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ISSUE CONFLICT AMONG PARTY FOLLOWERS:
A RE-EXAMINATION

A Thesis

Presented to

The Faculty of the Department of Government

The College of William and Mary in Virginia

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Arts

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by

J. Haywood Blakemore IV

1975

APPROVAL SHEET

This thesis is submitted in partial fulfillment of

the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

Author

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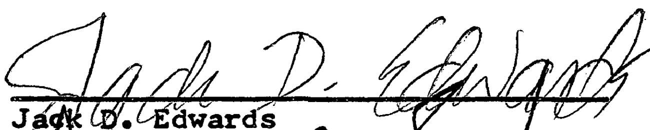

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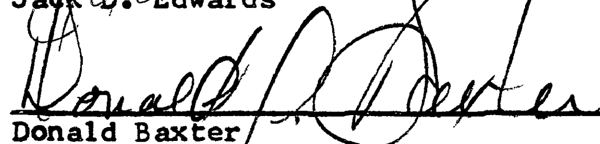

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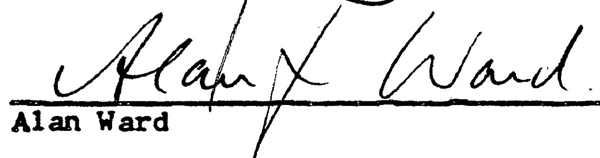

Alan Ward

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to compare levels of issue conflict between political party followers in a current setting with data on issue conflict compiled in a 1958 national survey.

The data presented by Herbert McCloskey, Paul J. Hoffman and Rosemary O'Hara in their article, "Issue Conflict and Consensus Among Party Leaders and Followers," prompted their conclusion that Democratic and Republican party identifiers differed only slightly in their views on twenty-four national issues. It is suggested that since the McCloskey-Hoffman-O'Hara survey in 1958, changes may have occurred in the amount of issue divergence between groups of rank and file Democrats and Republicans.

The following hypothesis is investigated: "A re-examination of levels of issue conflict between Democratic and Republican followers will reveal significantly higher levels of divergence than were discovered in earlier research by McCloskey, Hoffman and O'Hara."

A questionnaire including the twenty-four issues was administered to 100 randomly selected voters in Harrisonburg, Virginia, during spring, 1973. Results of the survey confirmed the hypothesis and demonstrated markedly higher levels of issue conflict than had been demonstrated in the 1958 study.

It is suggested that data from the Harrisonburg survey and similar findings in other recent studies cast doubt on the theory that the American electorate is characterized by a lack of conflict over national issues. Further, it is suggested that the recent data challenge the assumption that American political parties must blur their differences and converge to centrist positions on policy matters to attract maximum electoral support.

ISSUE CONFLICT AMONG PARTY FOLLOWERS:

A RE-EXAMINATION

CHAPTER I

ISSUES AND VOTING: AN OVERVIEW

During the 1968 Presidential campaign, when Governor George C. Wallace of Alabama ran as the nominee and leader of a newly formed third party movement, the American electorate was treated to the most widely voiced denunciation of the traditional two-party system in twenty years.

Not since the Dixiecrat days of Henry Wallace's 1948 campaign had the two major parties been so maligned for their alleged "me-tooism."

Gov. Wallace revived campaign history with his acidic description of the Democrats and Republicans as "Tweedledee and Tweedledum," or as the governor preferred to phrase it, "Tweedledumb and Tweedle-dumber." He inspired the cheers and votes of millions of Americans with his frequently aired charge that "not a dime's worth of difference" separated the two dominant parties.

Wallace's criticism drew support from unexpected quarters when then-Sen. Eugene McCarthy also denounced the lack of clear policy distinctions between the Democrats, who had spurned McCarthy's own candidacy, and the Republicans.

The issue was not unique to the 1968 campaign.

Four years earlier, in his own Presidential bid, Republican

Senator Barry M. Goldwater of Arizona had appealed to support from those voters who sought, in Goldwater's words, "a choice not an echo." His point, of course, was that the 1964 election offered the electorate a rare opportunity to select from two men who differed substantially on many major policy issues and reflected sharply divergent political philosophies. Goldwater told convention delegates his opponents for the G.O.P. nominations, principally then-Gov. Nelson Rockefeller of New York and then-Gov. William Scranton of Pennsylvania, represented only mild departures from the philosophy of Lyndon Johnson at a time when the country needed a clear alternative.

The notion that Democrats and Republicans play an election game of "me-tooism" did not originate with Wallace, McCarthy or Goldwater. But their criticisms provide a timely perspective for a discussion of issue conflict between the two parties.

The discussion which follows will review comments and arguments by several researchers and analysts on the role of issues in American voting behavior. Particular emphasis will be focused upon issue conflict between voters who identify with the Republican party and those who consider themselves closer to the Democratic party.

A subsequent chapter will report results of a survey of issue conflict conducted by the author in 1973.

Philip E. Converse, Warren E. Miller, Jerrold G. Rusk and Arthur C. Wolfe, in an analysis of the 1968 election, noted:

> In every United States election there are accusations from one quarter or another that the two conventional parties provide no more than "tweedledee" and "tweedledum" candidates. However, these accusations as aired in the public media rose to something of a crescendo in 1968 . . . and even as measured a source as the New York Times noted wryly that it would take no more than the deletion of two or three codicils to leave the official 1968 campaign platforms of the Democratic and Republican parties as utterly indistinguishable documents.[1]

Although McCarthy was dissuaded from a fourth-party candidacy in 1968 and neither Wallace nor Goldwater came close to polling a majority of the popular votes in their Presidential attempts, the enthusiasm of their supporters was evidence of the dissatisfaction many voters seemed to feel with the major parties. The alternatives typically offered by the parties in political campaigns are too similar, some voters seemed to be saying. It was a dissatisfaction which transcended McCarthy's liberalism, Goldwater's conservatism and Wallace's populism.

Goldwater's own race and, more recently the McGovern-Nixon clash of 1972 are ample evidence that clear alternatives sometimes do emerge from the parties' nominating processes. But in the critics' eyes, such ideological conflicts are rare exceptions.

The observation that conflict is rare predates the 1960s. As far back as the Victorian era, Britain's Lord Bryce noted in his comments on American politics that the two major U.S. parties were "mirror images of each other."[2] Other analysts have concluded that "in ideology and policy positions the major American parties are indistinguishable, and compared with other party systems they show a monumental disinterest in matters of issue and ideology."[3]

Such comments defy quick, simple refutation. Perhaps, however, the voters' perceptions of the broad similarities in the two parties can be explained through a brief review of the role of political parties in a political system.

Two general functions can be seen as party goals: (1) to win elections, and (2) to articulate ideological or policy positions. Frank Sorauf, in Political Parties in the American System, argued that these two goals actually are incompatible, particularly in a two-party political system.

For a party to achieve electoral success, said Sorauf, it must mobilize the support of a large portion of the electorate and consequently must appeal to diverse groups of voters within the society.

Yet, to articulate a clear position on ideology or specific issues is, inevitably, to alienate that portion of the electorate which disagrees. The contradiction seems inherent. Electoral success depends on mass appeal; ideological or policy stands imply limitations of that appeal.

As Sorauf explained, ". . . it is an inescapable fact that within two- and three-party systems, political parties find it dificult to be both ideological parties and successful, electoral, brokerage parties . . . the necessity of winning elections stands as the greatest barrier to ideology in the political party."[4]

In the multi-party political systems of Western European states, the conflict between issue articulation and voter appeal is of less concern because election success is tied to proportionate voting.

ideological faith to an issue-motivated constituency is thus less troublesome. But, as Sorauf suggested, the incompatibility of the two party goals increases in party systems where fewer parties are active.

> For the fewer the competitors, the more inclusive the electoral party must be. This then is the major dimension of the dilemma: the fewer the competitive parties in the party system, the greater will be the likelihood that any one party's success in performing either of these two great party functions will be inversely related to its success in the other.[5]

But whereas in the multi-party system several minor parties may join together in a coalition government, in the two-party system the individual party itself must form the coalition. The result in American pluralist society is a two-party system in which both parties seek to play a "brokerage" or "umbrella" role, drawing under their broad banners a diversified coalition--a cross section--of the electorate. Because power is available only with 50-plus per cent of the voters' support, each party seeks to spread its "umbrella" widely enough to include all comers.

Apparently, the parties decide that, of the two goals defined by Sorauf, electoral success is more crucial than issue articulation, because without electoral success, the party ceases to have a platform from which to articulate any policy positions at all.

To achieve electoral success in a two-party system, the appeal of the parties inevitably must overlap, at least to the one voter who will provide a margin of victory. And in a pluralist society where class differences are not clearly perceived by most voters and

where few voters see themselves as ideologically-motivated, the overlap of the parties' appeal may widen to the point that the parties seek support from basically the same constituencies.

Socio-economic class identification does not clearly divide American voters into distinct groups. Robert E. Lane and David O. Sears concluded in Public Opinion that many voters are hesitant even to label themselves as members of any class.

"Even among adults . . there is often a reluctance to make class self-identifications. As many as a third of a nationwide sample were unable or unwilling to identify themselves as members of any social class," Lane and Sears wrote.[6]

Neither are most American voters' political perceptions triggered by ideological positions which they recognize. When Angus Campbell, Warren E. Miller, Philip E. Converse and Donald E. Stokes compiled the data for their ground-breaking study of The American Voter, which was based on studies of the 1952 and 1956 election campaigns, they discovered only 2.5 per cent of the nationwide sample in 1956 that could be classified as ideologues, and only another 9 per cent of the sample that fit the authors' definition of "near ideologues." These figures translated to 3.5 per cent and 15 per cent of all voters, the authors said. They concluded that most voters were not motivated by ideological considerations in their political perceptions.[7]

Neither does any one issue divide the American electorate and thus make feasible diverging appeals by the two parties.

spite of the heterogenous nature of the U.S. society, said Sorauf, the parties are unable to identify "some axis, some line of separation, on which to divide the American electorate."[8]

In the absence of a clear division by class, ideological or issue grounds, the American parties apparently look in unison to the center ground for support sufficient to provide electoral success.

It is not surprising that Richard M. Scammon and Ben J. Wattenberg, in their 1970 study of <u>The Real Majority</u>, offered identical advice to Democratic and Republican strategists: "Go to the center." The Republican strategy should be "a mirror image" of the Democrats', the authors suggested. Neither party should allow itself to be caught holding a minority position on a salient issue, Scammon and Wattenberg urged. Party strategists were warned to "play within the 35-yard lines."[9]

"It is the judgment of the authors that there are no two strategies for victory--they are the same strategy with different rhetoric. This single strategy involves a drive toward the center of the electorate," they wrote.[10]

"Quite explicitly, then," observed <u>Washington Post</u> columnist David Broder, "Scammon and Wattenberg's advice is that each party should ape the other, so far as possible."[11]

Scammon and Wattenberg's "pragmatic" prescription is based on the theory of necessary convergence--that the nature of the American party system dictates a blurring of the differences between the two parties, a muting of distinctions which usually leads to

near identical appeals by the two parties and to the very "me-tooism" which Wallace, McCarthy and Goldwater decried.

Scammon and Wattenberg described the theory as follows:

> . . . the drive toward the attitudinal center is crucial in politics because it produces the maximum number of votes, and, as is well known, the man with the most votes wins. . . . In a most simplistic way for the moment: on a scale of 100, a candidate taking a position of 25 on an attitudinal question gives his opponent all the votes from 26 to 100. On the other hand, a candidate taking a position of 49 or 50 or even 51 begins to cut into his opponent's vote. . . . This may sound cynical; it is not. The jousting for the center in politics is only a craven way of expressing a far nobler sentiment: Politicians in a democratic form of government are in business to represent the will of the majority of the people. . . . A politician must either go where the ducks are or convince the ducks he is where they want to be. But the final choice is the choice of the ducks, not of the politician.[12]

Broder put it more succinctly: "Party politics is almost by definition accommodation politics."[13]

The effect of necessary convergence, Sorauf said, is that American political parties become neutral brokers seeking votes.

> In an electorate that divides in an almost infinite number of issue permutations and entertains an equally large number of potentially conflicting interests, the competitive party must rely on non-ideological appeals--the attractive candidate, for instance--or on pseudo-ideological symbols, platitudes, or truisms to hold its disparate electorate together. The American parties become great neutral electoral brokers, whose art and skill is the minimization of difference and division. . . . Their role in a competitive two-party system demands an emphasis on consensus and agreement, on the widely held political pieties rather than the issues that divide men. . . . The capsule slogan and the flashing smile capture far more political attention in the electorate than the windy manifesto or the sober discussion of political philosophy.[14]

Herbert Agar addressed the same phenomenon in slightly less cynical terms. He noted that the process of coalition-building forces political parties and systems to blend the specific concerns of small groups within the party into a total platform which promises something for everyone. It becomes necessary, said Agar, to:

> . . . water down the selfish demands of regions, races, classes, business associations, into a national policy which will alienate no major group and which will contain at least a small plum for everybody. This is the price of unity in a continent wide federation.[15]

The scenario which emerges from these authors' comments is of political parties which mold a winning coalition from the clay of docile voters. As voters do not respond in mass to cues based on appeals to class, ideology or issue, the argument goes, political parties rely on broad platitudes and patriotic cues, and blur their differences to avoid alienating any segment of the electorate more than the opposition does.

The question that arises from this cynical view is: "Does a common thread unite the members of an American political party and distinguish them from members of the opposition party -- perhaps some subtle and generally overlooked similarity among the party adherents which ties them together?"

