

## Questions and Answers On Extension Of The Voting Rights Act

The Voting Rights Act is one of the most important and effective civil rights laws ever passed by Congress. As a result of the act, hundreds of thousands of black and Hispanic Americans have been able to exercise the most precious of constitutional rights — the right to vote. Major provisions of the Voting Rights Act are scheduled to expire in August, 1982, unless Congress Acts to extend them.

### What is the Voting Rights Act?

The Voting Rights Act was enacted in 1965 and continued in 1970 and 1975 to protect constitutionally guaranteed voting rights which had been systematically denied blacks in the South. The Act also protects the voting rights of Hispanics and other language minority citizens against severe voting discrimination in other parts of the country.

### 2. Why is it important to act on the Voting Rights Act now?

Key provisions of the Voting Rights Act are due to expire in August, 1982 unless

Congress votes to extend the Act. It is important for the House to complete action on the bill this year to ensure that there will be sufficient time for the difficult Senate fight.

### 3. What are the key provisions of the Voting Rights Act?

The Voting Rights Act includes both permanent and temporary or "special provisions. Among the permanent provisions is a nationwide ban on literacy tests. The most important temporary provisions are: Section 5, which stops other means of discrimination, such as racial gerrymandering, changes from single member to at-large elections, and last minute shifts in polling places by requiring certain state and local governments — with a proven history of discrimination — to pre-clear any new changes in voting or election procedures with the Justice Department. Covered jurisdictions must show that proposed changes will not discriminate against minority voters;

Section 203, which requires certain state and local jurisdictions with a concentration

of language minority population to provide assistance in other languages to voters who are not literate or fluent in English.

### 4. How does Section 5 pre-clearance work?

A covered state or county which wants to put an election change into effect submits the change, along with background information, to the U.S. Justice Department. Within 60 days (or 120 days in special circumstances), the Department responds by "pre-clearing" the changes or by "objecting" to them. If there is pre-clearance, the jurisdiction can implement the change; if there is an objection, the jurisdiction may not use the change.

In the covered parts of the country, any change in voting or election procedure, such as redistricting, annexation, re-registration requirements, polling place changes, new rules for candidate qualification, and any other election change must be pre-cleared under Section 5 to prevent new forms of voter discrimination from replacing those that have been outlawed.

### 5. Where does Section 5 apply?

Section 5 pre-clearance applies in any state or county in the nation where a literacy test was used to discriminate against minority voters. (The formula used by Congress to determine when a literacy test was used to discriminate was a less than 50% turnout of eligible voters for presidential election).

Section 5 covers Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, South Carolina, Texas, Virginia, and half of North Carolina. It also covers parts of New York City (including the Bronx) and parts of eleven other states from all sections of the country.

### 6. What are some examples of the Justice Department's preventing serious discrimination by objecting to changes submitted under Section 5, the pre-clearance section of the Voting Rights Act?

In many cases, Section 5 has been successful even where a lawsuit under the 14th or 15th Amendment has been unsuccessful. For example, after an unsuccessful court suit, Section 5 blocked the use of discriminatory multi-member districts in

the South Carolina House of Representatives. As a result, the number of black members went from three to thirteen.

In Richmond, Virginia and San Antonio, Texas, efforts to maintain white control through annexation were stymied by Section 5. In each case, the annexation was allowed to go through, but the use of gerrymandered at-large elections was blocked. The result was the election of a substantial number of minority representatives in each city, because the votes of minority citizens were not diluted.

### 7. Should the act be applied nationwide?

Important permanent provisions of the VRA already apply nationwide. The act already allows a court to require pre-clearance in any jurisdiction where serious racial discrimination in voting is proved. Section 5 applies in areas where the specific problem of discriminatory literacy tests and substitute forms of discrimination in voting show a proven history of discrimination.

## Begin's Neo-Colonial Bombs

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Neither Prime Minister Thatcher of Britain nor French President Mitterand believe that Iraq was in the process of building atomic weapons. The West German authorities were reluctant to express similar views for fear of incurring the pre-election wrath of Israeli Prime Minister Begin.

President Reagan, playing political possum, professed not to know all the facts, took cover behind an "investigation into the matter." The Soviets and Chinese were as one in condemning the Israelis.

The Arab nations, arguing for military and economic sanctions against Israel, went on to point out the reason for the attack. They assert that the fundamental motive of the Israeli leadership's command decision to strike at the atomic plant was and is to prevent the Arab nations from developing a technical-scientific base.

