2001–2002, by Party (in Millions)

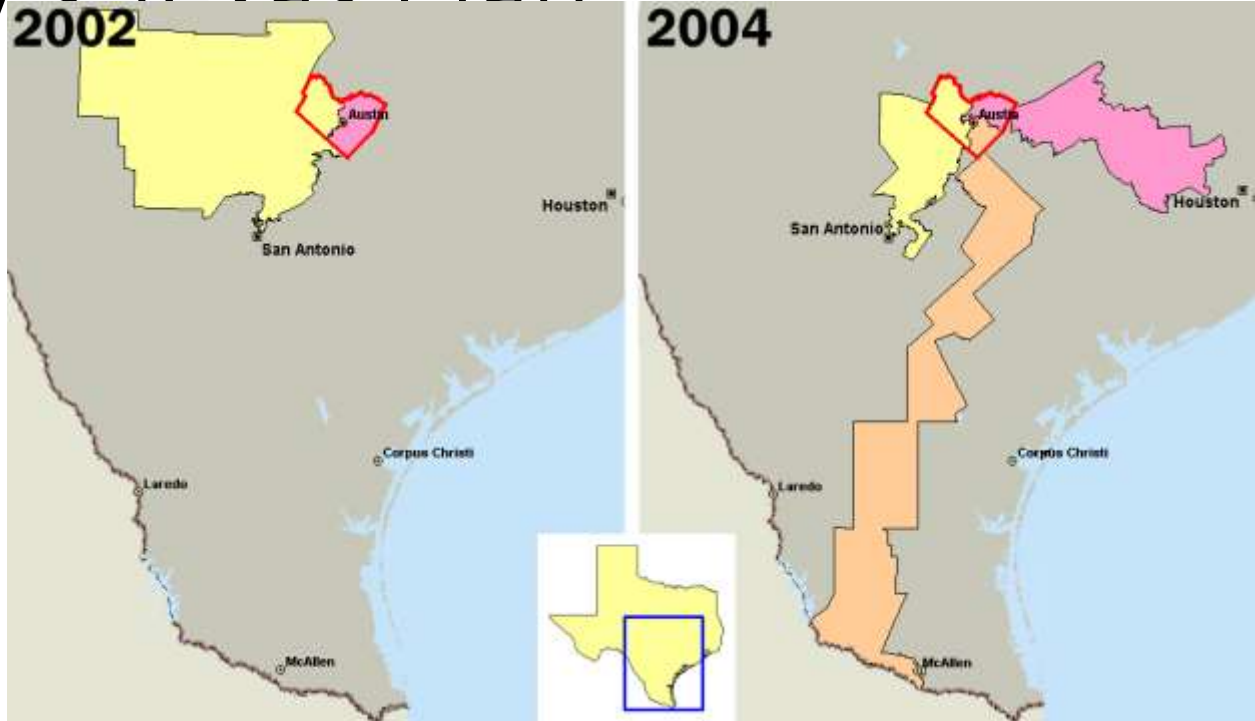
Sources	Incumbents	Challengers	Open Seats
Individuals			
Democrats	\$132.7	\$47.1	\$40.2
Republicans	125.5	44.1	55.8
PACs			
Democrats	93.2	13.6	14.5
Republicans	100.1	8.8	20.0

*Source:* Calculated from Harold W. Stanley and Richard G. Niemi, *Vital Statistics on American Politics, 2003–2004* (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Press, 2003), Table 2.6.

# Drawing District Boundaries

- **Malapportionment:** districts have very different populations, so the votes in the less-populated district “weigh more” than those in the more-populated district
- **Gerrymandering:** boundaries are drawn to favor one party rather than another, resulting in odd-shaped districts
- [www.redistrictinggame.com](http://www.redistrictinggame.com)