During the 1950s, when political scientists first began to pay serious attention to empirical analyses of voters' opinions, several researchers studies matters which impinge on this question.

In their study of The American Voter, Campbell and his colleagues

analyzed three motivations in the individual's voting decision: issue orientation, candidate appeal and party identification. Through their analysis of data from 1952 and 1956, the authors concluded that, of the three motivating factors, party identification has the strongest impact on a voter's decision about how to vote. Candidate appeal was determined to be only a secondary influence, while issue orientation had the slightest impact of the three factors.

Issue position thus seemed an unlikely common thread among party adherents. A study published in 1960 seemed to provide even further evidence that issues played a minor, if any role in attracting members to a political party in the United States.

In that study, which was published in the June 1960 edition of the American Political Science Review, Herbert McCloskey, Paul J. Hoffman and Rosemary O'Hara presented their conclusions based on a survey of "Issue Conflict and Consensus Among Party Leaders and Followers." The paper's findings were drawn from a survey of delegates and alternates to the 1956 Democratic and Republican national conventions and from a nationwide sample of voters.

The researchers examined levels of agreement and disagreement among leaders and followers of each party to determine what cohesiveness of issue orientation existed. Their conclusions were to have a significant impact on political scientists through the 1960s and into the 1970s.

McCloskey and his colleagues began with the assumption that such cohesiveness among party followers--rank and file voters who identify with a particular party--would be minimal. In view of the discussion above, their arguments sound familiar:

> Since both parties want to attract support from the centrist and moderate segments of the electorate, their views on basic issues will, it is thought, tend to converge. Like giant business enterprises competing for the same market, they will be led to offer commodities that are in many respects identical . . . It is one thing for a small party in a multi-party system to preserve its ideological purity, quite another for a mass party in a two-party system to do so. The one has little hope of becoming a majority, and can most easily survive by remaining identified with the narrow audience from which it draws its chief supporters; the other can succeed only by accommodating the conflicting claims of many diverse groups--only, in short, by blunting ideological distinctions.[17]

Further, the authors wrote, political, cultural, historical and sociological factors combine to limit the role of ideology and issues in the American party system:

> The development and enforcement of a sharply delineated ideology is also hindered by the absence in either party of a firmly established, authoritative, and continuing organizational center empowered to decide those questions of doctrine and discipline. Party affiliation is loosely defined, responsibility is weak or non-existent, and organs for indoctrinating or communicating with party members are at best rudimentary. Cultural and historical differences may also contribute to the weaker ideological emphasis of American as opposed to European parties. Many of the great historical cleavages that have divided European nations for centuries . . . have never taken root in this country. . . . In addition, never having known a titled nobility, we have largely been freed from the conflicts found elsewhere between the classes. . . . Consider, too, the progress made in the United Sates toward neutralizing forces which ordinarily lead to sharp social and hence intellectual and political differentiation. The class and status structure of American society has attained a rate of mobility equalling or exceeding that of any other established society . . . Rural-urban differences continue to exist, of course, but they too have been diminishing . . . In

short, a great many Americans have been subjected in their public lives to identical stimuli--a condition unlikely to generate strong, competing ideologies.[18]

Their research, the authors said, was intended to test the accuracy of those observations. The precise manner of their investigation and a detailed discussion of findings is contained in Chapter II of this paper. For now, it is sufficient to summarize.

McCloskey and his co-workers concluded that the leadership factions of the two parties "are distinct communities of co-believers who diverge sharply on many important issues." Rank and file party members, however, were found to differ only negligibly on the same issues that divided the leadership cadres.

The authors concluded that no support was demonstrated for the hypothesis that party leaders ignore deep cleavages within the electorate, and that parties converge to the center despite voters' more disparate opinions. In fact, said the researchers, "one might indeed more accurately assert the contrary, to wit: that the natural cleavages between the leaders are largely ignored by voters."[19]

This conclusion was supported by Campbell _et al._ in their study of _The American Voter_. They noted that few in the survey sample showed knowledge of issues and still fewer knew about the issues and simultaneously perceived a difference in the ways the parties approached the issues. For many voters, the absence of perceived differences was due to a simple lack of information, the authors said.

Party convergence on issue positions also plays a role in limiting the voters' perceptions of party positions, however, they observed.

> What underlies this failure to perceive party differences on policies of concern to the individual? Its roots are to be found in circumstances of the external world as well as in limitations of the individual. Where distinctions between the parties are academic, it would be surprising if only a few people did succeed in discrimination, however intense popular feelings on the issue might be. Nor can we always assume that people failing to perceive differences are less well informed than those who do, although this may be the general rule; they may simply be more "up to date" in their images of parties whose policies are indeed converging.[20]

Further support for the notion that issues play only a small role in voters' partisan choices can be found in Gerald M. Pomper's _Elections in America, Control and Influence in Democratic Politics_.

Voters are not themselves ideological persons and therefore fail to perceive even minor ideological differences between the Democratic and Republican parties, Pomper said. Neither does party loyalty necessarily follow subconscious ideological lines--conservatives and liberals populate both of the major parties.

"Policy questions, then, are not central considerations for many voters," according to Pomper. "Policy considerations, therefore, cannot be said generally to determine campaign outcomes. . . . The policy-oriented philosophical citizen does not appear often in voting studies."[21]

It is interesting to note that although Pomper's book was published in 1970, his chief references for the discussion of issues are _The American Voter_ and "Issue Conflict and Consensus Among Party Leaders and Followers," both of which were based on surveys conducted no later than 1958. This is evidence of the lasting impact of these two seminal studies on political scientists over the last 15 years.

Both studies have been highly respected within the discipline and have shaped the opinions of many instructors and students in political science classes. Relatively little work has been done until recently either to challenge or support their findings.

Pomper agreed with Campbell et al. that party identification and candidate image play a stronger role in voting decisions than does an individual's issue orientation.

> Traditional partisanship and candidate personalities account for much of the balloting. While many voters are concerned with their particular interests, few are aware of or interested in the entire range of policies or in general ideological postures . . . Furthermore, voters are more conscious of past than future policies. They make retrospective judgments on the record of the incumbent party, not prospective choices between alternate programs.[22]

With the role of issue orientation relegated to third place in the heirarchy of motivating factors in voting, political analysts of the late 1950s and the 1960s concentrated on the role of party identification, or partisanship in voting.

William H. Flanigan, in Political Behavior in the American Electorate, called partisanship "the most important single influence on political opinions and voting behavior." The concept may be defined, he wrote, as: "the feeling of sympathy for, and loyalty to, a political party which an individual acquires (probably) during childhood and which endures (usually) with increasing intensity throughout his life."[23]

Early development of partisan loyalty was documented by David Easton and Robert D. Hess in their paper, "The Child's Political

World," in 1962. Most American children develop such loyalties at about the second grade level, they asserted.

> Most children do not become familiar with the term political party until the fourth and fifth grade at the earliest. But before this, as early as the second grade, large numbers are nevertheless able to assert a party identification . . . Interviews . . . indicate that in the early grades--the point at which party preference becomes well established--the children may be adopting party identification in much the same way that they appropriate the family's religious beliefs, family name, neighborhood location or other basic characteristics of life. Nor do most children display partisan feelings in a purely formal way. They seem to be aware of the implications of party preferences as an expression of explicit commitment to a point of view, however superficial their understanding of this point of view may be . . . but they did feel the pressure to adopt a partisan posture, however apolitical its meaning was for them.[24]

Fred I. Greenstein, author of The American Party System and The American People, stated that a voter's feeling of party loyalty usually does not result from a conscious decision to support one set of ideals as opposed to another. Rather, Greenstein said, partisanship comes about inadvertently as a result of social stimuli. The development occurs before the child is capable of dealing with abstract thoughts, according to Greenstein.

> In the United States an individual's identification is usually an evolutionary outcome of the largely inadvertent and unintended political learning that is absorbed from family, peer group, neighborhood, schools, and mass media, remarkably early in childhood. By the age of ten (fifth grade), more than one-half of all American children consider themselves little Republicans or Democrats, whereas at this age the capacities for abstraction that are necessary for issue orientation are largely undeveloped, and orientations toward candidates and political leaders are immature in the sense that children tend to be idealistically uncritical of those individuals in public life of whom they are aware . . . For the young child, party identification is so barren of supporting information that he

may be able to say, "I am a Republican" or "I am a Democrat",
without even knowing the party of the incumbent President.[25]

Kenneth P. Langton elaborates on the procedure by which a child learns "correct" political orientation:

> Behavior which is rewarded is reinforced, that which is not is dropped. Often incidental cues will lead to "correct" imitative behavior. A child seeking parental attention may hear his father announcing proudly that he is a Republican, his father and father's father were Republicans, and any honest and decent man could not be anything but a Republican--an obvious cue. The child responds by announcing that he is a Republican, and is rewarded by receiving attention . . . However at this stage in the socialization process, the child's imitation of parental party preferences probably occurs without regard to the complexity of values and beliefs that may be related to the parent's party preference.[26]

For those who adopt the view of American electoral choices as the corporate decisions of an informed, philosophical and intelligent citizenry, these findings may be unsettling. If party identification is the dominant motivating factor in an individual's voting decision, and if such identification is the product not of thoughtful consideration but of puppet-like reaction of a child to stimuli which he cannot even comprehend, purists' views of the democratic process are put on shaky ground at best.

The disturbing implications of these findings are heightened by further data and conclusions about the role of party identification. The hope that party loyalties which develop initially among young children are later redefined by more mature young adults, is apparently illusory, according to researchers.

Greenstein noted that party identification which "might appear

to be one of the simpler and more fragile phenomena proves to be durable and most influential."[27]

Voting behavior studies indicate that a sizeable majority of Americans not only form their party allegiances at an early, impressionable age, but also stick with that early identification throughout their political lives.

"It is apparent," Campbell and his colleagues said, " that identification with political parties, once established, is an attachment which is not easily changed."[28]

Pomper argued that the stability of party loyalty is overstated in some reports, including The American Voter. But he conceded that most voters adopt the partisan identification of their parents, and only about 20 per cent change during their lives.[29] He also reaffirmed the fidelity with which most children treat the party identification they assumed so early.

> Party identification is quite firm. It develops early in life, before there is any detailed understanding of public issues and governmental institutions. By the fourth grade, a majority of schoolchildren identify with a political party. For the most part, children assume and later retain the same party loyalty as their fathers and mothers . . . Even among adults, nearly 80 per cent hold to the same faction as their parents. Once established, this loyalty is highly resistant to change . . .[30]

Even when an individual's perception of an issue does not coincide with his perception of his party's position, partisanship may not be threatened, according to Pomper. White Southerners, for example, may oppose integration, but nevertheless continue to support the Democratic party, regardless of the national party's

general pro-integration image, he said.[31]

Perhaps the most damaging blow to adherents of the purist view of American democracy--those who hope to find intelligent, informed citizens in the balloting booth--is the contention of many scholars that a voter's issue orientation is the product of, rather than the impetus for, his party loyalty.

Reports of voting behavior studies of the last 15 years seem unanimous in their conclusion that a voter's party loyalty has the capacity to shape his attitudes and his perceptions of right and wrong on political issues.

As Campbell and his associates noted, "Once a person has acquired some embryonic party attachment, it is easy for him to discover that most events in the ambiguous world of politics redound to the credit of his chosen party."[32]

Or, as Pomper noted, "Loyalty to the Democrats or Republicans will affect the perceptions and actions of the voter to a considerable degree . . . Because of party loyalty, most voters do not wait for a campaign to begin before deciding for whom to vote."[33] Flanigan observed that ". . . partisan identification provides guidance for the public on policy matters; that is, most Americans hold their opinions by following what they perceive to be the view consistent with their partisanship."[34]

In the eyes of these scholars, then, party identification is not a result of issue positions that the voter holds, but rather is

stimulus for the formation of issue positions that will allow him to remain in conformity with his psychological commitment to the party. Party loyalty is thus not merely an expression of voters' opinions, but an agent of opinion-formation.

"In the competition of voices reaching the individual, the political party is an opinion-forming agency of great importance," concluded Campbell and his colleagues.[35]

This opinion-formation role which in some other societies is performed by class identification, falls by default to the political parties in America due to the absence of salient class identity.[36]

The effect of partisanship, said Campbell et al., is "profound."

> Apparently party has a profound influence across the full range of political objects to which the individual voter responds. The strength of relationship between party identification and the dimensions of partisan attitude suggests that responses to each element of national politics are deeply affected by the individual's enduring party attachments.[37]

The individual's party identification, then, stems from a set of psychological and social cues he receives at an early age, and endures through his life, molding his reactions to issues through further psychological and social cues articulated in campaign rhetoric. In a two-party system in which both parties converge at the center of issue positions, it is doubtful that the voter will receive cues from his party to alienate him from its ranks and send him to the opposing faction. Both parties will articulate a similar set of cues, so the voter will note no conflict on which to base a decision for changing parties.

"So long as the party he supports continues to be identified with those programs, leaders and groups to which he is attached," said Pomper, "he will retain his loyalty."[38]

With this understanding of the role of party identification in mind, a contradiction seems to arise concerning the role of issues in electoral decision-making and the theory of necessary convergence of American political parties. On the one hand, political analysts say, parties are forced to converge on centrist positions and to blur their differences to avoid alienating voters. At the same time, they stress that voters congregate in the center of the spectrum largely because the parties' cues drive them there. Can both be true?

The central question arising is, "Do centrist parties produce a centrist electorate, or does the centrist electorate force parties to assume centrist positions?"