This base would then be the foundation on which to build an industrial establishment and end the Israeli industrial hegemony in the Middle East, largely established with American money.

For their part, the Israelis continue to claim that the attack was purely a defensive measure against a nation soon to possess the atomic bomb. Defending his actions, Prime Minister Begin of Israel said there would not be a second holocaust in his lifetime.

From basic positions, the nations will argue their respective cases before the United Nations and world public opinion. The course of the debate will depend on how each nation assesses the present overall world situation

and how the Israeli-Iraq crisis fits in this picture.

Britain and the United States, eager to establish a strong Egyptian-Israeli bastion in the region, but at the same time fearful of antagonizing the Arab nations, will probably condemn the attack while at the same time "understand the feelings of the Israelis." Neither the British nor the U.S. will permit sanctions against Israel.

West Germany and France will take a harsher line against the attack since both curry favor with the Arab world for solid economic reasons. Neither the Germans nor the French are convinced about the military role of the U.S. in the Middle East or about the contemplated military buildup of the Egyptian-Israeli block.

They are even less inclined to follow policies that would perpetuate Arab and Third World dependence on the industrial West. Taking the long view, both nations feel the long term survival of the West must depend on massive economic expansion in the Third world accompanied by economic expansion in the West, both complementing each other. From this point of view the Begin raid was utterly foolish.

The Chinese will use harsh language to attack Israel. Israel will be accused of following imperialistic policies, of being the repeated aggressor in the region against the Palestinian people, against Lebanon and now against Iraq. The Chinese will thus be consolidating their position within the Arab world.

The Chinese, following their harsh attack on Israel, will probably take a side swipe at the Soviet Union for their presence in Afghanistan. They will

soft peddle their remarks against the United States for fear of giving aid and comfort to the Russians.

It will be the Soviet Union that will lead the major assault against the Israeli attack. For the Soviets, the arch enemy is Imperialism in all of its manifestations. In the Middle East, this manifestation is Israel under the Begin government. This government works in an intimate and often secret manner with the United States to keep the Arab world under control and make it dependent on America for food, technology, medicine and scientific know-how.

The attack will be as much against Israel as it will be against the United States and Secretary of State Haig. They will show the aggressive collusion between Israel and South Africa in the Middle East and Africa. They will warn that the present divisions within the Arab world offer the imperialists their targets of opportunity and further that these divisions are actively fostered by U.S. economic and political actions.

The Soviets will call the attack the work of madmen, who believe that pre-emptive strikes will lead to peace. They will say the attack has horrified all thinking men who fear the power of the atom. Then they will cast doubt in the minds of many by showing that the friends and allies of the United States use American weapons without permission when everyone knows that the condition for selling these weapons was conditioned on obtaining prior U.S. approval before being used.

Then will come a blunt Soviet warning to Western Europe, now debating the stationing of additional U.S. medium range missiles, there, to ponder how willful men and governments, on either

## Sports Ties Provoke Secondary Boycotts

[AN] "Sport is an extension of politics," commented a recent article in *New African* magazine, "an arena of war where nations defend their honor. Like soldiers,

side of the Atlantic, may break the fragile chain of command, and launch attacks that may spell the end of civilization?"

sportsmen compete under the banner of a nation, and, directly or indirectly, represent it."

The international uproar over sports ties with South Africa is intensifying with the imminent 15-match tour to New Zealand by South Africa's Springboks rugby team. The first match of the July-September visit was

scheduled for Wednesday, July 22, and if all goes well for the Springboks, they will also play three matches in the United States in September while en route home.

Organizing against the Springboks tour began months ago. Prime Minister Robert Muldoon and the New Zealand parliament have, to no avail, urged the New Zealand Rugby Football Union to cancel its invitation, underscoring their position by refusing the

Union a \$10,000 government grant. However, Muldoon is declining to go further and use his power to deny visas to the South African team.

The rugby tour is the first major South African sporting event since protesters turned to a systematic secondary boycott against those having sports dealings with South Africa. The United Nations Center Against Apartheid has published a list of over 250 sportspersons and teams already

targeted. If the New Zealand matches go ahead as expected, the whole country can expect reprisals from African countries and their supporters.

Polls show a majority of New Zealanders oppose the South African team's visit — less because of anti-apartheid sentiments than from fear of violence between rugby fans and anti-tour demonstrators. Tens of thousands of marchers in New Zealand (Continued on Page 16)

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