# Tom Delay's Texas Plan



2002  
Dem-17 Rep-15

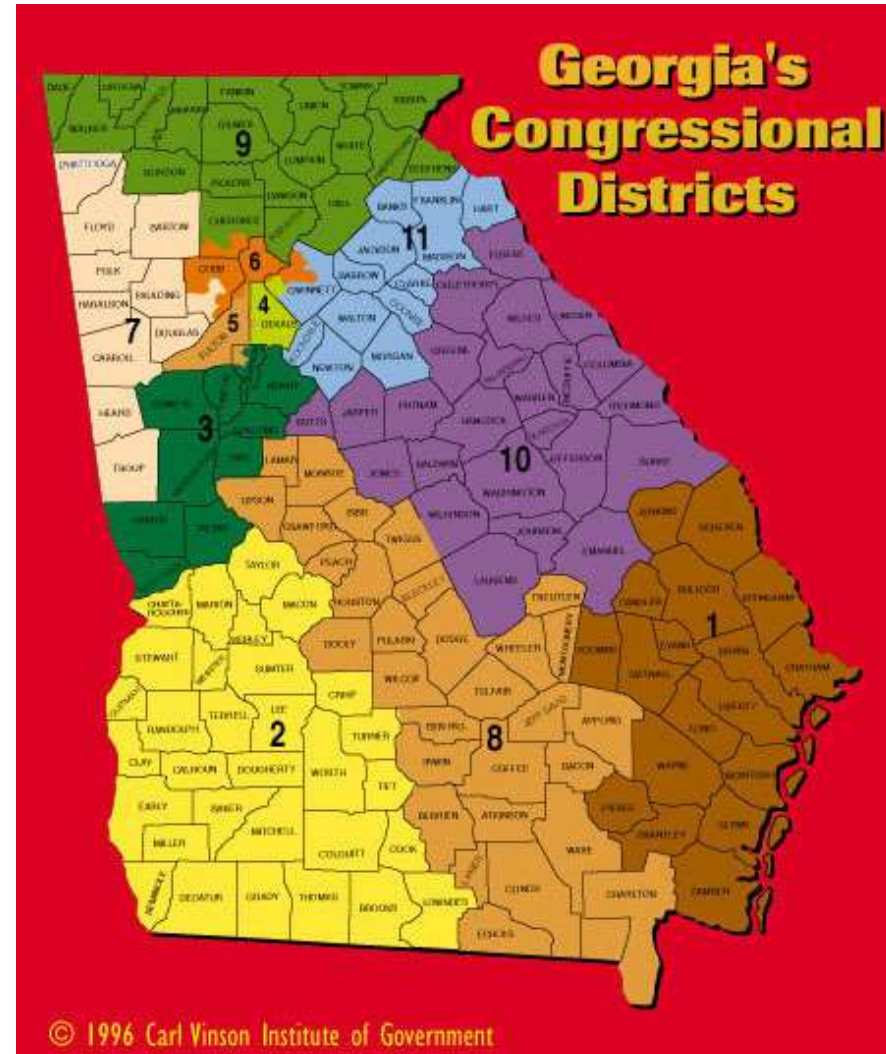
2004  
Dem 11 Rep 21



# Majority Minority Districts

Before Miller v. Johnson 1995

After Miller v. Johnson



# Staying in Congress

- Members gear their offices to help individual constituents
- Committee members secure pork for the district
- Members must decide to what extent to be delegates ( to do what the district wants) versus trustees ( to use their independent judgment)

# 1974 Campaign Finance Reform

- 1972: Watergate and illegal donations from corporation, unions, and individuals catalyzed change
- Brought about the 1974 federal campaign reform law and Federal Election Commission (FEC)



# Raising Money (Old System)

- Individuals can give \$2,000; PACs can give \$5,000 in each election to each candidate
- Candidates must raise \$5,000 in twenty states in individual contributions of \$250 or less to qualify for federal matching grants to pay for primary campaigns

# Problems with Campaign Financing

- **Independent expenditures:** an organization or PAC can spend as much as it wishes on advertising, so long as it is not coordinated with a candidate's campaign
- **Soft money:** unlimited amounts of money may be given to a political party, so long as it does not specifically advocate for the election or defeat of a candidate.

# Bipartisan Campaign Finance Reform Act

McCain Feingold or Shays Meehan

- Banned soft money contributions to national parties from corporations and unions after the 2002 election
- Raised the limit on individual donations to \$2,000 per candidate per election

# Bipartisan Campaign Finance Reform Act

- Sharply restricted independent expenditures
  - Corporations, unions, trade associations, nonprofit organizations cannot use their own money for an advertisement referring to a candidate by name 30 days before a primary and 60 days before a general election