With the background of scholarly argument in the preceding discussion, it becomes possible to explore a few theoretical notions of voting behavior and the American party system.

A first notion concerns the extent of centrism evidenced in the behavior of the Democratic and Republican parties. The adherent of that purist notion that some voters are not mere puppets on a string of sociological cues might argue that the parties do not, in fact, converge to an exact sameness but rather reflect overlapping but distinct coalitions. The overlap may be extensive, but not total.

Sorauf argued that even parties seeking mass appeal in a two-party system begin with a distinct nuclei.

Even the large brokerage party, in seeking electoral aggregates by minimizing differences, builds its coalitions around a nucleus that distinguishes its electorate from that of its competitor. The commitment of the major American parties to a constellation of interests may, in fact, be stronger than we give it credit for. Many of the voter loyalties within the American electorate that appear to be traditional, old-line party loyalties, are in reality loyalties to this silent, implicit ideology of interest. The man who votes for the Republican party because his family always has, or because his friends do, may be voting for a distant, traditional, unspoken ideology or interest that has been transmitted to him as he first learns about the political world. Voting for the party of one's father may be, considering the stability of social and economic status between generations, ideological voting one generation removed.[39]

Indeed Pomper's example of white Southerners who remain faithful to the Democratic party despite its general pro-integration image, may upon closer scrutiny, actually be a dated example of ideological voting one generation removed. Declining Democratic support in the South over the last two Presidential elections--first such votes since the major civil rights legislation of the mid-1960s was enacted by a Democratic Congress under a Democratic President--may be symptomatic of Southerners' slow reaction to the party's shifting image.

Kevin Phillips argued in his work on The Emerging Republican Majority that white Southerners will make the switch and become part of the Republicans' own distinct nucleus for a winning coalition.[40]

Others, too, concede that party images, and hence issue cues, may differ more than Scammon and Wattenberg would prefer. Even Campbell and colleagues admitted that whereas "articulation between party program, party member opinion, and individual political decision is weak indeed, . . . it may well be argued that we have imposed a view of issues and policies that is unrealistically specific. Significant

differences do exist in the public images of the parties." (italics mine)[41]

If this were true, voters would receive diverging cues on issue positions, and voter surveys would detect alignments by party allegiance and issue orientation dovetailing in at least some areas. McCloskey and his colleagues, however, report little divergence between groups of Republican and Democratic voters. Yet Donald Stokes, in his 1966 paper on "Some Dynamic Elements of Contests for the Presidency," found that differing perceptions of the issue positions of the two parties' candidates did play a role in voters' decisions, although the extent of that role is not clearly defined.[42]

So perhaps necessary convergence leaves room for some distinctive appeals by the two parties. And perhaps that divergence, however slight, is perceived by the voters and plays at least a minor role in the voters' partisan choice, either immediately or in retrospect. The concession may seem slight, but it invites further investigation. If party cues may include a subtle hint at divergence from strict centrist positions, is it also possible that voters are capable of escaping the ties of early childhood affiliations and of choosing a party on more rational grounds? Is partisan loyalty keyed to more than parental guidance and platitudinous reinforcement?

For many voters, it seems possible that partisan affiliation is more than an inheritance. V.O. Key in his last work, *The Responsible Electorate, Rationality in Presidential Voting, 1936-1960*, argued that

"voters on the average base their vote decisions on the issue positions of the candidates and on their expectations concerning how the candidates would perform as President."[43] Key wrote the book in an attempt to rebut some conclusions of Campbell and his associates. While Campbell _et al._ had argued that voters responded to party cues and acted principally in consequence with an enduring sense of party loyalty, Key responded that most voters base their electoral decision on a responsible and reasonable understanding of the candidates' positions and a desire to further their own interests.

"The perverse and unorthodox argument of this little book," wrote Key shortly before his death, "is that voters are not fools."[44]

To prove his point, Key analyzed the electorate in three groups: "standpatters" (those who vote for candidates of the same party in successive elections); "switchers" (those who vote for candidates of differing parties in successive elections); and "new voters" (those who did not vote in the previous election). For each group, Key demonstrated what he considered a pattern of rational decision-making.

"In short, the data make it appear sensible to regard the voter as a person who is concerned with what governments have done or not done and what they propose to do rather than one guided, perhaps unaware, by the imperatives of economic status or the tricks of Madison Avenue,"[45] he wrote.

First-time voters tend generally to align themselves with the party which they perceive will best represent their own interests and

general philosophy, said Key. Their votes, he observed, are usually consistent with their understanding of the parties' issue position and their own leaning on the issues.[46]

"Switchers," he wrote, are not mindless wanderers between parties whose positions they do not comprehend. Instead, "to an astonishing degree . . voters in their movements to and fro across party lines and from an inactive to an active voting status behaved as persons who made choices congruent with their policy preferences."[47] The minority party usually gains the support of voters who "are disappointed by, who disapprove of, or who regard themselves as injured by, the actions of the Administration,"[48] he said.

Key's description seems to have been tailored as a refutation of the Campbell group's image of independent voters as uninformed, disinterested and casual participants.

> Some observers move bravely to the conclusion that the fate of the Republic rests in the hands of an ignorant and uninformed sector of the electorate highly susceptible to influence by factors irrelevant to the solemn performance of its civic duties. That conclusion is certainly not invariably, if ever, correct. . . . Instead the switchers, who (in company with the "new" voters) call the turn, are persons whose peculiarity is not lack of interest but agreement on broad political issues with the standpatters toward whom they shift. Democratic defectors diverge markedly from Democratic standpatters; Republican renegades likewise depart sharply from the policy views of Republican standpatters. . . This should be regarded as at least a modicum of evidence for the view that those who switch do so to support governmental policies or outlooks with which they agree, not because of subtle psychological or sociological peculiarities.[49]

Key estimated that between 12 and 20 per cent of the survivors from a previous election switch their party allegiance in a succeeding

vote. The very existence of a large body of switchers would seem to cast a heavy doubt on the supposedly pervasive impact of early childhood loyalties and enduring allegiances.

Even among the standpatters, who stick with a party from one election to another, Key found a rational base for the decision not to switch. While enduring partisan loyalty may be cited as the reason for this fidelity, Key viewed the loyalty as only a symptom of a basic agreement with the party's orientation. He did not address the issue of opinion formation by the party, but implied that voters may be more independent-minded than as portrayed in _The American Voter_.

> What of these voters who remain in the party ranks from election to election? Are they obtuse diehards who swallow their principles to stick by their party? . . . on issue after issue those with views consistent with the outlook of their party stood pat in their voting preferences. Notably few Republican defections occurred among those who subscribed to sound Republican doctrine. Democratic deserters were uniformly fewest among those who concurred with the pure and orthodox Democratic tenets of the time . . . The facts seem to be that, on the average, the standpatters do not have to behave as mugwumps to keep their consciences clear; they are already where they ought to be in light of their policy attitudes . . . Though partisan groupings of voters are not models of ideological purity, the standpatters of each party manifest fairly high agreement with the party positions as popularly perceived.[50]

Key's reference to "sound Republican doctrine," "orthodox Democratic tenets of the time" and "party positions as popularly perceived" should not escape the reader's attention in light of the preceding discussion on necessary convergence and the blurring of party differences. An expanded examination of that portion of Key's

comment must be postponed briefly, however. It is the notion of rationality among standpatters which is of interest at this point.

Taken together, Key's analyses of the three groups leave a picture of voters whose decisions are triggered not by unseen pre-adolescent psychological influences, but by an understanding that one party's candidate offers greater compatibility of issue orientation than does his opponent.

"From our analysis the voter emerges as a person who appraises the actions of government, who has policy preferences, and who relates his vote to those appraisals and preferences," Key concluded.[51]

Pomper also tied the voter's issue orientation to his concept of his own self-interest.

"For a great many voters, policy does have some relation to their party preferences, although issues are not viewed philosophically," Pomper said.[52]

Fred Greenstein noted that while partisan loyalties develop initially among children at an early age, the child gradually learns to differentiate between the parties in terms of what they represent. Only a few adults remain ignorant of these distinctions in party stands, Greenstein wrote, while other voters relate the distinctions to what is "best" for their own group--peer, interest, region or whatever.[53]

These authors seem to agree that despite the lack of class

identity among voters, some basis for diverging issue orientation does exist within the electorate. The scholars seem reluctant to pinpoint the basis for such divergence, but seem willing to acknowledge its presence and its impact on partisan choice.

Even McCloskey, Hoffman and O'Hara, who demonstrated the lack of substantial issue conflict among party followers, conceded that they were prepared to find "contrary influences" that would counteract the voters' convergence.

"We believed that the homogenizing tendencies referred to are strongly offset by contrary influences, and that voters are preponderantly led to support the party whose opinions they share."[54] Unfortunately, the authors neglected to define those "contrary influences."

Additional evidence of the potential for rational decision-making by voters can be found in the voluminous data of The American Voter. Data from both the 1952 and 1956 elections demonstrate that those who claim to be strong Democrats hold the most pro-Democratic views and that strong Republicans hold the most pro-Republican attitudes toward the parties' candidates.[55]

It is interesting to note also Pomper's observation that party identification among veteran voters must remain consistent with policy preferences and that newer voters, whose allegiance to party is not so solidly established, tend to follow personal opinion on the issues as much as social or party cues.

> Group pressures, traditions and propaganda do not explain elections. They are usually reinforced by opinion on issues. When party

identification or group membership is not consistent with policy preferences or other short-term forces, a significant proportion will desert their "natural" party. New voters, who are less committed, will follow their opinions as much as their sociological or partisan instincts.[56]

Whatever rationality is found in most voters is rarely based on the individual's philosophical understanding of the issue's ramifications and on a deliberate decision to support one side after a debate on merits of the issue, the authors seem to agree. Rather, the voters perceive some cue, perhaps indirect, in a party's or candidate's appeal which triggers a feeling of sympathy. Likely, the cue will relate to some group interest with which the voter is familiar, although perhaps not fully knowledgeable. In other words, Pomper and Key do not attempt to argue that American voters are ideologues or philosophers, but simply, as Key put it, that they "are not fools."

The caution they raise is that a scarcity of the true philosophical citizen may lead some to conclude that all voters are putty to be manipulated by pervasive social and political forces. The impact of such factors as psychological and sociological cues decreases, one might argue, when the parties effectively perform the second of the two party goals previously discussed--articulation of issue positions. When alternatives are presented, the voters will respond. In the absence of such distinctions, the voter is forced to choose between party labels and between candidate appeals.

Sorauf, among others, argued that the Democratic and Republican

parties, while not ignoring issues, sent out only subtle cues to the electorate through the 1960s.

> The American parties spell out policy stands tentatively and vaguely. They do not have a flair for enunciating principles, nor do they speak in one clear ideological voice. They do, as their critics charge, bow before all the limits the political system sets to their statement of programs and ideologies. But of the charge of disregarding interest and policy issues altogether they are not guilty.[57]

This subtlety of approach, combined with the voters' hesitance to make distinctions between the parties except in the presence of cues initiated by the party, may combine to cause the very centrism which in turn encourages the parties to mimimize their differences. The phenomenon may, in fact, be a circular and self-sustaining one.

Flanigan, too, noted the subtlety with which parties signal their members on issue positions. Frequently, the leadership of the two parties are in agreement on an issue, he observed. At other times, the leadership factions of each party may be split among themselves, resulting in no clear cue gaining expression.[58]

Also, Campbell and his associates stated that even if the voter is conscious of an issue and concerned about it, it will have no effect on his partisan decision or ballot unless he perceives some distinction in two parties' positions.[59]

As David W. Abbott and Edward T. Rogowsky argue in their paper, "The Linkage Process: An Essay on Parties and Opinion,":

> At certain junctures there are virtually no differences in the policy stances of the candidates of the two parties on important issues. This condition is not very serious in a period of general consensus. However, when public opinion is deeply divided and when

both parties have chosen candidates who take almost identical positions on a nationally divisive issue, then the members of the dissenting minority are denied an opportunity to represent their opinions by voting. The virtually identical Viet Nam positions of the Republican and Democratic party nominees in 1968 is a case in point.[60]

The crucial distinction which emerges from these arguments is between periods in which the party system puts out only very subtle issue cues and periods in which true issue divergence develops and voters become aware of a comprehensible split between leadership factions of the two parties.

The importance of this distinction--the acknowledgement that political context is also a variable that must be weighed in any analysis of voting behavior--will now be the focus of this discussion.

Walter DeVries and V. Lance Tarrance in The Ticket Splitter note that the political context of the 1960s was different from that of the 1950s. The decade of Kennedy, Johnson, Vietnam and race riots was "politically turbulent" and produced significant change in America's political situation, they said.

> Some observers have seen these changes in the 1960s as a major realignment of the two political parties. Others have thought they detected the emergence of new coalitions of voters or the building of new majorities. In fact, some analysts believe that we are experiencing the disintegration of the two-party system as we have known it, arguing that if this trend continues, the Republican and Democratic parties may be completely removed as the major variables in most elections. A few analysts now believe that rather than party, the issues, the candidates' views, and the use of media both by the candidates and by the voters are now the most important factors in a voter's decision.
>
> Whatever the explanation, we do know that something happened to American voters during the politically turbulent years from 1960 to 1970. Those years produced a whole set of political paradoxes which have yet to be explained.[61]

Perhaps the most significant observation V.O. Key made in *The Responsible Electorate* was that:

> To be sure, many individual voters act in odd ways indeed; yet, in the large, the electorate behaves about as rationally and responsibly as we should expect, *given the clarity of the alternatives presented to it* and the character of the information available to it. (italics mine)[62]

Much of the body of knowledge of American voting behavior has stemmed from surveys conducted during the 1950s. *The American Voter* and "Issue Conflict and Consensus Among Party Leaders and Followers" have had a significant impact on later works in the field.

