

**POLITICS & GOVERNMENT**

*Black Votes  
in Mississippi*

"Mississippi Blacks and the Voting Rights Act of 1965" by Paul E. Joubert and Ben M. Crouch, in *Journal of Negro Education* (Spring 1977), Bureau of Educational Research, Howard University, Washington, D.C. 20001.

Mississippi has a higher proportion (36 percent) of blacks than any other state in the Union, but prior to 1965, black Mississippians who attempted to vote faced economic reprisals, complicated literacy tests, and sometimes violence.

The Voting Rights Act (VRA) of 1965, renewed by Congress in 1975, guaranteed blacks the right to vote; federal examiners enforced that right. Joubert and Crouch, professors at the University of Southwest Louisiana and Texas A&M, respectively, report that within 30 days after the VRA was signed into law, registration of blacks in the state rose 120 percent, from 35,000 to 77,000. By the end of 1970, the percentage of registered Mississippi blacks was comparable to that of the white majority, with 71 percent—or 286,000—of the eligible blacks on the voting rolls (82 percent of the eligible whites were registered). A year later, 50 blacks were elected to public office in Mississippi, more than in any other Southern state.

These advances have brought renewed white opposition. Some counties, the authors note, have instituted re-registration laws, effectively purging much of the black electorate. Threats of violence and of economic sanctions are increasing. The black achievement in Mississippi may be substantial, contend Joubert and Crouch, but among many whites "no real change in attitude" has occurred since 1965.

*Neo-Conservatives  
and Politics*

"Intellectuals and Power" by Richard Gillam, in *The Center Magazine* (May-June 1977), Box 4068, Santa Barbara, Calif. 93103.

The connections between the "power elite" and the "intelligentsia"—and ultimately, between both these groups and society as a whole—continue to engross American intellectuals.

But in recent years, argues historian Gillam, a "general reorientation" has jeopardized the independence of what Lionel Trilling once called the intellectual "adversary culture."

The "old muckraking style of thought," Gillam observes, has been replaced among growing numbers of political intellectuals by the ideology of "neo-conservatism." Power is perceived by them as "preordained," human society as impervious to all but the most insignificant tinkering, and radical agitation as an irrelevant exercise that is, in sociologist Daniel Bell's words, "increasingly apocalyptic, hedonistic, and nihilistic."