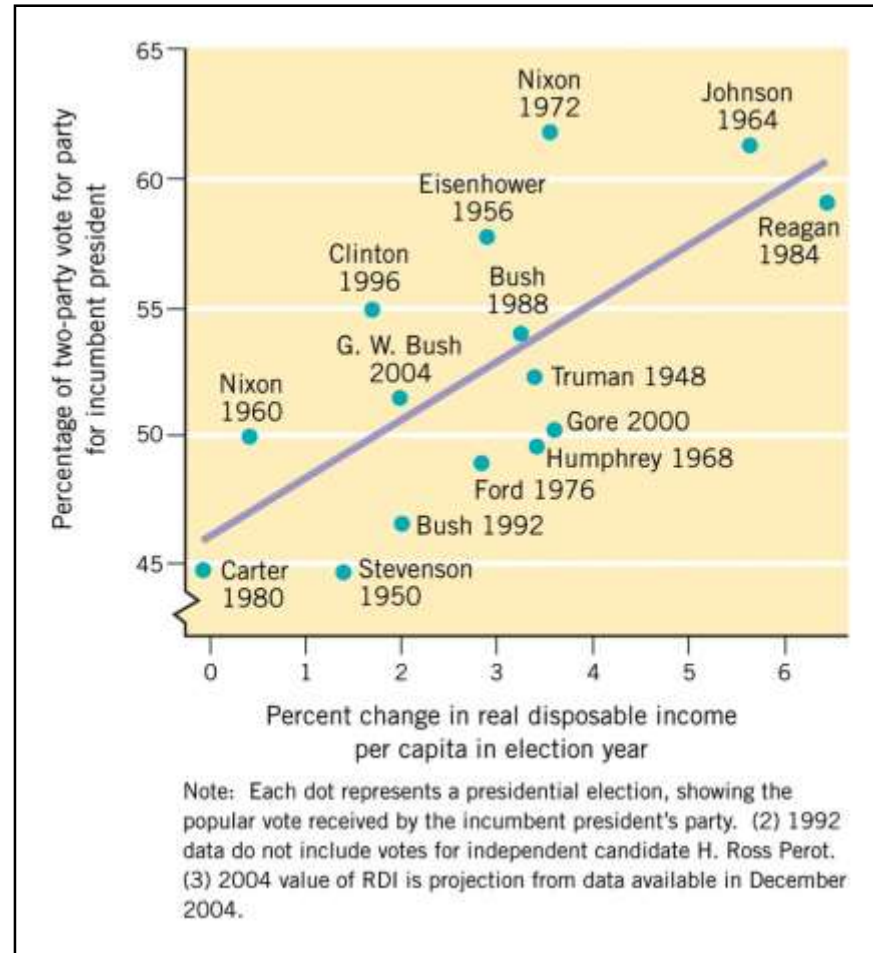
# 527 Organizations

- A new source of money under the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act
- Designed to permit the kind of soft money expenditures once made by political parties
- They can spend their money on politics so long as they do not coordinate with a candidate or lobby directly for that person
- [527: Swift Boat Veterans for Truth](#)

# Money and Winning

- Presidential candidates have similar funds because of federal funding
- During peacetime, presidential elections are usually decided on the basis of three factors:
  - Political party affiliation
  - The economy
  - Character

# Figure 10.3: The Economy and Vote for President, 1948-2004



Updated from Robert S. Erikson and Kent L. Tedin, *American Public Opinion*, 5th ed., p. 271.  
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# Theme B Discussion Questions

1. Suppose we consider campaign-finance reform an attempt to redistribute political influence. That is, *fat cats* are thought to have excessive influence and campaign-finance reform attempts to take away that influence and give it to more deserving people—for example, small contributors. Consider the groups listed below. Judge whether each has *gained* or *lost* influence as the result of campaign-finance reform, or whether reform has made no difference. Then judge whether each group *should have* more influence in American politics.

Labor unions Large corporations Incumbent politicians Poor people Issue-oriented members of the middle class Media managers Average workers Rich individuals Popular entertainers Political party officials

2. Given that campaign funds have such an immediate effect on a candidate's ability to conduct a strong campaign, why would members of Congress pass reform legislation in 2000? Did the reform disadvantage incumbents? 3. Should congressional elections be publicly financed? What effect has public financing had on the presidential elections?