Perhaps a reassessment of the findings of those studies is in order to determine whether they remain valid descriptions of the electorate after fifteen or twenty years. It certainly is possible that the "clarity of alternatives" presented to voters during the 1950s was greater or lesser than in more recent years.

Many of the precepts of the argument for necessary convergence grew specifically out of the work of Campbell and McCloskey and their colleagues. Perhaps a re-examination of those research projects in particular is due.

Do voters in the 1970s remain clustered in the center of the spectrum? Does no significant divergence exist among party followers? Or is it possible that voters in the 1970s have responded to a greater clarity of alternatives by moving apart, attracted by divergent issue appeals from the parties?

Pomper published an article in 1972 which reviewed the role of

issues in Presidential balloting from 1956 to 1968.[63] It is a valuable contribution to the study of voting behavior.

Using data from the Survey Research Center at the University of Michigan, Pomper examined quadrennial election studies for the period under investigation, analyzing voter responses to six specific policy questions. The items examined were: aid to education, medical care, job guarantee, fair employment, school integration and foreign aid.

According to Pomper, while partisan identifiers differed somewhat in their approaches to these issues in the 1956 and 1960 samples, a far more significant distinction emerged in the 1964 sample. Perceptions of the linkage between party and policy showed a similar pattern through the four measurements, he said.

From this data, Pomper drew three broad implications. First, i should be recognized that the election of 1964 was a critical one, "initiating a new political era in the United States, rather than the abberant event it appeared at the time . . ." Characteristic of such critical elections, said Pomper, is "*increased voter consciousness of policy questions*, and the later electoral *persistence of group* divisions based on the policy questions raised in the critical election." (italics mine)[64]

In 1964 and again in 1968, voters aligned their partisan loyalties in much closer harmony with their policy preferences than they had in either 1956 or 1960, he discovered.

Second, Pomper indicated that these findings point to the possible

development of a "responsible two-party system" in the United States. A committee of the American Political Science Association studied the two-party system in 1950 and recommended several changes to bring about such a responsible system.

"Responsible two-party system" means a system in which the parties are characterized by distinctively perceived policy positions, and in which parties are relatively cohesive, Pomper said. While he believed this was an unrealistic goal in the 1950s, he predicted it may be more obtainable in the 1970s. Twenty years ago, he wrote, "On most issues the voters did not relate their policy preferences to their partisan affiliations nor did they see a difference between the parties, nor did they agree on the relative positions of the parties."

Pomper saw changes in the voters during the latest election he analyzed, however.

> Parties can now meaningfully stand as "groups of like-minded men" offering particular stances toward public issues. Their victories can now reasonably be interpreted as related to the mass choice of one set of issue positions over another. To this extent, the conditions for a responsible party system have been fulfilled.[65]

In light of Pomper's optimism, it is worthwhile to review briefly the prerequisites to a responsible party system stipulated by the APSA committee in its 1950 report.

"An effective party system," the report said, "requires first, that the parties are able to bring forth programs to which they commit themselves, and, second, that the parties possess sufficient internal cohesion to carry out these programs."[66]

In a 1970 review of the committee's report and progress in the intervening two decades, Evron M. Kirkpatrick, longtime executive secretary of the association and a member of the original study committee, delivered a critical evaluation of the 1950 report's lack of "analysis, justification or clarification" and "its popular missionary tone."

Kirkpatrick's criticism took three parts. First, he said, political parties do not appear competent to formulate policy to solve the nation's complex problems. Second, even if they could develop the policies, it is unlikely, due to the lack of ideological cleavage in the American political system, that parties would present clear alternatives to the voters. Finally, even if such alternatives were presented to the electorate, the voters do not possess a sufficient level of issue information to be able to choose intelligently from among them. He cited voting studies (of the 1950s) to show that voters base their partisan choice on nonrational factors.

"The cumulative impact of voting studies on the committee model of responsible party doctrine," said Kirkpatrick, "is quite simply devastating."[67]

Pomper countered Kirkpatrick's traditionalist arguments with references to more recent voting studies, showing new patterns of voting behavior which, he said, more adequately support the supposition that, given the proper impetus, a "responsible" party system could work.

Pomper cautioned, however, that before this goal can be achieved,

the parties must become more cohesive than they were in 1968.

Pomper's final point was a particularly significant one in light of the notion previously expressed that voting behavior studies conducted during the 1950s have had a pervasive impact on political science and perhaps are in need of re-examination to determine if a measurement fifteen or twenty years later will produce the same results.

The study of voting behavior has suffered, Pomper argued, from an over-generalization on the basis of cross-sectional research, such as The American Voter and the article by McCloskey et al. Of The American Voter, he said: "We have assumed that this superb analysis of the 1950s is a study of the electorate of all time."[68]

It is crucial to study not only the behavior of voters, but also the political and social context in which that behavior occurs, he said. Various environmental stimuli must be considered, and their effects weighed.

It is significant to note that two of the authors of The American Voter, Philip E. Converse and Warren E. Miller, joined with two other researchers in the fall of 1969 to make a similar plea. In their report on a study of the 1968 election, the authors said:

> . . . some past findings have been to our mind "overinterpreted" as implying that issues are poorly linked to voting preferences because of innate and hence incorrigible cognitive deficiencies suffered by the mass electorate in the United States. Merely the Wallace data [showing that Wallace voters in 1968 were motivated by a feeling of compatibility with the candidate on issue positions] taken alone would suffice to show, exactly as Key argued, that the public can relate policy controversies to its own estimates of the world and vote accordingly.[69]

It is in light of this background of alleged "overinterpretation" that Pomper urged a "reinterpretation" of voting behavior studies of the 1950s by comparing the cross-sectional data of that decade to new measurements reflecting more current political climates. Changing political winds alter the voter, he argued.

If the voter is viewed as a microcosmic version of David Easton's political system analysis, he is understood to receive inputs from the environment around him and to produce outputs (decisions) from the raw material of those inputs. But with each new output, the environment is altered, and thus the inputs are varied. The system (or the voter) therefore operates in a constantly changing political environment.

It is shortsighted at best to expect the voter's outputs to remain constant during twenty years' change in the political context.

Pomper concluded:

> Most critically, we must emphasize in this context the effect upon voters of the stimuli they receive from the parties and other electoral actors. *If these stimuli are issueless and static, as they largely were in the 1950s*, the citizenry is likely to respond in the manner described in *The American Voter*. If these stimuli are more ideological and dynamic, we are likely to see different perceptions and behavior, such as that evidenced in the 1964 and 1968 elections. (italics mine)[70]

In light of the information and arguments presented, it appears that a re-examination of the research reported by Herbert McCloskey, Paul J. Hoffman and Rosemary O'Hara in their "Issue Conflict and Consensus Among Party Leaders and Followers," is warranted. As the preceding discussion demonstrates, their study has played a significant role in the development of a body of knowledge pertaining to American

voting behavior. It has now been fifteen years since they presented their findings and in that time the conclusions they propounded have been widely accepted and respected within the discipline. But their study was a single cross-sectional measurement.

On that basis alone, a re-examination appears justified. But as the following chapter will indicate, additional questions about the methodology and procedure of McCloskey, Hoffman and O'Hara's research make a reappraisal of their conclusions even more necessary.

In view of the arguments presented above, and particularly the compelling argument by Pomper of the need for a re-examination of cross-sectional research, an hypothesis for the research presented herein was formulated. In the following pages, data will be presented to support and to confirm the hypothesis that: A re-examination of levels of issue conflict between Democratic and Republican voters will reveal significantly higher levels of divergence than were discovered in similar research in 1957-58 by Herbert McCloskey, Paul J. Hoffman and Rosemary O'Hara.

CHAPTER II

THE McCLOSKEY-HOFFMAN-O'HARA STUDY

In June, 1960, the American Political Science Review published an article on voting behavior by Herbert McCloskey, Paul J. Hoffman and Rosemary O'Hara. The article was to have a profound impact on subsequent work in the field of voting behavior.

"Issue Conflict and Consensus Among Party Leaders and Followers" examined levels of issue conflict on major national issues between leaders of the Democratic and Republican parties and between groups of voters who identified with the Democrats and those who identified with the Republicans. The paper was one of several reports stemming from research by the authors during 1957-58.

The authors hoped to determine whether leadership factions of the two parties differ significantly in their approaches to issues and whether the level of issue conflict among leadership factions is reflected among party "followers."

They took note of the phenomenon of party convergence and its alleged necessity within the American party system and identified factors which contribute to this convergence. McCloskey and his colleagues believed that "contrary influences" would lead to issue conflict between identifiers of the two parties. As previously noted here, the authors did not define such "contrary influences."

The "Tweedledee-Tweedledum" view of the American party system is widely held among observers of U.S. politics, they noted. It is a view, however, which had never been investigated empirically, the authors contended.

"Although these 'conclusions' are mainly derived from a priori analysis or from casual observations of 'anecdotal' data (little systematic effort having been made so far to verify or refute them), they are often taken as confirmed--largely, one imagines, because they are compatible with certain conspicuous features of American politics."[71]

It was time, the authors had decided, for a careful examination of the "Tweedledee-Tweedledum" assumption. Despite those "conspicuous features" which seemed to evidence a party system in which differences were diminished, McCloskey and his associates believed that issue distinctions existed between Democratic and Republican voters.

To investigate this notion, the authors conducted a national survey of voters. In January, 1958, questionnaires were distributed to a randomly selected sample of voters. An identical questionnaire was distributed to delegates and alternate delegates to the Republican and Democratic national conventions of 1956.

The questionnaire included questions on party identification. Each person interviewed was asked to declare which of the parties he felt closer to. Also included was a list of twenty-four issues which the authors had determined were salient for that time. In

selecting the issues, the researchers sought to include those matters of public policy which appeared to be "most significant and enduring."[72]

For each of the twenty-four issues, each respondent was asked to indicate whether he favored an "increase," "decrease" or "no change."

The issues were grouped in five categories: Public Ownership of Resources; Government Regulation of the Economy; Equalitarianism and Human Welfare; Tax Policy, and Foreign Policy.

The issues, by category, were:

I. Public Ownership of Resources
   A. Public Ownership of Natural Resources
   B. Public Control of Atomic Energy

II. Government Regulation of the Economy
   A. Level of Farm Price Supports
   B. Government Regulation of Business
   C. Enforcement of Anti-Monopoly Laws
   D. Regulation of Trade Unions
   E. Level of Tariffs
   F. Restrictions on Credit
   G. Regulation of Public Utilities

III. Equalitarianism and Human Welfare
   A. Federal Aid to Education
   B. Slum Clearance and Public Housing
   C. Social Security Benefits
   D. Minimum Wages
   E. Enforcement of Integration
   F. Immigration into the United States

IV. Tax Policy
   A. Corporate Income Tax
   B. Tax on Large Incomes
   C. Tax on Business
   D. Tax on Middle Incomes
   E. Tax on Small Incomes

V. Foreign Policy
   A. Reliance on the United Nations
   B. American Participation in Military Alliances
   C. Foreign Aid
   D. Defense Spending

The samples to which the questionnaire was administered were divided to form four comparison groups: (1) Democratic leaders, (2) Republican leaders, (3) Democratic followers, (4) Republican followers.

For each response, a quantitative value was assigned as follows: "increase"--1.0, "decrease"--0, and "no change"--0.5. For each issue, the values of each response in a comparison group were summed and divided by the number of respondents in the group (N). The figure which resulted from this computation was labeled a "ratio of support score."

When all computations were completed, the ratio of support scores on an issue were compared and the amount of difference in their values determined. The figure which represented the difference in ratio of support scores between two groups was considered an index of issue conflict for that group.

The researchers had anticipated that a comparison of scores for the delegations to the party conventions would indicate that significant issue conflict separates the elite factions of leadership of the Democrats and the Republicans. By the authors' interpretation, the data confirm this view. (See Tables 1 and 2.)

While McCloskey, Hoffman and O'Hara failed to state their definition of statistical significance for these figures, they implied that the data show "that the leaders differ significantly on 23 of the 24 issues listed and that they are separated on 15 of these issues by .18 or more ratio points--in short, by differences that are . . . very large."[73]

TABLE 1

MEAN RATIO OF SUPPORT SCORES FOR PARTY LEADERS IN THE McCLOSKEY TEAM'S STUDY, BY CATEGORY[a]

Categories	Democrats' Mean Score (N=1,788)	Republicans' Mean Score (N=1,232)	Mean Level of Conflict
Public Ownership of Resources	.76	.48	.28
Government Regulation of the Economy	.59	.48	.11
Equalitarianism and Human Welfare	.71	.50	.21
Tax Policy	.36	.19	.17
Foreign Policy	.54	.39	.15

[a]Compiled from: Herbert McCloskey, Paul J. Hoffman, and Rosemary O'Hara, "Issue Conflict and Consensus Among Party Leaders and Followers," in Political Parties and Political Behavior, ed. by William J. Crotty, Donald M. Freeman and Douglas S. Gatlin (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1966), pp. 196-204.

TABLE 2

RATIO OF SUPPORT SCORES FOR PARTY LEADERS[a]
IN THE McCLOSKEY TEAM'S STUDY, BY ISSUE

Issue	Democrats' Score (N=1,788)	Republicans' Score (N=1,232)	Level of Issue Conflict
Public Ownership of Natural Resources	.69	.30	.39
Public Control of Atomic Energy	.83	.65	.18
Level of Farm Price Supports	.58	.20	.38
Government Regulation of Business	.41	.08	.33
Enforcement of Anti-Monopoly Laws	.88	.68	.20
Regulation of Trade Unions	.73	.91	.18
Level of Tariffs	.35	.46	.11
Restrictions on Credit	.43	.50	.07

TABLE 2--CONTINUED

Issue	Democrats' Score (N=1,788)	Republicans' Score (N=1,232)	Level of Issue Conflict
Regulation of Public Utilities	.76	.50	.26
Federal Aid to Education	.76	.40	.36
Slum Clearance and Public Housing	.86	.59	.27
Social Security Benefits	.78	.55	.23
Minimum Wages	.73	.52	.21
Enforcement of Integration	.59	.47	.12
Immigration into the United States	.54	.44	.10
Corporate Income Tax	.54	.21	.33
Tax on Large Incomes	.52	.24	.28
Tax on Business	.37	.15	.22

TABLE 2--CONTINUED

Issue	Democrats' Score (N=1,788)	Republicans' Score (N=1,232)	Level of Issue Conflict
Tax on Middle Incomes	.26	.18	.08
Tax on Small Incomes	.11	.19	.08
Reliance on the United Nations	.66	.45	.21
American Participation in Military Alliances	.62	.48	.14
Foreign Aid	.33	.23	.10
Defense Spending	.43	.40	.03

[a]Compiled from: Herbert McCloskey, Paul J. Hoffman, and Rosemary O'Hara, "Issue Conflict and Consensus Among Party Leaders and Followers," in Political Parties and Political Behavior, ed. by William J. Crotty, Donald M. Freeman and Douglas S. Gatlin (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1966), pp. 196-204.

Careful examination of the data in Tables 1 and 2 seems to reveal that the threshold for "significance" employed by McCloskey *et al.* falls somewhere between differences of .03 ratio points (considered not significant) and .07 ratio points (apparently considered significant).

The authors conclude that:

> Despite the brokerage tendency of the American parties, their active members are obviously separated by large and important differences. The differences, moreover, conform with the popular image in which the Democratic party is seen as the more "progressive" or "radical," the Republicans as the more "moderate" or "conservative" of the two. In addition, the disagreements are remarkably consistent, a function not of chance but of systematic points of view, whereby the responses to any one of these issues could reasonably have been predicted from knowledge of the responses to the other issues.[74]

The two groups were separated most widely on the issue of Public Ownership of Natural Resources, where conflict reached the .39 level. Closest harmony was found on the issue of Defense Spending, where the factions differed by only .03 ratio points. By category, Public Ownership of Resources evidenced the widest gap between scores while Foreign Policy matters showed the least divergence. But even on Foreign Policy issues, the authors concluded, the conflict in issue attitudes between the two parties' leaders is "significant."

When McCloskey and his associates turned to data from the followers sample and compared self-identified Democratic party members with those who said they were Republicans, less issue conflict was apparent.

TABLE 3

MEAN RATIO OF SUPPORT SCORES FOR PARTY FOLLOWERS IN THE 1958 NATIONAL SAMPLE, BY CATEGORY[a]

Category	Democrats' Mean Score (N=821)	Republicans' Mean Score (N=623)	Mean Level of Conflict
Public Ownership of Resources	.70	.66	.04
Government Regulation of the Economy	.58	.53	.05
Equalitarianism and Human Welfare	.70	.66	.04
Tax Policy	.42	.38	.04
Foreign Policy	.49	.47	.02

Note:

Although McCloskey, Hoffman and O'Hara reported that 1,484 questionnaires were returned in "completely usable" form, their tables show a total N of only 1,444. The authors offered no explanation for this discrepancy.

[a]Compiled from: Herbert McCloskey, Paul J. Hoffman, and Rosemary O'Hara, "Issue Conflict and Consensus Among Party Leaders and Followers," in Political Parties and Political Behavior, ed. by William J. Crotty, Donald M. Freeman and Douglas S. Gatlin (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1966), pp. 196-204.

TABLE 4

RATIO OF SUPPORT SCORES FOR PARTY FOLLOWERS IN THE 1958 NATIONAL SAMPLE, BY ISSUE[a]

Issue	Democrats' Score (N=821)	Republicans' Score (N=623)	Level of Issue Conflict
Public Ownership of Natural Resources	.60	.56	.04
Public Control of Atomic Energy	.70	.66	.04
Level of Farm Price Supports	.56	.41	.15
Government Regulation of Business	.43	.31	.12
Enforcement of Anti-Monopoly Laws	.73	.72	.01
Regulation of Trade Unions	.69	.74	.05
Level of Tariffs	.46	.47	.01
Restrictions on Credit	.58	.53	.05

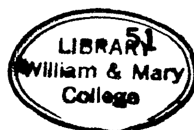
TABLE 4--CONTINUED

Issue	Democrats' Score (N=821)	Republicans' Score (N=623)	Level of Issue Conflict
Regulation of Public Utilities	.64	.57	.07
Federal Aid to Education	.85	.78	.07
Slum Clearance and Public Housing	.87	.82	.05
Social Security Benefits	.83	.77	.06
Minimum Wages	.78	.69	.09
Enforcement of Integration	.57	.59	.02
Immigration into the United States	.29	.32	.03
Corporate Income Tax	.56	.49	.07
Tax on Large Incomes	.66	.56	.10
Tax on Business	.50	.42	.08

TABLE 4--CONTINUED

Issue	Democrats' Score (N=821)	Republicans' Score (N=623)	Level of Issue Conflict
Tax on Middle Incomes	.28	.29	.01
Tax on Small Incomes	.12	.16	.04
Reliance on the United Nations	.59	.57	.02
American Participation in Military Alliances	.62	.58	.04
Foreign Aid	.26	.26	.00
Defense Spending	.67	.65	.02

[a]Compiled from: Herbert McCloskey, Paul J. Hoffman, and Rosemary O'Hara, "Issue Conflict and Consensus Among Party Leaders and Followers," in Political Parties and Political Behavior, ed. by William J. Crotty, Donald M. Freeman and Douglas S. Gatlin (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1966), pp. 196-204.



"The observation most clearly warranted from these data is that the rank and file members of the two parties are far less divided than their party leaders," they wrote. "Not only do they diverge significantly on fewer issues--seven as compared with twenty-three for the leader samples--but the magnitudes of the differences in their ratio scores are substantially smaller for every one of the twenty-four issues."[75]

No index of conflict was greater than .14 for the followers' samples. On the majority of issues, the disparity was less than .05.

The authors noted a pattern in the data:

> All the issues on which the followers significantly disagree are of the "bread and butter" variety, the more symbolic issues being so remotely experienced and so vaguely grasped that rank and file voters are often unable to identify them with either party. Policies affecting farm prices, business regulation, taxes, or minimum wages, by contrast, are quickly felt by the groups to whom they are addressed and are therefore more capable of arousing partisan identifications. It should also be noted that while the average differences are small for all five categories, they are smallest of all for foreign policy--the most removed and least well understood groups of issues in the entire array.[76]

In further examinations of their data, McCloskey and his colleagues concluded that "there is substantial consensus on national issues between Democratic leaders and Democratic and Republican followers, while the Republican leaders are separated not only from the Democrats but from their own rank and file members as well."[77] Republican followers were found to be in greater agreement on the issues with Democratic leaders than with the leaders of their own

party. The strongest pattern of consensus was found between Democratic followers and their leaders.[78]

The authors drew six conclusions from their findings. First, they wrote, despite the assumption that the two American parties are identical in doctrine and policy, the Democratic and Republican leadership cadres were shown to be "distinct communities of co-believers who diverge sharply on many important issues." In addition, the apparent negative reaction by Republican followers to some stands taken by the Republican leadership can be taken as an indication "that the parties submit to the demands of their constituents less slavishly than is commonly supposed," they wrote.[79]

Second, the leadership groups are most widely separated on those issues "that grow out of their group identification and support--out of the managerial, proprietary, and high-status connections of the one, and the labor, minority, low-status, and intellectual connections of the other. The opinions of each party elite are linked less by chance than by membership in a common ideological domain."[80]

A third conclusion summarized the lack of divergence among followers.

> Whereas the leaders of the two parties diverge strongly, their followers differ only moderately in their attitudes toward issues. The hypothesis that party beliefs unite adherents and bring them into the party ranks may hold for the more active members of a mass party *but not for its rank and file members* . . . However, we cannot presently conclude that ideology exerts no influence over the habits of party support, for the followers do differ significantly and in the predicted directions on some issues. (Italics mine)[81]

Next, the authors argue, leaders are more articulate, informed and involved, and therefore can be expected more readily to diverge on issues.

"If the leaders of the two parties are not always candid about their disagreements, the reason may well be that they sense the great measure of consensus to be found among the electorate."[82] Here the authors seemed to imply that while the leaders do not ignore a possible cleavage among the voters, their public presentations of issue stands (cues) are muted to avoid offending what they perceive as consensus among voters.

The fifth conclusion, actually a reservation, is that while leaders may diverge on the issues, they do not necessarily act on the basis of their opinions. Different opinions between the leadership factions is not prima facie evidence "that the two parties are, in practice, governed by different outlooks."[83]

Finally, the authors concluded that the parties are not necessarily most internally cohesive on those issues which separate them clearly from the other parties' attitudes.

The effect of these conclusions most relevant to this discussion is that, in one of the most widely respected and best known examinations of issue conflict in the literature of voting behavior, the notion of necessary convergence is not disconfirmed, and that conclusions of the authors of that study lend support to the notion.

Some observers apparently assumed, perhaps on the basis of a shallow understanding of the findings, that the notion of necessary convergence was confirmed by the data from the McCloskey team's study. If party leadership cliques diverge significantly on the issues but groups within the electorate do not, then it must be true that the leaders blunt their distinctive policy orientations during a campaign to attract the broadest possible support, according to the argument.

Before accepting this notion on the basis of the McCloskey team's research, however, subsequent researchers are wise to examine carefully the procedure employed to reach those conclusions. Several aspects of the research technique invite questions.

First, it is hazardous in empirical research to accept a single cross-sectional measurement as evidence of a continuing phenomenon. Since McCloskey and his team conducted their voters survey in 1958, little research has been attempted either to corroborate or to disconfirm their findings. On this basis alone, additional measurements seem warranted, or, at least, highly desirable.

Regardless of how well the original study was designed and executed, it could measure levels of issue conflict and consensus only at one point in time. In the absence of additional evidence to confirm the findings, reliance on the authors' conclusions fifteen years later seems risky.

But in the case of the McCloskey-Hoffman-O'Hara article,

several shortcomings in the research design and the methodology seem to magnify the need for a closer look at the subject of their inquiry.

For the leadership samples, the problems in the research are glaring.

"Of the 6,848 delegates and alternates available to be sampled," the authors explained, "3,193 actually participated; 3,020 (1,788 Democrats and 1,232 Republicans) completed and returned questionnaires that were usable in all respects."[84]

It appears that questionnaires were mailed to potential respondents for the leadership sample, and if a recipient completed the questionnaire that was deemed "usable in all repects," he became a member of the sample. The authors do not explain the criteria by which a questionnaire was judged "usable in all respects," or how they decided to discard the 173 questionnaires which were returned, but were not in a "usable" form.

In addition to the initial mailing--to deliver the questionnaire and explain the study--the researchers employed subsequent mailings to encourage participation.

They seemed pleased that roughly 44 per cent of the potential respondents submitted questionnaires which were useful for the study.

"This gratifyingly large number of returns of so lengthy and detailed a questionnaire was attained through a number of follow-up mailings and special letters."[85]

The problem, however, is that when the potential respondent decided for himself whether to participate in the research, a significant potential for bias was introduced to the sample. In other words, in any experiment in which the subject is allowed to decide for himself whether to join the sample group, it becomes possible that those who do join will not accurately reflect a cross section of the group being studied. Does the 44 per cent mirror the attitudes and perceptions of the other 56 per cent? Or is there something different about those who declined to participate? Is the sample representative? Does it serve as a microcosm of the entire population under scrutiny in the experiment? Or is a sample in which subjects with an aversion to filling out questionnaires are excluded truly representative of all the potential subjects?

Such questions are particularly important in a survey of attitudes, because the very decision not to participate in the survey may be evidence of an attitudinal distinction on the part of the non-joiners.

Similar problems exist in the sample of rank and file voters. Procedures for this sample were somewhat better, however, than for the leaders' groups. By arrangement with the American Institute of Public Opinion, the researchers selected two national cross section samples. Representatives of the institute personally distributed the questionnaire to 2,917 adult voters who had been selected.

Of that number, 1,610--or 55 per cent--of the voters filled

out the questionnaire and returned it. Only 1,484 of the questionnaires were judged "completely usable."[86] Again, standards of usefulness were not defined.

Participation, it seems, was voluntary. If the respondent chose not to return the questionnaire by mail, he was omitted from the final sample. No personal interviews were conducted.

As a result of these procedures, only 50.8 per cent of the voters originally selected for the sample completed the full questionnaire in an acceptable manner. Data from the followers' sample, then, was based on responses from slightly more than half of those voters selected originally for the study.