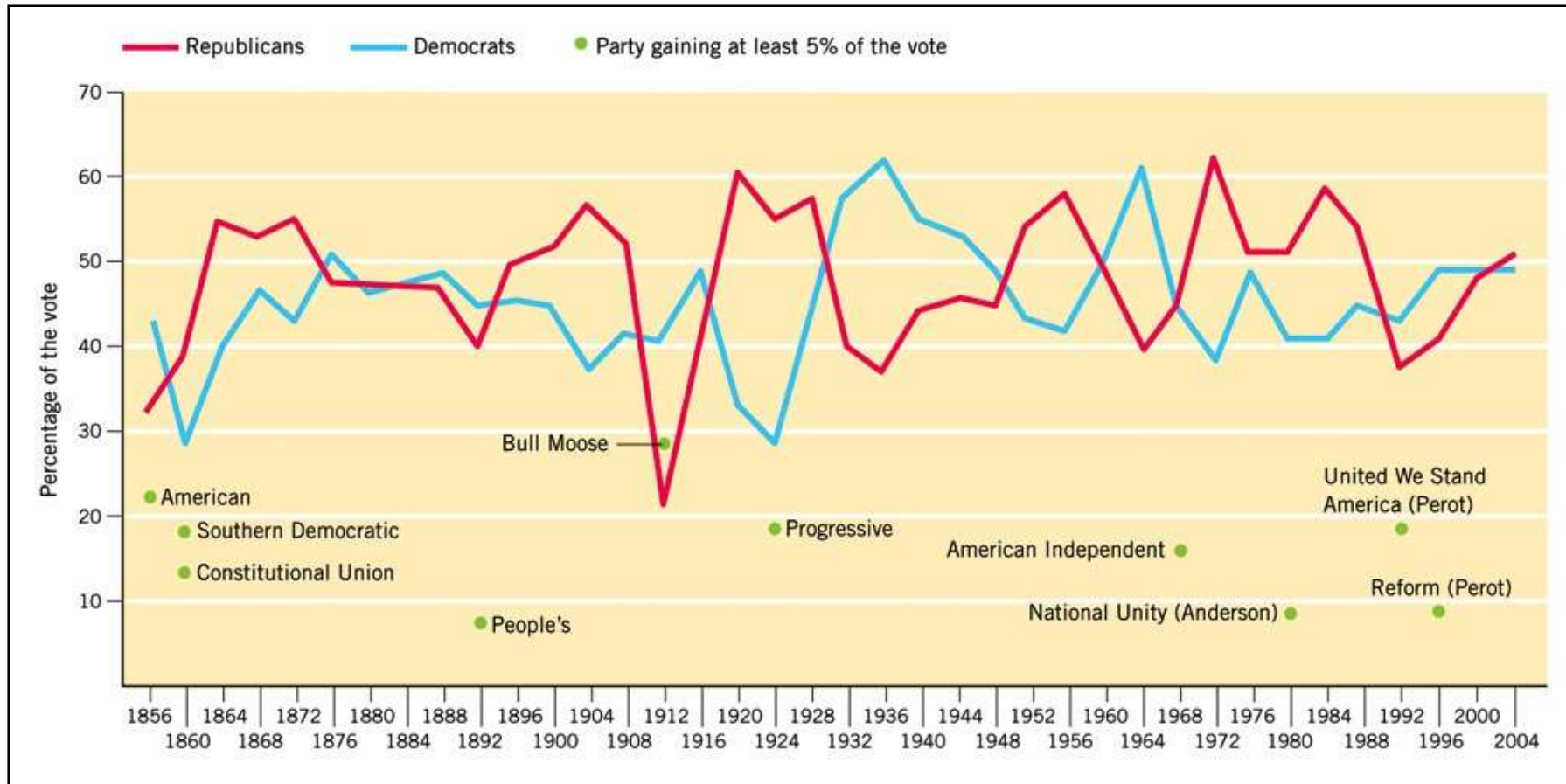
# Voter Behavior

- V. O. Key: most voters who switch parties do so in their own interests
- Prospective voting is used by relatively few voters
- Retrospective voting is practiced by most voters, and decides most elections

# Coalitions

- Democratic coalition: African Americans, Jews, Hispanics (not Cuban)
- Catholics, southerners and union members are leaving the Democrats
- Republican coalition: business and professional people who are very loyal, farmers

# Figure 10.4: Partisan Division of Presidential Vote, 1856-2004



Updated from Historical Data Archive, Inter-University Consortium for Political Research, as reported in William H. Flanigan and Nancy H. Zingale, *Political Behavior of the American Electorate*, 3rd ed., 32.

# Do Elections Make a Difference in Policy?

- Many American elections do make differences in policy
- But the constitutional system generally moderates the pace of change

# Theme C Discussion Questions

- Who constitutes the Democratic coalition? Which groups are the most loyal members of the Democratic coalition? Which contribute the largest proportion of the Democratic vote? How does it matter that the most loyal groups are not among the largest contributors of votes?
- Why is a crisis often required to produce major policy changes? Does the fact that a crisis is required to produce major policy changes suggest that our system is excessively biased against change? Or does our system produce changes only when clear majorities *want* a change, which is likely to occur during a crisis?
- How should the 1992 and 2000 elections be classified? Are these realignments, dealignments, or simply instances of voters acting erratically?