The authors apparently remained confident that their sample was not biased. The rank and file sample "closely matched the national population on such characteristics as sex, age, region, size of city, and party affiliation, and, though it somewhat oversampled the upper educational levels, we considered it sufficiently large and representative for most of our purposes," the authors wrote.[87]

In weighing the results of the research by McCloskey, Hoffman and O'Hara, one must ask to what extent the potential bias resulting from selective participation may have affected the findings. Unfortunately, however, no answer is available. All that is known is that the sample _may_ have been an inaccurate reflection of the universe from which it was drawn. But that possibility alone is enough to cast doubt on the veracity of a researcher's findings.

A final caution regarding acceptance of the findings concerns the timing of the study. Perhaps this single measurement reflects a political climate which has changed significantly in the intervening years since the research data was gathered.

It has previously been noted that little corroborating evidence has been assembled since the study first was published fifteen years ago. In addition to that gap, the researcher in 1975 must wonder if a single cross sectional measurement reflects a situation which, even if portrayed accurately in the 1958 data, has since been altered by changes in the political climate of the United States.

Some might argue that the period during which the study was conducted by Mccloskey, Hoffman and O'Hara was, in terms of issue conflict between the two political parties, relatively quiescent compared to conditions in 1964, 1968 and 1972. Pomper has been quoted as arguing that a greater distinction of the parties' issue stands emerged with the 1964 Presidential campaign and continued in 1968. He described the decade of the 1950s as characterized by political stimuli which were "issueless and static," as opposed to those of the 1960s, which were more "ideological and dynamic."

Surely the clashes of Lyndon Johnson and Barry Goldwater in 1964 and of Richard Nixon and George McGovern in 1972 left with the voters a greater sense of diverging party positions than did the contests of Dwight Eisenhower and Adlai Stevenson--contests marked largely by personality and party label competition.

The researcher who looks at data on issue conflict that was

collected during the 1950s must weigh whether the absence of clearly perceived divergence of the parties then necessarily presupposes issue consensus and precludes divergence in the more turbulent years which followed.

In short, questions and even doubts about the reliability of McCloskey, Hoffman and O'Hara's conclusions after seventeen years of almost unchallenged acceptance seems to make desirable a re-examination of the questions they raised so articulately.

Such a re-examination is reported in the chapters which follow.

CHAPTER III

THE HARRISONBURG, VIRGINIA, POLITICAL ATTITUDES SURVEY

The McCloskey team was well-financed for its ambitious research effort. McCloskey himself received grants from the Committee on Political Behavior of the Social Research Council and from the Graduate School Research Fund and a Fellowship in Legal and Political Philosophy from the Rockefeller Foundation.

The subsequent re-examination attempt reported here was, on the contrary, severely limited in financial resources. Limitations in the scope of the re-examining study thus seemed necessary and prudent.

While subsamples of the American electorate are available in every town and county of the nation, access to a representative sample of party leaders is much more limited. An initial decision was made, therefore, to re-examine levels of issue conflict only among party followers and only in a small geographic area. No attempt was made to re-examine the levels of issue conflict among the group McCloskey *et al.* identified as "party leaders."

In the winter of 1972-1973, initial steps were taken to administer the relevant portions of the McCloskey team's questionnaire to a sample of rank and file party members to determine levels of issue conflict between groups of Democratic and Republican

party identifiers.

The research project began with the selection of a site and the drawing of a sample. A questionnaire was composed and interviewers were trained in administering the questions. Introductory letters to the sample were drafted, prepared and mailed. The data were gathered by personal interview and the results were tabulated. The data gathering process was completed during March, April and May, 1973.

Because it was impossible to survey a national cross section of the electorate, selection of a site from which to survey a subsample was dictated primarily by matters of convenience to the researcher.

The city of Harrisonburg, Virginia, was chosen. Several factors contributed to the decision. First, Harrisonburg is located about 180 miles from the researcher's residence at that time, Williamsburg, Virginia, allowing frequent trips between the research site and the library, computer and faculty resources employed. During the months of data gathering, the research effort required as many as three trips a week between the research site and the College of William and Mary, in Williamsburg.

Second, the researcher had lived in Harrisonburg for nine months during the preceding year, and had a basic knowledge of its people, commerce and political climate. Third, assistance with survey interviews was available in Harrisonburg through the researcher's acquaintance with two students majoring in political

science at Madison College there.

No assumption was made that Harrisonburg voters are in any way "typical" of voters in the United States. Any such allegation regarding any locality is, of course, highly questionable. On the contrary, the assumption was that no locality offered an electorate which could be relied upon as a microcosm of the nation's. Selection by factors of convenience, then, seemed reasonable.

At the time of the research the city, which is located in the central Shenandoah Valley of Virginia, had a population of about 18,000 persons with 7,810 registered voters. The five-man city council was composed of three Democrats and two Republicans. John Kenneth Robinson, a Republican from Winchester, represented the district (Va.-7) in the U.S. House of Representatives, having won his seat in 1970 and retained it in 1972 in repeat races against a Democratic candidate generally identified as "liberal." Prior to 1970, the district's seat had been occupied for many years by conservative Democrat John O. Marsh, now Counsellor to President Gerald R. Ford. Marsh traditionally had carried the city, as had Robinson in his 1970 and 1972 campaigns.

The city also had provided majorities for incumbent U.S. Senators William L. Scott, a freshman Republican, and Harry F. Byrd Jr., an Independent.

Sen. Byrd's father, a conservative Democrat, had held the Senate seat now occupied by his son until his death in 1966. The elder Byrd, also of Winchester, had received support from the

voters of Harrisonburg during his many campaigns in Virginia. Although portions of the Shenandoah Valley, including Harrisonburg, have been called the nucleus of Republicanism in the state, the city also is generally acknowledged to have been part of the elder Byrd's "stronghold." This is due in part to a generally conservative trend among voters of the city, observers say.

Another factor contributing to Byrd's popularity in the area may be the Byrd family's ownership of the city's sole newspaper, The Daily News Record. The Washington Post and the Richmond Times-Dispatch also enjoy minority circulation in Harrisonburg.

One television station (WSVA-TV, an American Broadcasting Corporation affiliate) is located just outside the city limits in Rockingham County. Local viewers also receive stations from Washington, D.C., and Richmond by cable service, and some viewers in the city also can receive stations from Roanoke.

Three major employers contribute to the local economy: Dunham-Busch, Inc., manufacturers of industrial and residential heating and cooling units; Walker Manufacturing Co., makers of exhaust systems for automotive vehicles, and Madison College, a state-supported institution with an enrollment of about 7,000 students.

Although various religious organizations play a role in the spiritual life of the community, Harrisonburg is known primarily as a center of the Mennonite faith. Eastern Mennonite College, one of the denomination's two institutions of higher education, is

located in the city, as is an auxiliary school for primary and secondary instruction.

Specific percentages of racial groupings are not available, but the City Registrar estimated that, in 1973, less than 20 per cent of Harrisonburg's voters were non-white.

The unemployment rate for the city was less than 2.5 per cent during the survey period, well below the national rate at that time.

The city's growth has been steady, but, as if in contrast to the modern subdivisions, apartment complexes and shopping centers under construction in the spring of 1973, hitching posts still occupied a prominent place in municipal parking lots--for use by the horse-drawn carriages which still are maneuvered on the city streets. Rich farmland surrounds the city and the economy of neighboring counties is dominated by agricultural pursuits.

It was the electorate of Harrisonburg, then, that served as the universe from which a sample of 100 persons was drawn. Randomly selected numbers were matched to a computer printout of voters' names to select the potential respondents' names.

The researcher first obtained a copy of the list of all registered voters in the city as of January 31, 1973. By referring to a table of random numbers, the researcher then selected 100 random numbers between 1 and 7,810. The 100 persons whose place in the alphabetical listing of registered voters corresponded to the 100 randomly selected numbers thus became the members of the sample group.

Despite a recent effort by the City Registrar to purge the voters' list of the names of persons known to have died, transferred their registration or residency or otherwise disqualified themselves as voters in Harrisonburg, several of those selected for the sample were found to be deceased or to be no longer residents of the city. For these eight members of the sample, substitutes were selected by reference to the table of random numbers, using choices 101, 102, 103, etc., as needed.

The members of the sample each received a letter in early spring of that year, advising them they had been selected to be interviewed as part of a study of voting behavior in the city. A copy of the letter is included in Appendix I. The letter informed the individuals that an interviewer would call on them at home and ask their cooperation in completing a questionnaire.

More than half the total 100 interviews were conducted by the researcher himself. Others were completed by two college students whom the researcher had trained. The researcher accompanied the college students on early interviews and supervised their procedures.

In an effort to provide the most direct basis for comparison with the findings of the McCloskey team, the twenty-four issue portion of the earlier questionnaire was adopted verbatim for the Harrisonburg survey. A copy of the questionnaire employed in the Harrisonburg interviews is included in Appendix II. McCloskey, Hoffman and O'Hara had noted that these particular twenty-four

issues were selected for the original study because they were deemed to be of "enduring" significance.

Additional questions included on the 1973 questionnaire were items designed to determine the respondent's age, sex, educational level, perception of income level, length of residency in the community and candidate preferences in the Presidential elections of 1964, 1968 and 1972.

Administration of the questionnaire to a respondent took about twenty minutes. All respondents were cooperative.

Party identification of the respondent was determined by response to three questions. The interviewer first asked: "With respect to national politics, do you usually think of yourself as a Republican, a Democrat, an Independent, or what?"

If the respondent indicated a partisan loyalty to one of the two major parties, the interviewer asked: "Would you call yourself a strong (Republican or Democrat) or a not very strong (Republican or Democrat)?"

If the respondent answered the first question with any response other than "Republican" or "Democrat," he was asked, "Do you think of yourself as closer to the Republican or Democratic party?"

Based on responses to these questions, the respondents were divided into three groups: (1) those who indicated a preference for the Republican Party (fifty of those interviewed); (2) those who said they were closer to the Democratic Party (forty of the respondents), and (3) those who stuck to their independent status and declined to

indicate a preference for either party (ten respondents). Since data tabulations were designed primarily to compare Democratic followers with Republican followers, the hard-core independent respondents were not included in those tables designed to reflect comparisons of party identifiers.

Subsequent tabulations which ignored party preference and compared respondents' issue positions with respect to such factors as age, income level, education level and Presidential preference in 1972 included data from the independent respondents, however.

While the method of sample selection and the interview technique seem scientifically valid so as to engender confidence in the results of the Harrisonburg survey, there is additional evidence to bolster claims of accuracy for the research project.

One question on the interview form asked, "If a referendum were held to determine if restaurants in Harrisonburg would be allowed to serve mixed alcoholic drinks, how would you expect to vote?" The respondent was asked to reply either "Yes," "No," "Probably would not vote," or "Don't know."

The researcher had been made aware that some restaurateurs in the city were considering a petition drive to call such a referendum. No public mention of the move had been made during the survey period.

The response to that question showed that 50 per cent of the sample would vote in favor of allowing sale of mixed drinks, 28 per cent said they would vote "No," 11 per cent said "Don't know,"

and another 11 per cent indicated they probably would not vote on the issue. Of those who did express an opinion on the question and said they probably would vote on the issue, 64 per cent said they would vote for approval and 36 per cent said they would vote "No."

Leaders of the city Democratic and Republican committees and the editor of The Daily News Record, informed of the results on the question, were surprised and skeptical. They assumed, as did some of the restaurateurs, that the city's voters would be hesitant to approve such a measure.

The referendum was held in November, 1973, and the proposal was approved by more than 60 per cent of those who voted--approximately the percentage found in the survey six months prior to the vote. (A summary of the election and referendum results is available in the State Board of Elections' bulletin of voting tabulations for November, 1973.)

Despite these reassurances of accuracy for the Harrisonburg survey, it is necessary to remember that the Harrisonburg research project was a limited attempt to re-examine the findings of McCloskey, Hoffman and O'Hara in their earlier national survey. Because it examined only the voters of one Virginia city, the survey cannot be presented as a replication of the earlier research. The attempt, again, is merely to re-examine the earlier findings with reference to one locality to determine if they are valid for rank and file party members in Harrisonburg, Virginia, during 1973.

That disclaimer notwithstanding, the findings which resulted from the Harrisonburg research project provide an enlightening and significant update to the original study.

CHAPTER IV

ISSUE CONFLICT AMONG HARRISONBURG VOTERS

Results of the Harrisonburg study differed from those of the 1958 survey of party followers by McCloskey and his colleagues in startling proportion. The average of issue conflict levels on all twenty-four issues among the Democratic and Republican identifiers surveyed in 1973 was three times greater than the comparable figure for the 1958 study.

Conflict between Democrats and Republicans in the 1973 study averaged .157 ratio of support points for the twenty-four issue list. This compares with an average (mean) conflict of only .050 points for the "followers" sample of the McCloskey-Hoffman-O'Hara survey. (See Table 5.)

In the 1958 study, the single widest divergence between Democrats and Republicans was on the issue of Farm Price Supports, where the groups were separated by .15 ratio points. The Harrisonburg study, however, showed differences of .15 or greater occurred on thirteen issues. The greatest divergence, on Regulation of Trade Unions, was .31 points--more than twice the largest gap in the 1958 study. (See Table 6.)

McCloskey and his colleagues claimed their data show "significant" differences in ratio scores on eight of the twenty-four issues.

TABLE 5

MEAN LEVELS OF ISSUE CONFLICT FOR PARTY FOLLOWERS
IN THE 1958 NATIONAL SAMPLE AND
IN THE 1973 HARRISONBURG SAMPLE

Sample Group	Mean Level of Issue Conflict
Democratic Followers versus Republican Followers, 1958 National Sample	.050
Democratic Followers versus Republican Followers, 1973 Harrisonburg Sample	.157

TABLE 6

RATIO OF SUPPORT SCORES FOR PARTY FOLLOWERS IN THE 1973 HARRISONBURG SAMPLE

Issue	Democrats' Score (N=40)	Republicans' Score (N=50)	Level of Issue Conflict
Public Ownership of Natural Resources	.70	.51	.19
Public Control of Atomic Energy	.73	.50	.23
Level of Farm Price Supports	.62	.47	.15
Government Regulation of Business	.50	.21	.29
Enforcement of Anti-Monopoly Laws	.68	.69	.01
Regulation of Trade Unions	.51	.82	.31
Level of Tariffs	.46	.57	.11
Restrictions on Credit	.47	.53	.06

TABLE 6--CONTINUED

Issue	Democrats' Score (N=40)	Republicans' Score (N=50)	Level of Issue Conflict
Regulation of Public Utilities	.68	.50	.18
Federal Aid to Education	.87	.60	.27
Slum Clearance and Public Housing	.91	.67	.24
Social Security Benefits	.82	.77	.05
Minimum Wages	.85	.57	.28
Enforcement of Integration	.62	.38	.24
Immigration into the United States	.46	.34	.12
Corporate Income Tax	.78	.50	.28
Tax on Large Incomes	.90	.70	.20
Tax on Business	.67	.52	.15

TABLE 6--CONTINUED

Issue	Democrats' Score (N=40)	Republicans' Score (N=50)	Level of Issue Conflict
Tax on Middle Incomes	.27	.29	.02
Tax on Small Incomes	.12	.22	.10
Reliance on the United Nations	.55	.46	.09
American Participation in Military Alliances	.30	.32	.02
Foreign Aid	.25	.20	.05
Defense Spending	.35	.48	.13

Unfortunately, however, the authorsneglected to define their standard of "significance." Careful analysis of their data indicates that a difference of .07 ratio points or more apparently was considered "significant."

If the same standard is applied to the data from the 1973 study, the number of "significant" conflicts over issues increases sharply to eighteen. (See Table 7.)

On two issues--Farm Price Supports and Enforcement of Anti-Monopoly Laws--the levels of conflict in the 1973 sample were identical to those of the 1958 national sample. On two other issues, conflict in the 1973 study actually was lower than in the earlier measurement. Conflict over Social Security Benefits dropped .01 ratio points from .06 to .05. American Participation in Military Alliances provoked a conflict equal to only .02 ratio points, down .02 from the .04 mark in the 1958 data.

On the remaining twenty issues, however, levels of issue conflict between groups of Democratic and Republican identifiers were markedly higher in the 1973 Harrisonburg survey than those reported by McCloskey, Hoffman and O'Hara for the 1958 survey, as Table 7 shows.

When the data from the two samples are compared by category, increases are noted in all five areas. Largest increases in levels of issue conflict occur in Public Ownership of Resources (up .17) and Equalitarianism and Human Welfare (up .15). The lowest conflict level in both studies and the slightest increase was in Foreign Policy. (See Table 8.)

TABLE 7

LEVELS OF ISSUE CONFLICT FOR PARTY FOLLOWERS IN THE 1958 NATIONAL SAMPLE AND IN THE 1973 HARRISONBURG SAMPLE, BY ISSUE

Issue	Level of Conflict, 1958 Sample	Level of Conflict, 1973 Sample	Change in Level of Conflict
Public Ownership of Natural Resources			+.15
Public Control of Atomic Energy	.04	.23	+.19
Level of Farm Price Supports	.15	.15	--
Government Regulation of Business	.12	.29	+.17
Enforcement of Anti-Monopoly Laws	.01	.01	--
Regulation of Trade Unions	.05	.31	+.26
Level of Tariffs	.01	.11	+.10
Restrictions on Credit	.05	.06	+.01

TABLE 7--CONTINUED

Issue	Level of Conflict, 1958 Sample	Level of Conflict, 1973 Sample	Change in Level of Conflict
Regulation of Public Utilities	.07	.18	+.11
Federal Aid to Education	.07	.27	+.20
Slum Clearance and Public Housing	.05	.24	+.19
Social Security Benefits	.06	.05	-.01
Minimum Wages	.09	.28	+.19
Enforcement of Integration	.02	.24	+.22
Immigration into the United States	.03	.12	+.09
Corporate Income Tax	.07	.28	+.21
Tax on Large Incomes	.10	.20	+.10
Tax on Business	.08	.15	+.07

TABLE 7--CONTINUED

Issue	Level of Conflict, 1958 Sample	Level of Conflict, 1973 Sample	Change in Level of Conflict
Tax on Middle Incomes	.01	.02	+.01
Tax on Small Incomes	.04	.10	+.06
Reliance on the United Nations	.02	.09	+.07
American Participation in Military Alliances		--	-.02
Foreign Aid	.00	.05	+.05
Defense Spending	.02	.13	+.11

TABLE 8

MEAN LEVELS OF ISSUE CONFLICT FOR PARTY FOLLOWERS IN THE 1958 NATIONAL SAMPLE AND IN THE 1973 HARRISONBURG SAMPLE, BY CATEGORY

Category	Mean Level of Issue Conflict, 1958 Sample	Mean Level of Issue Conflict, 1973 Sample	Change in Mean Level of Issue Conflict
Public Ownership of Resources	.04	.21	+.17
Government Regulation of the Economy			+.10
Equalitarianism and Human Welfare	.05	.20	+.15
Tax Policy	.06	.15	+.09
Foreign Policy	.02	.07	+.05

In the earlier research, McCloskey and his colleagues noted that conflict was greatest on issues with the most direct impact on the voters--matters pertaining to money. Conflict levels of .06 ratio points--greatest level of divergence by category--were recorded for both the Government Regulation of the Economy category and the Tax Policy area in the 1958 data.

In the 1973 sample, however, domestic social concerns seemed to divide the Democrats and Republicans more than pocketbook issues. Conflict on Government Regulation of the Economy was third among categories at .10 ratio points. Tax Policy issues ranked fourth in level of conflict, with a .09 level separating the party groups.

On the issue of Public Ownership of Natural Resources, the McCloskey team's research showed Democratic followers' support at .60 and Republican support at .56, for a conflict level of only .04. In the Harrisonburg study, however, Democrats had an aggregate ratio of support score of .70 while Republicans showed only .51 support. The two parties seemed to move in opposite directions from the stands recorded in the earlier research. The level of conflict in 1973 was .19, up .15 points over the 1958 national sample.

Both party groups showed less support in the 1973 study for Public Control of Atomic Energy than was recorded in the earlier survey. Democrats in 1973 scored .73, down from .79, and Republicans dropped to .50 from an earlier .75. Issue conflict increased from the McCloskey team's measurement of .04 to a fairly high mark of .23.

The parties' supporters also diverged more widely in opinions regarding Government Regulation of Business in the Harrisonburg study than did the national sample as reported by McCloskey, Hoffman and O'Hara. The earlier .43-.31 Democratic to Republican split increased to a .50-.21 gap, thus increasing the conflict measurement from .12 points to .29.

Similar divergence over the Regulation of Public Utilities resulted in a conflict measurement for the 1973 sample of .18, up .11 over McCloskey and his colleagues' 1958 findings.

Democrats in the Harrisonburg sample reflected the same ratio of support score as their earlier counterparts on the issue of Level of Tariffs--.46. Republicans in the 1973 study, however, were more eager for an increase in tariffs than their counterparts had been, with the support score rising from .47 for the national group to .57 for the Harrisonburg group.

Democratic support decreased, while Republican support increased for Restrictions on Credit, but the level of conflict rose from .01 to .05 points. And while Democratic support for Federal Aid to Education was slightly higher in the Harrisonburg sample than in the earlier national group, Republican support among the Harrisonburg voters was down .18 points from the 1958 measurement of national Republicans. Conflict on the issue rose from .07 to .27 ratio points.

In other areas of what McCloskey and his colleagues called the "Equalitarianism and Human Welfare" category, Republican support

among respondents in the Harrisonburg sample decreased from that of the national G.O.P. sample, while local Democrats' scores were higher than their predecessors. Conflict levels rose on all but the Social Security Benefits issue in this category. Conflict between the party groups was .19 points higher on Slum Clearance and Public Housing and on Minimum Wages, and .22 points higher on Enforcement of Integration. Republican support for Immigration into the United States increased slightly, and Democratic support increased briskly. Conflict on the issue rose by .09 ratio points to a level of .12.

While both Democrats and Republicans scored higher support marks in the 1973 study on taxes of Corporate Incomes, Large Incomes and Businesses, the Democratic jumps outstripped the Republicans', and conflict on the three issues increased over the 1958 data. Scores on the Tax on Middle Incomes issue were almost identical to those of the earlier study, but Republicans in Harrisonburg seemed more willing to increase Taxes on Small Incomes than their counterparts had been in the national sample, while Democrats in the 1973 study mirrored their partisans' score in the earlier national data. Conflict on the issue increased slightly, from .04 in the 1958 study to .10 in the subsequent research.

Support for Reliance on the United Nations and for Foreign Aid was less evident among voters of both parties in the 1973 group than it had been in the McCloskey-Hoffman-O'Hara study. Conflict over the U.N. rose .07 points in the Harrisonburg survey to a .09

level. While there was apparent consensus in the earlier study on the Foreign Aid issue, the 1973 study reflected a conflict level of .05 points.

Although conflict on American Participation in Military Alliances was less among the 1973 sample than in the earlier data, a significant shift in the magnitude of support from both parties was evident. In the 1958 survey, the researchers found Democrats' support for the issue at .62 points, while Republicans scored .58. In the 1973 study, Democratic support for the matter had slipped to only .30 points and the Republicans scored only .32. This mutual sliding of support within roughly the same thin margin of conflict may be evidence of an enduring consensus between the parties on an issue about which attitudes have shifted in tandem over the last fifteen years.

A similar phenomenon is apparent in the data on the issue of Defense Spending. In the earlier study, Democratic support was recorded at the .67 level and Republicans scored .65--near consensus. In the Harrisonburg sample, Democrats scored only .35 while the Republicans also had less support than the earlier national Republican sample. The Republican decrease to .48 was more moderate than the Democrats, and conflict on the issue increased from .02 in the 1958 data to .13 points for the later sample. Again, the lower scores recorded by both parties may indicate a change in the public attitude and an alteration of the voters' positions on the issue, while the parties' positions _vis a vis_ each other may have

changed less substantially.

Careful analysis of the data from the 1973 Harrisonburg study reveals that, of six variables, political party identification provides the greatest level of issue conflict among groups of respondents. Members of the sample also were divided into categories for comparison by age, income level, educational level, 1972 Presidential preference and participation versus non-participation in the 1972 Presidential balloting. In each comparison, respondents differed less sharply over the twenty-four issues than did blocs of party identifiers in 1973. Mean levels of issue conflict for the twenty-four issue list were tabulated for each comparison. When data for the comparison of party identifiers from the 1958 survey was added to the list of mean levels of issue conflict, it became apparent that while party identifiers in 1973 differed more sharply than any other groups tabulated, the 1958 party identifiers had the least conflict of all groups considered. (See Table 9.)

As noted previously, the mean level of issue conflict for the 1973 party identifiers was .157. The second highest mean conflict was found in the comparison of McGovern voters to Nixon voters in the 1972 Presidential election. Divergence between the two groups reached a mean level of .128.

Respondents who claimed to have voted in the 1972 election were in conflict with those who said they had not gone to the polls by a mean score of .124.

TABLE 9

MEAN LEVELS OF ISSUE CONFLICT FOR SEVEN VARIABLES, SIX FROM THE 1973 HARRISONBURG SAMPLE AND ONE FROM THE 1958 NATIONAL SAMPLE

Variable	Mean Level of Issue Conflict
Democratic Followers versus Republican Followers, 1973 Sample	.157
McGovern Voters versus Nixon Voters, 1973 Sample	.128
Voters versus Non-voters for President in 1972, 1973 Sample	.124
Low and Lower Middle Income Group versus Middle and Upper Middle Group, 1973 Sample	.085
Voters 35 and Under versus Those over 35 Years Old, 1973 Sample	.078
Less Educated Voters versus Those with Education Beyond High School Diploma, 1973 Sample	.076
Democratic Followers versus Republican Followers, 1958 Sample	.050

As Table 9 indicates, those respondents who perceived their household income level as either "Low" or "Lower Middle" differed from those who considered themselves in the "Middle" or "Upper Middle" bracket by a mean level of conflict of .085. Those between eighteen and thirty-five years of age conflicted with those thirty-six and older by a mean level of .078.

Respondents whose maximum educational advancement was not beyond high school graduation were in conflict with those who had some post-high-school educational experience by a mean score of .076.

But the average difference between Democrats and Republicans in the survey conducted in 1958 was a smaller figure--only .050. While it is possible that such differences would have been found among voters in Harrisonburg even during the period of the earlier research, it also seems possible that some intervening factor or set of factors has increased voters' tendencies to disagree with their fellow citizens on these twenty-four issues.

The relative ease with which levels of conflict greater than those demonstrated in the 1958 research are detected among groups of respondents in Harrisonburg who have no apparent reason to be in significant conflict over the range of issues seems to indicate one of two things. Either the voters of Harrisonburg are inclined to more divergent views on these issues than are voters in the U.S. as a whole, or, if Harrisonburg voters are more closely representative of the nation's electorate, the situation has been

altered since the McCloskey team's reading of the national sample's responses in 1958. A third possibility, of course, is that the earlier data was simply inaccurate, even for the period in which the measurement was made.

In any event, the hypothesis that a re-examination of levels of issue conflict between Democratic and Republican followers would reveal significantly higher levels of divergence than were discovered in the 1958 national study is confirmed by the data from the 1973 Harrisonburg survey. Levels of issue conflict between Democrats and Republicans sampled in Harrisonburg are indeed far greater than the conflict levels demonstrated in the McCloskey-Hoffman-O'Hara research.

Proving an increase in issue conflict levels among a sample of voters in Harrisonburg, Virginia, in 1973 does not disconfirm the findings of McCloskey and his colleagues in 1958. The results in Harrisonburg do not confirm a change in national political attitudes. Nevertheless, the data do seem to indicate the possibility that a change in the amount of divergence between Democratic identifiers and Republican identifiers may have occurred since the earlier measurement and that the parties' supporters now may be separated by a more clearly distinguishable gulf.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

Like the study it sought to re-examine, the research project reported herein is a single, cross-sectional measurement. By the nature of such a study, the implications that may be drawn from the data are limited.

It may be significant to note, however, that studies by other researchers on the question of issue conflict between groups of party followers in recent years have resulted in findings which point in the same direction as those from the Harrisonburg study.

In their article, "Political Parties and Political Issues: Patterns in Differentiation, 1940-1972," Everett Carll Ladd Jr. and Charles D. Hadley explored data covering a thirty-two-year period and sought to determine levels of "party distance," or issue conflict. The scope of their study spanned what Ladd and Hadley termed "the change-dominated years from FDR to Nixon."[88]

The authors examined voting behavior from the period to determine the extent of differences on issue orientations between "behavioral" Democrats and Republicans as well as self-identified party supporters. By "behavioral" party members, they meant those voters who actually voted for the candidates of a given party, not merely those voters who declare themselves "closer to" the party.

Ladd and Hadley concluded that there has been substantial issue distance in both foreign policy matters and domestic issues throughout the period, although such differences were of less magnitude during the middle 1950s than at other times. Differences on foreign policy matters have been less dramatic than those on domestic issues, they said.[89]

"Since 1940 (and presumably since the beginning of the New Deal), there have been sharp Republican-Democratic differences across virtually the whole range of domestic and social welfare matters," Ladd and Hadley wrote. Although less clearly defined by the data, differences in foreign policy matters "are substantial and hardly random," they added.[90]

Civil rights issues divided party adherents throughout the period, the authors observed, although the width of the attitudinal gap is more pronounced during the 1960s and early 1970s (when such issues gained greater salience) than in the 1940s and 1950s. The apparent impact of changing political context on levels of issue conflict here should not be ignored.

The authors noted specifically that party distance during "Eisenhower's 'era of good feeling'" was less "than in subsequent years."[91]

The data of McCloskey, Hoffman and O'Hara were among those analyzed by Ladd and Hadley. They concluded that the McCloskey team's findings, when compared to data for the entire period 1940 to 1972, showed lower levels of party distance (or issue conflict)

than was apparent for other years. This observation supports the notion that McCloskey and his associates' measurement reflected a relatively quiescent period in recent U.S. politics and that changes in political context are significantly related to variations in the level of issue conflict between blocs of party followers.[92]

Ladd and Hadley attempted to put their findings in perspective. They acknowledged that "the structure of the American two-party arrangement has served as a factor working to reduce inter-party differences on most political questions."[93] They also observed, as was noted here earlier, that a "narrow coalition operating in a multi-party system" has an easier time maintaining a high level of issue coherence and cohesiveness among its supporters. A mass party in a two-party system, however, must "accommodate conflicting aims of diverse groups," the authors wrote. "Since it is internally heterogeneous, its collective distinctiveness from its opponents must be relatively modest." Each of the two major American parties is "an unwieldy diffuse alignment of state and local units, and of a broad range of social groups," they wrote.[94]

In light of these observations about the nature of American political parties, Ladd and Hadley contended that the levels of issue conflict demonstrated in their data were of great significance. With such entrenched factors at work to minimize attitudinal disagreement, any conflict between party blocs is noteworthy, they said.

> In this context, the inter-party distance which we documented for the period since 1940 must be seen as remarkably substantial. Data presented . . . ,showing a pattern of consistent and persistent differences between the citizenry parties on a wide range of issues, are all the more striking, that is, because of what is perhaps the most salient feature of the American party system, the broadly inclusive "umbrella" character of the coalitions.[95]

Ladd and Hadley's comments, of course, are equally applicable to the results of the 1973 Harrisonburg survey.

The Ladd and Hadley data lend support to the notion that issue conflict levels may have increased nationwide among party followers since the period of the McCloskey team's research. The Harrisonburg data, too, seem to imply development of greater levels of conflict between party blocs than was evident in the report of the 1958 survey.

Neither the Ladd and Hadley data nor the Harrisonburg results prove conclusively that issue conflict for U.S. voters has, in fact, increased. That could be proved only by comparing two or more compatible sets of data. Unfortunately, the McCloskey team's questionnaire apparently has not been re-administered to a national sample under the same procedures as originally employed. On the basis of these more recent findings, however, the question may at least be raised more forcefully than before.

The data from the Harrisonburg survey <u>prove</u> very little about the nature of the American system of political parties. Most of the broad issues and arguments presented in Chapter One of this paper remain unanswered.

The scope of accomplishment for the research project reported here is relatively small--a narrowly drawn hypothesis appears to have been confirmed by the data. The 1973 survey of voters in Harrisonburg did indeed discover higher levels of issue conflict than were reported for the "followers" portion of the 1958 national study.

It is proved, therefore, that the level of issue conflict between Democratic and Republican identifiers in one city of Virginia during the spring of 1973 was higher on twenty-four specific national issues than between Democratic and Republican followers in a nationwide sample surveyed fifteen years previously.

Little else can be said with certainty, based solely on the data gathered during the project and analyzed above.

The certainty of this one discovery, however, leads inevitably to speculation on other matters. Based on the McCloskey team's findings, it was believed likely that voters in Harrisonburg, as in the nation as a whole, would be clustered around a single viewpoint on each issue, with little or no issue conflict separating the parties' supporters. That was not the case for Harrisonburg, however.

If the level of issue conflict in Harrisonburg in 1973 did not follow the national pattern expressed in the 1958 data, perhaps it would not do so in other localities. Perhaps parties' supporters in other portions of the United States are similarly divided by conflicts over issues of national policy.

If this is the case, and voters are divided on the issues along lines of party loyalty, the notion of necessary convergence is due for careful re-analysis. If party constituencies are diverging bodies of voters, then perhaps the parties themselves can diverge more dramatically at the leadership level without fear of losing support of their followers. Perhaps the lack of candor which McCloskey, Hoffman and O'Hara noted among party leaders can give way to more straightforward pronouncements of the leaders' positions. In short, if the voters are not clustered around a single viewpoint but are separated in partisan blocs which hold distinctive positions, then the parties, too, can become distinctive alternatives to each other.

Perhaps the parties already are distinct alternatives and the divergence of the voters is a reaction to divergent party cues. Or perhaps the voters have drifted apart independent of party cues and the parties now are in a position to react to the voters' movement.

In any event, the idea that parties must converge is subject to question, and researchers with greater resources and patience should direct further investigations in this direction.

It is tempting to postulate that the 1970s may be characterized by significantly greater national conflict on these twenty-four issues than were the 1950s, and that the political context already has changed dramatically, altering with it the political landscape of the American electorate. While the pos-

sibility of such a change in the nature of the American voter may not comfort those engaged in the painstaking process of cataloguing the characteristics of the electorate, perhaps the possibility offers an important message to researchers in the field of voting behavior: the voter may not be so one-dimensional as to be easily described by simple or even elaborate cross-sectional surveys. While they add significantly to the body of knowledge, such surveys are only stepping stones. The conclusions which flow from such measurements must be re-checked continually.

In short, the seminal studies which were conducted early in the development of our knowledge of voting behavior may be due for close scrutiny and re-examination in light of possible changes in the political climate and in the characteristics of the American electorate.

APPENDIX I

INTRODUCTORY LETTER TO MEMBERS OF THE HARRISONBURG SAMPLE

March 27, 1973

Dear Harrisonburg Voter,

I am a graduate student in the Department of Government at the College of William and Mary, currently working on a research project as part of the requirements for a Master's degree. I live in Keezletown, and I've decided to concentrate my research in the Harrisonburg area. This study will involve a survey of political attitudes of voters in the city of Harrisonburg.

Your name is one of those which was selected at random to be a part of the survey. Within the next several weeks, an interviewer will call on you at home to ask you several questions. His or her questions will take only a few minutes, and I can assure you that your responses will be kept in confidence--your name will not be used.

This project is, of course, very important to me, and I thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Haywood Blakemore

APPENDIX II

QUESTIONNAIRE EMPLOYED FOR THE HARRISONBURG POLITICAL ATTITUDES SURVEY

#__________

Precinct__________

Interviewer__________

(Read) This survey is part of an academic research project being conducted by a graduate student at the College of William and Mary. I'm going to ask you a number of questions about your political views, and I'd appreciate your cooperation. Your responses will be kept in confidence and your name will not be used.

1. How long have you lived in Harrisonburg?

   less than five years_____ five to ten years_____ ten to twenty years_____ more than twenty years_____ all my life____

   no response_____

2. For how many years have you been a registered voter?

   less than five years_____ five to ten years_____ more than ten years_____ no response_____

3. What is your occupation? (Interviewer classify.)

   blue collar_____ white collar_____ housewife_____

   merchant_____ clerical_____ student_____ unemployed____

   retired_____ no response_____

   (Indicate the respondent's sex. Do not ask.)

   male_____ female____

5. With respect to national politics, do you ususally think of yourself as a Republican, a Democrat, an Independent, or what?

   republican_____ democrat_____ independent_____ no response____

6. (If Republican or Democrat) Would you call yourself a strong (Republican or Democrat) or a not very strong (Republican or Democrat)?

   (If Independent) Do you think of yourself as closer to the Republican or Democratic party?

   strong republican_____ weak republican_____ strong democrat___

   weak democrat_____ independent republican_____ independent

   democrat_____ solid independent_____ no response_____

7. through 30. (Give the respondent the issue sheet and a pencil.) Here is a list of some national issues. I'd like you to indicate in the proper column whether you favor an increase, a decrease or no change for each issue.

31. In talking to people about last November's election, we find that a lot of people weren't able to vote because they weren't registered, or they were sick or they just didn't have the time. How about you, did you vote this time?

    yes_____ no_____ no response_____

32. For whom did you vote in the November Presidential election?

    McGovern_____ Nixon_____ Schmitz_____ other_____ didn't vote ___

33. How about in 1968. Do you recall how you voted?

    Humphrey_____ Nixon_____ Wallace_____ other _____ didn't vote___

34. Now how about the 1964 election, when President Johnson and Senator Goldwater were running. How did you vote then?

    LBJ_____ Goldwater_____ other_____ didn't vote____

APPENDIX II--CONTINUED

35. And finally, in the 1960 race, with Kennedy and Nixon. Do you recall how you voted that time?

    JFK_____ Nixon_____ other_____ didn't vote_____ no response_____

36. (Hand respondent Card #1.) We're interested in how far you went in school. Tell me what number on this card indicates the highest grade you completed.

    grade 1-5_____ grade 6-8_____ grade 9-11_____ high school grad____

    1-2 years college_____ 3-4 years college_____ college grad____

    post-graduate work_____ no response_____

37. (Hand respondent Card #2.) Which of the numbers on this card indicates the category of your household income, in your opinion?

    lower_____ lower middle_____ middle_____ upper middle____

    upper_____ no response_____

38. (Hand respondent Card #3.) Which of the numbers on this card indicates the category which includes your present age?

    18-25_____ 26-35_____ 36-45_____ 46-55_____ 56-65_____

    over 65_____ no response_____

39. How do you react to the following statement: A local law which would allow restaurants in the city to serve mixed drinks of alcoholic beverages would be a good thing. Do you agree, strongly agree, disagree or strongly disagree?

    strongly agree_____ agree_____ disagree_____ strongly disagree____

    no response_____

40. If a referendum were held to determine if restaurants in Harrisonburg would be allowed to serve mixed alcoholic drinks, how would you expect to vote, yes or no?

    yes_____ no_____ probably would not vote_____ no response____

APPENDIX II--CONTINUED

ISSUE SHEET FOR QUESTIONNAIRE

Issue	Increase	Decrease	No Change
1. Public Ownership of Natural Resources			
2. Public Control of Atomic Energy			
3. Level of Farm Price Supports			
4. Government Regulation of Business			
5. Enforcement of Anti-Monopoly Laws			
6. Regulation of Trade Unions			
7. Level of Tariffs			
8. Restrictions on Credit			
9. Regulation of Public Utilities			
10. Federal Aid to Education			
11. Slum Clearance and Public Housing			
12. Social Security Benefits			
13. Minimum Wages			
14. Enforcement of Integration			
15. Immigration into the United States			
16. Corporate Income Tax			

APPENDIX II--CONTINUED

Issue	Increase	Decrease	No Change
17. Tax on Large Incomes			
18. Tax on Business			
19. Tax on Middle Incomes			
20. Tax on Small Incomes			
21. Reliance on the United Nations			
22. American Participation in Military Alliances			
23. Foreign Aid			
24. Defense Spending			

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